

# Revitalising the Gulf

## Marine protection proposals

### Information document

#### Purpose

This document describes and seeks feedback on the updated marine protection proposals that have been further developed since those described in *Revitalising the Gulf: Government action on the Sea Change Plan (Revitalising the Gulf)*.

It outlines why the Government is pursuing increased marine protection and new protection tools in the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park (the Gulf). Further information can be found in the marine protection and fisheries management sections in *Revitalising the Gulf*.

This document does not seek feedback on any other proposals contained in *Revitalising the Gulf*.

In addition to the marine protection proposals, a Hauraki Gulf Fisheries Plan is being developed. There will be a separate opportunity to provide feedback on the Fisheries Plan later this year. More information on this process will be available at:

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

#### We are seeking your feedback

The Department of Conservation (DOC) welcomes feedback on any or all of the proposals contained in this document.

Anyone can provide feedback by emailing us at: [seachange@doc.govt.nz](mailto:seachange@doc.govt.nz). Please ensure any attachments are in either a PDF or Microsoft Word format and include your name (or the name of the group you are representing) and contact details in your email.

***Please provide any feedback by 5pm 28 October 2022.***

Feedback received will inform how to progress *Revitalising the Gulf's* package of marine protection proposals. The Minister for Oceans and Fisheries and Minister of Conservation will consider your feedback before making final decisions and progressing a Hauraki Gulf Marine Protection Bill.

There will also be an opportunity to provide feedback on this Bill during a Select Committee process.

Please direct any questions that you have in relation to this process to [seachange@doc.govt.nz](mailto:seachange@doc.govt.nz)

#### What are we proposing?

We propose establishing 19 new protected zones in the Hauraki Gulf, using two new marine protection tools established through new legislation (a new Hauraki Gulf Marine Protection Bill). This increase in marine protection will support the recovery of some of the most biodiverse regions in the Gulf. The proposed marine protection package includes:

- 12 High Protection Areas (HPAs) to protect and enhance marine habitats and ecosystems while providing for the customary practices of mana whenua;
- 5 Seafloor Protection Areas (SPAs) to protect sensitive sea floor habitats while continuing to allow for compatible activities; and
- 2 protected areas adjacent to Whanganui-a-Hei (Cathedral Cove) and Cape Rodney – Okakari Point marine reserves. These areas will be established as HPAs or marine reserve extensions.

#### Why do we need more marine protection?

Consecutive 'State of our Gulf' reports illustrate that the Gulf is in an ongoing state of environmental decline due to human activities.

Pressures from harvest and utilisation activities, land-based activities (e.g. pollution and sedimentation) and climate change have contributed to a decline in coastal and marine biodiversity. Increasing prevalence of ecosystem changes such as kina barrens, habitat loss and localised fisheries depletion are some of the ways these issues are manifesting.

National and international experts consider area-based marine protection to be one of the most effective methods for protecting marine life. In the Gulf at present, there are six existing marine reserves and four cable protection zones (CPZ) that are recognised as 'Type 2' marine protected areas. These cover 0.28% and 6.3% of the Gulf respectively.

The protection areas proposed would increase protection to 18% of the Gulf (including the CPZ) and bring us closer to creating an effective network of marine protection. This will result in positive biodiversity outcomes and contribute to *Revitalising the Gulf's* goal of restoring the overall health and mauri (life force) of the Gulf.

# What are our proposals for marine protection in the Gulf?

## Where did these proposals come from?

In 2017, the *Sea Change - Tai Timu Tai Pari - Hauraki Gulf Marine Spatial Plan* (Sea Change Plan) recommended marine protected areas at 15 sites in the Gulf. In 2020, DOC undertook an initial biodiversity assessment of the Sea Change Plan's marine protection recommendations based on the best data available.

Technical experts assessed the Sea Change Plan's recommendations against its objectives, overall biodiversity benefits, and principles of marine protected area network design. The findings of this assessment were presented at a workshop where technical experts<sup>1</sup> made minor boundary changes to the Sea Change Plan's proposals where the assessment indicated such changes would enhance biodiversity outcomes or reduce the potential impact on users.

## Outcomes for marine protection

The proposals intend to deliver the following outcomes:

- protection of at-risk, high ecological value and representative habitats and ecosystems in the Gulf to support their recovery;
- increased understanding of marine ecosystems within the Gulf, and the pressures on them, to support holistic management; and
- restoration of the Gulf's healthy marine environment to enhance cultural practices and social and spiritual wellbeing.

## The new marine protection tools

As described in *Revitalising the Gulf*, two new protection tools are proposed to achieve biodiversity and cultural outcomes. These tools have been designed to recognise Treaty Settlements, customary rights as identified under the **Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Act 2011** (Takutai Moana Act), and other statutory obligations.

### *12 High Protection Areas*

HPAs will provide high-level protection from the sea floor to the water's surface. The purpose of HPAs is to protect, enhance, and restore the full range of marine communities and ecosystems and outstanding, rare, distinctive, or nationally important marine habitats, to protect the mauri of the Gulf. HPAs will also provide for the customary practices of mana whenua.

Each HPA will be managed according to site-specific biodiversity objectives based on the biological values requiring protection at each site.

### *5 Seafloor Protection Areas*

SPAs are designed to maintain, restore and protect ecologically important benthic (seafloor) habitats while allowing for compatible uses. SPAs will be complemented by management actions in the draft Hauraki Gulf Fisheries Plan (as described in *Revitalising the Gulf*) to protect marine benthic habitats from the adverse effects of bottom-contact fishing.

### *2 additional marine protection areas adjacent to existing marine reserves*



*Revitalising the Gulf* proposed marine protection in the areas adjacent to Whanganui-a-Hei (Cathedral Cove)<sup>2</sup> and Cape Rodney-Okakari Point marine reserves. *Revitalising the Gulf* noted that these adjacent areas could either be established as HPAs or marine reserves.

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<sup>1</sup> The workshop included technical advisors from DOC, Fisheries New Zealand (FNZ) and the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA).

<sup>2</sup> Note that work is underway to rename the Whanganui-a-Hei (Cathedral Cove) marine reserve to Te Whanganui-O-Hei (Cathedral Cove) Marine Reserve.

**Table 1: What activities can be undertaken in HPAs?**

 <b>Supports</b>	 <b>Prohibits</b>
<p>Activities that can take place in HPAs may include (although are not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recreational activities such as swimming, snorkelling and diving;</li> <li>• commercial operators that utilise the marine environment for non-extractive purposes and do not harm habitats. For instance, ecotourism businesses showcasing local wildlife;</li> <li>• journeys through HPAs;</li> <li>• normal ship operations such as piloting and anchoring a vessel;</li> <li>• small-scale removal of non-marine life such as shells and stones;</li> <li>• monitoring and research driven by either mātauranga Māori or western science knowledge systems or both;</li> <li>• active habitat restoration initiatives, such as the removal or addition of marine life (translocation) to improve habitats of interest.</li> </ul> <p>The customary practices of mana whenua, including customary non-commercial fishing, will be provided for within HPAs. Customary practices will be managed to achieve the biodiversity objectives agreed with mana whenua for each site.</p> <p>Protected Customary Rights (PCR) and Customary Marine Title (CMT) recognised under the Takutai Moana Act will be unaffected.</p>	<p>Activities that will be prohibited in HPAs may include (although are not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mining;</li> <li>• dumping;</li> <li>• commercial and recreational fishing;</li> <li>• industrial removal of marine materials such as sand, stones, and biogenic reef materials;</li> <li>• erection of structures;</li> <li>• discharge of oils, noxious liquids, garbage, fishing waste, untreated sewage, or other potentially harmful substances;</li> <li>• discharge of sewage from outfalls;</li> <li>• discharge of ballast (unless for the immediate safety of the ship);</li> <li>• landing of an aircraft (except for emergency or for a navigational aid);</li> <li>• the use of explosives or firearms.</li> </ul>

**Table 2: What activities can be undertaken in SPAs?**

 <b>Supports</b>	 <b>Prohibits</b>
<p>Activities that can take place in SPAs may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• commercial and recreational fishing (without harmful bottom-contact fishing methods);</li> <li>• the customary practices of mana whenua;</li> <li>• recreational activities such as snorkelling, kayaking, swimming and scuba diving;</li> <li>• passage through the area and normal ship operations.</li> </ul> <p>PCR and CMT recognised under the Takutai Moana Act will be unaffected.</p>	<p>Activities which harm the seafloor will be prohibited in SPAs, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• dumping;</li> <li>• dredging;</li> <li>• bottom trawling;</li> <li>• Danish seining;</li> <li>• potting;</li> <li>• set netting;</li> <li>• bottom longlining;</li> <li>• sand extraction;</li> <li>• mining.</li> </ul>

## We have worked with mana whenua to develop options for how customary practices can be managed in HPAs

The Gulf has supported generations of Māori, with some of the earliest waka (traditional canoes) arriving on these shores between 600-800 years ago. This taonga (treasure) has been passed down with each generation, along with the responsibility and authority to protect it. We want to support mana whenua to continue to undertake their non-commercial customary practices, including with respect to their ancestral role as kaitiaki (guardians) of the Gulf.

### *Initial biodiversity objectives for each HPA will be developed next year*

In 2023, DOC intends to work with mana whenua to identify the biodiversity objectives for each HPA site. The biodiversity objectives will inform the management of customary fishing, habitat restoration, and research and monitoring within each HPA site. We intend for the biodiversity objectives to be based on the best available information, including Mātauranga Māori, and we will engage with mana whenua to achieve this.

As we work with mana whenua to understand interests across each individual HPA, we intend for the biodiversity objectives of each individual HPA to be refined over time in partnership with mana whenua.

### *The biodiversity objectives will inform the management of customary practices*

Customary fishing will continue to be subject to the existing customary fisheries regulations to ensure the protections provided by the Treaty of Waitangi (Fisheries Claims) Settlement Act 1992 are able to be exercised. These customary fisheries regulations include:

- **Fisheries (Kaimoana Customary Fishing) Regulations 1998**, which provide for customary food gathering and the special relationship mana whenua have with important fishing grounds;
- **Fisheries (Amateur Fishing) Regulations 2013**, which provide for the authorisation of traditional non-commercial fishing use and take for hui or tangi.

Some additional management measures may be needed to ensure alignment with the biodiversity objectives. If so, these will be implemented through the existing fishing regulations. The planned Hauraki Gulf Marine Protection Bill will stipulate that the customary fisheries regulations will give effect to the biodiversity objectives, i.e. customary fishing exercised under customary fisheries regulations must not conflict with the HPA objectives agreed with mana whenua.

Over time, as the biodiversity objectives for individual HPAs are refined in partnership with mana whenua, we propose that mana whenua have the option to design their own customary practice management plans (CPMPs). CPMPs can describe how mana whenua will manage their customary fishing to align with the biodiversity objectives.

CPMPs will provide for mana whenua to exercise rangatiratanga (authority) over their own customary practices and recognise their role as kaitiaki.

For example, a CPMP may establish additional stock limits for vulnerable fish species, restrict methods of fishing harmful to the local habitats, or restrict customary fishing during breeding seasons or according to the maramataka (the Māori lunar calendar).

Customary fishing will continue to be exercised under existing fisheries legislation but should be consistent with the CPMP developed by mana whenua to manage their fishing in HPAs.

It will continue to be possible to use the management tools in the Fisheries Act 1996 which provide for temporary closures and restrictions on fishing methods (Sections 186A and 186B closures) and taiāpure which can regulate commercial, recreational, and customary fishing (although commercial and recreational fishing will already be prohibited within the HPAs).

### *Other non-fishing customary practices will be provided for within HPAs*

We understand that some customary practices involve the removal of marine materials. These customary practices can continue within the HPAs and SPAs.

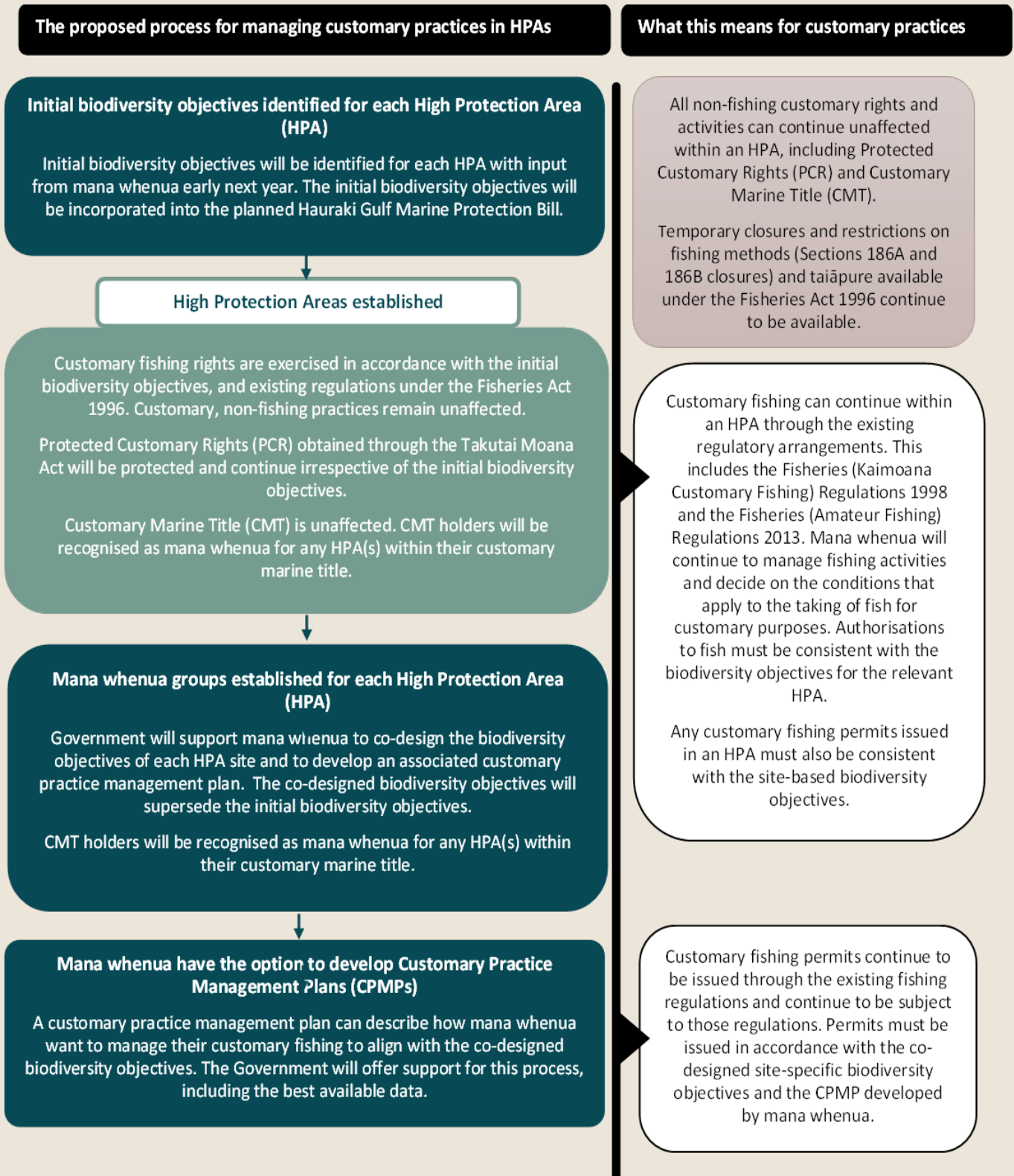
We propose that HPAs and SPAs provide for small-scale removal of non-living materials such as shells and stones (marine materials). Large-scale removal of marine materials would be prohibited to ensure a limited impact on marine ecosystems so the sites can passively recover over time.

### *Rights and interests recognised by the Takutai Moana Act would not be affected*

The Takutai Moana Act provides legal recognition and protection of customary interests in the marine and coastal area, including through protected customary rights (PCR) and customary marine title (CMT).

Such rights and interests recognised, or sought, under the Takutai Moana Act would not be affected. Successful PCR applicants can continue to exercise their PCRs within the proposed HPAs and SPAs, irrespective of the sites' biodiversity objectives or CPMPs. Depending on their PCR order, PCR holders may have the power to remove marine materials at greater volumes than others.

Figure 1: Approach to providing for customary practices in HPAs



## Protection tool for extensions to existing marine reserves

*We are considering the type of protection tool to be applied adjacent to Whanganui-a-Hei (Cathedral Cove) and Cape Rodney-Okakari Point marine reserves*

*Revitalising the Gulf* proposed marine protection in the areas adjacent to Whanganui-a-Hei and Cape Rodney-Okakari Point marine reserves (the latter is also known as the Leigh or Goat Island marine reserve). *Revitalising the Gulf* noted that these adjacent areas could either be established as HPAs or marine reserves.

- **HPAs** will protect, enhance and restore the full range of marine communities and ecosystems and outstanding, rare, distinctive or nationally important marine habitats. Removal of material or activities that harm marine life will not be allowed. Customary practices that are consistent with the biodiversity objectives of each site will be provided for.
- **Marine reserves** are established under the Marine Reserves Act 1971 and provide protection from the sea surface to the sea floor, including the foreshore. Marine reserves create an area free from alterations to marine habitats and life, providing a useful comparison for scientists to study.

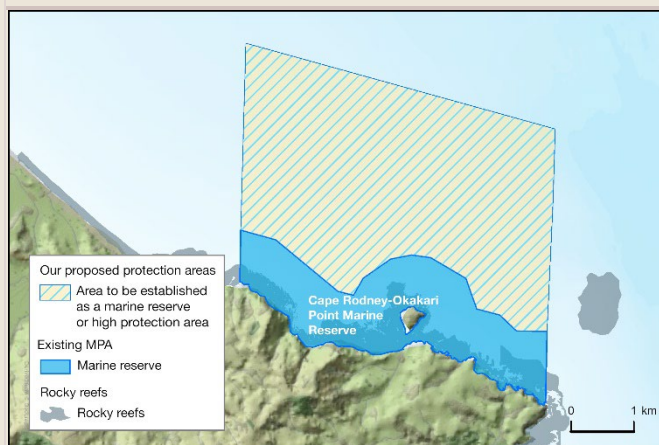
The Sea Change Plan originally recommended these areas be established as extensions of the existing marine reserves. However, during *Revitalising the Gulf's* development, concerns were raised about the impact of such extensions on the customary practices of mana whenua. DOC has since engaged further with mana whenua to help determine what protection tool would be most appropriate and received mixed feedback.

We are interested in whether there are any other ecological values at the proposed sites (described opposite), or technical considerations you would like Ministers to give regard to when making their decision on the protection tool to be applied at these sites.

### Have your say

- Is there anything you would like Ministers to consider when deciding the marine protection tool to be applied at these sites? For instance, are there other ecological values you would like them to be aware of?

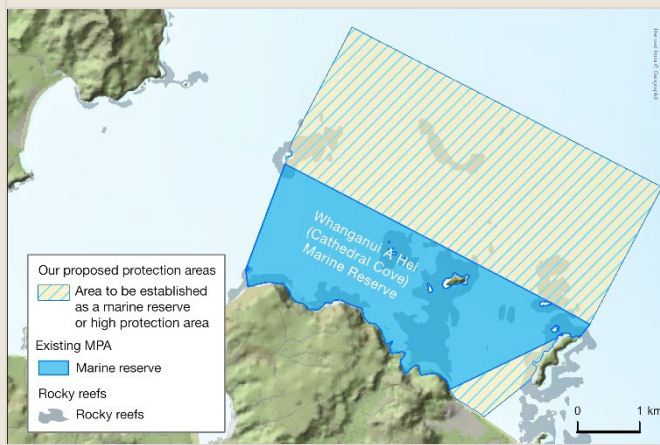
### Cape Rodney-Okakari Point proposal



**Ecological value:** Research and monitoring undertaken in the marine reserve since its establishment in 1975 (as our first marine reserve) tells a well-documented story of ecosystem recovery post implementation. However, significant fishing at the reserve's boundary has been linked to impacts on fish abundance within the reserve.

The extension would enhance the reserve by reducing the pressure of fishing at the edges, enabling effective protection of the reef ecosystem. The proposal would extend protection to a more significant amount of soft substrate habitat and preserve the linkages between these habitats and the rocky reef.

### Whanganui-a-Hei (Cathedral Cove) proposal



**Ecological value:** Recreational fishing, including spear fishing and scuba diving for rock lobster (as well as commercial rock lobster fishing) is common around the boundary of the reserve.

The extension would improve protection to the existing reserve by acting as a buffer to exploitation on the boundary. In addition, the extension would both increase the representation of soft substrate habitats and extend protection to deep reef habitats currently not included in the reserve.

## The Ōtata / the Noises HPA

*We have added the Ōtata / the Noises HPA to the list of HPA proposals*

We are proposing the establishment of an HPA around the Noises Islands, a cluster of small islands east of Rākino Island and north of Waiheke Island. The islands and surrounding marine area are of high biodiversity importance.

It is expected that the HPA would enhance important ecological linkages between terrestrial and marine habitats. The proposed HPA contains a variety of physical and biogenic habitats including mussel beds, dog cockle beds, and rhodolith beds.

Revitalising the Gulf identified the Noises as a potential area for marine protection and noted that a proposal was being led by a community project.

Now that the project has concluded, we see value in progressing the proposal alongside *Revitalising the Gulf's* other marine protection initiatives. It would protect important biodiversity and deliver on the aspirations of the local community and Sea Change Stakeholder Working Group; but will be framed differently to the community project proposal. We do not plan to:

- establish an Ōtata Mauri Ora Guardians group similar to the Kaikōura Marine Guardians. Instead, we propose a consistent management approach across the marine protection proposals. There would not be multiple groups to oversee the general management of individual HPAs;
- name the area 'Ōtata Mauri Ora' (The Noises Marine Regeneration Area). Instead, we propose the name 'Ōtata/the Noises High Protection Area', in line with the nomenclature of the wider marine protection proposals.

### Ōtata/the Noises HPA proposal



## Estimated impacts of the protection package

### Benefits of the proposals

The marine protection zones are designed to protect the marine environment, increase the abundance of fish stocks, and build our understanding of marine ecosystems.

The Gulf includes many sensitive habitats (e.g. sponge gardens) and species (e.g. shorebirds, black corals) that will benefit from protection. HPAs and SPAs will provide protection from directed take of targeted organisms, bycatch mortality of non-target organisms, and habitat damage from fishing activities.

By eliminating some of the main stressors, the areas can eventually recover and restore ecological integrity to reflect 'natural' ecosystem structure and function.

The protected areas could also support abundant fish stocks for commercial and recreational fishers, alongside the proposed fisheries management measures. The spillover of fish larvae from marine reserves has shown the potential for contributing to fisheries sustainability and enhancement. For example, it is estimated adult snapper at Leigh marine reserve contributed 10.6% of newly settled juveniles to the surrounding 400 km<sup>2</sup> area.

The HPAs and SPAs can enable uses that have ecological, cultural, social, genetic, economic, educational, scientific, recreational, and aesthetic importance. For instance, scuba diving, eco-tours and research activities would all be provided for within the proposed protected areas. HPAs and SPAs will also provide opportunities for better public understanding and appreciation of marine ecosystems and education.

The protected areas will facilitate and enhance scientific knowledge and understanding of marine ecosystems and natural processes by providing comparative areas with minimal human disturbances. By eliminating fishing, marine reserves provide control sites to objectively evaluate the effects of extractive impacts on marine ecosystems.

The protected areas would also bring us a step closer to achieving global goals and targets under the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The CBD is seeking to adopt a new global biodiversity framework, including new global goals and targets. One target being proposed (Target 3) aims for 30% protection of the global ocean by 2030.

## Impact on the commercial and recreational fishing sectors

The proposed protected areas are designed to help protect important ecosystems and habitats. However, we acknowledge that establishing new protected areas will have an impact on the commercial and recreational fishing sectors. The Gulf supports a number of key inshore fisheries including snapper, grey mullet, blue mackerel and gurnard.

### Recreational fishing

While spatial information on recreational fishing is limited, results from an analysis of fishing effort relating to the Sea Change Plan's proposals indicated that the Kawau Bay and Rotoroa Island areas are likely to have the most significant impact on recreational fishing for snapper (noting that protection around Ōtata/the Noises was not considered in that analysis).<sup>3</sup>

Estimated displacement of boat-based recreational fishing for snapper was 1.6% and 1.1% (of the total recreational snapper catch caught within the Gulf) for Kawau Bay and Motoroa Island respectively. Overall, an estimated 5.7% of recreational boat fishing for snapper would be displaced by the HPAs/marine reserve extensions (excluding the Noises).

Further assessment of the effects of the proposals on recreational fishing are ongoing. The results of this assessment will be published on our website later this year.

### Commercial fishing

DOC commissioned an economic impact assessment of the marine protection proposals described in this document. The first stage of this assessment determined the level of commercial fishing activity that occurs within the proposed protection areas, relative to the overall commercial fishing activity in the Gulf. The results of this assessment are summarised below.

#### Methodology

The analysis was performed using commercial fishing catch and effort information provided by Fisheries New Zealand (FNZ). The fishing effort estimates within the proposed protected areas were generated using a combination of electronic catch and position reporting.

The estimated catch was produced by measuring the proportion of a fishing event that occurred inside a proposed area, then applying that proportion to the reported catch for that fishing event.

The analysis accounted for the different levels of protection provided by HPAs and SPAs and their subsequent impact on commercial fishing. For example, HPAs prohibit all commercial fishing whilst SPAs support limited commercial fishing using non-bottom contact methods.

#### The October fishing year

The majority of commercial fishing stocks are managed according to the October fishing year (1 October to 30 September). The remaining affected commercial fishing stocks caught in the Gulf, rock lobster and packhorse rock lobster, are managed according to the April fishing year (1 April to 31 March).

The impact assessment considered how much commercial fishing activity is undertaken in the quota management areas that include the Gulf to understand how much fishing activity would be impacted/displaced.

In the 2020-2021 October fishing year, total catch within the Gulf was 37,979 tonnes.<sup>4</sup> This translated to NZD\$66 million of port price revenue for the commercial fishing industry. Of this, 1% (530 tonnes) was estimated to have been caught within the proposed protected areas, accounting for NZD\$ 1.37 million in port price revenue (2% of total port price revenue in the Gulf) for the commercial fishing industry.

#### The April fishing year

In the 2020-2021 April fishing year, total catch within the Gulf was 129 tonnes of greenweight. This translated to NZD\$ 7.8 million of port price revenue for the commercial fishing industry. Of this, 3% (4.47 tonnes) was caught within the proposed protected areas, accounting for NZD\$ 0.3 million in port price revenue (4% of total port price revenue in the Gulf) for the commercial fishing industry.

### Have your say?

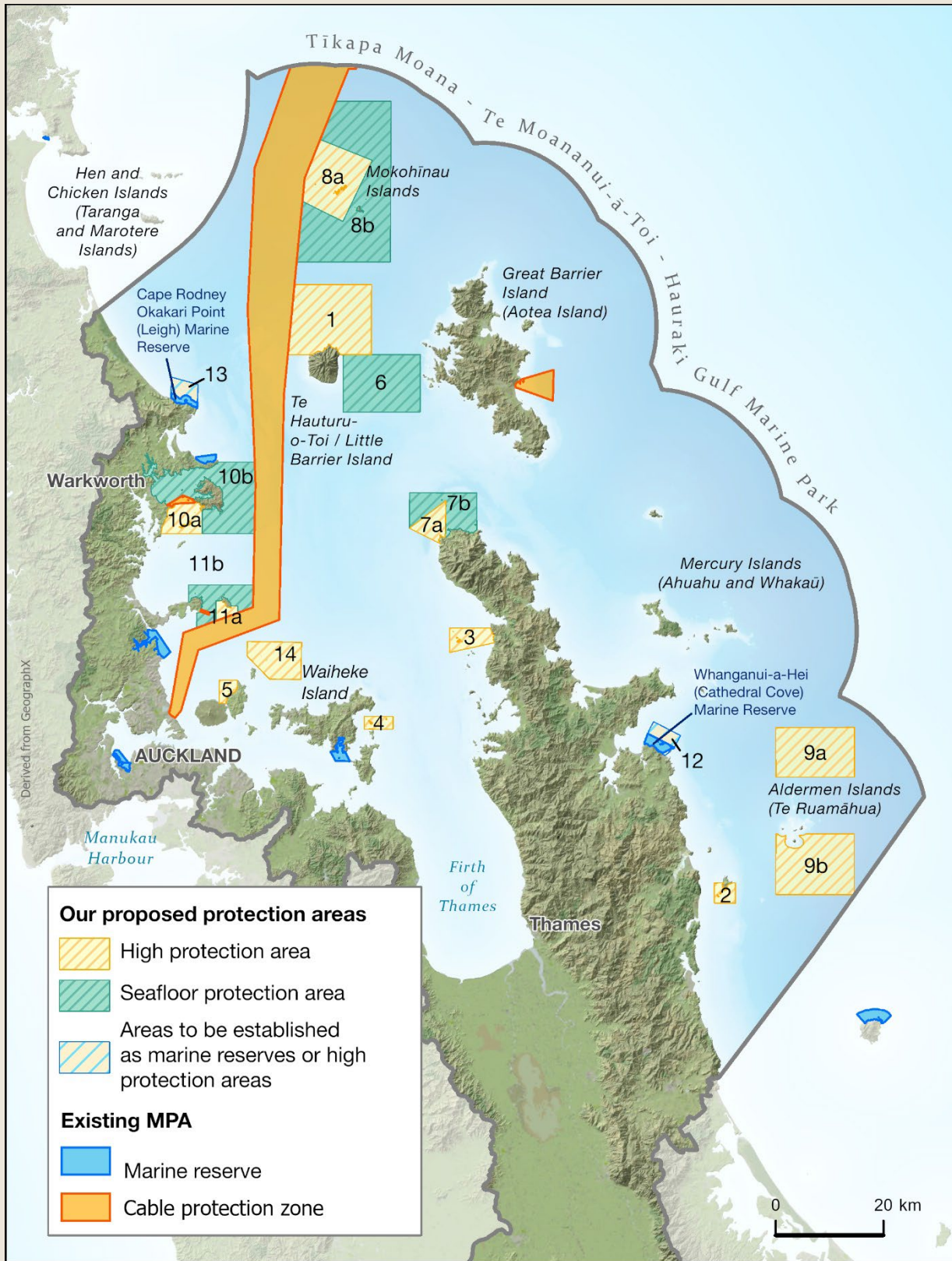
- What impact will the marine protection proposals have on you or your interests?
- Do you think there are any additional costs or benefits we haven't considered? For instance, those specific to individual operators?

<sup>3</sup> This assessment is based on aerial survey data collected during 47 scheduled flight days in 2017/18 and the associated boat ramp creel survey (interview) data. See Sea Change - Marine Protected Area (MPA) proposals - Agency analysis and advice on selection of MPAs towards development of the Hauraki Gulf MPA network, pages 144-145, for further information.

<sup>4</sup> Catch refers to greenweight - the weight of fish before any processing commences.



**Figure 2:** Location of the marine protection proposals (see the corresponding list of protected areas on the following page)

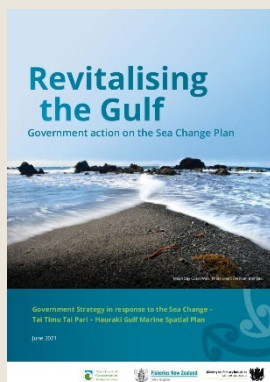


**Figure 3:** List of proposed areas for marine protection in the Gulf.

Map reference	Site	Type of protection
1	Te Hauturu-o-Toi / Little Barrier Island	High Protection Area
2	Slipper Island / Whakahau	High Protection Area
3	Motukawao Islands	High Protection Area
4	Rotoroa Island	High Protection Area
5	Rangitoto and Motutapu	High Protection Area
6	Craddock Channel	Seafloor Protection Area
7a	Cape Colville	High Protection Area
7b	Cape Colville	Seafloor Protection Area
8a	Mokohīnau Islands	High Protection Area
8b	Mokohīnau Islands	Seafloor Protection Area
9a	Aldermen Islands / Te Ruamāhua (north)	High Protection Area
9b	Aldermen Islands / Te Ruamāhua (south)	High Protection Area
10a	Kawau Bay	High Protection Area
10b	Kawau Bay	Seafloor Protection Area
11a	Tiritiri Matangi	High Protection Area
11b	Tiritiri Matangi	Seafloor Protection Area
12	Whanganui-a-Hei (Cathedral Cove) Marine Reserve	High Protection Area or marine reserve
13	Cape Rodney-Okakari Point (Leigh) Marine Reserve	High Protection Area or marine reserve
14	Ōtata / Noises Islands	High Protection Area

## Background information

### What is *Revitalising the Gulf*: Government action on the Sea Change Plan?



Revitalising the Gulf is the Government's strategy in response to the call for action made by the 2017 *Sea Change - Tai Timu Tai Pari - Hauraki Gulf Marine Spatial Plan* (the *Sea Change Plan*). Released in 2021, *Revitalising the Gulf* is a package of integrated marine conservation and fisheries management actions to improve the health and mauri

of the Gulf.

*Revitalising the Gulf* includes a roadmap of actions across marine protection, fisheries management, aquaculture, active habitat restoration, marine biosecurity, protected species, research monitoring and reporting, and ahu moana (localised marine management by local communities and mana whenua). DOC and FNZ are implementing these actions over the next three years and beyond.

*Revitalising the Gulf's* actions will be supported by a research, monitoring and reporting programme, to track implementation and effectiveness of actions, and drive a flexible adaptive management approach to deliver the best results for the Gulf.

*Revitalising the Gulf's* actions are guided by two overarching outcomes:

- 1) Effective kaitiakitanga and guardianship in the Gulf; and
- 2) Healthy functioning ecosystems that:
  - underpin the wellbeing and prosperity of people who live, work and play in the Gulf;
  - sustain healthy fisheries that replenish and enhance the pātaka kai (food basket) for customary, recreational and commercial uses;
  - regulate, support and sustain the Gulf; and
  - support resilient and diverse habitats and marine life.

A key deliverable of *Revitalising the Gulf*, and the focal point for this document, was the proposal for 18 new protected areas utilising two new marine protection

tools. *Revitalising the Gulf* also noted that a proposal for marine protection for Ōtata / the Noises Islands was being led by an independent community group. That proposal is also included for discussion in this document.

For further information on *Revitalising the Gulf*, visit: [www.doc.govt.nz/our-work/sea-change-hauraki-gulf-marine-spatial-plan/](http://www.doc.govt.nz/our-work/sea-change-hauraki-gulf-marine-spatial-plan/)

### An independent Sea Change – Tai Timu Tai Pari – Ministerial Advisory Committee provided advice during *Revitalising the Gulf's* development

The Sea Change – Tai Timu Tai Pari Ministerial Advisory Committee (the MAC) was appointed by the then Minister of Fisheries and Minister of Conservation in July 2019 to provide feedback and advice to Ministers, DOC and FNZ. The MAC provided independent expert feedback and advice during *Revitalising the Gulf's* development, including reviewing and testing the proposals against desired outcomes.

Membership comprised 50% mana whenua, and members had expertise in areas such as tikanga Māori, science, environmental issues, law, economics and fisheries management. Four members were also involved in the development of the Sea Change Plan. The mana of the MAC members, their standing within the Gulf community, experience in key sectors and interest areas brought together diverse viewpoints and expertise to inform *Revitalising the Gulf's* development.

The MAC's advice cumulated in its September 2020 report to the former Ministers of Conservation and Fisheries (then Hon Eugenie Sage and Hon Stuart Nash). This report stated that Government had broadly arrived at a logical and durable response.

### *Revitalising the Gulf* was informed by mana whenua and stakeholder feedback

Targeted engagement with mana whenua and key stakeholders was critical to testing the Sea Change Plan's recommendations and developing *Revitalising the Gulf*. DOC and FNZ worked together with the MAC to identify the iwi, iwi organisations and stakeholders that had a special interest in the Hauraki Gulf.



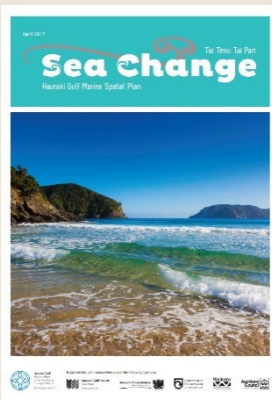
Department of  
Conservation  
Te Papa Atawhai

DOC and FNZ invited 28 iwi and 2 iwi collectives with rohe connection in the Gulf to provide feedback on the Sea Change Plan's recommendations. Agencies met with all mana whenua who expressed an interest in meeting. Mana whenua were broadly supportive of new marine protection measures, provided customary practices could be exercised.

Information packs were distributed to 138 stakeholders. 6 local and regional councils, 28 stakeholder groups (representing commercial and recreational fishers), the aquaculture industry and environmental organisations were actively engaged. Stakeholders' continued support for *Revitalising the Gulf* was dependent on being given the opportunity to provide further input on the strategy's implementation.

We encourage stakeholders and mana whenua to provide feedback during the current engagement process.

## What is the Sea Change Plan – Tai Timu Tai Pari – Hauraki Gulf Marine Spatial Plan?



The Sea Change Plan is an innovative, non-statutory plan that contains over 180 recommendations across land and freshwater for improving the health and mauri of the Gulf. It includes proposals for fisheries management, marine protection, habitat restoration, catchment management, localised co-management, aquaculture and opportunities for economic development.

In 2013, mana whenua and representatives of environmental groups, and infrastructure, fishing, aquaculture and agriculture sectors came together to form the 14-member Sea Change Stakeholder Working Group. The group was tasked with developing an integrated plan for the Gulf in a bid to reverse the decline in its health. This project was overseen by a co-governance Sea Change Project Steering Group.

The Sea Change Plan was released in 2016 and published in 2017. The Sea Change Plan was developed through engagement with mana whenua, local communities, and stakeholder groups. Some mana whenua were involved in the development of the Sea Change Plan through representation on the Project Steering Group, Stakeholder Working Group, the

Mātauranga Māori Round Table and the Mana Whenua Reference Group. However, not all mana whenua were included or represented in this process.

The Stakeholder Working Group engaged with the public on the state of biodiversity in the Gulf prior to publishing the Sea Change Plan. The overwhelming response was that marine biodiversity and marine protected areas are some of the most important issues in the Gulf.

The Government was not involved in the drafting of the Sea Change Plan. However, DOC, FNZ, Auckland Council and Waikato Regional Council provided scientific, technical, financial and administrative support to the Stakeholder Working Group.

You can read the Sea Change Plan at:

[www.gulfjournal.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/5086-SCTTTP-Marine-Spatial-Plan-WR.pdf](http://www.gulfjournal.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/5086-SCTTTP-Marine-Spatial-Plan-WR.pdf)

## Official Information Act

Please note that any feedback you provide will become public information and that anyone can ask for copies of the feedback provided during engagement under the Official Information Act (OIA) 1982.

The OIA states that we must make information available unless there is a good reason for withholding it and provides a list of such reasons in sections 6, 9 and 18. If you think there is a good reason to withhold specific information, please state this alongside your feedback. A good reason may include commercial confidentiality or that it is personal information.

Any decision that is made by DOC to withhold information can be reviewed by the Ombudsman, who may require the information to be released.