

BOTTOM LINE – KNOW THE REGULATIONS

A full copy of the regulations is available at
www.fish.govt.nz



**Protect your fishery -
Report illegal activities:
0800 4 POACHER**

November 2009

Code of Practice when fishing for blue cod in the Marlborough Sounds



Blue Cod Management Group

This Code of Practice has been developed by the Blue Cod Management Group to assist in rebuilding a sustainable blue cod fishery in the Marlborough Sounds.

FISHING TACKLE

When choosing a hook, use fishing tackle that minimises mortality from hook damage.

- > Use larger hooks (6/0 minimum) to prevent undersized fish from being hooked.
- > Use circle type hooks preferably with no offset.
- > Use a single hook rig, placed above the sinker.
- > Pinch or remove the barb of hooks for easier extraction.

Remember, small hooks kill fish!



HANDLING BLUE COD

It is essential to return undersized fish to the water as quickly as possible.

- > Minimise the length of time fish are out of the water.
- > Measure fish immediately and return fish smaller than 30 cm gently back to sea.
- > The best way to hold blue cod to extract hooks is behind the head.
- > Wear wet gloves or use a wet rag to lie fish on if you do need to handle them out of the water, and avoid placing them on hot, dry surfaces.
- > Cut the line if gut or gill hooked, do not use a gob stick.

PREDATION:

Released fish are the targets for predation by shags and barracouta.

- > Move location if returned fish are being predated – don't feed the shags.
- > Use a downpipe to lower fish back into the water.

SUSTAINABILITY:

Blue cod are very vulnerable to localised depletion. Every fisher can play a part:

- > Limit your catch.
- > Return some of your bigger fish to the water (but not those injured or bleeding) as large females contribute significant numbers of eggs and are vital to the future of the fishery.
- > Move location if you are repeatedly catching undersized fish.
- > Exclude blue cod as a category species in fishing competitions.

