



26 May 2008

Dear Stakeholder

I am writing to advise you that the Ministry of Fisheries (MFish) wishes to consult on a proposed purpose for a special permit. The proposed purpose is intended to enable commercial exploratory and developmental fishing activities for stocks in the Quota Management System.

Section 97 of the Fisheries Act (Act) authorises the MFish Chief Executive to issue a special permit. If an activity considered for a special permit does not fit within the purposes prescribed in the Act, the Minister of Fisheries (Minister) may approve any other purpose, following consultation with such persons as he considers are representative of those classes of persons having an interest in the granting of such a special permit. MFish is consulting on behalf of the Minister to approve a new purpose.

This new purpose would be applied where information on stocks with very low total allowable catches is unavailable or inadequate. MFish considers that special permits would be an appropriate mechanism to permit commercial exploratory fishing, research and data collection programmes, in order to establish a more informed catch limit in the future. This particular use of special permits is not explicitly captured under those prescribed in the Act and therefore MFish proposes a new purpose, as approved by the Minister, is needed.

The full proposal is discussed in the attached Initial Position Paper (IPP).

Following the consultation period, MFish will submit an advice paper to the Minister summarising the views of tangata whenua and stakeholders and seeking a final decision on the proposed purpose. If the Minister approves the proposed purpose, MFish staff would consult with, as prescribed in section 97(2) of the Act, on any specific special permit application received under this purpose.

I welcome your views on the matters discussed in this IPP. The consultation period is open until Monday 7 July. Please provide submissions to Tracey Steel to either tracey.steel@fish.govt.nz or Tracey Steel, Ministry of Fisheries, PO Box 1020, Wellington.

Sincerely

Stefan Leslie
Deepwater Manager