



OIA16-0440

20 OCT 2016

Graham Carter
C/- fyi.org.nz

Dear Graham Carter

OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST

I refer to your official information request received by the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) on 1 August 2016 relating to:

1. All catch data for NZ Inshore fishing vessel, including catch reports and data on trawl mortality.
2. All catch reports for Red Snapper around the NZ coastline in the various fishing areas.
3. All Gurnard catch reports in the West Coast area.
4. All scallop catch reports for Marlborough Sounds and Hauraki Gulf since 2000.
5. All Flounder catch reports.
6. All analysis reports on discrepancies in catches on fishing vessels.

As you have not specified the fishing areas in points one, two, five and six of your request, MPI has interpreted these areas as being the total sum of all 52 inshore Fisheries Statistical Areas of New Zealand. MPI has interpreted the "West Coast area" in point three as specifically meaning the West Coast region of the South Island only, which does not include the North Island, nor any area of the South Island that lies north or south of the West Coast region.

MPI has interpreted point six as a request for all discrepancy reports prepared for any of the 1000+ permit holders in New Zealand, which compares the greenweight of fish reported on the Monthly Harvest Return with the Licensed Fish Receiver Return and the corresponding individual Catch Landing returns for all species in all fishing areas of New Zealand.

Your request is for a significant amount of information that covers many separate fishing areas of New Zealand as well as an extended period of time, at least the last 16 years. Your request would require a search through a number of databases and paper records in order to collate the data. Your request is refused pursuant to section 18(f) of the Official Information Act (OIA), as the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.

In making the decision to refuse your the request pursuant to section 18(f) of the OIA on the grounds that the information cannot be made available without substantial collation or research, we considered this request together with your other requests relating to fisheries management issues. We also considered whether fixing a charge would enable us to grant your request. Given the considerable amount of information requested, we have decided that charging would not be appropriate. The diversion of resources required to meet your requests would unreasonably interfere with the operations of MPI.

Secondly, pursuant to section 18B, we considered consulting you about revising the scope of the requests. Given the substantial amount of information requested, we do not see that entering into correspondence on this issue is likely to refocus the requests down to a manageable scale.

It may be useful to review the *Fisheries Assessment Plenary* reports on the MPI website, as this will give you summaries on fishery, biological, stock assessment and stock status information for 99 of New Zealand's commercial fish species or species groups in a series of Working Group or Plenary reports. The reports can be found at the following link and will contain information relevant to the requests that you have made: (<http://fs.fish.govt.nz/Page.aspx?pk=61&tk=212>).

You have the right under section 28(3) of the OIA to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of our decision to refuse your request.

Yours sincerely



Peter McCarthy
Chief Legal Adviser