

FAQ's

Why is the fishery being opened earlier than the original proposed date of 2012?

The intent of the closure was to both halt any further decline of blue cod abundance in the closed areas and provide a window for recreational stakeholders to work together to develop a management plan for the amateur fishery. The key issue was gaining understanding and buy-in from the recreational sector stakeholders regarding the issue and the approach to managing it. This opportunity has now been provided and a set of management tools developed.

Why do we need the new rules for recreational fishers?

The new rules seek to manage fishing so the Marlborough blue cod fishery remains healthy for future generations.

The management plan for the fishery is deliberately cautious. The latest survey information tells us that adult numbers have increased during the closure, but a corresponding increase in juvenile numbers is not yet obvious everywhere in the Sounds.

There are also some underlying issues that needed to be considered. Fish are smaller on average than they were 10 years ago and the populations are heavily dominated by males.

Therefore the measures aim not only to manage the level of amateur catch, but also to ensure that the populations can successfully reproduce.

Why is it so long between the announcement and the reopening? Why not reopen for the summer season?

The management measures need to be incorporated into fisheries regulations prior to fishery being reopened. The soonest this can be achieved by is for a 1 April 2011 opening.

The interim period also provides time for an information and awareness plan to be implemented so that the new rules are introduced effectively.

What is being done to address commercial fishing?

The largest extractor of blue cod from BCO7 and the Sounds is the amateur sector. The purpose of this management plan was to more effectively manage amateur fishing effort in the Sounds. Now this plan has been developed, blue cod management will be looked at in a wider context, including considering commercial utilisation. The Ministry will continue to monitor commercial fishing activity and may progress measures to manage the effort if required.