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Media Release

Snapper 1 decision fails to rebuild stock



The Minister for Primary Industries, Hon Nathan Guy, today released his decision on the Snapper 1 stock. The decision increases the total allowable catch by 500 tonnes, reduces the bag limit for recreational fishers from 9 to 7 per person per day and increases the minimum size of fish which can be caught by them, and contains a range of other management measures.

“We are extremely disappointed that the Minister has failed to implement a credible rebuild plan for the Snapper 1 stock,” said EDS Policy Director Raewyn Peart

“The best available science indicates that the stock is well below its maximum sustainable yield, and that it is in decline in the Hauraki Gulf and the Bay of Plenty.

“Today’s decision, which increases rather than reduces the total allowable catch, fails to address this situation.

“Delaying action now will mean that larger cuts will be required in the future if the stock is to be rebuilt.

“It will also mean fewer fish to go around for longer. The Ministry’s own analysis has shown that if we significantly rebuild the snapper stock, a much larger amount of fish can be taken each year on a sustainable basis.

“Keeping the snapper stock at depleted levels is not good for us and it is not good for the marine environment.

“In other areas there is positive news. EDS supports the move to place greater camera or observer coverage on commercial vessels in order to reduce illegal dumping and other unlawful practices.

“We also welcome the decision to implement a scientific tagging survey over the next year to provide reliable information on the stock. This is urgently needed as it is almost 20 years since the last tagging survey.

“Close to 50,000 submissions were received by the Ministry and this indicates the high level of public interest in the management of the snapper stock. Unfortunately today’s decision fails to ensure that there will be enough fish for everyone going forward,” concluded Ms Peart.

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