



Your file ref: EEZ100015  
EEZ15 08

3 October 2018

Mr Richard Johnson  
Manager EEZ Applications  
Climate, Land & Oceans  
Environmental Protection Authority  
Private Bag 63002  
Wellington 6140  
New Zealand

Dear Mr Johnson

**Request for advice under section 56 of the Exclusive Economic Zone and Continental Shelf (Environmental Effects) Act 2012 regarding the Coastal Resources Limited Application – EEZ100015**

I refer to your letter of 14 September 2018, regarding an application for a marine dumping consent from Coastal Resources Limited (CRL). The application is to dump dredged material in the Northern Disposal Area (NDA), approximately 25 kilometres east of Great Barrier Island.

The Decision-making Committee (DMC) for the application has requested advice and information to help it understand any potential effects on fisheries of activities described in the CRL application. The DMC's questions and Fisheries New Zealand's responses are below.

1. The Applicant asserts that the Northern Disposal Area is unsuitable habitat for fish. Please comment on whether this assertion is a fair statement.

This is not a fair statement. The NDA is not an unsuitable habitat for fish. The site has low benthic invertebrate diversity and abundance, therefore food is limited in the area and you would not expect it to support large numbers of fish. However, catch

**Fisheries New Zealand**

Fisheries Management

Pastoral House, 25 The Terrace

Wellington 6011, New Zealand

PO Box 2526

Wellington 6140, New Zealand

Telephone: 0800 00 83 33, Facsimile: +64-4-894 0300

[www.mpi.govt.nz](http://www.mpi.govt.nz)

records support the fact that fish can be present in the area at low densities or potentially as transients.

2. Please advise on the potential effects on fisheries of dumping over 35 years at the Northern Disposal Area.

The NDA is a relatively small area within a widespread and relatively low biodiversity benthic habitat. Due to this low biodiversity this habitat is only likely to support low densities of benthic or transient pelagic fish of interest to fisheries. These fish can generally avoid any dumping disturbance so any effect on fish is likely indirect through limiting available food, but is likely to be practically either scientifically undetectable or, if detected, ecologically very small. The subsequent impact on fisheries is therefore likely to be even smaller and more difficult to detect.

3. Please provide a **map** or plot of the trawl, fishing paths or footprints of fishers in the area around the Northern Disposal Area dumping site 25km east of Great Barrier Island, centred on 36°12.3403"S and 175°48.002"E (if that can be produced at a legible scale)

See attached maps:

- Trawl fishing effort – Appendix 1
- All fishing effort (except trawl lines) – Appendix 2

On both maps, the dashed line indicates the boundary between New Zealand's territorial sea and Exclusive Economic Zone. Fishing events are aggregated to a 3 minute grid and averaged over 10 years.

4. What quota is in place for FMA 1, including name of holder and fish species for that quota.

See attached spreadsheet:

- FMA1 (holder name – stock code – quota shares) – Appendix 3

The below deep water and highly migratory stocks are excluded from the attached spreadsheet, because Fisheries New Zealand does not consider them to be inshore stocks, and they are unlikely to be caught in the NDA dumping site.

Stock Code	Species Name
BIG1	bigeye tuna
BWS1	blue shark
BYX1	alfonsino
CDL1	black cardinal fish
GSP1	ghost shark, pale
HAK1	hake
HOK1	hoki
LDO1	lookdown dory
MAK1	mako shark
MOO1	moonfish

OEO1	oreo
ORH1	orange roughy
POS1	porbeagle shark
PRK1	prawn killer
PTO1	patagonian toothfish
RBT1	red bait
RBY1	ruby fish
SBW1	southern blue whiting
SCI1	scampi
SQU1J	squid (jigging)
SQU1T	squid (trawl)
STN1	southern bluefin tuna
SWA1	silver warehou
SWO1	swordfish
TOR1	pacific bluefin tuna
WWA1	white warehou
YFN1	yellowfin tuna

5. Please advise on the commercial fish species found in the Northern Disposal Area dumping site.

Our records indicate that the commercial species that may be found in the NDA dumping site are snapper, school shark, tarakihi, skipjack tuna, jack mackerel and blue mackerel.

Between 2007/08 and 2016/17, the main species taken within 1.5 km of the supplied central coordinates were snapper, school shark and tarakihi. The estimated annual average catch for these species was:

- Snapper 74 kg.
- School shark 18 kg.
- Tarakihi 18 kg.

Between 2007/08 and 2016/17, skipjack tuna, Jack mackerel and blue mackerel were also estimated to have been taken within 1.5 km of the supplied central coordinate, however these species were reported using mostly statistical area codes and the likelihood of these species being harvested within 1.5 km of the supplied central coordinates is low. The estimated annual average catch for these species is:

- Skipjack tuna: 154 kg.
- Jack mackerel: 116 kg.
- Blue mackerel: 70 kg.

Estimates of how much catch is taken from an area is calculated using reported catch data. The data is reported at either a fine or coarse scale.

Fine scale data comes from vessels over 6 m long where the start point of each fishing event is reported to 1 nautical mile (nm) for trawl or line methods, and 2 nm for netting methods. The catch taken from a fishing event is apportioned over the area of interest.

Coarse scale data comes from fishing effort that is reported by statistical area. The catch taken is apportioned evenly across the available fishing area within that statistical area. Coarse scale data has greater uncertainty as to where a particular fishing event took place within a statistical area.

See attached map:

- General statistical areas – Appendix 4

6. Provide evidence of the fishing effort made for the various commercial species in and around the Northern Disposal Area noting any seasonality of the fishing activity.

The use of some fishing methods is reported using coordinates (see above explanation regarding fine scale data). Between 2007/08 and 2016/17, the fishing methods likely to have been used within 1.5 km of the supplied central coordinate were:

- Trawling (22% of annual catch weight).
- Bottom longlining (6% of annual catch weight).
- Danish seine (2% of annual catch weight).
- Set netting (<1% of annual catch weight).

These fishing methods were used as below:

- Trawling - seven commercial fishers.
- Bottom longlining - nine commercial fishers.
- Danish seine - two commercial fishers.
- Set netting - one commercial fisher.

The use of some fishing methods is reported using statistical areas (see above explanation regarding coarse scale data). These fishing methods may have been used within 1.5 km of the supplied central coordinate between 2007/08 and 2016/17.

These fishing methods are:

- Purse seining (69% of annual catch weight);
- Hand lining (<1% of annual catch weight); and
- Potting (<1% of annual catch weight).

These fishing methods were used as below:

- Purse seining – nine commercial fishers.
- Hand lining (or trolling) – 37 commercial fishers;
- Potting – 21 commercial fishers.

7. Provide records of the catch volumes and reasons for any change in volumes over the past 10 years.

Using the best available information, Fisheries New Zealand estimates fishing activity inside the NDA to be relatively low over the past 10 years.

Between 2007/08 and 2016/17, an estimated annual average catch of 508 kg was taken within 1.5 km of the supplied central coordinates. The estimated catch weight

includes records from fishing events reported using statistical area codes. Fisheries New Zealand cannot accurately map these records and it is possible these events did not occur within 1.5 km of the supplied central coordinate. When statistical area reported catch is omitted, an estimated annual average catch of 157 kg was taken within 1.5 km of the supplied central coordinates.

Between 2007/08 and 2016/17, an estimated annual average catch of 1,962 kg was taken within 3.0 km of the supplied central coordinates. The estimated catch weight includes records from fishing events reported using statistical area codes. Fisheries New Zealand cannot accurately map these records and it is possible these events did not occur within 3.0 km of the supplied central coordinate. When statistical area reported catch is omitted, an estimated annual average catch of 1,406 kg was taken within 3.0 km of the supplied central coordinates.

See attached graph:

- Fishstock by year – Appendix 5

In the Fishstock by year graph, “year” refers to fishing years, typically beginning 1 October and ending 30 September, and the y-axis is in kilograms. Blue mackerel (EMA), Jack mackerel (JMA), and skipjack tuna (SKJ) were mostly reported by statistical area. The likelihood that these species were taken in the proposed area is low. The stock codes in the graph are:

<b>Stock Code</b>	<b>Species Name</b>
BAR	Barracouta
EMA	Blue mackerel
FRO	Frostfish
GUR	Gurnard
JMA	Jack mackerel
KAH	Kahawai
LIN	Ling
MDO	Mirror dory
PIL	Pilchard
SCH	School shark
SKI	Gemfish
SKJ	Skipjack tuna
SNA	Snapper
SSK	Smooth skate
TAR	Tarakihi
TRE	Trevally

8. Please provide a list of fishing charter operators that are operating in the area around the Northern Disposal Area dumping site.

The amateur charter vessel register is not a public register and since the register contains personal information (information about identifiable individuals), Fisheries New Zealand is unable to provide a full list of operators as requested. Fisheries New Zealand confirms that there are 59 amateur-fishing charter vessel operators currently

registered with a Waitemata Harbour / Hauraki Gulf base port. Attached is a list of the 40 operators operating as companies in the area that are not subject to privacy concerns. We offer to communicate on your behalf with the 19 individuals in the Auckland area that are registered as amateur-fishing charter vessel operators.

See attached document:

- Charter operators operating as companies – Appendix 6

9. Provide comment on the scale and significance of the recreational fishery that occurs in the area of the Northern Disposal Area dumping site.

In general, the area of the NDA dumping site coincides with the summer distribution of tuna and billfish. This supports a game fishery based on surface trolling. It also likely contains habitat for hapuka, bass and bluenose that are ground fished with jigs and baited hooks.

Fisheries New Zealand funds research by NIWA into counting vessels observed to be recreational fishing at the approximate time of peak fishing effort on the same day. This survey includes the vicinity of the NDA dumping site as shown in the attached chart. The data suggests a very light incidence of recreational fishing of 0-0.01 vessel per kilometre. One record by an amateur-fishing charter vessel in the vicinity is reported but there is considerable uncertainty about this record since the target species reported is snapper.

See attached document:

- Vessels per km<sup>2</sup> – Appendix 7

I note that the DMC has requested Fisheries New Zealand to make available a witness(s) to attend a hearing, if required, to answer questions on any information provided in response to this request for advice. Please contact me if Fisheries New Zealand is requested to appear at the hearing.

Yours sincerely



Stuart Anderson  
Director, Fisheries Management