



Declaration and Evidence for Sustainability of COC7A fishery

New Zealand High Quality Fisheries Management: By

law, catch limits for every fish stock have to be set at levels that ensure their long-term sustainability. Fishstocks are regularly assessed to review catch limits in relation to biological reference levels as outlined here <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/growing-and-harvesting/fisheries/fisheries-management/fish-stock-status/>


Management target
 For a healthy fishery, we want fish stocks to fluctuate around this level.


Soft limit
 If a fish stock falls below this level, we manage it to rebuild it. For example, we reduce the total amount of fish that fishers can catch.


Hard limit
 If a stock falls below this level, we consider it 'collapsed'. We may close the fishery to rebuild it.

Latest stock Status: The most recent official review of the status of the COC7A fishery is summarised in the table here extracted from the 2021 COC7A fishery assessment found at <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/45373-Fisheries-Assessment-Plenary-May-2021-Stock-Assessments-and-Stock-Status-Volume-1-Introductory-section-and-Alfonsino-to-Hake> and concludes there is high quality information on this fishery and present catch levels are very unlikely to cause overfishing.

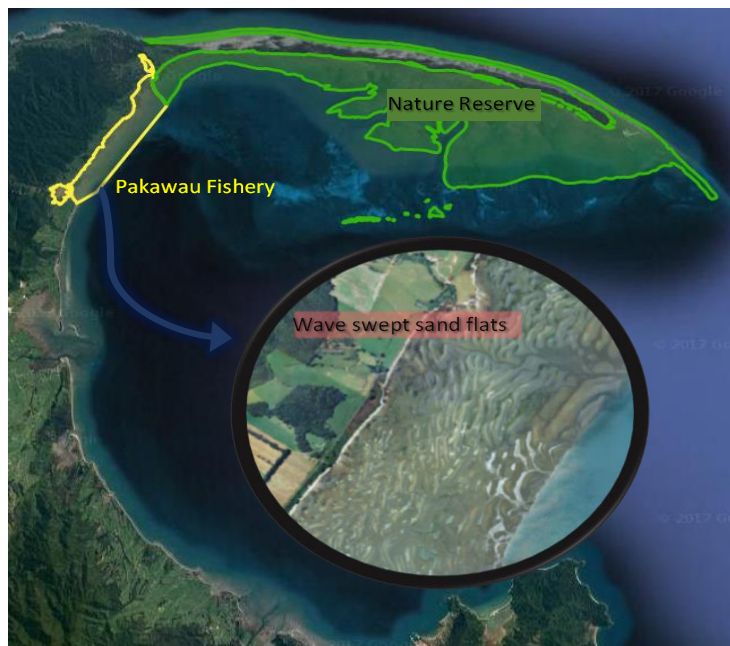
Stock Projections or Prognosis	-
Probability of Current Catch or TACC causing Biomass to remain below or to decline below Limits	Fishing at present levels is Very Unlikely (< 10%) to cause declines below the soft or hard limits.
Probability of Current Catch or TACC causing Overfishing	Very Unlikely (< 10%)

Assessment Methodology and Evaluation		
Assessment Type	Level 2 - Partial quantitative stock assessment	
Assessment Method	Absolute biomass estimates from quadrant surveys	
Assessment Dates	Latest assessment: 2021	Next assessment: 2028
Overall assessment quality rank	1 – High Quality	
Main data inputs (rank)	- Abundance survey	1 – High Quality
	- Length frequency	1 – High Quality

Independent review: The COC7A fishery has been independently assessed by The Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch Program and given their highest recommendation for consumer choice <https://www.seafoodwatch.org/recommendation/cockles/new-zealand-cockle-29033?species=30>



Ecosystem-based fisheries management: The area fished by Westhaven is a 500-ha relatively exposed tidal sand flat adjacent to the 9400-ha RAMSAR wetland and nature reserve at Farewell Spit, Golden Bay. The sand habitat ecosystem is well flushed by coastal waters producing fast growing and clean shelled cockles. The ecosystem is adapted to regular natural disturbance from storm waves and moving sand and tolerant of mechanical harvesting of cockles. The fished area and the adjacent reserve are used by significant numbers of endemic and migratory shorebirds that also rely on a healthy sandflat ecosystem and abundant cockles. Shorebird numbers are used as a sensitive indicator for ecosystem-based management of the COC7A fishery.



Westhaven's cockle fishery occupies a small proportion of the vast wave swept sand flats of Golden Bay ensuring a sustainable abundance of cockles and shorebird feeding grounds

Dr Tracey Osborne has monitored the sustainability of this fishery since 1992 and hereby declares the cockle fishery of the beach harvested by Westhaven Marketing Ltd is in good health and presently harvested at a sustainable level. Prepared for Westhaven Marketing Ltd by Dr Tracey Osborne October 2021