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Annual Report of New Zealand to the Scientific Committee

New Zealand



Fisheries New Zealand

Tini a Tangaroa

New Zealand Annual Report on Fishing, Research Activities, and Observer Implementation in the SPRFMO Convention Area during 2025

SPRFMO SC14-Doc25

September 2026

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Requests for further copies should be directed to:

Publications Logistics Officer
Ministry for Primary Industries
PO Box 2526
WELLINGTON 6140

Email: brand@mpi.govt.nz
Telephone: 0800 00 83 33
Facsimile: 04-894 0300

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1 Description of Fisheries

1.1 PELAGIC FISHERIES

Jack mackerel

New Zealand conducted no fishing for *Trachurus* species in the SPRFMO Convention Area in 2025.

Chilean jack mackerel (*Trachurus murphyi*) was first observed in New Zealand waters in 1987, although its distribution in New Zealand waters has changed significantly over time. *T. murphyi* in New Zealand is thought to be a small, periodically separated component of the larger South Pacific stock which undergoes occasional expansions or migrations. It is unknown whether there has been any spawning of *T. murphyi* in New Zealand waters.

Catches of *T. murphyi* within the New Zealand EEZ were highest in the 1990s, estimated at around 20,000 tonnes, but have since decreased significantly.

Squid

New Zealand conducted no pelagic fishing for *Dosidicus* species in the SPRFMO Convention Area during 2025.

1.2 BOTTOM FISHERIES

New Zealand vessels have been bottom fishing in the now-SPRFMO Convention Area since before 1990. The New Zealand high seas bottom trawl and line fisheries are described in detail in the bottom fishery impact assessment 'Cumulative Bottom Fishery Impact Assessment for Australian and New Zealand bottom fisheries in the SPRFMO Convention Area, 2023' (<http://www.sprfmo.int/science/benthic-impact-assessments/>) and the updated quantitative benthic impact assessment (SC12-DW 12 rev1). Bottom fishing activities conducted during 2025 operated as described in that document.

Specific high seas fishing permits for New Zealand vessels in the now-SPRFMO Convention Area were first authorised in 2007-08. Figure 1 shows the total number of New Zealand vessels permitted to trawl in high seas areas (pre-2007) or specifically in the SPRFMO Convention Area (post-2007) and those that were recorded as fishing in a given year. The most recent 5 years of information on the number of New Zealand vessels permitted to fish in the SPRFMO Convention Area and the number of vessels which bottom fished in the Convention are shown in Table 1.

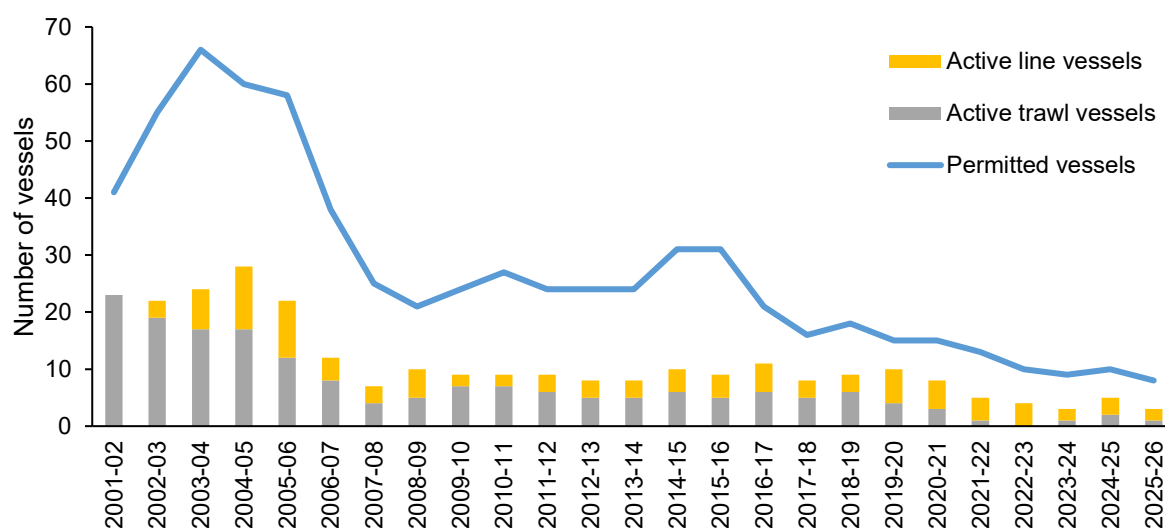


Figure 1: Summary of the number of New Zealand vessels permitted to bottom fish in the SPRFMO Convention Area, and the number of vessels which were active in the Area by year and by method. The data are arranged by permit year, which runs from May to April.

Table 1: Summary of the number of New Zealand vessels permitted to bottom fish in the SPRFMO Convention Area, and the number of vessels which actually fished in the Area by year with either bottom trawl or line for the last 5 years. The data are arranged by permit year, which is a split year - May to April.

Vessel Permit Year	Number of Vessels Permitted to Fish SPRFMO Convention Area	No. of Vessels that Actively Bottom Fished in the SPRFMO Convention Area	Bottom Trawling	Bottom Lining
2021-22	13	5	1	4
2022-23	10	4	0	4
2023-24	9	3	1	2
2024-25	10	5	2	3
2025-26	8	3	1	2

The number of trawl vessels operating in the Area declined from a peak of 23 vessels in 2001/02 and has fluctuated between 0 and 7 vessels since 2008 (Figure 1). The number of vessels bottom line fishing peaked at 11 vessels in 2004/05 and has been stable between 2 and 6 vessels since (Figure 1). The distribution of vessel size of the permitted vessels for the most recent 5 years is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Distribution of vessel size (length overall in metres) for New Zealand vessels permitted to bottom fish in the SPRFMO Convention Area for the last 5 permit years (May - April).

Permit year	Length overall (m)									
	≤ 11.9	12–17.9	18–23.9	24–29.9	30–35.9	36–44.9	45–59.9	60–74.9	≥ 75	Total
2021-22	0	1	3	0	1	3	3	2	0	13
2022-23	0	1	2	0	0	3	3	1	0	10
2023-24	0	1	2	0	0	2	3	1	0	9
2024-25	0	1	2	0	0	3	3	1	0	10
2025-26	0	1	2	0	0	2	3	0	0	8

The main areas of bottom fishing utilised by New Zealand vessels outside of the New Zealand EEZ since 2006 are shown as the labelled grey boxes in Figure 2. Bottom Trawl, Midwater Trawl, and Bottom Line Areas from [CMM03-2025](#) are also displayed. The main areas of bottom fishing utilised by New Zealand vessels are broadly consistent with the FMAs used in the Bottom Fishing Impact Assessment.

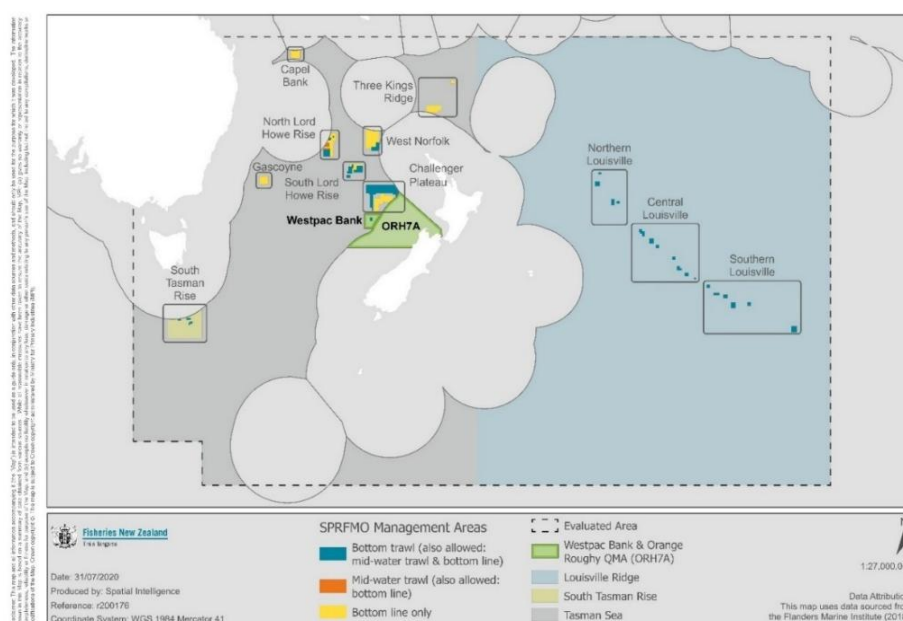


Figure 2: The general areas bottom fished by New Zealand vessels in the SPRFMO Convention Area since 2006 (grey boxes) overlaid with Management Areas from [CMM03-2025](#) N.B. The orange roughy catch limit for the South Tasman Rise is set at 0 tonnes.

2 Catch, Effort and CPUE Summaries

2.1 TOTAL CATCH

New Zealand's total catch of orange roughy and other species for the most recent 5 years is tabulated in Table 3, including catch limits as appropriate.

Table 3: Total New Zealand catch (recorded landings for orange roughy and estimated catch for other species) and relevant catch limits (tonnes) for the previous 5 calendar years.

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	
Orange roughy catch	0	0	0	93	0	Tasman Sea
	20	0	0.3*	268**	181***	Westpac Bank
	0	0	0	0	0	Louisville
Orange roughy limit	569	569	302	302	302	Tasman Sea
	245	245	245	245	168	Westpac Bank
	1,026	1,026	523	523	523	Louisville
Other species catch	44	53	38	104	51	
Other species limit*	762	762	762	762	762	
Exploratory catch	25.4	39.5	34.4	33.9	6	
Exploratory limit	240	240	240	240	290	

Prior to 2019, New Zealand had a total catch limit of 2 614 tonnes which included an orange roughy catch limit of 1 852.

* Note the Orange roughy catch in 2023 was taken by a research vessel conducting a stock assessment in Westpac Bank

**Note that in 2023-2024 a 10% carry forward was permitted this is why the catch in Westpac Bank is slightly higher than the catch limit as under catch was carried forward from 2023.

*** The estimated catch on board the vessels was 169 t but total landings came to 181 t, catch in excess of the allocated limit is deducted from the allocated limit from the following year ([CMM 03a-2026](#)).

2.2 TRAWL FISHERIES

Historically New Zealand's trawl fisheries in the SPRFMO Convention Area have been primarily focused on bottom trawling for orange roughy (*Hoplostethus atlanticus*), with limited effort using midwater trawl gear to target alfonso species (*Beryx splendens*, *B. decadactylus*) close to the seabed.

Bottom trawl

The annual bottom trawl fishing effort by New Zealand vessels in the SPRFMO Convention Area is summarised in Table 4. Effort has declined from a maximum of 23 vessels completing over 3,500 tows in 2002 to an average of 1 vessel and 31 tows between 2021-2025.

New Zealand conducted no trawl fishing in the SPRFMO Convention Area during 2022 and only conducted a stock assessment survey in 2023.

Orange roughy (ORY) has been the main target species and has made up 67-99% of the total New Zealand bottom trawl catch from commercial vessels since 2002 with tonnages ranging from 20 to 2,578 tonnes. Fishing effort and catch by area has varied over time, with the majority of catch taken since 2002 in the Challenger and Louisville areas. Further information on bottom trawl effort and orange roughy catch by area is shown in Figure 4 and Tables 5-7 below.

Other species that have been prominent in the catch include alfonso (ALF), cardinalfish (EPI), and oreo (BOE/SSO) species; however, catch of these species has fluctuated over time and catch of any one species has never exceeded 300 tonnes per annum.

Table 4: Annual fishing effort (number of vessels and tows) and fisher-reported catch (tonnes) of the target and main bycatch species (identified by FAO species codes – Appendix 1) by New Zealand vessels bottom trawling in the SPRFMO Convention Area, for the last 5 calendar years (N.B. any discrepancy between the total and the sum of the sub-categories is due to rounding).

Year	No. Vessels	No. Tows	Avg. Tows/Vessel	ORY	SOR	EPI	SSO	RIB	RTX	SCK	Total (t)
2021	1	17	17	20	0.5	0	0	0	0	1	22
2022	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2023	1	6	6	0.3*	0.1	0	0	0	0	0	0.4
2024	2	96	48	338	1.6	0.2	0.1	4.4	1.7	2.4	355
2025	1	17	17	169	0.6	0	0.1	0	0	0	170

Tows reported here is the number of tows which recorded a fish catch and excludes tows where there was no catch, for the total number of tows in 2025 including tows with no catch see Table 13.

* Note the Orange roughly catch in 2023 was taken by a research vessel conducting a stock assessment in Westpac Bank

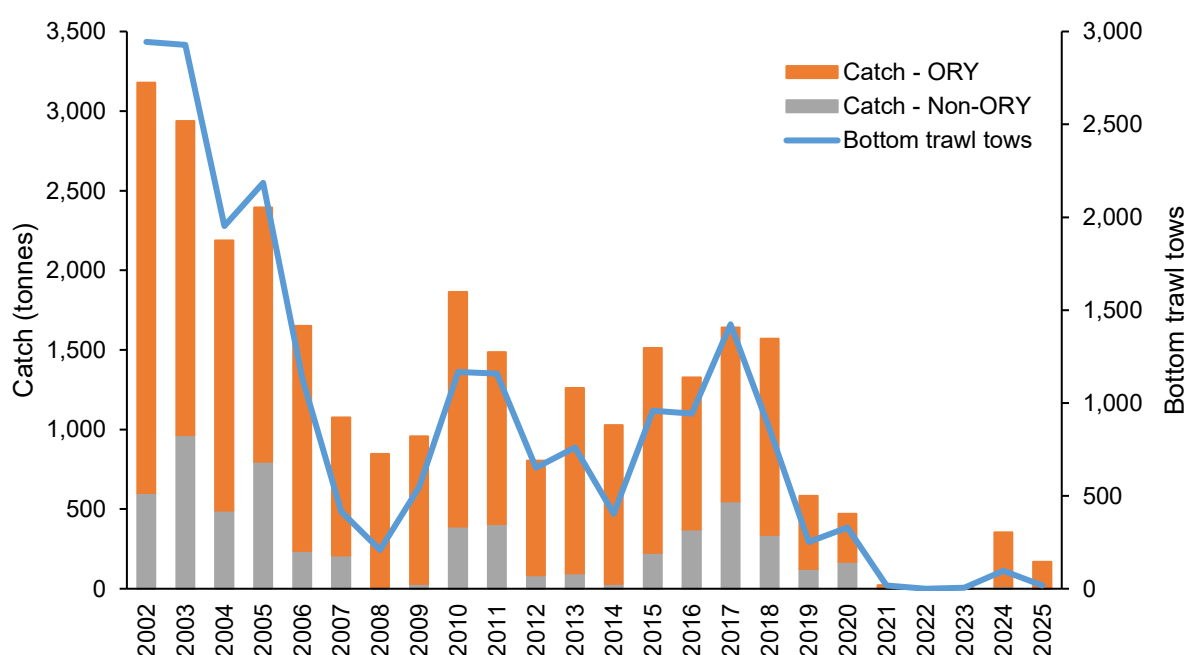


Figure 3: New Zealand bottom trawl effort (number of tows recording a catch) and catch (in tonnes) from 2002 in the SPRFMO Convention Area. For the total number of bottom trawl tows in 2025 including tows with no catch see Table 13.

Table 5: Bottom trawl effort (number of tows recording a catch) in the main areas fished by New Zealand vessels fishing in the SPRFMO Convention Area over the last 5 calendar years. For the total number of bottom trawl tows in 2025 including tows with no catch see Table 13.

Year	North West Challenger	West Norfolk Ridge	Lord Howe Rise	Tasman Sea Sub-total	Westpac Bank	Louisville Ridge	All Areas
2021	0	0	0	0	17	0	17
2022	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2023	0	0	0	0	6	0	6
2024	73	0	5	78	18	0	96
2025	0	0	0	0	17	0	17

Table 6: Total estimated catch (tonnes) of orange roughy from the main areas fished by New Zealand bottom trawl vessels fishing in the SPRFMO Convention Area over the last 5 calendar years (N.B. any discrepancy between the total and the sum of the sub-categories is due to rounding).

Year	North West Challenger	West Norfolk Ridge	Lord Howe Rise	Tasman Sea Sub-total	Westpac Bank	Louisville Ridge	All Areas
2021	0	0	0	0	20	0	20
2022	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2023	0	0	0	0	0.3	0	0.3
2024	84	0	1	85	253	0	338
2025	0	0	0	0	169	0	169

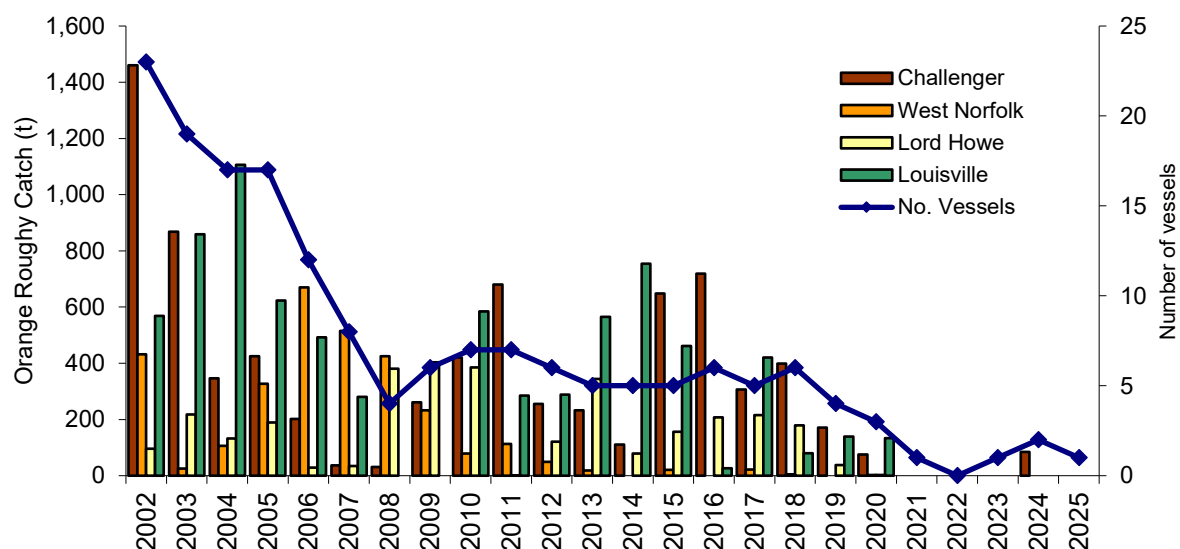


Figure 4: Trends in effort (the number of vessels bottom trawling) and total landings of orange roughy (tonnes) for each of the four main areas fished since 2002 by New Zealand bottom trawl vessels in the SPRFMO Convention Area.

Midwater trawl

Midwater trawling for benthic-pelagic species is included in the SPRFMO definition of bottom fishing because the gear occasionally comes into contact with the seafloor ([SC12-DW08 rev1](#)). Midwater trawling for benthic-pelagic species by New Zealand vessels has occurred sporadically since 1989 (Figure 5) and largely concentrated in the North Lord Howe Fishery Management Area. Effort has been variable over time but reached a peak in 2018 with 145 tows (Table 7). New Zealand conducted no midwater trawls in the SPRFMO Convention Area in 2021, 2022, 2023 or 2025.

Catch from midwater trawling fluctuated around 150 tonnes per year from 2011 to 2013, was less than 100 tonnes from 2014 to 2017, increased to over 200 tonnes in 2018 but then declined again to 12 tonnes in 2019 and 7 tonnes in 2020. Catch from midwater trawling is predominantly alfonso, which has comprised over 90% of catch in the most recent three years the midwater trawling occurred.

Table 7: Annual fishing effort (number of vessels and tows) and fisher-reported catch (tonnes) of the target and main bycatch species (identified by FAO species codes – Appendix 1) by New Zealand vessels midwater trawling for benthic-pelagic species in the SPRFMO Convention Area for the last 5 calendar years

Year	No. Vessels	No. Tows	Avg. Tows/Vessel	ALF	EDR	ONV	BWA	All Species
2021	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2022	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2023	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2024	1	3	3	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.2	1.2
2025	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Tows reported here is the number of tows which recorded a fish catch and excludes tows where there was no catch, for the total number of tows in 2025 including tows with no catch see Table 13.

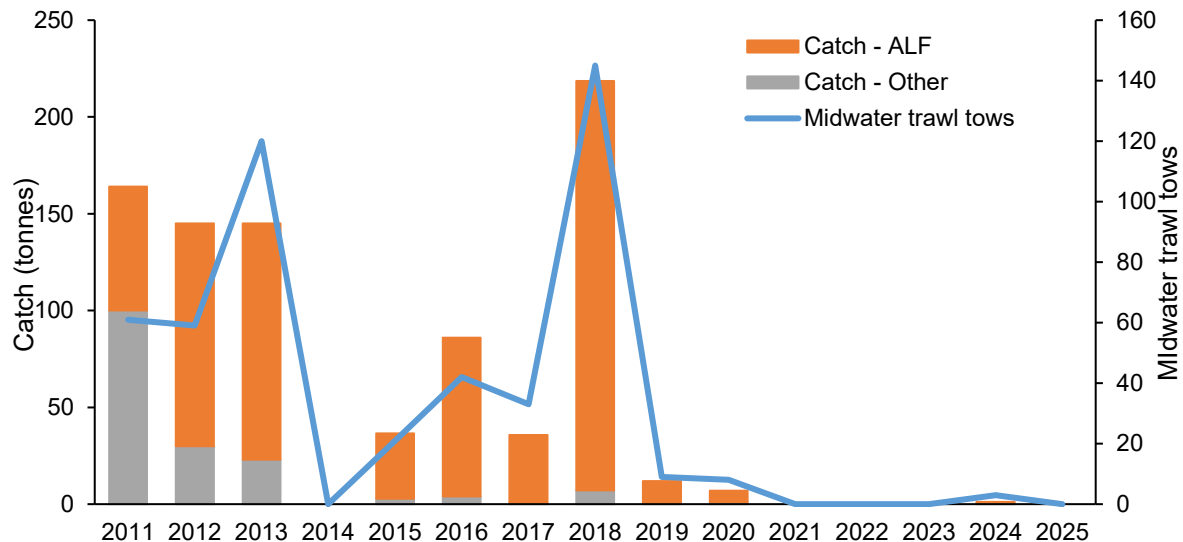


Figure 5: New Zealand midwater trawl effort (number of tows recording a catch) and catch (in tonnes, split between ALF and other species) from 2011 in the SPRFMO Convention Area. For the total number of midwater tows in 2025 including tows with no catch see Table 13.

2.3 BOTTOM LINE FISHERIES

The annual fishing effort (number of vessels and hooks fished) and catch of the main bottom line target and bycatch species are summarised in Table 8. The number of active line vessels peaked at 11 in 2005, then declined and has fluctuated between 2 and 5 vessels since 2007. The numbers of hooks set have fluctuated over time, peaking at 780,000 hooks in 2014. The number of hooks set in 2025 was approximately 48,000.

There have been three bottom line fishing methods used by New Zealand vessels in the SPRFMO Convention Area, bottom longline, Dahn line, and hand line. Dahn and hand line are very similar, with both methods employing a vertical line with hooks that is either attached to a float (Dahn line) or remains attached to the fishing vessel (hand line). Given the similarities, Dahn line and hand line have historically been treated as a single fishery, and data reporting by commercial fishers and observers is the same for both methods.

Under [CMM03-2025](#), 'bottom line' is defined to include longlines, hand lines, drop lines, trot lines, and dahn lines, so they will continue to be reported together.

Bluenose (BWA, *Hyperoglyphe antarctica*) catches peaked in 2006 at 271 tonnes but have declined and have fluctuated from 6-57 tonnes in the most recent 5 years. The other main species caught by bottom line, which occasionally makes up most of the catch, is wreckfish (HAU, *Polyprion oxygeneios* and *P. americanus*) which has been caught in quantities of 7–50 tonnes annually, over the last 5 years. Together, these three species have made up around 65% of the catch in the most recent five years.

Other species making minor contributions to bottom line catches include spiny dogfish (DGS), king tarakihi (MOW), kingfish (YTC), and sea perch (ROK).

Table 8: Effort and estimated catch for New Zealand vessels bottom longlining in the SPRFMO Convention Area for the most recent 5 calendar years. Effort is presented as the number of vessels, trips, and number of hooks set, with catches in tonnes of the target and main bycatch species (codes detailed in Appendix 1). This table does not include information on exploratory fishing pursuant to CMMs 4.14, 14a-2019, CMM 14a-2022, [CMM 14i-2026](#) (for this data see Table 11).

Year	No. Vessels	No. Trips	No. Hooks (000s)	Hooks/Vessel (000s)	BWA	HAU	DGS	MOW	All species (t)
2021	4	11	97	24	20	7	1	1	43
2022	3	6	252	84	8	33	8	2	53
2023	2	4	32	16	7	17	10	1	37
2024	2	8	152	76	22	32	19	2	86
2025	1	3	48	48	5	25	14	1	50

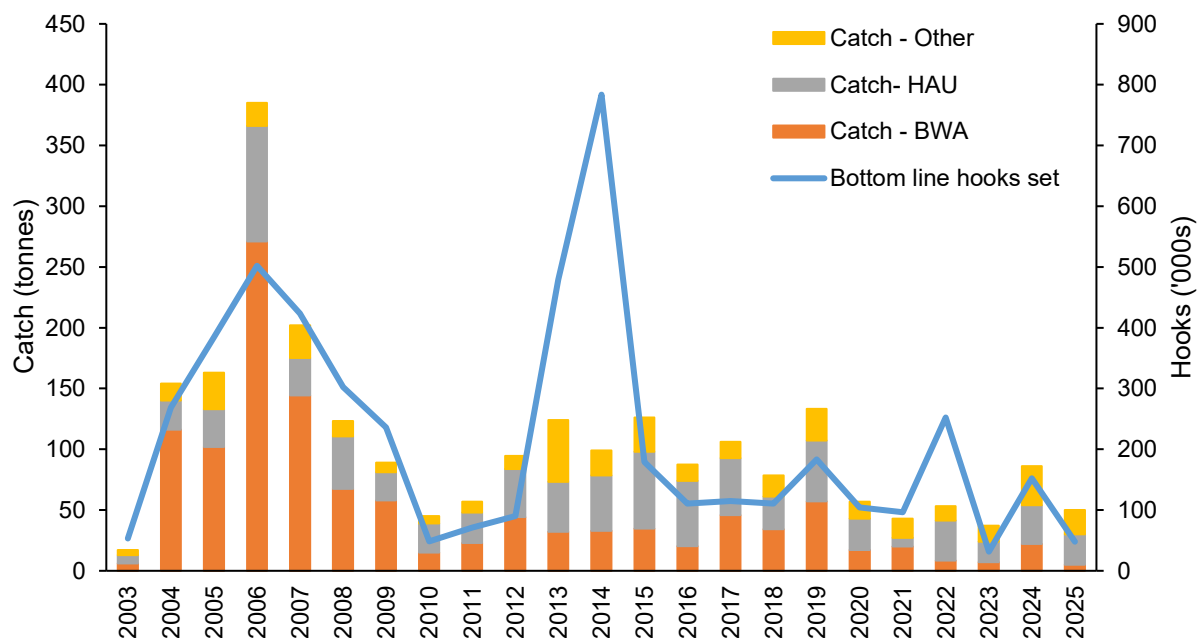


Figure 6: New Zealand bottom line effort (thousands of hooks) and catch (in tonnes, split between HAU, BWA and other species) from 2003 in the SPRFMO Convention Area.

Bluenose catch (BWA) by main fishing areas since 2021 is shown in Table 9, with the relationship between catch and fishing effort shown in Figure 7. There are no clear trends in nominal CPUE (Figure 8).

Table 9: Total catch of bluenose (BWA) in tonnes, from the main areas fished by New Zealand bottom line vessels fishing in the SPRFMO Convention Area by calendar year for the last 5 years. (N.B. any discrepancy between the total and the sum of the sub-categories is due to rounding)

Year	Challenger Plateau	West Norfolk Ridge	Three Kings Ridge	Louisville Ridge	Other	All Areas
2021	12	4	2	-	2	20
2022	1	4	1	2	-	8
2023	2	4	<1	-	-	7
2024	16	6	-	-	-	22
2025	-	5	-	-	-	5

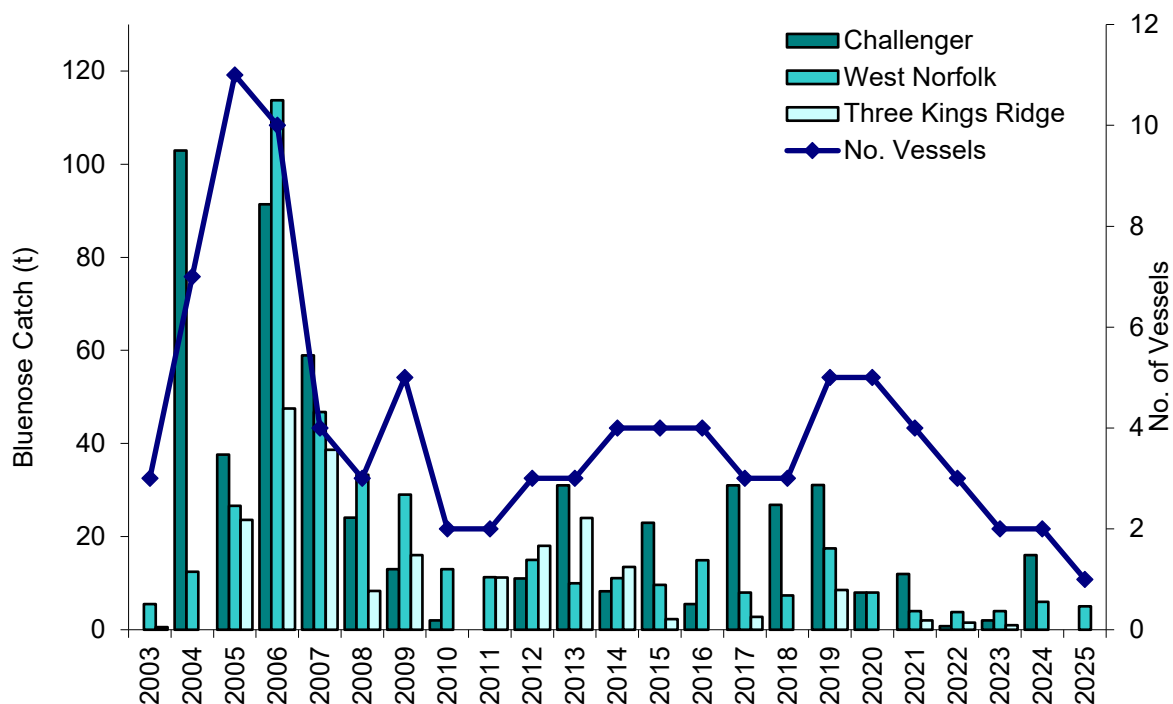


Figure 7: Trends in number of bottom line fishing vessels and total bluenose catch from the three main areas fished by New Zealand bottom line vessels in the SPRFMO Convention Area by calendar year 2003-2025.

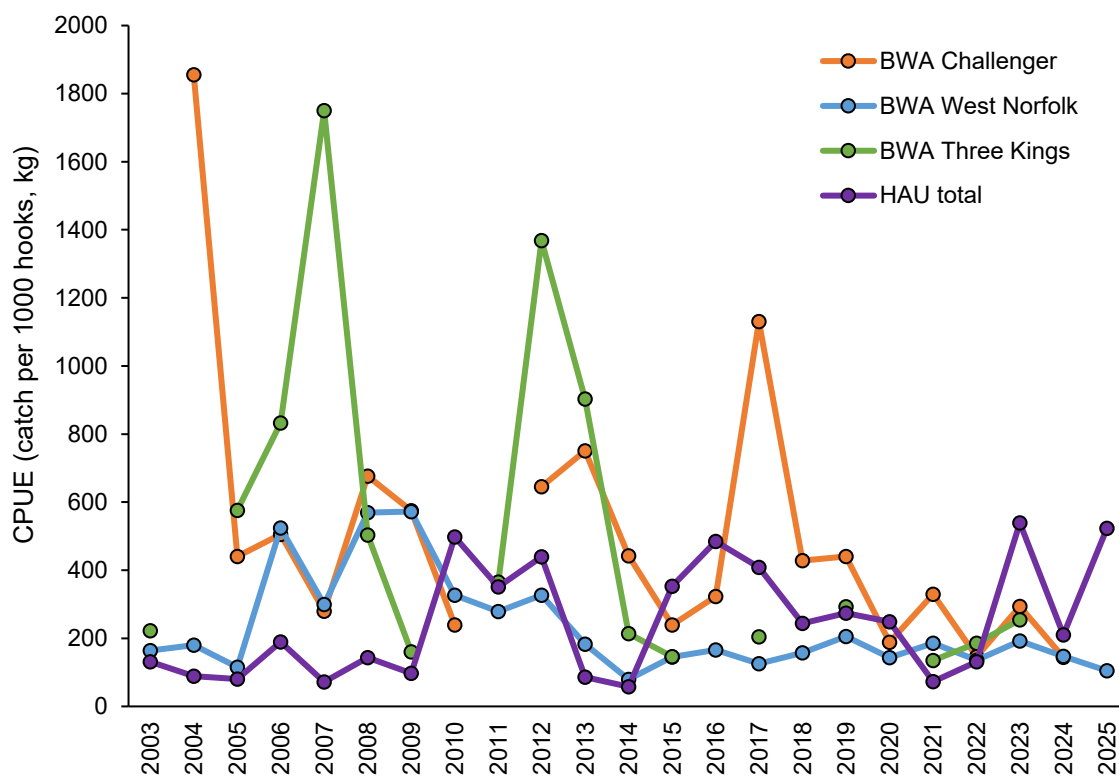


Figure 8: Trends in nominal CPUE (kg per 1000 hooks set) for bluenose (BWA) for the three main areas fished and wreckfish (HAU) by New Zealand bottom longline vessels fishing in the SPRFMO Convention Area by calendar year 2003-2025.

Bottom longline comprised all of the fishing effort (48,000 hooks in 2025 - excluding exploratory effort) and catch (50 tonnes in 2025 - excluding exploratory effort) there was no other bottom line methods used. Effort using other bottom line methods (i.e., hand lines, drop lines, trot lines, and dahn lines) is significantly variable over time in the SPRFMO Convention Area. Table 10 shows effort and catch from fishing using other bottom line methods for the most recent 5 years.

Table 10: Effort and estimated catches for New Zealand vessels using other bottom line methods in the SPRFMO Convention Area by calendar year for the previous 5 years. Effort is presented as the number of vessels and number of hooks set, with catches in tonnes of the target and main bycatch species (codes detailed in Appendix 1).

Year	No. Vessels	No. Hooks	BWA	HAU	MOW	YTC	Total catch (t)
2021	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2022	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2023	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2024	1	18	0	<1	0	<1	<1
2025	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 11: Effort and catches for New Zealand vessels bottom longlining in exploratory fisheries in the SPRFMO Convention Area by calendar year for the previous 5 years pursuant to CMMs 4.14, 14a-2019, CMM 14a-2022, [CMM 14i-2026](#). Effort is presented as the number of vessels, trips, and number of hooks set, with catches in tonnes of toothfish and main bycatch species (codes detailed in Appendix 1) (N.B. any discrepancy between the total and the sum of the sub-categories is due to rounding).

Year	No. Vessels	No. Trips	No. Hooks (000's)	TOA	TOP	GRV	ANT	HYD	Total catch (t)
2021	1	1	376.4	32.6	0	2.8	1.0	0	36.58
2022	1	1	89.1	38.7	0.02	0.38	0.22	0.11	39.53
2023	1	1	15.5	34.4	0	0.004	0.004	0	34.41
2024	1	1	39.4	32.7	0	0.9	0.13	0	33.95
2025	1	1	50.6	0.1	1.1	0.02	0.7	3.5	6.07

3 Fisheries Data Collection and Research Activities

3.1 FISHERIES CATCH & EFFORT DATA COLLECTION SYSTEMS

Data collection on New Zealand high seas bottom fishing vessels are consistent with the information requirements detailed in [CMM02-2026](#). Detailed tow-by-tow catch and effort data for all high seas fishing operations have been collected since 2007 using at-sea catch and effort logbooks and landings recording forms. Detailed observer Benthic Materials Forms are completed for all observed bottom fishing to record benthic bycatch to the most detailed taxonomic level as possible.

Leading up to May 2019 and the implementation of CMM 03-2019, a Vulnerable Marine Ecosystem (VME) Evidence Form was used by observers in the areas designated as move-on areas for trawlers. From May 2019 to May 2020 and from May 2020 onward, revised forms have been used for all trawl effort reflecting the thresholds and requirements of CMM03-2019 to [CMM03-2025](#) (Appendix 2).

From 1 October 2017, New Zealand trawl vessels >28m in length overall operating on the high seas started transitioning to reporting through a new electronic catch reporting system. The data fields are consistent with previous paper forms; however, data is now submitted on a daily basis. In the 2018 calendar year, 75% of fishing events in the SPRFMO Convention Area were reported through the electronic catch reporting system. In the 2019 calendar year, 100% of trawl fishing events in the

SPRFMO Convention Area were reported through electronic catch reporting and 70% of bottom lining events. Overall, 82% of events in SPRFMO were reported electronically. Since 2020 100% of trawl and bottom lining events in the SPRFMO Convention Area were reported through electronic catch reporting.

3.2 RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

As presented to recent meetings of the SPRFMO Scientific Committee and SPRFMO Commission meetings, New Zealand has worked with Australia to progress a number of workstreams to inform the development and review of the bottom fishing conservation and management measure [CMM03-2025](#). Progress updates on these workstreams have been presented to deepwater workshops, the fourth through thirteenth Scientific Committees, and the sixth through thirteenth meetings of the Commission. The work presented to the SPRFMO Scientific Committee and SPRFMO Commission can be found on the [SPRFMO website](#)

4 Observer Implementation Report

4.1 OBSERVER TRAINING

The New Zealand Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI) requires all observer recruits to complete a three-week training course before they are accepted into the programme. See the following link for a full detailed outline of the observer training modules [SC12 - Doc 23](#).

Successful recruits are deployed with an observer trainer for one to two trips of an average duration of 30 days per trip before they can be deployed independently.

4.2 OBSERVER PROGRAMME DESIGN AND COVERAGE

New Zealand has had an observer programme in place since 1986, operating as a unit within MPI or predecessor organisations. It delivers coverage days for a number of clients, who are provided with some or all of the information collected. These clients include: The Ministry for Primary Industries (Science, Field Operations, Fisheries Management groups), The Department of Conservation through the Conservation Services Levy, The Natural History Unit of the Museum of New Zealand, the New Zealand Fishing Industry, the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment, Maritime New Zealand, and the Conversion Factors Working Group, which is a joint MPI and industry working group.

New Zealand observers collect a wide range of data to inform scientific analyses including both target stock assessments and quantification of bycatch, monitoring of compliance with requirements including seabird mitigation measures, and the collection of more general biological information.

The MPI observer programme makes provision in its annual plan to meet the observer coverage levels set out in SPRFMO [CMM03-2025](#) (Bottom Fishing in the SPRFMO Convention Area):

- i. for vessels using trawl gear in the SPRFMO Convention Area, ensure 100% observer coverage for vessels flying their flag for the duration of the trip.
- ii. for each other bottom fishing gear type, ensure that there is at least 10% observer coverage each fishing year, specified in [CMM03-2025](#) to be measured by % of hooks observed. Note that how the 10% was achieved was previously not specified.

All New Zealand vessels intending to fish in the SPRFMO Convention Area are required to provide a 5 working day notification to the Fisheries New Zealand observer programme to allow for the deployment of an observer as required. Wherever possible, two observers are deployed on trawl trips (and at least one at all times) and generally the first bottom line trip of the year. Subsequent bottom line trips may be required to carry an observer based on the overall level of effort (to ensure that a 10% minimum is observed), if they are intending to use a different gear type (e.g., hand or dahn line), or to provide additional information as observer resources are available.

Table 12 provides details on the number of fishing days and number of observed fishing days by month for trawl and by days and hooks observed during the haul for bottom line methods. Note that for some months, the number of days fished may not match between vessels and observers due to differences in the criteria for reporting fishing events for commercial vessels and observers.

Table 12: Monthly fishing effort (and observer coverage) on New Zealand vessels fishing in the SPRFMO Convention Area during 2025 – including exploratory fisheries. Numbers in () are observed.

Month & year	Trawl: N days	Bottom line: N days	Bottom line: N hooks
Jan-25	0 (0)	0 (0)	0
Feb-25	0 (0)	0 (0)	0
Mar-25	0 (0)	0 (0)	0
Apr-25	0 (0)	0 (0)	0
May-25	0 (0)	0 (0)	0
Jun-25	0 (0)	0 (0)	0
Jul-25	2 (2)	0 (0)	0
Aug-25	3 (3)	0 (0)	0
Sep-25	0 (0)	0 (0)	0
Oct-25	0 (0)	11 (11)	53,063
Nov-25	0 (0)	13 (6)	27,791
Dec-25	0 (0)	7 (0)	17,500
Total	5 (5)	31 (17)	98,354

Overall, the following levels of coverage were attained in 2025:

- Trawl: 100%
- Bottom line: 55% (17 bottom line days observed out of 31)

One New Zealand trawl vessel operated in the SPRFMO Convention Area during 2025. Both of the trawl trips were observed and 360 fish were measured.

Two New Zealand bottom line vessels operated in the SPRFMO Convention Area during 2025. Two bottom line trips were observed comprising 17 vessel days and 205 fish were measured.

Table 13: Summary of observer and sampling coverage of bottom and midwater trawl and bottom longlining in the SPRFMO Convention Area during 2025.

Method	No. comm trips	No. obs trips	Total events (tow/hooks)	No. Fish Measured
Bottom trawl	2	2	17	360
Midwater trawl	0	0	0	0
Bottom line	4	2	98,354	205

Note: Tows/sets reported here are all tows conducted, including those which had no catch, and so may exceed the tows which had a catch, as reported in the effort summary tables.

4.3 BIOLOGICAL SAMPLING AND LENGTH/AGE COMPOSITION OF CATCHES

The bottom fisheries continued to be monitored by scientific observers during 2025 and a summary of the length-frequency sampling is provided in Table 14.

Table 14: Summary of length-frequency sampling conducted by scientific observers aboard New Zealand vessels conducting bottom fishing in the SPRFMO Convention Area in 2025

Scientific name	Method	Common name	Measure	Length (cm)			Number measured
				Min	Mean	Max	
<i>Hoplostethus atlanticus</i>	Bottom trawl	Orange roughy	Standard	27	35.2	60	360
<i>Hyperoglyphe antarctica</i>	Bottom Long Line	Bluenose	Fork	64	81.6	96	12
<i>Polyprion americanus</i>	Bottom Long Line	Wreckfish - Bass	Standard	55	85.6	127	193
Total							565

The unscaled length-frequency distribution of orange roughy in 2025 is shown in Figure 9. Comparison of length frequency distributions from 2021 to 2025 (Figure 10) suggests that the size of orange roughy caught in bottom trawls is relatively consistent over time.

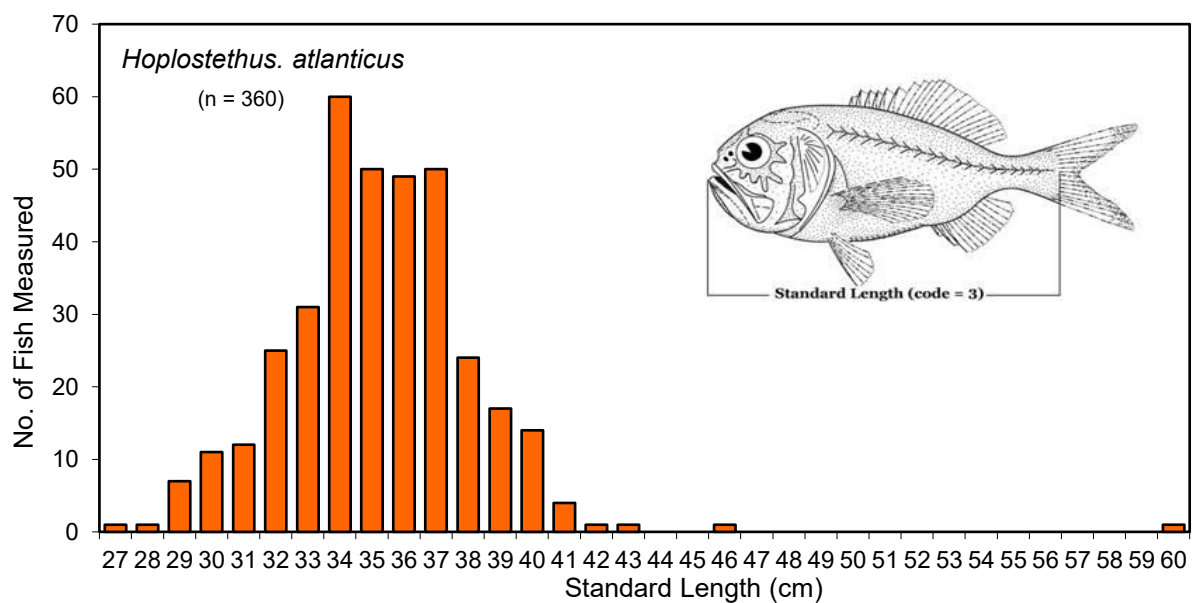


Figure 9: Length frequency distribution (unscaled) for orange roughy by scientific observers in 2025.

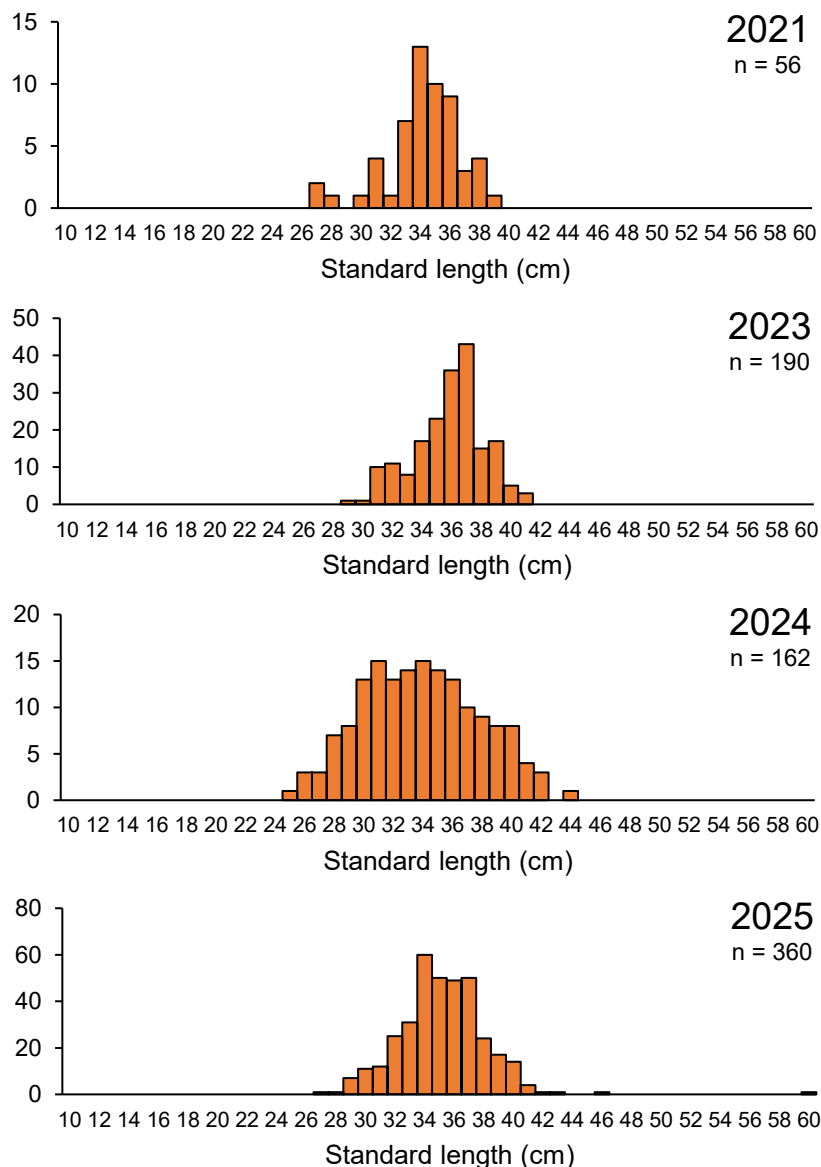


Figure 10: Length frequency distributions (unscaled – standard length) of orange roughy from 2021 to 2025 in the SPRFMO Convention Area noting there was no commercial trawl fishing for orange roughy in 2022 and length frequency data from 2023 came from a research vessel conducting a stock assessment.

5 Ecosystem Approach considerations

5.1 ANTIPODEAN ALBATROSS

At its February 2020 meeting, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) Conference of Parties unanimously agreed to list Antipodean Albatross on Appendix I of its Convention. The proposal was put forward jointly by New Zealand, Australia and Chile with the aim of catalysing international cooperation between States, including through RFMOs. This listing recognises the critical state of the species (assessed as Endangered by IUCN) and the need for urgent action to prevent ongoing decline. The listing creates an obligation on CMS Parties (130 countries) to impose strict protection measures for the species, including on their flagged vessels operating on the high seas. The Conference of Parties also approved the Concerted Action Plan which sets out actions for range

States aimed at protecting this species, in particular in relation to fisheries bycatch in international waters. Further details are available on the CMS website (www.cms.int).

5.2 SEABIRD MITIGATION MEASURES

New Zealand vessels fishing in the SPRFMO Convention Area are required to deploy seabird mitigation commensurate with [CMM09-2026](#).

For bottom line vessels, this includes the combined use of a line weighting system, streamer (tori) lines, setting at night (between nautical dark and nautical dawn), and controlling/avoiding the discharge of any biological material during shooting or hauling where possible.

For trawl vessels, this requires the deployment of streamer (tori) lines or a bird baffle where it is not operationally feasible to deploy streamer lines, and management of the discharge of biological material. Trawl vessels must, where possible, prohibit the discharge of biological material during shooting and hauling; convert offal into fish meal; retain all waste material related to fish processing; and restrict discharge to liquid discharge/sump water. Where this is not feasible, vessels should batch waste for two hours or longer.

In addition, all New Zealand trawl vessels >28 metres in length also have a vessel specific 'Vessel Management Plan' (VMP), which sets out the practices and processes that the vessel will follow to minimise the risk of seabird interactions. VMPs include a commitment to manage the discharge of biological material, to clean nets after every shot to remove 'stickers', and to minimise the time the net is on the water during hauling. VMPs also identify contingency plans in the case of gear or equipment malfunction which may otherwise result in increased risk of seabird interactions (e.g., meal plant breakdown or winch malfunction). Adherence to the VMPs is monitored by Fisheries New Zealand observers and reported on each year by MPI.

5.3 OBSERVED INTERACTIONS WITH SEABIRDS AND OTHER SPECIES OF CONCERN

New Zealand observers report captures of all seabirds, marine mammals, reptiles, sharks, and coral species protected under New Zealand's Wildlife Act 1953, and other species of concern, on the 'non-fish and protected species bycatch' form. In addition, all non-targeted marine invertebrates, marine plants, or benthic organisms are reported on the Observer Benthic Materials Form (Appendix 2). This information is recorded to a high standard and includes information on the species, the deployment of mitigation devices, adherence to other mitigation practices, and situational details about the capture where possible including where and how it was captured.

Observer coverage of the trawl fisheries in the SPRFMO Convention Area has historically been high (70–100% of tows observed per year). New Zealand observers are present on about 10% of bottom line fishing trips by New Zealand vessels and typically observe 10–15% of all line sets each year.

Over the last five years, five seabird captures have been observed on New Zealand vessels: in bottom line fisheries, two seabirds were released alive and two were found dead, and in trawl fisheries one seabird found dead (Table 15). Species identifications of some of the reports are being confirmed by expert analysis and may change.

In relation to other species of concern as specified in Annex 14 of [CMM02-2026](#), observers reported the capture of 50 kg of porbeagle shark (*Lamna nasus*) in 2015 from the Challenger area. No information on the number of individuals or the life status is available.

New Zealand vessel interactions with marine mammals, seabirds, reptiles, and other species of concern in bottom fisheries 2024 - 2025

This section summarises New Zealand vessel interactions with marine mammals, seabirds, reptiles, and other species of concern in bottom fisheries for 2024-2025 to meet the requirements of [CMM03-2025](#). This paper does not include reporting on interactions that occurred during exploratory fisheries, such interactions are reported on under a separate agenda item of SC14.

New Zealand vessels had no interactions with marine mammals, reptiles or other species of concern (Annex 14 of [CMM02-2026](#)) in 2024-2025.

New Zealand vessels had three interactions with seabirds during 2024-25 all were on bottom long line vessels with an observer on board. In 2024 while targeting bluenose on the Challenger Plateau two white-chinned petrels were brought on board dead having been hooked on the fishing gear. In 2025 while targeting wreckfish on the West Norfolk Ridge a black petrel was caught when a fisher was recovering a wreckfish floating on the surface. The bird was released and the observer watched the bird fly away noting that it had some ruffled feathers but otherwise it seemed okay.

For these two trips where seabird interactions occurred, observers recorded that Protected Species Risk Management Plans or Vessel Management Plans were adhered to. Observers also reported that tori lines were used, lines were set at night, fish waste was held on board while shooting and hauling and a grating or trap was used to prevent fish or offal being accidentally discharged overboard.

Black petrels (*Procellaria parkinsoni*) and white-chinned petrels (*Procellaria aequinoctialis*) have global designations of 'Vulnerable' by the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species and were last assessed in 2018.

As per the requirements of [CMM03-2025](#) bottom fishing vessels are required to carry observers, with coverage specified as 100% for trawling and at least 10% for bottom line methods for each year. Consequently, where accurate reporting relies on the collection of data by an observer, there is the potential for fisher reported interactions with marine mammals, seabirds, reptiles, and other species of concern for bottom line fisheries to underrepresent these interactions.

Noting the level of observer coverage in the bottom longline fishery, the available data suggests interactions with marine mammals, seabirds and reptiles are likely to be rare in bottom fisheries in the SPRFMO Convention Area. Therefore, it is recommended that no spatial/temporal closures, spatially/temporally limited gear prohibitions, bycatch limits or measures for an encounter protocol for any of these species are required at this time.

Table 15: All records from observer non-fish bycatch forms for seabirds, marine mammals, reptiles, and other species of concern captured by New Zealand vessels for the last 5 years including life status

Year	Area	Fishing method	Species	Dead/ alive	Notes
2021	Westpac Bank	Trawl	Fairy Prion*	Dead	*Originally identified as a white-chinned petrel but ID changed based on expert identification
2022	Three Kings	Bottom longline	Black Petrel	Alive	
2024	Challenger Plateau	Bottom longline	2x White-chinned petrel	Dead	
2025	West Norfolk Ridge	Bottom longline	Black Petrel	Alive	

5.4 ECOSYSTEM CONSIDERATIONS

In order to better understand the impacts of fishing on the wider ecosystem, New Zealand's scientific observers record details on quantities of all species caught during fishing activities in the SPRFMO Convention Area. Commercial fishers are also required to report the top eight species per fishing event.

Table 16 provides a summary of the top five non-target teleost species and top five chondrichthyan species reported by observers in bottom contacting trawl fisheries. Table 17 provides a summary of the same information as reported by commercial fishers in New Zealand bottom line fisheries in the SPRFMO Convention Area.

Table 16: Most common non-target (non-orange roughy, alfonsino, or boarfish) teleost species and most common chondrichthyan species observed caught and quantities (tonnes) in New Zealand bottom-contacting trawl fisheries in the SPRFMO Convention Area from 2021 and 2023-2025. Note there was no trawl fishing in 2022 and the trawl fishing in 2023 was from an orange roughy stock assessment.

Species	2021	2023	2024	2025
Rattails <i>Macrouridae</i> spp.	0.2	0.001	1.5	0.001
Ribaldo <i>Mora moro</i>	0.01	0	5.3	0.003
Spiky oreo <i>Neocyttus rhomboidalis</i>	0.3	0.1	1.4	0.7
Cardinalfish <i>Epigonus telescopus</i>	0	0	0.3	0.002
Shovelnose dogfish <i>Deania calcea</i>	0.1	0	1.8	0.01
Seal shark <i>Dalatias licha</i>	0.2	0	0.4	0.08
Widenosed chimaera <i>Rhinochimaera pacifica</i>	0	0	0.2	0
Baxter's lantern dogfish <i>Etmopterus baxteri</i>	0.3	0.01	0.4	0.01

Table 17: Most common non-target chondrichthyan species commercially reported (tonnes) in New Zealand bottom line fisheries in the SPRFMO Convention Area (non-target teleosts are covered in Table 8)

Chondrichthyans					
Species	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Northern spiny dogfish <i>Squalus griffini</i>	1.1	7.9	9.4	15.6	14.4
Shovelnose dogfish <i>Deania calcea</i>	0.9	0.09	0.1	2.5	0
School shark <i>Galeorhinus galeus</i>	0.3	0.1	0.02	1	0.09
Mako shark <i>Isurus oxyrinchus</i>	0	0	0.3	0.25	0.32

5.5 VME ENCOUNTERS AND STATE PROCESSES

Scientific observers deployed on New Zealand bottom trawling trips in the SPRFMO Convention Area complete VME Evidence Process forms for each tow conducted within a move-on area.

For details of the development of VME encounter protocol trigger thresholds and encounters from 2009-2021 see [SC12 - Doc 23](#).

At the 9th Commission meeting in 2021, Annex 6A and Annex 6B were updated in CMM03-2021 as follows:

Annex 6A: Weight Threshold for Triggering VME Encounter Protocol in Any One Tow for a Single VME Indicator Taxa

Taxonomic Level		Common Name	Weight Threshold (kg)
Phylum Porifera		Sponges	25
Phylum Cnidaria			
	Class Anthozoa		
	Order Scleractinia	Stony corals	60
	Order Antipatharia	Black corals	5
	Informal group Gorgonian Alcyonacea	Seafan octocorals	15
	Order Actiniaria	Anemones	35
	Order Zoantharia	Hexacorals	10

Annex 6B: Weight Threshold for Triggering VME Encounter Protocol in Any One Tow for Three Or More Different VME Indicator taxa

Taxonomic Level		Common Name	Weight Threshold (kg)
Phylum Porifera		Sponges	5
Phylum Cnidaria			
	Class Anthozoa		
	Order Scleractinia	Stony corals	5
	Order Antipatharia	Black corals	1
	Order Alcyonacea	True soft corals	1
	Informal group Gorgonacea	Seafan octocorals	1
	Order Pennatulacea	Sea pens	1
	Order Actiniaria	Anemones	5
	Order Zoantharia	Hexacorals	1
	Class Hydrozoa		1
	Order Anthoathecatae		
	Family Stylasteridae	Hydrocorals	1
Phylum Bryozoa		Bryozoan	1
Phylum Echinodermata			
	Class Asteroidea		
	Order Brisingida	Armless stars	1
	Class Crinoidea	Sea lilies	1

New Zealand reported a VME encounter occurring in the 2020 calendar year, within the North Lord Howe Rise Fishery Management Area. The encounter related to the capture of a quantity of Gorgonacea (FAO code GGW) estimated to be above the encounter threshold of 15 kg. As per CMM03-2020, the encounter area was closed to further fishing and a review of the encounter was provided to SC9 ([SC9-DW06 rev1](#)). No encounters have been triggered by New Zealand vessels in 2021, 2022 or 2023.

A VME encounter was triggered in the 2024 calendar year, within the Central Lord Howe Rise Fishery Management Area. The encounter related to the capture of 33 kg of Gorgonacea (FAO code GGW) which is above the encounter threshold of 15 kg for a single tow ([CMM03-2025](#) – Annex 6A). As per [CMM03-2025](#), the vessel moved away from the encounter area, and it is closed to further fishing pending an updated review. An initial review of this VME encounter was presented to the 13th meeting of the SPRFMO Scientific Committee in 2025 [SC13 - DW 09](#).

Benthic bycatch data

Fisheries New Zealand observers also collect information on the bycatch of benthic fauna. Information on the taxa and quantity of benthic bycatch reported by observers in New Zealand's bottom fishing activities is summarised for the last five years in Table 20.

Table 18: Weight in kg (and number of positive reports) of benthic bycatch reported by observers from New Zealand bottom trawl and line fisheries in the SPRFMO Convention Area between 2021 and 2025. Where taxonomic resolution allows, bycatch is presented at the Class level, otherwise at the Phylum level. For bottom trawl, row colours refer to VME indicator taxa included in [CMM03-2025](#) (purple) and other benthic bycatch taxa (white).

Taxon	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
BOTTOM TRAWL					
Arthropoda					
Malacostraca (Crabs, prawns)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Chordata					
Thaliacea (Tunicates)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Cnidaria					
Anthozoa (Anemones, corals, sea pens) ¹					
Actiniaria (Anemones)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	38.7 (20)	0 (0)
Alcyonacea (Soft corals)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0.1 (2)	0 (0)
Antipatharia (Black corals)	1.4 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	6.6 (7)	0.2 (2)
Gorgonian Alcyonacea (Tree-like forms, sea fans, sea whips, bottlebrush) ²	0.3 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	33.56 (4)	0.01 (1)
Pennatulacea (Sea pens)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0.1 (1)	0 (0)
Scleractinia (Stony corals) ³	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4.3 (8)	0 (0)
Zoantharia (Hexacorals)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Hydrozoa (Hydroids) ⁴	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Stylasteridae (Hydrocorals)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Echinodermata					
Asteroidea (Starfish)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Brisingida ('Armless' stars)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Crinoidea (Sea lilies)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Echinoidea (Sea urchins)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Holothuroidea (Sea cucumbers)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Ophiuroidea (Brittle stars)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Mollusca					
Gastropoda (Snails, whelks, tritons)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Porifera (Sponges) ⁵	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0.5 (3)	0 (0)
BOTTOM LONGLINE					
Brachiopoda (Lamp shells)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0.1 (1)	0 (0)
Bryozoa (Lace corals)	0 (0)	<0.1 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0.1 (1)
Cnidaria					
Anthozoa (Anemones, corals, sea pens) ¹	0 (0)	0.1 (1)	0 (0)	0.5 (3)	0 (0)
Actiniaria (Anemones)	0 (0)	0.7 (4)	0 (0)	0.2 (2)	0 (0)
Antipatharia (Black corals)	0 (0)	0.2 (3)	0.1 (1)	0 (0)	4 (1)
Alcyonacea (Soft corals)	0 (0)	0.2 (5)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)

Taxon		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
	Gorgonian Alcyonacea (Tree-like forms, sea fans, sea whips, bottlebrush) ²	0 (0)	17.2 (14)	0.1 (1)	3.7 (6)	1.2 (5)
	Scleractinia (Stony corals) ³	0 (0)	5 (6)	0 (0)	5.5 (4)	0.2 (1)
	Zoantharia (Hexacorals)	0 (0)	2.8 (7)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
	Hydrozoa (Hydroids) ⁴	0 (0)	<0.1 (1)	0 (0)	0.2 (2)	0 (0)
	Stylasteridae (Hydrocorals)	0 (0)	0.1 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0.2 (2)
Echinodermata						0 (0)
	Asteroidea (Starfish)					0 (0)
	Brsingida ('Armless' stars)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0.1 (1)	0 (0)
	Ophiuroidea (Brittle stars)	0 (0)	0.1 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0.3 (2)
Porifera (Sponges) ⁵		0 (0)	1.6 (13)	1.16 (3)	0.1 (1)	0.1 (1)

¹ Includes taxa other than Actiniaria, Gorgonian, Alcyonacea, Scleractinia, Antipatharia, Pennatulacea, Zoantharia

² Includes all Gorgonacea within the sub-orders Halaxonia, Calcaxonia and Scleraxonia

³ Includes all taxa within the following genera: Solenosmilia; Goniocorella; Oculina; Enallopsammia; Madrepora; Lophelia

⁴ Includes taxa other than Stylasteridae

⁵ Includes all Porifera within the classes Demospongiae and Hexactinellidae

5.6 INFORMATION RELATING TO ABANDONED, LOST OR DISCARDED FISHING GEAR

A conservation and management measure on fishing gear and marine plastic pollution in the SPRFMO Convention Area was adopted by the SPRFMO Commission in 2019 (now [CMM 17-2022](#)), with it coming into force in May 2019.

Fisheries New Zealand observers currently report on abandoned, lost, or discarded fishing gear and any efforts made by a vessel to retrieve lost gear. They also record the catch of fishing materials, primarily small amounts of debris that can be identified as originating from fishing activities. Commercial fishers also report any fishing gear abandoned or lost during fishing activities on their vessel.

Tables 21-23 provide information on reported incidents of abandoned, lost, discarded or retrieved fishing gear from New Zealand vessels fishing in the SPRFMO Convention Area for 2021-2025. 'Retrieved' currently includes catch of any type of debris identifiable as having come from fishing (e.g., floats, bins, etc...).

Table 21: Gear loss recorded by observers from New Zealand trawl vessels in the SPRFMO Convention Area 2021 - 2025

Year	Trawl – abandoned/lost
2021	0
2022	0
2023	0
2024	0
2025	0

Table 22: Gear loss recorded by observers from New Zealand bottom line vessels in the SPRFMO Convention Area 2021-2025. N/A (not applicable) refers to no reported events of lost fishing gear.

Year	Hooks	Backbone	Other
2021	N/A	N/A	N/A
2021 exploratory fishery	21,292	29,809 m	4 x grapnel 4 x floats 2,850 m downline 1 x GPS beacon 1 x chain
2022	422	1,500 m	29 x floats

			8 x weights
2022 exploratory fishery	12,335	17,270 m	11 x grapnel 6,000 m downline 3 x chain 2 x radio beacon 12 x floats 6 x weights 2 x pole gaff 1 x streamer (part of tori line)
2023	345	759 m	7 x weights 23 x floats
2023 (exploratory fishery)	3,550	N/A	250 m downline
2024	502	N/A	N/A
2024 (exploratory fishery)	2,717	N/A	N/A
2025	160	N/A	N/A
2025 (exploratory fishery)	0	N/A	N/A

Table 23: Fishing gear (or part thereof) reported by observers as recovered by New Zealand vessels in the SPRFMO Convention Area 2021 - 2025

Year	Fishing gear recovered by trawl vessels	Fishing gear recovered by bottom line vessels
2021	0	0
2022	0	0
2023	0	0
2024	0	0
2025	0	0

* Includes all records of fishing-related rubbish (e.g., "Rubbish-fishing plastics, rubbish-fishing textiles")

6 Implementation of Management Measures

6.1 HISTORICAL MANAGEMENT MEASURES

A detailed description of New Zealand's implementation of the SPRFMO interim bottom fishing measures adopted in 2007 can be found in Ministry of Fisheries (2008b) and Penney *et al.* (2009). The management approach was subsequently codified in CMMs 2.03, 4.03, 03-2017, and 03-2018

Fishing up to May 2019 was conducted pursuant to CMM 03-2018.

From May 2019, management measures changed substantially and were made consistent across all bottom fishing Members with the adoption of CMM 03-2019. The Bottom fishing CMM was most recently updated in 2025 [CMM03-2025](#).

6.2 MANAGEMENT OF THE SOUTHWEST CHALLENGER PLATEAU STRADDLING STOCK ORANGE ROUGHY FISHERY

New Zealand manages the in-zone portion of the orange roughy stock which straddles the New Zealand EEZ and the Westpac Bank area in the SPRFMO Convention Area. The fishery in this area began in the 1980s with the first catch limit in the area set in 1986. New Zealand has completed several surveys and stock assessments of the area and, up until 2019, has set and managed New Zealand's catch limits for the full biological stock. The in-zone portion of the stock is comprised of New Zealand Quota Management Area ORH 7A.

The fishery was closed from 2000 to 2010 when it was re-opened with a TAC of 525 tonnes following a stock assessment completed by New Zealand that estimated there to be at least a 70% probability that the biomass had increased above the 'Soft Limit' of 20% B_0 (Ministry of Fisheries 2008a).

The stock was assessed again in 2014, supported by trawl and acoustic surveys (2010, 2013) with the stock estimated to be well above the lower end of the New Zealand agreed management target range

of 30-50% B_0 . The New Zealand Total Allowable Commercial Catch for ORH 7A was subsequently increased in 2014 to 1,600 tonnes.

The New Zealand bottom trawl management measures up to May 2019 included two open blocks on the Westpac Bank in the SPRFMO Convention Area where the stock straddles the New Zealand EEZ.

New Zealand vessels fishing on the Westpac Bank in the SPRFMO Convention Area are required to report all catches against New Zealand's SPRFMO allocated catch limit and also balance those catches with New Zealand Annual Catch Entitlement to ensure catches are accounted for within the New Zealand Total Allowable Catch for the whole stock.

For the full details of the most recent Challenger Plateau (Westpac bank) stock assessments see the following links ([SC7-DW06](#), [SC 12 – DW 05](#)).

6.3 EXPLORATORY FISHERY FOR TOOTHFISH

New Zealand presented a proposal to the third meeting of the Scientific Committee in 2015 ([SC-03-DW-01](#)) for a 2-year exploratory fishery for toothfish (Patagonian toothfish, *Dissostichus eleginoides*, and Antarctic toothfish, *Dissostichus mawsoni*) using the method of bottom longlining. This proposed fishery was outside New Zealand's existing bottom line fishing footprint (Figure 11) and in excess of average catches during the reference years 2002–2006. The Scientific Committee assessed New Zealand's proposal and confirmed that the proposal was acceptable under Article 22 (then CMM2.03, now [CMM03-2025](#)) and the [Bottom Fishery Impact Assessment Standard](#). The Compliance and Technical Committee and Commission considered the proposal in early 2016 and the Commission approved a 2-year exploratory fishery with a retained catch limit of 30 tonnes of *Dissostichus* spp. (both species combined) each year (CMM 14-2016).

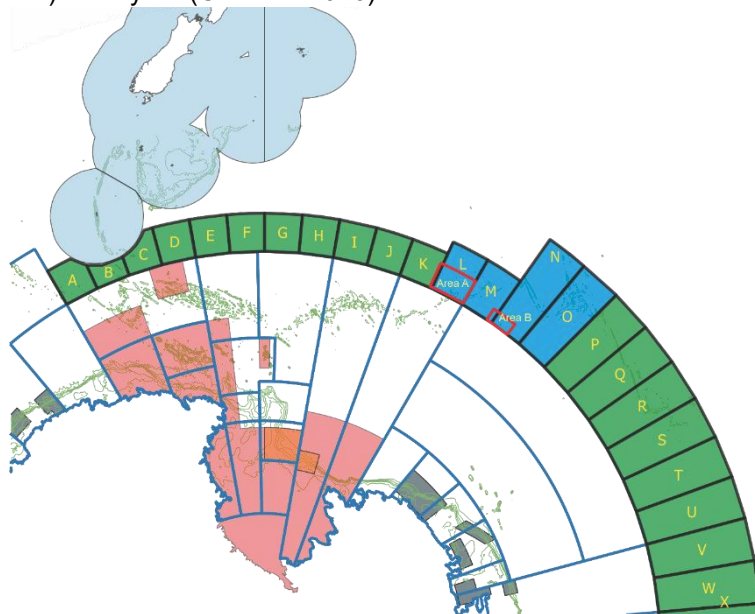


Figure 11: 2019 and 2020 research areas available for fishing coloured blue as defined by CMM-14a-2019. The red boxes (Area A and Area B) show previous research areas from 2016 and 2017.

Two exploratory fishing voyages were completed pursuant to CMM 14-2016, the first in August 2016 (see Fenaughty & Cryer 2016, [SC-04-DW-02](#)), the second in August/September 2017. Detailed results from both voyages were presented to SC-06 as part of the proposal for a continuation of the exploratory fishery ([SC-06-DW-03-rev2](#)). Generally, catch-rates in the exploratory fishery were very high compared with those typically recorded from most of the CCAMLR Convention Area. Most fish caught were large Antarctic toothfish and in relatively poor post-spawning condition, suggesting the area is close to a spawning ground. Only two Patagonian toothfish were caught and fish bycatch was less than 1% of the total catch by weight in both years. Invertebrate bycatch was less than 1 kg in total for both years.

The Commission approved the continuation of exploratory fishing starting in 2019, designed to cover key gaps in our knowledge of the distribution and life cycle of Antarctic toothfish in the South Pacific Ocean and Ross Sea to underpin understanding and management of those stocks (CMM 14a-2019). This work complements the exploratory fishing work in the winter longline survey of Antarctic toothfish in the northern region of CCAMLR Subareas 88.1 and 88.2 proposed by New Zealand.

For a detailed summary of the progress of this exploratory fishery see the following links: [SC9-DW04](#), [SC9-DW01_rev1](#), [SC10-DW07](#), [SC11-DW11](#), [SC12-DW01_rev2](#), [SC13 - DW 07](#)).

7 References

- Fenaughty, J.M. & Cryer, M. (2016). Report on the first year's fishing under New Zealand's exploratory fishery for toothfish within the SPRFMO Convention Area. Paper for the 4th Meeting of the Scientific Committee of the South Pacific Fisheries Management Organisation, The Hague, Kingdom of the Netherlands, 10–15 October 2016. SC-04-DW-02. 6 p.
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Appendix 1. List of Species Codes, Scientific Names and Common Names Used

FAO Code	NZ Code	Scientific Name	Common Name
ALF	BYX	<i>Beryx splendens</i> , <i>B. decadactylus</i>	Alfonsino & Long-finned beryx
BOE	BOE	<i>Allocyttus niger</i>	Black oreo
BWA	BNS	<i>Hyperoglyphe antarctica</i>	Bluenose
DGS	SPD	<i>Squalus</i> spp.	Spiny dogfish, northern spiny dogfish
EDR	SBO	<i>Pseudopentaceros richardsoni</i>	Southern boarfish
EPI	CDL	<i>Epigonus telescopus</i>	Deepsea cardinalfish
HAU	HPB	<i>Polyprion oxygeneios</i> , <i>P. americanus</i>	Wreckfish (Hapuku & Bass)
MOW	KTA	<i>Nemadactylus</i> sp.	King tarakihi
SOR	SOR	<i>Neocyttus rhomboidalis</i>	Spiky oreo
ORY	ORH	<i>Hoplostethus atlanticus</i>	Orange roughy
RIB	RIB	<i>Mora moro</i>	Ribaldo
ROK	SPE	<i>Helicolenus</i> spp.	Sea perch
RTX	RAT	<i>Macrouridae</i> (Family)	Rattails
RXX	SKI	<i>Rexea</i> spp.	Gemfish, southern kingfish
SCK	BSH	<i>Dalatias licha</i>	Seal shark
SEM	WAR	<i>Seriellela brama</i>	Common warehou
SEP	SWA	<i>Seriellela punctata</i>	Silver warehou
SNK	BAR	<i>Thyrsites atun</i>	Barracouta
SSO	SSO	<i>Pseudocyttus maculatus</i>	Smooth oreo
TOA	TOT	<i>Dissostichus mawsoni</i>	Antarctic toothfish
TOP	PTO	<i>Dissostichus eleginoides</i>	Patagonian toothfish
YTC	KIN	<i>Seriola lalandi</i>	Kingfish

Appendix 2. Vulnerable Marine Ecosystem Evidence Form & ID Guide

Form used from May 2021

Vulnerable Marine Ecosystem Evidence Process

(v4 February 2021)



Fisheries New Zealand

Tini a Tangaroa

1. Trip, tow, and vessel information

Trip number	Tow number	Observer/s	Name of vessel master

2. Date, time, and position fishing commenced (net reaches target depth) and end (net leaves target depth)

	Date (dd/mm/yy)	Time (NZST 24hr)	Depth (m)	Latitude	Longitude	E/W
Start						
End						

3. Relevant taxonomic groups, weights, and scores

Taxonomic Group	Species code	Method of Weighing	Weight (kg)	(Annex A) Threshold Limit (kg)	(Annex B) Weight Limit (kg)
PORIFERA Sponges	ONG			25	5
CNIDARIA Anthozoa (class) Anemone, coral and sea pens					
Scleractinia (order) Stony corals	SIA			60	5
Antipatharia (order) Black corals	COB			5	1
Alcyonacea (order) Soft corals	SOC				1
Gorgonian Alcyonacea (Informal group) Sea fans octocorals	GOC			15	1
Pennatulacea (order) Sea pens	PTU				1
Actiniaria (order) Sea anemones	ATR			35	5
Zoantharia (order) Hexacorals	ZAH			10	1
Hydrozoa (class) Hydroid	HDR				1
Stylasteridae (Family) Hydro corals	COR				1
BRYOZOA	COZ				1
ECHINODERMATA					
Brisingiida (order) Armless stars	BRG				1
Crinoidea (class) Sea lillies	CR1				1

If there are any ticks in Threshold limit checkbox column the event is considered an encounter and the encounter protocol must be applied. If there are three or more ticks in Weight limit checkbox column the event is considered an encounter and the encounter protocol must be applied.

4. Vessel notification

As soon as the form is completed for any tow provide a copy to the person in charge of the vessel.

Name (if not vessel master)	Received by person in charge (signature)	Date received (dd/mm/yy)	Time received (NZST 24hr)

Note these are FNZ / MPI 3-letter species codes

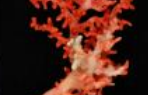
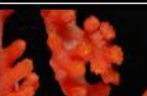
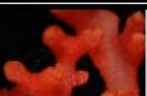
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These groups are not included



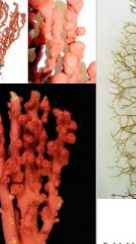
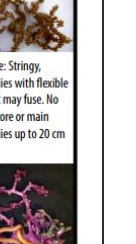
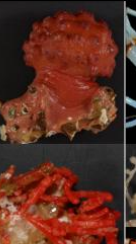
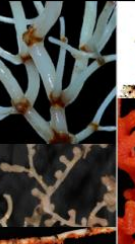
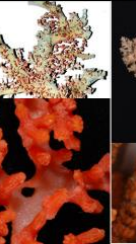
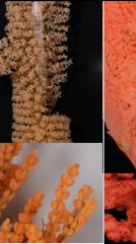
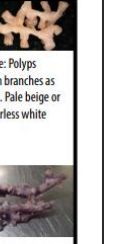
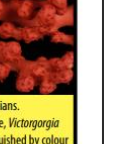




Code	SIA	COB	SOC	GOC					COR	HDR	
Level	Scleractinia (Order)	Antipatharia (Order)	Alcyonacea (Order) Seafan octocorals (Gorgonian Alcyonacea)							Anthoathecatae (Order)	Leptothecata (Order)
Taxon	Stony corals	Black corals	True soft corals	Keratoisididae Mopseidae (Bamboo)	Coralliidae (Red / Precious)	Primnoidae (Bottle brush, Sea fans)	Paragorgiidae (Bubblegum)	Chrysogorgiidae (Golden)	Stylasteridae Hydrocorals	Hydrozoa (hydroids)	
Form, Size	   Branching: Can form large matrices, often forms thickets Cups: usually small (<20cm), solitary or in small clusters	   Semi-rigid, woody, not very dense, dark brown or black skeleton, can be large (>2m). Branch tips can look like hydroids or small gorgonian	   Can be mushroom shaped. Floppy or soft, leather-like surface texture. Usually multiple large polyps, body not symmetrical, no foot or stalk	   Solid calcified trunk with brown joints (nodes), rings in x-section, branching 2D or 3D, fine tips, tree like branch tips	   Calcified skeleton, no spines. Thick, stubby stems with fine side branches	   Dark or metallic tree-like branches, flexible	   Large (up to 2m), red, thick stems, breaks when flexed	   Gold, black or green metallic lustre. Semi-rigid single, main axis with semi-soft tissue cortex. Small specimens can be feathery like hydroids or bushy like black coral	   Calcified, no rings in X-section, often pink or white. Often uniplanar, side branches lattice from obviously thicker main stems	   Entire organism small, <30cm, flexible and plant-like, often feathery, no soft tissue covering	
	  Calcified, very hard or brittle Branching: Often smooth stems Cups: Can be ridged Polyp calyces well formed with ridged edges, large, hard polyps	  Slimy flesh on branches. Surface with minute spines, may appear smooth. 3D, fine or bushy tips	  Similar polyps to seapens, but soft corals are not stalked	  Can scrape off surface tissue, skeleton surface smooth between nodes	  Can scrape surface tissue off. Smooth (not sandpaper) with knobly ends. No pores on skeleton	  Usually no spines, some metallic lustre on skeleton, 3D Bushy branches, obvious polyps	  Chalky material, not hard. No spines, can scrape off surface. Bulbous ends with polyps	  Can be non-branching and whip-like. Usually no spines, metallic lustre. Fine or sparse 3D branching	  Coarse sandpaper texture, can't scrape off surface tissue. Has minute pores	  Indistinct polyps, feathery tips	
Commonly mistaken for:	 Branching form can look like hard sponges, pieces of hydrocorals, and bryozoans	 Hydroid if small, or small pieces of dead Gorgonians	 Small pieces of Coralliidae. Can also resemble Demosponges, which have no polyps	 Other Gorgonians if in small pieces, but won't break easily	 Soft corals, which always have soft stems	 Hydroids if small pieces, but have distinct polyps	 Small pieces of Coralliidae	 Antipatharia, but tips are not slimy	 Small, hard Bryozoans or pieces of Coralliidae	 Small specimens of Gorgonians or Antipatharia	

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Classification guide for potentially vulnerable invertebrate taxa in the SPRFMO Area										
Note these are FNZ / MPI 3-letter species codes										
Code	SIA	COB	SOC	GOC						
Level	Scleractinia (Order)	Antipatharia (Order)	Alcyonacea (Order)	Alcyonacea (Order) – Sea fan octocorals (Gorgonian Alcyonacea)						
Taxon	Stony corals	Black corals	True soft corals	Keratoisididae Mopseidae (Bamboo)	Coralliidae (Red / Precious)	Primnoidae (Bottle brush, Sea fans)	Paragorgiidae (Bubblegum)	Chrysogorgiidae (Golden)	Acanthogorgiidae, Plexauridae	Anthothelidae, Victorgorgiidae
Form, Size										
	Branching: Can form large matrices, often forms thickets Cups: usually small (<20cm), solitary or in small clusters	Semi-rigid, woody, not very dense, dark brown or black skeleton, can be large (>2m). Branch tips can look like hydroids or small gorgonian	Can be mushroom shaped. Floppy or soft, leather-like surface texture. Usually multiple large polyps, body not symmetrical, no foot or stalk	Solid calcified trunk with brown joints (nodes), rings in x-section, branching 2D or 3D, fine tips, tree like branch tips	Calcified skeleton, no spines. Thick, stubby stems with fine side branches	Dark or metallic tree-like branches, flexible	Large (up to 2m), red, thick stems, breaks when flexed	Gold, black or green metallic lustre. Semi-rigid single, main axis with semi-soft tissue cortex. Small specimens can be feathery like hydroids or bushy like black coral	Acanthogorgiidae: Highly branched single plane sea fan; up to 40 cm Plexauridae: Variable form, highly branched, flattened fan- or candelabra like. Up to 1m, usually 20-50cm	Anthothelidae: Stringy, tangled colonies with flexible branches that may fuse. No rigid central core or main branch. Colonies up to 20 cm or more Victorgorgiidae: Branching irregular, branches lack a hard central core. At least up to 30 cm
Detail (Texture, colour, polyps)										
	Calcified, very hard or brittle Branching: Often smooth stems Cups: Can be ridged Polyp calyces well formed with ridged edges, large, hard polyps	Slimy flesh on branches. Surface with minute spines, may appear smooth. 3D, fine or bushy tips	Similar polyps to seapens, but soft corals are not stalked	Can scrape off surface tissue, skeleton surface smooth between nodes	Can scrape surface tissue off. Smooth (not sandpaper) with knobly ends. No pores on skeleton	Usually no spines, some metallic lustre on skeleton, 3D Bushy branches, obvious polyps. Polyps/calyces are usually arranged in obvious pairs or rosettes	Chalky material, not hard. No spines, can scrape off surface. Bulbous ends with polyps	Can be non-branching and whip-like. Usually no spines, metallic lustre. Fine or sparse 3D branching	Acanthogorgiidae: Polyps with protruding spines, matchstick or trumpet-like appearance. Tan, brown or yellow-white Plexauridae: Flexible branches and brown and woody core. Polyps conical, mound-like or flat. Red, purple, yellow, brown, white/tan	Anthothelidae: Polyps protrude from branches as tubular warts. Pale beige or tan to a colourless white Polyps often clustered into globular swellings along branches and tips, with smooth, polyp-free segments of branches in-between. Magenta or lavender
Commonly mistaken for:										
	Branching form can look like hard sponges, pieces of hydrocorals, and bryozoans	Hydroid if small, or small pieces of dead Gorgonians	Small pieces of Coralliidae. Can also resemble Demosponges, which have no polyps	Other Gorgonians if in small pieces, but won't break easily	Soft corals, which always have soft stems. Red stylasterid hydrocorals but these have minute pores	Hydroids but they have no distinct polyps. Small bottlebrush forms can resemble black corals	Small pieces of Coralliidae	Antipatharia, but tips are not slimy	Other gorgonians, but Acanthogorgiidae, Plexauridae have woody skeletons	Other Gorgonians. Anthothelidae, Victorgorgia easily distinguished by colour

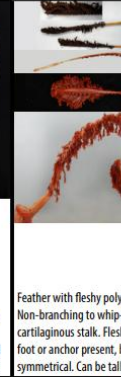
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Classification guide for potentially vulnerable invertebrate taxa in the SPRFMO Area

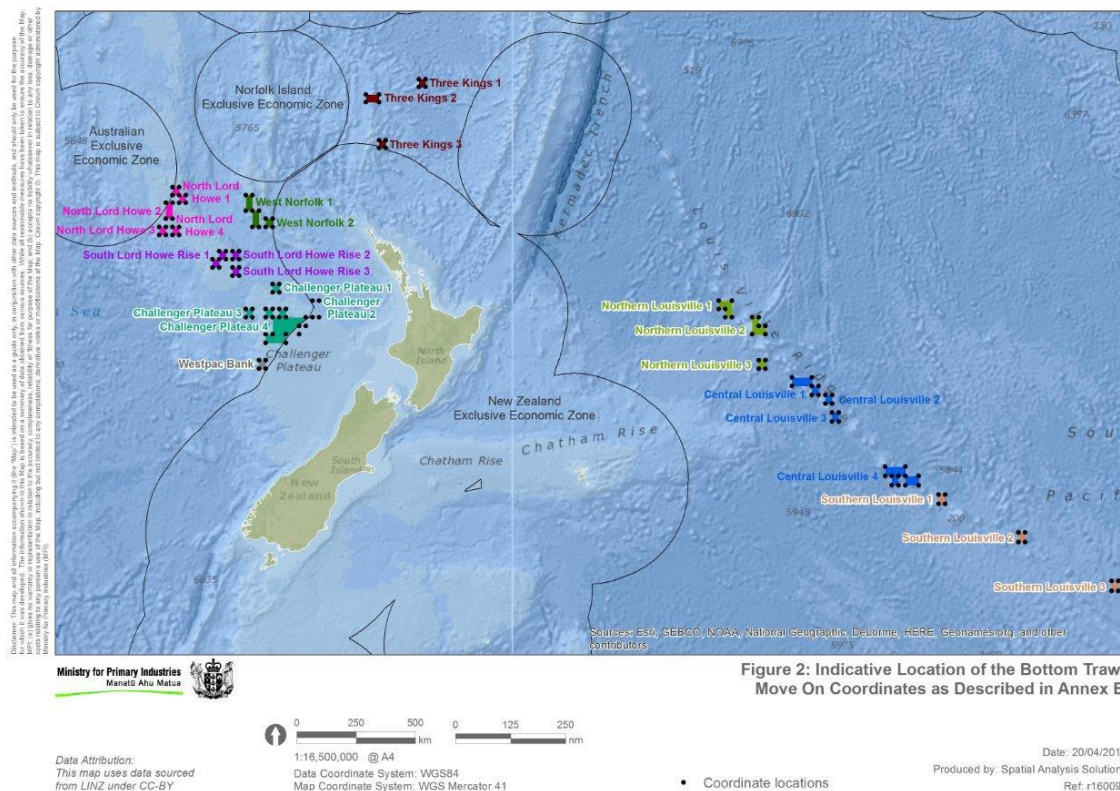
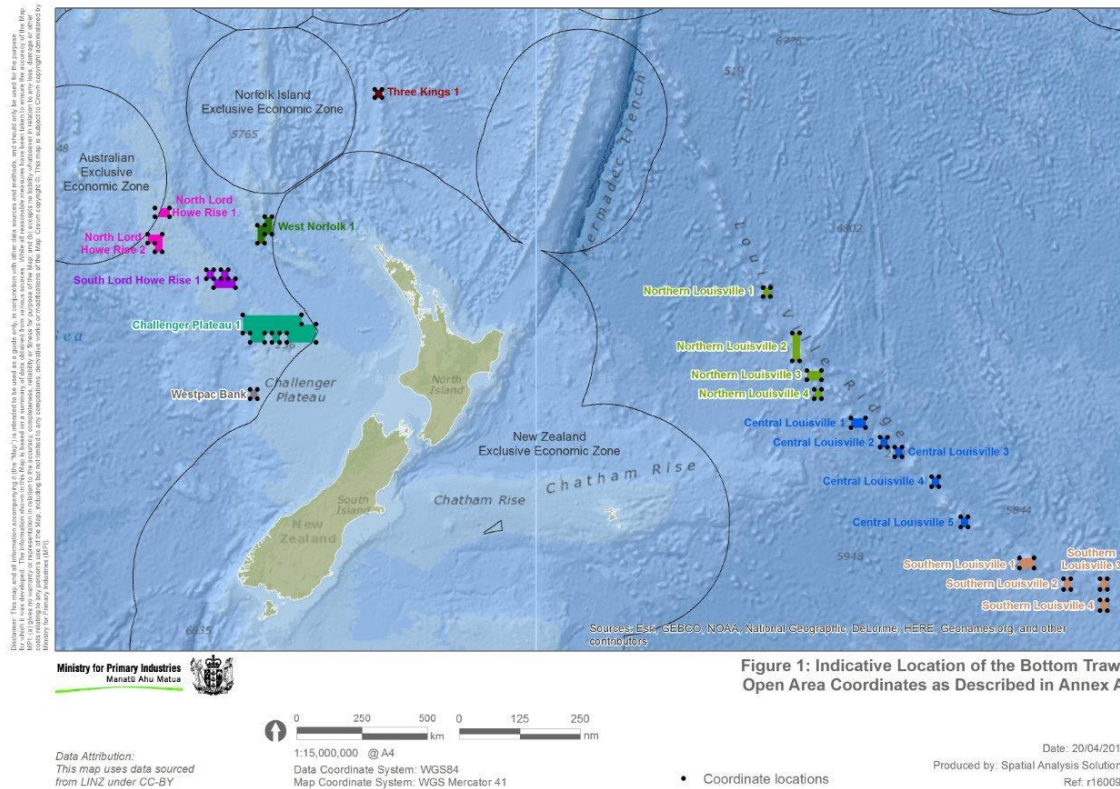
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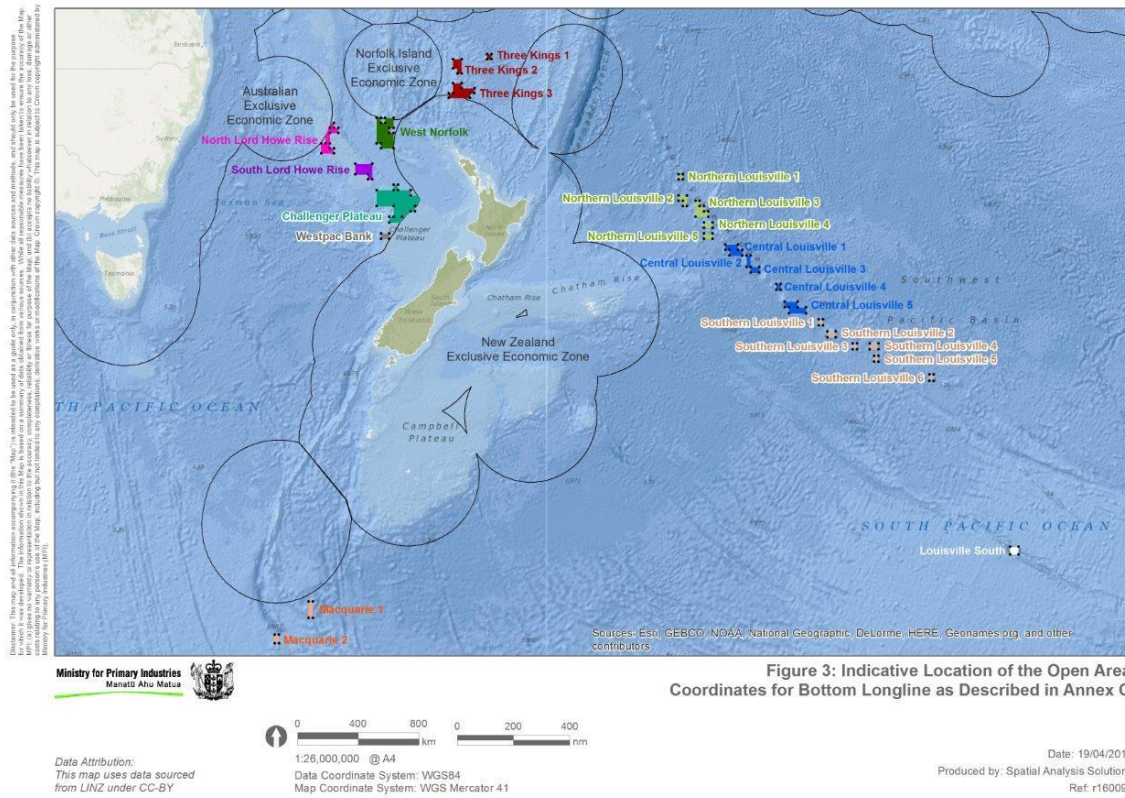
Code	COR	HDR	ONG		ATR	PTU	CRI	BRG	COZ	ZAH
Level	Anthothecata (Order)	Leptothecata (Order)	Porifera (Phylum)		Actiniaria (Order)	Pennatulacea (Order)	Crinoidea (Class)	Brisingida (Order)	Bryozoan (Phylum)	Zoantharia (Order)
Taxon	Stylasteridae Hydrocorals	Hydrozoa (hydroids)	Hexactinellida (Glass sponges)	Demospongiae (Siliceous sponges)	Anemones	Sea pens	Stalked crinoids (sea lilies) Feather stars	Armless stars	Bryozoans (lace corals)	Hexacorals (Zoanthids)
Form, Size	 Calcified, no rings in X-section, often pink or white. Often uniplanar, side branches lattice from obviously thicker main stems	 Entire organism small, <30cm, flexible and plant-like, often feathery, no soft tissue covering	 Often hollow central chamber can be vase like. Diverse shapes, fibrous or crystalline hard forms	 Many shapes, some small & hydroid-like to round hard solid masses	 Rubbery bottom with single polyp with lots of tentacles. Usually in retracted hardened cylinder form when captured	 Feather with fleshy polyps. Non-branching to whip-like cartilaginous stalk. Fleshy foot or anchor present, body symmetrical. Can be tall, >1 m	 Stalked. Small cuplike body. Arms usually branched. Crinoids are generally fragile, often only fragments. A long stalk, some bearing whorls of hooklike cirri Feather stars are similar to sea lilies but lack stalks, using leg-like cirri to grasp the substrate. Feathery arms	 At least 6 arms, usually more than 10. Arms easily separated from central disc and often all that is taken	 Typically small, (<30 cm). Variable forms. Can be hard or soft (most commonly hard) branching, lace-like, or corallike shaped, calcified, and brittle, surface cannot be scraped off	 Erect "coral-like" colonies. Often grow on, or colonise, other living corals.
Detail (Texture, colour, polyps)	 Coarse sandpaper texture, can't scrape off surface tissue. Has minute pores	 Indistinct polyps, feathery tips	 Pores often visible, glass spicules visible or fibre-glass like texture in hard forms	 Fleshy, slimy or rubbery. Textures stony, woody, fibrous or airy	 Knobbly, slimy, with tentacles. Tentacles sometimes look like worms when detached	 Fleshy polyps. Flower or feather like polyp mass	 Fragile, not flexible. Brittle and segmented	 Long spines on ventro-lateral margin	 No polyps	 Large roundish polyps; often bright orange.
Commonly mistaken for:	 Small, hard Bryozoans or pieces of Coralliidae	 Small specimens of Gorgonians or Antipatharia	 Bryozoans or scleractinians that are small and of a hard matrix	 Alcyonaceans or ascidians, which are not spongy and have polyps or siphons	 Alcyonaceans, which usually have several polyps or the Corallimorpharia, coral-like anemone	 Alcyonaceans or some Gorgonians, that have large polyps	 Arm fragments can be confused with brisingid and other sea-star arms	 Other sea stars with multiple arms (e.g., brittle stars) and crinoid arms	 Stylasterids if hard, hydroids if soft, carnivorous demosponge	 Large brooding gorgonian coral polyps; branching soft corals

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Appendix 3. Areas open to New Zealand flagged vessels for bottom fishing to May 2019





Appendix 4. Areas open to bottom fishing from May 2019 (per CMM 03-2019-[CMM03-2025](#)) N.B. The orange roughy catch limit for the South Tasman Rise is set at 0 tonnes

