

31 August 2020

Fish and Game Review Panel
Via email: fgreview@doc.govt.nz

Feedback to Fish and Game Governance Review Panel

Tēnā kōrua Belinda and John,

Tourism Industry Aotearoa (TIA) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Fish and Game Governance Review.

TIA is the peak body for the tourism industry in New Zealand. With over 1,500 members, TIA represents a range of tourism-related activities including hospitality, accommodation, adventure & other activities, attractions, retail, airports & airlines, transport, as well as related tourism services.

Tourism and freshwater

Freshwater is supremely important to tourism. New Zealand's unique scenery and environment is ranked as one of the main reasons why international visitors choose to come here and freshwater is a key part of that. Tourism is a largely non-extractive user of freshwater – many tourism activities that interact with freshwater occur on or in the water but do not remove or damage the resource.

The NZTE-developed New Zealand Visitor Activity Forecast provides an indication of freshwater value. For the year 2019, it estimated 11,502,219 visitors (both domestic and international) would interact with freshwater through rafting, kayaking, canoeing, jet boating and fishing.

In 2015, TIA in conjunction with the Domestic Tourism Working Group undertook segmentation research into the domestic travel behaviour of New Zealanders. Respondents were asked to identify a list of their preferred activities when travelling domestically. The research identified that domestic travellers will potentially take over 1.7m trips per annum to participate in freshwater fishing. 1.1m of these are day trips, the other 700,000 trips being overnight. While this figure may not indicate the actual number of freshwater fishing trips (as it is potential rather than actual) it does demonstrate the attractiveness of freshwater fishing to stimulating domestic travel and getting New Zealanders into the outdoors.

NZ Professional Fishing Guides Association (NZPFGA) research estimates that the economic contribution of guided freshwater fishing to New Zealand ranges from \$28.9m (when assessing the direct benefit to the commercial freshwater fishing sector) to \$96.6m p.a. when the wider benefit to the tourism industry such as accommodation, transport, food and beverage are also

taken into account. The figures are regarded as conservative, with unrecognised and unregulated sources making the figures likely to be much higher than stated. NZPFGA also note that a 2014 study estimated the value of freshwater fishing to the economy in Otago alone (one of 12 Fish and Game regions) to be between \$63.7m and \$189m p.a. (Jiang 2014).

Tensions between commercially supported and private recreation in the environment

In the context of the wider natural environment, which includes freshwater, there is tension between some groups representing non-commercially supported recreation and the tourism industry. This tension is usually around sharing of a particular place and the different expectations of the user groups – particularly around noise, numbers of people, mechanised access and built facilities.

TIA believes that the needs of all user groups should be able to be met – however, not always in the same place at the same time. TIA also believes that the value of the experience of someone visiting our environment with commercial support is equal to that of someone visiting it privately. TIA advocates that national park plans should reflect these views and is supportive of DOC's efforts towards evidence-based management of sound impacts from helicopter flights and jetboat use.

TIA is making considerable effort to ensure that recreation representative groups understand the tourism industry, particularly with regard to our environmental values and the roles and importance of domestic and international visitors for the economy.

It's important to us that the commercial tourism voice is heard across Fish and Game, particularly at the National Council level (we understand several of the regional representatives are commercial fishing guides). While we will continue to encourage operators to volunteer their time to ensure the commercial tourism view is represented, we would encourage the panel to consider ways the commercial voice could be more strongly reflected across the work of Fish and Game.

TIA would value the opportunity to further engage and represent the tourism sector in the work of Fish and Game.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries about our feedback.

Nāku nā



Chris Roberts
Chief Executive
Tourism Industry Aotearoa