



Fisheries New Zealand

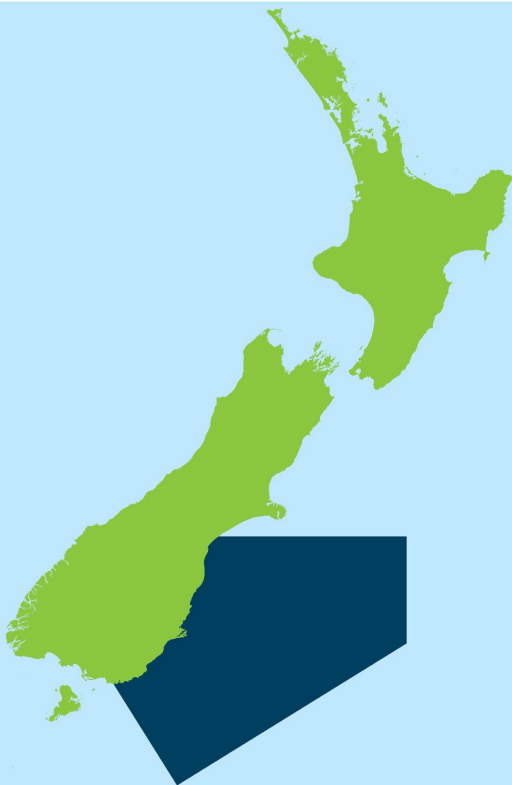
Tini a Tangaroa



Recreational Fishing Rules

South-East (South area)

Effective from: December 2024 (subject to change without notice).



WANT THE RULES ON YOUR PHONE?

Use our free text service.

Download our free smartphone app.

Check the back of the brochure for details.



Shared Sustainable **Fisheries** for the **Future**

Recreational fishing

South-East Fishery Management Area

This brochure is a guide to the recreational fishing rules for the southern part of the South-East Fishery Management Area (FMA). The southern part of the South-East FMA includes the South Island East Coast from the Rangitata River in South Canterbury down to Slope Point in Eastern Southland. Within this area there are areas with additional rules. These include Mātaītai Reserves near Timaru and near Moeraki, and the East Otago Taiāpure Area north of Dunedin. For full copies of these rules contact Fisheries New Zealand (FNZ).

Why recreational fishing rules matter

Fishing is one of New Zealand's most popular outdoor activities. Recreational fishers (people fishing non-commercially) take large numbers of finfish and shellfish every year. To keep the fisheries sustainable FNZ sets recreational fishing rules. By sticking to the rules and fishing responsibly, fishers help make sure that there will be fish today, tomorrow and for generations to come.

What do the rules cover?

Anyone fishing recreationally has to follow rules about:

- daily bag limits (how many fish you can keep);
- legal size limits (the sizes of fish you can keep);
- species restrictions (the types of fish you can keep);
- accumulation limits (how many fish you can keep over a period of more than one day);
- closed and restricted areas (where you can fish).

Things to remember:

- it is illegal to sell or trade recreational catch;
- breaking the rules can lead to prosecution, fines and property confiscations;
- only those physically involved in taking finfish, rock lobster, or shellfish can claim a catch within the daily limit;
- unwanted or unlawful catch (catch above your daily limit, undersized fish, fish taken with undersized mesh, unintentional catch or bycatch) must be immediately returned to the waters from which they were taken, dead or alive.

How can I check the rules?

This brochure is a guide only and may not include local restrictions or rules that have changed since it was printed. To keep up to date, check the rules each time you fish.

FNZ provides lots of (free) ways to check the rules. This includes a free text service, the free NZ Fishing Rules app, or visiting our website or offices. For more information see the back page of this brochure.

Fishing sustainably

Good fish handling

Correctly handling and releasing unwanted or unlawful catch can increase their chances of surviving. When handling and releasing fish, remember:

- use wet hands (towel or wet gloves);
- be gentle – slide fish into the water from as close to the surface as possible;
- return fish as near as possible to where you found them (especially shellfish and rock lobster);
- the best way to protect undersized fish is not to catch them in the first place. If you are catching lots of undersized fish, change locations, or use a larger hook or mesh size.

For more information, FNZ has a “Responsible Fishing Guidelines” brochure available online at

www.fisheries.govt.nz/rules or at your local FNZ office.

Looking after seabirds

Seabirds are experts at seeing bait and fish scraps in the water and can get hooked or become tangled in fishing line.

Find out how to avoid attracting seabirds and how to handle them safely at **www.southernseabirds.org**

New Zealand's fishing rules

If you're fishing or collecting seafood in New Zealand you need to know New Zealand's fishing rules. If you do not read English, have someone translate for you.

新西兰捕鱼条例

如果您要在新西兰垂钓或捕获海产品，您需要了解新西兰捕鱼条例。如果您不懂英文，请寻求他人帮助。

条例涵盖：允许捕获的类型及尺寸，允许捕获的位置，以及允许捕获的数量。

条例规定您不能将捕获的海产品进行贩卖或者交易，从而获得任何经济收入或者收益。

若违反条例，将面临被起诉、罚款并没收渔具。请您严格遵守法律，做有责任感的捕鱼者，这样才能确保我们现在、未来、世代代有鱼可捕。

뉴질랜드의 낚시 규정

뉴질랜드에서 낚시를 하거나 해산물을 채취할 경우 반드시 뉴질랜드 낚시 규정을 숙지하고 있어야 합니다. 만약 규정 안내판의 영어를 읽지 못할 경우 번역이 가능한 사람에게 부탁하십시오.

규정 내용: 낚시 또는 채취 가능한 물고기의 종류 및 크기, 낚시 가능

장소, 채취 가능한 물고기의 수.

채취한 해산물을 상업 및 이윤 취득의 목적으로 판매 또는 거래하는 것은 불법입니다.

본 규정을 위반할 경우 기소, 벌금 또는 재산 압류 등의 결과를 초래할 수 있습니다.

본인 책임하에 낚시 규정을 반드시 준수하여 다음 세대 어류가 정상적으로 성장할 수 있도록 해 주십시오.

Tulafono mo Fagotaga i Niu Sila

Afai o e fagotaina po'o e aoina foi figota o le sami e tatau ona e silafia tulafono nei mo fagotaga i Niu Sila. Afai e lē mafai ona e faitauina i le Gagana Peretania faamolemole faafesoota'i sē tasi e mafai ona ia faaliliuina mo oe.

O tulafono e aofia ai: le ituaiga ma le lapo'a o i'a e mafai ona e taofiina, o fea e mafai ona e fagota ai, ma le aofa'i o i'a e mafai ona e taofia.

E matua'i faasaina faaletulafono lou faatauina atu o i'a mo ni tupe maua po o se pōlōfiti.

O le lē usita'ia mai o tulafono nei e o'o ina molia ai oe, sala tupe ma aveesea faamalosi au mea totino. O le tausisi i tulafono ma fagota ma le faautauta lelei, e fesoasoani lea i le faamautūina o i'a mo le asō, taeao ma autupulaga o le lumana'i.

Lao ki he toutai 'a Nu'usila

Kapau ko ha tokotaha toutai ika koe, pe 'oku ke fangota ki ha me'atahi 'i Nu'usila, kuopau ke ke 'ilo ki he ngaahi lao 'o e toutai 'a Nu'usila. Kapau 'oku 'ikai ke ke lava 'o lautohi fakapilitania, pea kole ki ha taha ke ne liliu ki ho'o lea.

Ko e lao 'oku anga pehe ni: ko e fa'ahinga mo e lalahi 'o e ika 'oku lava ke ke ma'u; faitu'u 'oku ngofua ke ke toutai ai; pea mo e ika 'e fiha 'oku lava ke ke 'ave.

'Oku ta'efakalao ke fakatau atu pea ke fai ha fefakatau'aki e ika 'o ke ma'u ai ha fa'ahinga pa'anga, pe tupu fakapa'anga.

Ko hono maumau'i 'o e lao, 'e ala faka'ilo ai koe, tautea pa'anga, pea to'o mo e koloa 'oku ke ma'ú. Ko e tauhi 'o e lao mo e toutai fakapotopoto, 'e tokoni ia ki hono fakapapau'i 'e ma'u ha ika he 'aho ni, pongipongi, pea mo e to'utangata 'o e kaha'u.

Finfish

Daily limits and size restrictions

In the South-East FMA (South area) there is a **combined maximum daily bag limit of 30** for finfish* (excluding specified baitfish and freshwater eels). Individual species limits within this combined daily bag limit must also not be exceeded.

There may be local restrictions or area closures, check the **Closed and restricted areas** section.

* Finfish includes all species of finfish of the classes Agnatha, Chondrichthyes, and Osteichthyes, at any stage of their life history, whether living or dead.

Individual species daily limits within the combined daily limit

Finfish species	Max daily limit per active fisher	Min fish length (cm)	Min net mesh size (mm)
Blue cod North Otago – Rakaia River to Taiaroa Head	10	33 landed whole or gutted only	–
Blue cod East Otago Taiāpure	2	33 landed whole or gutted only	–
Blue cod Southern – Taiaroa Head to Sand Hill Point	15	33 landed whole, gutted or headed and gutted	–
Blue moki	15	40	114
Bluenose	5	–	160
Blue shark	1	–	100
Bronze shark	1	–	100
Butterfish/Greenbone	15	35	108
Elephant fish	5	–	150
Groper (Hāpuku)/Bass	Daily limit of 5 with no more than 3 kingfish	–	160
Kingfish		75	100
Hammerhead shark	1	–	100
Kahawai	15	–	90
Mako shark	1	–	100

Table continues on next page

Finfish species	Max daily limit per active fisher	Min fish length (cm)	Min net mesh size (mm)
Marlin	1	–	100
Porbeagle shark	1	–	100
Quinnat salmon	1	–	–
Quinnat salmon (Otago Harbour)	1	45	–
Red cod	10	25	100
Red moki	15	40	115
Rig	5	–	150
School shark	5	–	150
Seven gilled shark	1	–	100
Skate/Ray	5	–	100
Snapper	10	25	125
Spiny dogfish	15	–	100
Southern bluefin tuna	1	–	100
Tarakihi	15	25	100
Thresher shark	1	–	100
Trumpeter	15	35	100
Warehou	15	–	100

Further size limits for finfish within the combined daily limit

Finfish species	Min fish length (cm)	Min net mesh size (mm)
Flatfish (except Sand flounder)	25	100
Grey mullet	–	90
Red gurnard	25	100
Sand flounder	23	100
Snapper	25	125
Trevally	25	100
All other finfish	–	100

In addition, you may also take the following baitfish species

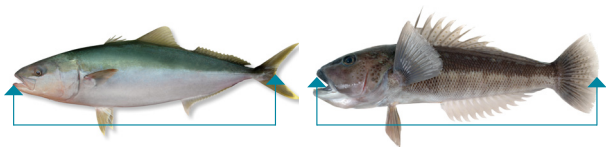
Baitfish species	Max daily limit per active fisher
Anchovy	Daily limit of 50 for any combination of these species
Jack/Horse/Chilean mackerel	
Koheru/Scad	
Pilchard	
Piper/Garfish	
Slender/Stout sprat	
Yellow-eyed mullet	

And

Finfish species	Max daily limit per active fisher	Min net mesh size (mm)
Eel	6	12

Measuring finfish

Measure from the tip of the nose to the middle ray or “V” in the tail.



Blue cod
Measurable state

In the North Otago blue cod area (Rakaia River to Taiaroa Head) and in the East Otago Taiāpure blue cod must be landed whole or gutted and measure a minimum of 33cm.

In the Southern blue cod area (south of Taiaroa Head) blue cod may be landed whole or gutted, or headed (head removed in front of the pectoral fin) and gutted. Headed blue cod have a minimum size of 24cm measured from the rear of the base of the pectoral fin to the posterior end of the middle ray of the tail fin.

It is an offence to possess blue cod in New Zealand fisheries waters in an unmeasurable state.

Fishers may possess blue cod in another state only if it is immediately eaten on board the fishing vessel it was taken from.

Blue cod pots

Blue cod pots must be covered with a single layer of rigid square mesh with minimum inside dimension of 54mm and not have any cover, liner, or any other construction that restricts the inside dimensions of the mesh to less than 54mm.

Accumulation limit

The accumulation limit for blue cod is no more than two times the daily limit when blue cod is taken over two or more days.

Protection of white pointer shark and spotted black groper

No person may take or possess any white pointer shark or spotted black groper.

Quinnat salmon restrictions

When fishing for quinnat salmon, fishers:

- must only be in possession of, or have control over, one assembled rod and running line;
- may use another rod and running line to jig for sprat or other baitfish, so long as any salmon taken on that rod and running line are returned to the water immediately;
- must not take or possess salmon by using a spear gun or a net.

Set line restrictions

Set line fishing includes the use of long lines and dahn (drop) lines but does not include rod and reel or hand lines. In areas where line fishing is permitted, the following restrictions apply:

- no person may use, or be in possession of, more than one line (other than handlines, or rod and reel lines);
- no person may use or possess a line with more than 25 hooks;
- where more than one person is using a line from a vessel (other than rod and reel lines), no more than two lines (other than rod and reel lines), may be used, set from or possessed on board that vessel;
- surface floats attached to any line must be marked clearly, legibly and permanently with the fisher's initials and surname. A phone number is also useful.

Netting restrictions

Net fishing includes set, fyke drag and other nets. In areas where netting is permitted restrictions apply to the number of nets that may be used or carried on a boat, the length of nets, spacing between nets, net mesh sizes and how the nets are used. For details on the rules for netting, please refer to the free NZ Fishing Rules app, website, or your nearest FNZ office for a copy of the “Set net code of practice” brochure.

Shellfish

Daily bag limits and size restrictions

Shellfish are taken when they cannot freely return to the water e.g. placed into a catch bag or similar. At no time while gathering may you be in possession of more than your daily limit. The South-East FMA limits for taking and possessing shellfish are listed below. Remember there may be local restrictions or area closures, check the **Closed and restricted areas** section.

Shellfish species	Max daily limit per person	Min size length (mm)
Cockle	150	none
Kina (sea eggs)	50	none
Mussels	50	none
Oysters – Dredge [^] +	50	58
Pāua – Blackfoot/Ordinary	10	125
– Yellow foot	10	80
Timaru Mātaitai	3 combined total	as above
Moeraki Mātaitai	3 combined total	as above
Pipi	150	none
Scallops+	20	100
Tuatua	150	none
All others (combined) •	50	none

East Otago Taiāpure – taking of pāua is prohibited.

The combined daily limit for shellfish (including cockles) in the East Otago Taiāpure is 50.

North of the Waitaki River the pāua daily limit is 5 of each species.

[^] Hand gathering dredge oysters: Within the South-East FMA there is no restriction on either size or season for dredge oysters taken by hand-gathering (includes shore picking and free diving but does not include diving using underwater breathing apparatus). During the open season dredge oysters can be harvested by dredge and the use of UBA. Both the daily limit and minimum size of 58mm applies.

Continues on next page.

- + Limited provision allows a diver on a vessel to gather extra bag limits of oysters and scallops for up to two other people acting in a dive safety capacity.
- This is a combined, mixed-species bag limit. It applies to all shellfish species not specifically named in the table, and includes all crabs, limpets, starfish, periwinkles, whelks, barnacles and freshwater crayfish (kōura).

Land shellfish in a measureable state

All shellfish to which a minimum size restriction applies (including pāua, scallops and dredge oysters) must be landed in the shell and cannot be shucked or shelled seaward of the mean high-water mark. This includes transporting on the water.

Dredge oysters and scallops may be opened for immediate consumption onboard the vessel. Any scallops and dredge oysters eaten form part of your daily limit. Any scallops and dredge oysters not eaten must be landed in the shell.

Pāua accumulation limits

When daily limits are accumulated the maximum number or amount of pāua that one person can have in their possession at any one time for the PAU5 area (south of the Waitaki River) is:

- 20 pāua (both Ordinary and Yellowfoot pāua species combined) or;
- 2.5 kgs of pāua meat.

The accumulation limit of pāua north of the Waitaki River is 10 pāua or 1.25 kg shucked weight. See **Closed and restricted areas** section to view map.

Measuring shellfish

Pāua: measure the greatest length of the shell in a straight line. Do not measure over the curve of the shell.

Scallops: measure the greatest diameter of the shell.

Dredge oysters: must not pass through a rigid circular metal ring with an inside diameter of 58mm.



Shellfish restrictions

Underwater breathing apparatus (UBA)

- UBA does not include snorkels;
- no person may take pāua using UBA;
- no person may be in possession of pāua while in possession of UBA. This includes possession in or on any vessel or vehicle.

Open seasons

- **Dredge oysters:** open season is 1 March – 31 August inclusive.
- **Scallops:** 15 July – 14 February inclusive.

Protection of coral

No person may take or possess any black coral or red coral.

Potting

In areas where potting is permitted the following general restrictions apply:

- individuals may use, set, or possess, up to three pots in any one day;
- all pots and surface floats must be clearly and permanently marked with the fisher's surname and initials;
- two or more individuals fishing from a vessel may use, set, or possess up to six pots in any one day provided they have their name on the pots and that each person is using no more than three of the pots;
- bobs and ring pots may be used to catch rock lobster but all other requirements such as marking and pot limits apply;
- pots used to catch rock lobster have specific escape gap requirements – see **Rock lobster** section;
- species specific pots (cod pots, crab pots etc) can be used. They are exempt from escape gap requirements but all other requirements (such as marking and pot limits) remain.

Rock lobster

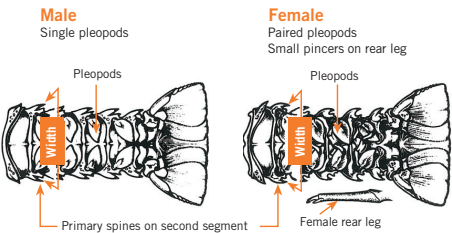
Daily bag limit

No person may take or possess more than six rock lobster (both species combined) on any one day.

Rock lobster may not be possessed seaward of the high water mark in an unmeasurable state.

How to measure rock lobster

Measure the tail width in a straight line between the tips of the two large (primary) spines on the second segment of the tail.



Minimum sizes

Lobster species	Tail width measurement
Red or spiny rock lobster	Male – 54mm Female – 60mm
Packhorse rock lobster	Male – 84mm Female – 90mm

If you are unsure of the sex, use the female (larger) measurement.

Rock lobster restrictions

Protected rock lobster

The following types of rock lobster are protected by law and must be returned immediately to the water:

- undersized rock lobster;
 - female rock lobsters carrying external eggs (in berry) – these are carried between the pleopods on the underside of the tail;
 - soft shell stage rock lobster;
 - rock lobster that cannot be measured (e.g. because of damage to the tail preventing accurate measurement).
- Specific exemptions apply for very large rock lobster with damaged tails – for more information go to

www.fisheries.govt.nz/rock-lobster

General restrictions

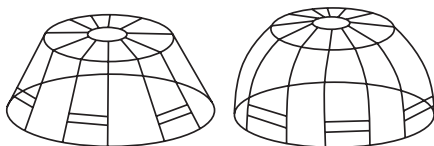
In areas where rock lobster may be gathered, the following restrictions apply:

- rock lobster may not be possessed seaward of the high water mark in an unmeasurable state;
- only hand operated loops or lassos may be used. Spring loaded loop or lassos are prohibited;
- spears or devices which could puncture the shell must not be used when taking rock lobster. Possessing any rock lobster which has been speared is an offence;
- external eggs or the egg-bearing appendages must not be removed from any rock lobster.

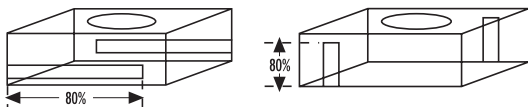
Rock lobster pots

Rock lobster pot means any pot, baited or not, that is capable of catching or holding rock lobster; and includes any other device capable of catching, holding or storing rock lobster. All rock lobster pots must have escape gaps (apertures). These are openings in the pot designed to allow undersized rock lobster to escape. No escape gap shall be incorporated in either the top or the bottom of any pot. Each escape gap must have an inside dimension of at least 54mm x 200mm.

Round or beehive pots: must have at least three escape gaps (other than the mouth).



Square or rectangular pots: must have at least two escape gaps (other than the mouth) in opposite faces of the pot. Each shall not be less than 80 percent of the height or length of the face of the pot in which the escape gaps are contained.



Mesh pots: any pot constructed entirely of unaltered spot welded mesh with minimum inside dimensions of 54mm x 140mm does not require escape gaps. Mesh pots may be used with covers or liners provided they leave unencumbered at least 80 percent of the surface area of each of two opposite sides.

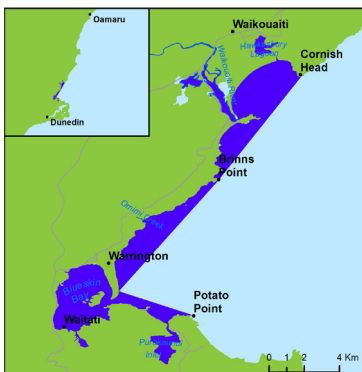
Closed and restricted areas

Restricted areas

Restricted areas are areas where the use of particular fishing methods is restricted or where catch limits may be different, or taking some species is prohibited. Some restricted areas in the southern part of the South-East FMA area are listed below. These are only a guide. Check for local restrictions and recent closures by contacting your nearest FNZ office. Contact the nearest Department of Conservation office for marine reserves (where fishing is prohibited).

General restricted areas

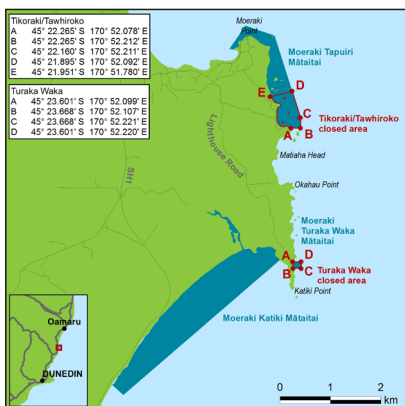
Map 1: East Otago Taiāpure: There are reduced bag limits (10 finfish total bag limit, including two blue cod). Taking pāua or kelp or using set nets is prohibited. There are reduced daily limits for shellfish including cockles (50), tuatua (50) and kina (10) and a total bag limit of 50 shellfish.



Map 1: East Otago Taiāpure

Moeraki Mātaitai pāua rules

Tikoraki/Tawhiroko and Turaka Waka areas are closed to the gathering of pāua. Outside of the closed areas, the daily limit is three pāua (combined species) per fisher per day. Contact your local FNZ office for more information.



Map 2: Tikoraki/Tawhiroko and Turaka Waka areas (highlighted by the red boundary on the map above) are closed to the gathering of pāua.

Timaru area Mātaitai reserves

Within the Tuhawaiki and Te Ahi Tarakihi Mātaitai reserve areas (refer to maps 3 and 4) the following bylaws apply.

Daily limits per fisher:

- Pāua – 3 both species combined
- Kina – 20
- Mussels – 50

Taking any other species of shellfish other than pāua, kina and mussels is prohibited.

Within the Te Ahi Tarakihi Waitarakao Mātaitai and Opihi Mātaitai Reserve areas (refer to maps 4, 5 and 6) the following bylaws apply.

Daily limits per fisher:

- Flatfish – 10



Map 3: Te Ahi Tarakihi Mātaitai Reserve



Map 4: Tuhawaiki Mātaitai Reserve



Map 5: Waitarakao Mātaitai



Map 6: Opihi Mātaitai

Mātaitai: A Mātaitai is a permanent reserve created in areas of traditional importance to Māori for customary food gathering.

Taiāpure: A Taiāpure is a local management tool established in an area that has customarily been of special significance to an iwi or hapū as a source of food or for spiritual or cultural reasons.

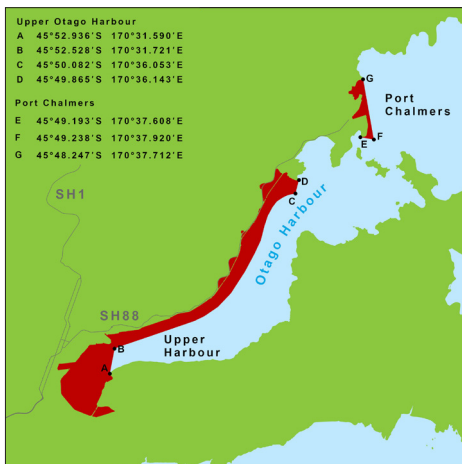
Set net restricted areas

Set netting is prohibited along the East Coast of the South Island out to a distance of four nautical miles, and extending out to 12 nautical miles off the east coast from a point on the existing four nautical mile offshore boundary east of the Waitaki River mouth, out to a point 12 nautical miles offshore east of Timaru, and then north east across the Canterbury Bight to Snuffle Nose on Banks Peninsula (refer Map 9).

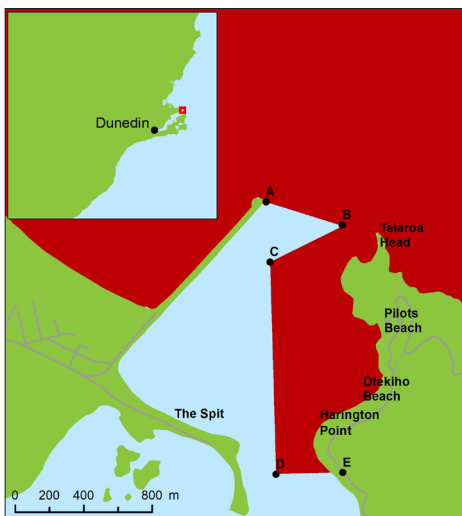
Set netting is permitted in most estuaries, rivers, lagoons, inlets and in parts of Otago Harbour.

Set netting is prohibited in Catlins Lake, East Otago Taiāpure (refer Map 1), and in the Upper Otago Harbour from Burns Point to Kilgour Point, in the vicinity of Port Chalmers, and near Harington point and Taiaroa Head at the harbour entrance (refer Maps 7 and 8).

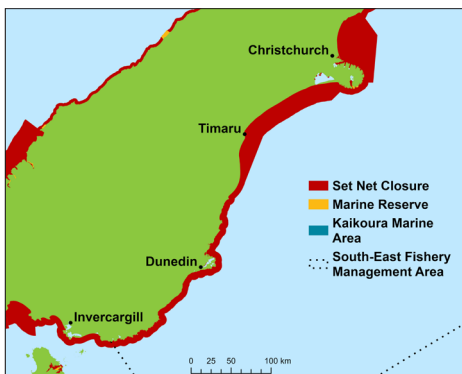
Fishing using drift nets is prohibited within all New Zealand fisheries waters.



Map 7: Upper Otago Harbour set net ban



Map 8: Otago Harbour entrance set net ban



Map 9: Set net prohibited area

Poacher prevention

Fisheries New Zealand's Compliance Team is responsible for protecting local fisheries and stopping illegal activities such as poaching.

If you see people acting illegally, taking more than their daily limit or undersized fish or selling or trading their catch, please report it. Any information provided stays completely confidential.

**Report poaching, suspicious or illegal activity
– call 0800 4 POACHER (0800 476 224).**

New Zealand's fishing rules at your fingertips

This brochure is a summary of the recreational fishing rules for the South-East Fishery Management Area (South area). It is a guide only and may not include all local restrictions and rules or any changes made since it was printed. To keep up to date, check the rules each time you fish. It is illegal to sell or trade your catch.

Check the rules

Check the rules using our FREE app

Download our free NZ Fishing Rules app by scanning the QR code or visiting the app store. The app works even when you have no coverage.



Other services

- Free text the name of the species you are fishing for (e.g. “kahawai” or “kina”) to **9889** and receive a text with the legal size and bag limit.
- Visit www.fisheries.govt.nz/rules
- Email recreationalfisheries@mpi.govt.nz to subscribe to fishing related updates in your area.
- Follow us on Facebook



MPI Fisheries – Northland
MPI Fisheries – East Cape/Bay of Plenty
MPI Fisheries – Nelson/Marlborough/Kaikōura
MPI Fisheries – Canterbury/Westland
MPI Fisheries – Otago/Southland

Contact us 0800 00 83 33