



# NZ R L I C B U S I N E S S P L A N

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2021 / 22







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# **FISHERY FIRST:**

## FROM ABUNDANCE ALL BENEFITS FLOW

### **Our role**

The NZ Rock Lobster Industry Council Ltd (NZ RLIC) operates as the representative body and central service agency for the commercial lobster fishing industry. It is our role to liaise with government, media, tangata whenua, environmental groups and other marine stakeholders on behalf of our constituents and in their best interests and that of the fishery.

### **Our mission**

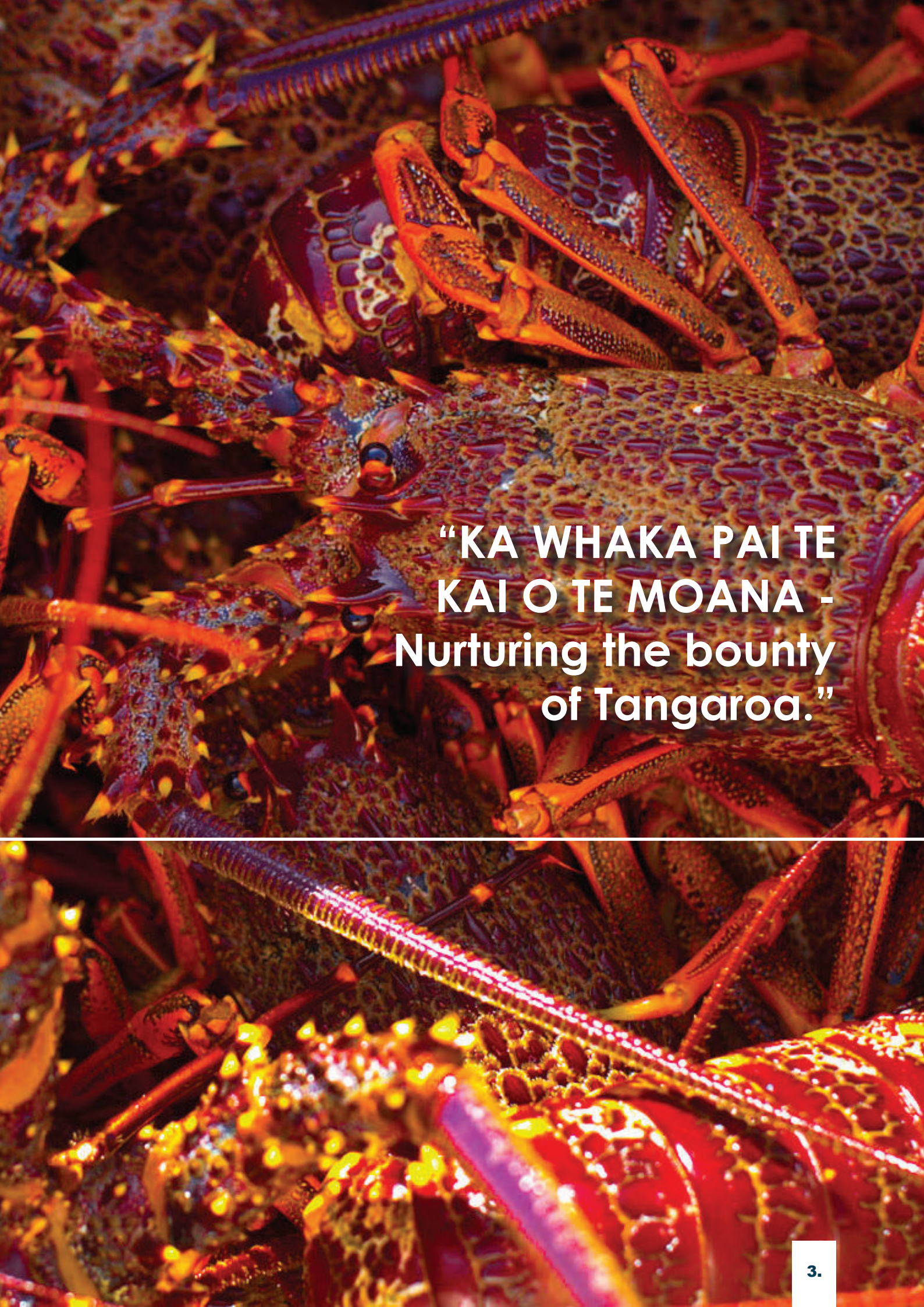
The rock lobster industry has consistently supported and advocated for the New Zealand fisheries management regime including the Quota Management System (QMS). This regime is based on ensuring sustainability through output controls on all extractive use, the security and incentives created by rights, the resolution of competing interests, and addressing interactions with the marine environment by applying legislative principles. There is work needed to complete the application of this framework to all sectors and realise its potential.

Working within the Fisheries Act, the NZ RLIC will continue building a cohesive and sustainable industry operating to deliver responsible environmental performance, making a substantial economic contribution - regionally and nationally - and delivering social and cultural value to all users through the healthy status of rock lobster fisheries.

## **OUR VISION:**

- 1.** To be a united, prosperous and ecologically sustainable rock lobster industry valued and respected by Government and by the wider New Zealand community.
- 2.** To be an industry which delivers a beyond premium seafood product to discerning domestic and international consumers.
- 3.** To be an industry well equipped to increasingly take on a greater role in fisheries research and management and be acknowledged as a leader in sustainable and innovative management of rock lobster fisheries.





**“KA WHAKA PAI TE  
KAI O TE MOANA -  
Nurturing the bounty  
of Tangaroa.”**



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## NZ RLIC IS WORKING FOR YOU AND WITH YOU IN PROVIDING A WORK PROGRAMME FOCUSED ON DELIVERING VALUE BY SUPPORTING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INDUSTRY.

We continue to influence legislation and policy through professional engagement to support an efficient and high value sector, maintaining the necessary access to inshore fishing grounds and minimising imposed costs and restrictions and burdensome bureaucracy. Our approach seeks to ensure the industry long term future through best practice research and environmental performance informed by industry-initiated stock monitoring and research. We have come a long way and there is much to acknowledge in terms of progress made and setbacks avoided – but the challenges are daunting and increasing in scope and complexity.

As the world continues to struggle with the impacts of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the rock lobster industry in New Zealand has a sustainable, food safe and highly desirable premium product to offer. In 2020 the industry had to weather the health crisis and a complete disruption to trade which hit revenue hard with lingering impacts in freight costs and logistics. COVID-19 and geopolitical factors have highlighted risks to market access and the need for mitigation where achievable and to be prepared. We will support the efforts of our exporters and quota share owners (QSOs) to look for economically viable opportunities that provide some resilience.

The COVID-19 environment has reinforced the importance of a strong relationship between the catching sector, QSOs, processors and exporters and brought about some positive changes in the relationships. There is an ongoing need to recognise their shared interests and responsibilities. This is supported through the CRAMAC operating and decision-making model and the working relationship with Lobsters Exporters of New Zealand (LENZ) – an incorporated society representing our export sector.

For NZ RLIC, in seeking to address the challenges facing the industry, our immediate level of cooperation and engagement is with the CRAMACs and their membership of quota share owners and ACE owners, Iwi, vessel operators and crew, companies and Licensed Fish Receivers. The industry is full of hard working, inventive, positive and resourceful characters who continually demonstrate their commitment to stewardship of the resource which underpins future benefits for all stakeholders.

We want to consolidate working relationships with Iwi, their companies and entities, and seek to better understand and incorporate their values and aspirations, including through encouraging their involvement in CRAMACs. We have a strong working relationship with Te Ohu

Kaimoana (TOKM) and recognise their role in protecting the settlement, the importance of the settlement to the integrity of the QMS, and their mandate from Mandated Iwi Organisations (MIOs). Many of those MIOs are also rock lobsters QSOs, so we work with TOKM so that our positions are aligned and mutually supporting.

Through our facilitation of the Commercial Fisheries Forum (CFF) we ensure close and collaborative working relationships with sector representative entities (SREs) including Paua Industry Council, Fisheries Inshore New Zealand, the Deepwater Group and Aquaculture New Zealand, and with Te Ohu Kaimoana and SeaFood New Zealand, and the development of well formulated and integrated positions. We also maintain positive relations with stakeholder groups including environmental NGOs and recreational fishers and seek to have the public and the media understand the responsible resource stewardship and positive economic and social contribution the rock lobster industry makes.

We work constructively with central and local government agencies and Ministers. This government has policy priorities in the primary sector area including Resource Management Act reform and climate change adaption. Our objectives are to engage to achieve improvement in the legislative framework and keep the government aware of implications of reform for our sector.

This business plan acknowledges the ongoing uncertainty and rapid pace of change in our operating environment both in terms of government policy

and reform but also the push toward ecosystem-based management, the environmental variability and regime shifts that affect the rock lobster resource and its habitat, advances in science and technology and increased attention on ethical and animal welfare matters.

The focus on addressing the ongoing government legislative and regulatory agenda which impacts on commercial access and use rights remains, based on using evidence and science. NZ RLIC will keep identifying opportunities to be proactive in addressing management and regulatory challenges, and changes in political and societal values, while trying to reduce unnecessary restrictions and cost imposition.

It is important to improve public understanding and appreciation of what the rock lobster industry delivers. We have a compelling story to convey about sustainability performance and low environmental impact, as a high value sector with significant economic contribution and employment nationally and regionally.



  
**Mark Edwards**  
**CEO**

# FUNDING

2021 / 2022

The NZ RLIC activities are resourced through the Rock Lobster Commodity Levy implemented in 2013 and renewed in 2018.

The administration of the mandatory levy (invoicing and debt collection) is contracted to Commercial Fisheries Services Ltd (FishServe).

The NZ RLIC has a separate income stream from the operation of the rock lobster stock monitoring contract with the Ministry for Primary Industries.

The NZ RLIC also derives income from providing a range of contract management, financial management and administrative services to a small number of select clients. Income earned in this manner offsets the amount required to be

collected by way of the Rock Lobster Commodity Levy.

The NZ RLIC operational expenses for the period 01 October 2021 through to 30 September 2022 have been constrained while funding the capacity, services and activities needed to address risks and opportunities that the Board has identified.

The 2021/22 Rock Lobster Commodity Levy will be set to recover \$982,867.51, an increase of \$83,378.58 on the amount currently being collected.

The total 2021/22 CRA TACC is 2,733.786 tonnes – the CRA Commodity Levy will be \$359.53 per tonne.



**NEW ZEALAND  
PRODUCES 2750  
TONNES OF ROCK  
LOBSTER EACH YEAR.**



# 245

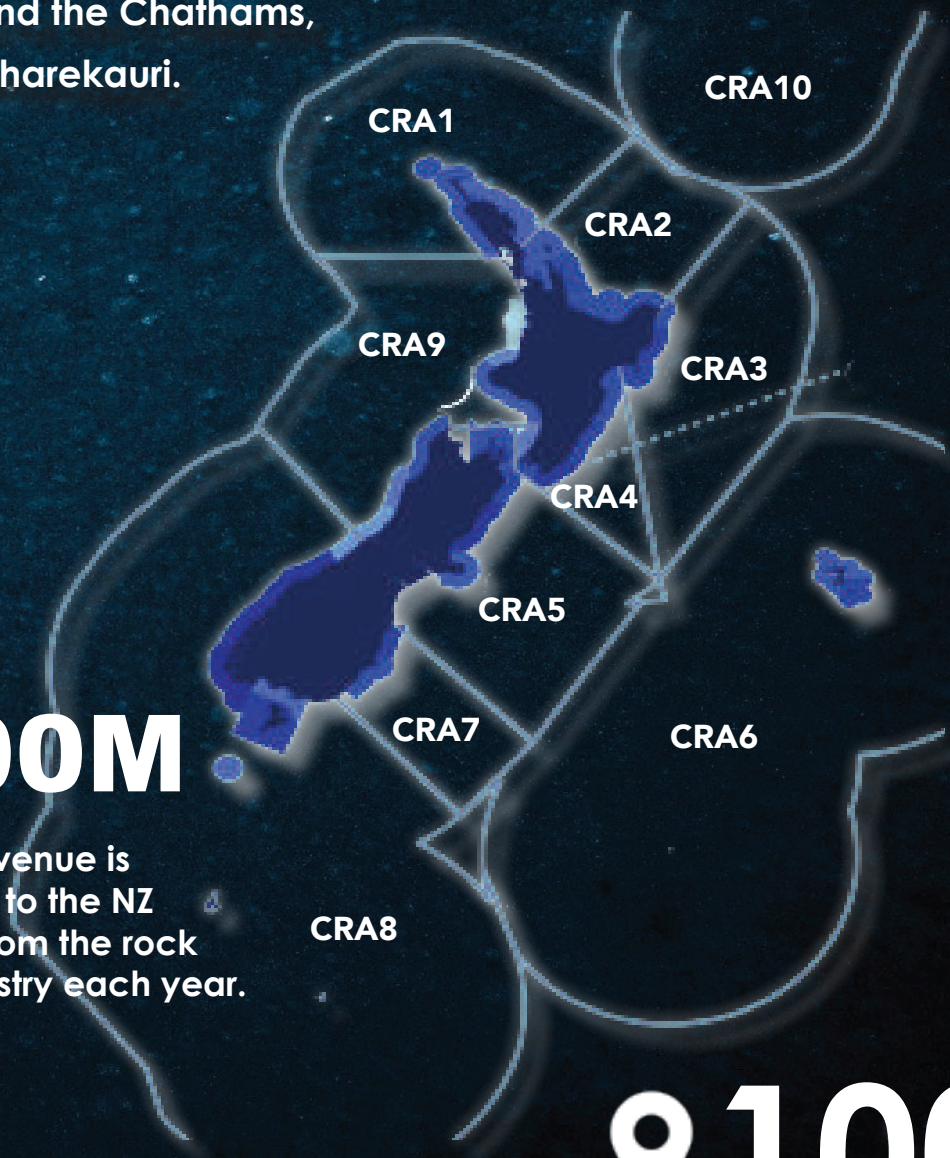
rock lobster vessels are deployed nationally, fishing from the Three Kings, Manawhatāwhi; all the way to Stewart Island, Rakiura; and the Chathams, Rēkohu/Wharekauri.

# 85%

of the national rock lobster TACC is from stocks with a biomass greater than BMSY-based reference levels.

# \$300M

in export revenue is contributed to the NZ economy from the rock lobster industry each year.



# 100

The rock lobster industry has around 100 landing points across New Zealand and a strong presence in regional centers.



# KEY COMPONENTS

## - BUSINESS PLAN 2021/22

The work undertaken by NZ RLIC under its business plan and resourced by the budget can be divided into five categories:

1. Policy and management
2. Stock research and monitoring
3. Communications
4. Elective research and development
5. Product standards and certification

For each category, the outcomes sought and the steps that will be taken are outlined in objectives and actions in the ensuing sections.





# POLICY & MANAGEMENT

**The NZ RLIC seeks to positively influence the development and implementation of policy, legislation, regulation and the performance of the fisheries management framework, nationally and regionally, to support environmentally sustainable, efficient, ethical and economically and socially optimal benefits from the use of the rock lobster resource.**

The security and confidence to invest in the resource and its future is underpinned by the rights and incentives inherent in the QMS and ongoing non-exclusive access to inshore fishing grounds. The range of access and allocation pressures will continue to be a primary focus along with progress in addressing actual risks to the health and productivity of the inshore marine environment.

Our approach will always be underpinned by science and evidence and will be developed with other representative bodies so that integrated and cost-effective positions are developed through resource sharing and collaboration.

**“The security and confidence to invest in the resource and its future is underpinned by the rights and incentives inherent in the QMS.”**



## **OBJECTIVE:**

### **Enhance performance of the fisheries management framework**

#### **ACTIONS**

- Work with the National Rock Lobster Monitoring Group (NRLMG) in the annual review of rock lobster stocks, the TAC, TACC, allowances and regulatory controls, including ensuring that all extractive use is effectively measured and managed
- Pursue cooperation to achieve management targets and create shared incentives including through improved certainty about allocation
- Engage constructively in the recognition and provision for customary rights through customary marine title applications, settlement legislation and mechanisms under Part IX of the Fisheries Act, while ensuring there is appropriate consideration of ability to utilise commercial entitlements
- Aspirations for finer scale management and localised abundance need to be cognisant of information requirements, cost and implications for access rights.

## **OBJECTIVE:**

### **Improvement in the regulatory environment to deliver to outcomes while being practical and cost effective**

#### **ACTIONS**

- Resolve ongoing issues and costs with digital monitoring, as well as legacy policy settings including returns to the sea
- Engage in reform and regulatory processes to preserve access to inshore waters
- Continue the initiative to improve the quality of reporting to inform science and management
- Pursue an enhanced role for industry in management and service delivery to support responsive and lower cost management including enabling collective decision making, ACE shelving and fishery management planning
- Seek improvement in the transparency and effectiveness of cost recovered services
- Continue collaborative work with MPI Compliance to reduce illegal activities and improve voluntary compliance.

## **OBJECTIVE:**

**Regional coastal plans and policies address threats to coastal marine ecosystems and provide certainty for the wild harvest sector**

### **ACTIONS**

- Re-direct regional coastal plans and policies to focus on addressing threats to the health and productivity of marine ecosystems and avoid duplicating the management of fishing that is effected through the Fisheries Act
- Encourage integrated monitoring and management of all activities across the coastal marine environment
- Continue to engage and advocate in regional planning process including challenging encroachment infisheries management (e.g., Marlborough and Northland)
- Participate in upcoming coastal plan reviews including Waikato, Tasman, Canterbury and Southland.

## **OBJECTIVE:**

**Legislative reform provides for confidence and sustainable development of the rock lobster sector**

### **ACTIONS**

- Seek reform to marine biodiversity conservation legislation integrated with the Fisheries Act
- Engage with government on new resource management legislation including the National and Built Environments Act, the Strategic planning Act and the Climate Change Adaption Act
- Promote policies and plans that support adaption of the industry to climate change.

## **OBJECTIVE:**

**Better management outcomes through collaboration**

### **ACTIONS**

- Enable and support CRAMAC initiatives and provide oversight and support on policy and operational issues and regular face to face engagement
- Support cohesive and credible whole of industry positions on all legislative and policy matters affecting the seafood industry by facilitating the Commercial Fisheries Forum



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- Support cohesive and credible whole of industry positions on all legislative and policy matters affecting the seafood industry by facilitating the Commercial Fisheries Forum
- Encourage alignment and recognition of the shared interests and responsibilities of the catching sector and quota share.

## **OBJECTIVE:**

### **Improved response and support for fisher wellbeing**

#### **ACTIONS**

- Ensure regulators understand the consequence of imposition of restrictions and encourage practical and cost effective intervention to achieve fishery management outcomes
- Support the development of the “First Mate” initiative to provide targeted counselling and support services while avoiding overlap in function with SREs and maintaining cost effective scale
- Explore opportunities to coordinate NZ RLIC and CRAMAC activities with the “First Mate” initiative.



# STOCK RESEARCH & MONITORING

**To maintain sustainable levels of harvest and environmental performance we invest in world leading and innovative stock monitoring and stock assessment.**

We seek continuous improvement in the quality of the information and science that informs management and delivers social, economic and cultural benefits to all stakeholders. Greater understanding of the environmental variables that impact on the productivity of rock lobster stocks informs responsive management and will support delivery of the ecosystem approach to fisheries management (EAFM) that is inherent in the Fisheries Act.



Measuring a lobster in the catch sampling programme.



## **OBJECTIVE:**

### **Invest in research to inform decisions on sustainable levels of harvest**

#### **ACTIONS:**

- Fund research that assesses stock biomass relative to targets and limits
- Maintain contractual arrangements with domestic and international science consultants to provide and review high quality research services
- Support the peer review, transparency and publication processes that give government and the public confidence in the integrity of the science that informs rock lobster management priority areas to invest in new science and information
- Facilitate research planning that identifies priority areas to invest in new science and information
- Monitor developments in research and science in other jurisdictions to identify improvement opportunities.

## **OBJECTIVE:**

### **Coordinate collection of stock monitoring information that provides key information to inform stock assessment and assess impact of spatial exclusions**

#### **ACTIONS:**

- Organise for the collection of spatially and temporarily representative fishery dependent information including size, sex and state from observer sampling and the voluntary vessel logbook program
- Implement tag release and recapture programs to provide growth estimates for length based population models
- Undertake puerulus collection to provide information on strength of recruiting year classes.

## **OBJECTIVE:**

### **Commission science that supports responsive management**

- Support management consideration of new stock management targets and the development of a new generation of management procedures to provide certainty about TAC adjustment.

# COMMUNICATIONS

**An understanding by government and the public of the positive contribution of the rock lobster sector is central to the opportunity to explain our perspectives and influence process to achieve our vision.**

We will maintain a calm, evidence-based and rational approach to our advocacy and maintain constructive relationships with government and all fisheries stakeholders. We will communicate the New Zealand rock lobster reputation as a premium value, healthy, sustainable and ethically harvested food export with substantial export returns to the NZ economy, a high return employer and a generator of significant economic activity in regional towns and communities. NZ RLIC's communication is also about informing and coordinating within industry so that there is commonality of purpose and understanding of the outcomes that are sought and our responsibilities.



The industry is full of hardworking, positive and resourceful characters. Trevor Burkhart and his crew. Image; Burkhart Fisheries.



## **OBJECTIVE:**

**Increasing public understanding of the environmental and sustainability performance, and social and economic contribution of the industry**

### **ACTIONS:**

- Targeted communication to inform and address inaccurate and imbalanced information and support the New Zealand fisheries management regime
- Inform and build momentum and engagement through social media platforms
- Convey the value contributed by the industry to regional towns and communities including through associated servicing and support businesses and employment.

## **OBJECTIVE:**

**There is consensus within industry about the outcomes we seek to achieve and the role components of industry play**

### **ACTIONS:**

- NZ RLIC will ensure there is regular engagement and discussion with CRAMACs to ensure unity of purpose and understanding of our priorities and responsibilities.

## **OBJECTIVE:**

**Ensure NZ RLIC is using the most effective communication approach and tools**

### **ACTIONS:**

- Develop a revised communication strategy
- Maintain and enhance the NZ RLIC website so content is relevant and current, and encourage CRAMAC use of their sections of the site.





The future of our fishery.



**Utilising a marine resource throws up constant challenges. We need to be aware of emerging food safety and biosecurity risks and threats to the health and welfare of lobsters.**

Marine biotoxin events have been occurring with greater frequency and intensity with serious implications if they were to be detected in export shipments. There are also developments in science and procedures to support assessments, protected species interactions and animal husbandry that may be relevant to build on past work. NZ RLIC will invest through direct purchase or elective research to allow the industry to act responsibly, adapt, progress and be resilient.

**“Rock lobster is the most commercially valuable of New Zealand’s wild harvest fisheries.”**

## **OBJECTIVE:**

**Ensure responses to emerging risks and opportunities are informed through investment in science**

### **ACTIONS:**

- Monitor research on biotoxins in Australasia including their detection, testing mechanisms, accumulation and persistence in crustaceans
- Examine developments in the science related to crustacean welfare and support the development of standards that meet or exceed international best practice
- Scan for new or emerging threats, including biosecurity risks.

## **OBJECTIVE:**

**Reduce the risk of whale interactions and ensure timely responses to any entanglements**

### **ACTIONS:**

- Promote and disseminate the revised WhaleSafe document and OceanSnap application
- Review best practise approaches and gear modifications that reduce incidence of entanglements in other jurisdictions
- Work with DoC to deploy the GPS location buoys purchased by NZ RLIC to allow timely intervention in any entanglement incident.

## **OBJECTIVE:**

**Ensure vessel operators and catch sampling technicians have the equipment and support required**

### **ACTIONS:**

- Invest in maintaining and updating electronic vessel logbook platforms
- Ensure electronic data collection and data storage protocols meet or exceed the required standards
- Maintain the Tagtracker database that provides key growth increment data, and provide upgraded feedback reports to vessel operators who report rock lobster tag recaptures.

## **OBJECTIVE:**

**Collect economic data to inform industry positions on spatial access loss, re-allocation and others mechanisms impacting on economics of operation**

### **ACTIONS:**

- Establish a pilot program to collect specific, credible economic data.



A photograph of a fishing boat deck at dusk or dawn. In the foreground, several large, rectangular lobster traps made of dark mesh are visible, each with a bright orange buoy attached to its top. The traps are resting on the boat's deck. In the background, a calm blue sea stretches towards a dark, hilly coastline. Several wind turbines are visible on the horizon. A person wearing a cap and a dark jacket is partially visible on the right side of the boat, looking out towards the sea. The sky is a clear, deep blue with a few birds flying in the distance.

**“We support industry  
meeting food safety  
standards, maintaining  
market access and  
achieving required skills  
and competencies.”**

- Cathy Webb  
Seafood Standards  
Council



# PRODUCT STANDARDS & CERTIFICATION

**Obtaining maximum value from quota limited landings is critically dependent on maintaining market access for live rock lobster exports and quickly addressing any barriers or threats to access, including new issues and changes in the requirements and standards that apply in export destinations and changes in preferences in the market.**

NZ RLIC will continue to work closely with Lobster Exporters New Zealand (LENZ) and the Seafood Standards Council in these areas.

The global COVID-19 pandemic had significant adverse impact on the sector in the first half of 2020 and there are ongoing serious market and operational risks and the need to be responsive.

NZ RLIC will support LENZ's work to mitigate those risks, and consider what steps the sector can take to develop resilience.

There is also ongoing work needed to provide accessible and authoritative information to demonstrate the environmental sustainability of rock lobster fishing.



## OBJECTIVE:

**Coordinate industry responses to issues that have implications for market access and food security including food safety, quality, animal welfare and environmental performance**

### ACTIONS:

- Commission elective research and undertake analysis to address risks and issues concerning food safety, biotoxins, biosecurity, product standards and animal welfare
- Continue the development of the National Marine Biotoxin Risk Management Plan to ensure readiness and response, and coordinate its implementation with CRAMACs
- Continue to promote humane treatment in handling, processing and distribution of lobsters.

## OBJECTIVE:

**Support LENZ<sup>1</sup> initiatives to examine market opportunities, and promote and enhance the reputation of rock lobster as a “beyond premium” product**

### ACTIONS:

- Facilitate work by LENZ to promote and market rock lobster, explore opportunities to diversify markets and address challenges including freight and logistic issues, including through seeking support from and advocacy with government agencies
- Monitor developments and the uptake of third-party certification, seafood labelling and traceability in the China market and coordinate the development of appropriate responses
- Support the review of the operation of the OpenSeas initiative, including the completion of a revised risk assessment framework
- Encourage and facilitate use of environmentally friendly packaging.

## OBJECTIVE:

**Support industry managing and adapting to market disruption and access issues and Alert levels**

### ACTIONS:

- In the event of market access issues, work urgently with government to develop and implement adjustment and mitigations including carry-forward of uncaught entitlements
- Provide COVID-19 protocols, information and advice when Alert levels change, including requirements to maintain and operate “essential service” status and protect health, safety and wellbeing.

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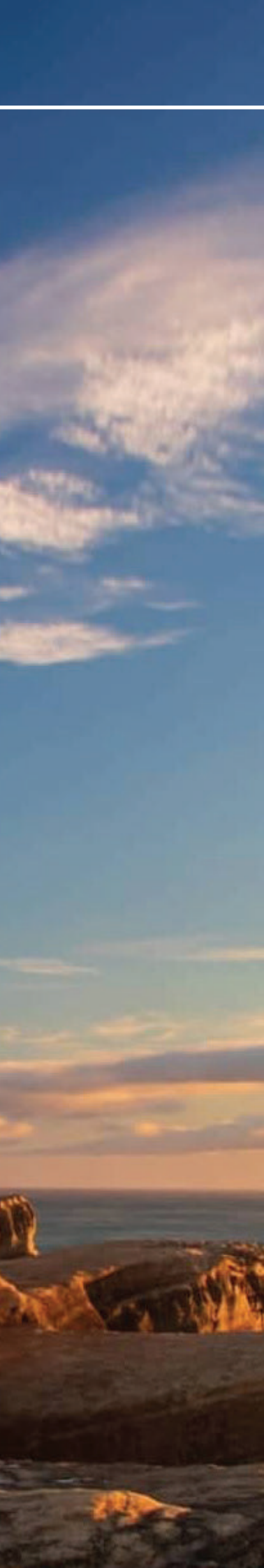
<sup>1</sup> Lobster Exporters New Zealand



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# ORGANISATION & STAFF





**The NZ RLIC aims to operate with high standards of governance, prudent financial management, and strict adherence to legislative and constitutional requirements including those related to Health and Safety and an independently audited financial report.**

We will apply energetic focus and well-informed representation on the many policy, operational and administrative issues that confront the lobster industry. The team provides timely support and facilitation for the regional CRAMACs and for industry participants generally as requested. Every effort will be made to provide the necessary submissions and manage programs and deliverables to deadlines and within budget. However, the reactive nature of the environment requires responsiveness and adaption within the year and may lead to discussing adjustment to the program with the Board.

The NZ RLIC team comprises Chief Executive Officer **Mark Edwards** with **James Robertson** as the new Chief Operating Officer. **Daryl Sykes** is transitioning to a support and advisory role. **Helen Regan** is the NZ RLIC Business Manager and **Leigh Brown** is contracted to provide administrative support. NZ RLIC staff are guided and supported by the Chair and nine Board members nominated by each of the CRAMACs;

<b>Chair</b>	<b>Andrew Branson</b>
<b>CRAMAC 1</b>	<b>Geoff Creighton</b>
<b>CRAMAC 2</b>	<b>Dan McRae</b>
<b>CRAMAC 3</b>	<b>Salve Zame</b>
<b>CRAMAC 4</b>	<b>Mark Peychers</b>
<b>CRAMAC 5</b>	<b>Larnce Wichman</b>
<b>CRAMAC 6</b>	<b>Terry Gittings</b>
<b>CRAMAC 7</b>	<b>Kate Hesson</b>
<b>CRAMAC 8</b>	<b>Malcolm Lawson</b>
<b>CRAMAC 9</b>	<b>Sonya Tuerlings</b>

We also work closely with the professionals appointed by most CRAMACs to address issues in their regions and improve coordination and communication.

It is likely we will move from the office and administrative facilities at Eagle Technology House during 2021/22. New facilities will be co-located with other seafood representative bodies and Commercial Fisheries Services Ltd (FishServe). As it has done since 1996, the NZ RLIC will coordinate the delivery of a wide range of technical, science, legal and policy advice to CRAMACs and individual industry members. On request from the CRAMACs, financial administration of rock lobster Stock Specific Levy income is undertaken by the NZ RLIC.



# COMMODITY LEVY

The NZ RLIC shareholders agreed that the **2021/22** Rock Lobster Commodity Levy will be set to recover **\$982,868** to offset NZ RLIC operational expenses for the period 01 October 2021 through to 30 September 2022.

TOTAL CRA TACC FOR 2021/22:

**2,733.786**  
T O N N E S

CRA COMMODITY LEVY:

**\$359.53**  
P E R T O N N E



The first lift of the day. Image; Trevor Burkhart

# BUDGET

## 2021 / 22

INCOME	BUDGET 2019/20	BUDGET 2020/21	BUDGET 2021/22
<b>Commodity Levy</b>	\$717,000.00	\$899,488.93	\$982,867.51
External Service Provision	\$15,000.00	\$21,100.00	\$20,000.00
MPI Research Contract	\$596,400.00	\$597,600.00	\$485,100.00
Surplus Carried Forward	\$134,600.00	\$105,000.00	-
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$1,463,000.00</b>	<b>\$1,623,188.93</b>	<b>\$1,487,967.51</b>

EXPENSES	BUDGET 2019/20	BUDGET 2020/21	BUDGET 2021/22
Policy & Management	\$95,000.00	\$95,000.00	\$200,000.00
Communication	\$55,000.00	\$74,660.00	\$83,300.00
Elective Research	\$35,000.00	\$30,500.00	\$25,000.00
Product Standards	\$55,000.00	\$61,269.00	\$45,000.00
Staff and Resources	\$683,000.00	\$717,259.93	\$ 649,667.51
MPI Research Contract	\$540,000.00	\$469,500.00	\$350,000.00
Direct Purchase Research	-	\$175,000.00	\$135,000.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,463,000.00</b>	<b>\$1,623,188.93</b>	<b>\$1,487,967.51</b>

Should you have any enquiries about the 2021/22 NZ RLIC Business Plan and Budget, or about the Rock Lobster Commodity Levy, please contact the NZ RLIC office at your convenience.

**NZ Rock Lobster Industry Council Ltd**



**Chief Executive Officer**





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