New Zealand orange roughy

The New Zealand orange roughy fishery achieved MSC certification for three orange roughy stocks in late 2016. This certification followed a detailed assessment by independent certifier, MRAG Americas. It represents a significant transformation in the management of orange roughy and is the result of 20 years of scientific innovation, careful stock management, research and collaboration.

The fishery's managers take a precautionary approach, requiring low catch rates and minimising impacts on the wider marine environment.

"Certification of New Zealand orange roughy signals to the world that collaboration among industry, Māori iwi leaders, government, scientists and other interest groups has the power to improve the health of fish stocks and ensure their sustainability."

MSC Asia Pacific Director, Patrick Caleo.

New Zealand's oceans are home to

156 million adult orange roughy

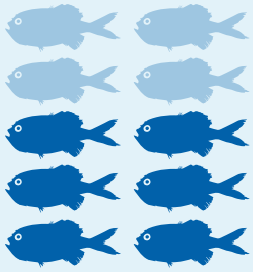
They swim at depths of

800m to 1,600m

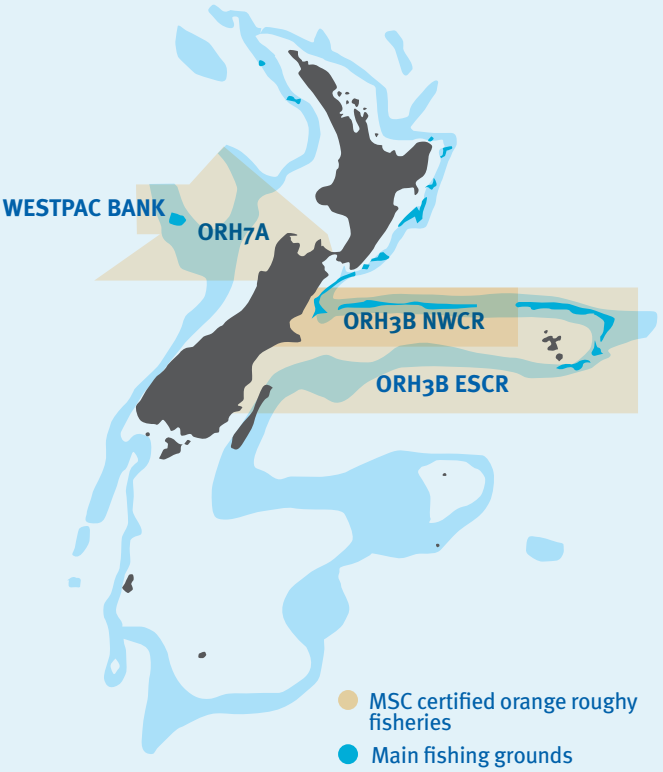
MSC certified orange roughy accounts for around

60%

of New Zealand's orange roughy catch



MSC certified orange roughy fisheries



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History

1978 — Commercial fishing of orange roughy in New Zealand begins

1980s — More fishing grounds discovered. Catches increase

1990s — New data shows that orange roughy grows slower and lives longer than previously thought, and are subject to overfishing

1992 — Total allowable catches are reduced substantially, at times to zero, to allow stocks to recover

1998 — New acoustic surveys are used to better understand the numbers of orange roughy

2000s — Commercial fishing of orange roughy in New Zealand resumes

2008 — New Zealand orange roughy undergoes MSC pre-assessment to develop a work programme to achieve certification

2014 — Three New Zealand orange roughy fisheries enter MSC full assessment

2016 — Three New Zealand orange roughy fisheries achieve MSC certification

Ensuring healthy stocks

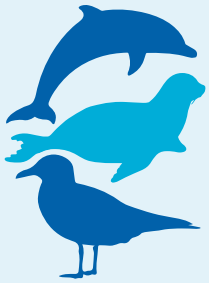
- The orange roughy stocks targeted by the certified fisheries in New Zealand are healthy and well-managed
- Stocks are kept at target levels that are designed to ensure the population remains healthy for the future
- Catch rates are set with precaution so that orange roughy have time to mature and reproduce
- One stock (ESCR) is at the lower end of the management target so is being conservatively managed to continue rebuilding.

Reducing impacts on marine habitats

- Closed areas, including Marine Protected Areas, minimise impacts on the seabed and corals
- 30% of New Zealand's seabed is closed to trawling. This equates to an area four times the size of New Zealand
- At least 10% of each of the different seabed habitats found in New Zealand are protected
- Annually less than 0.03% of New Zealand's Exclusive Economic Zone is trawled for orange roughy, fishers return to the same tows each year
- 60-90% of orange roughy habitat within the three assessment areas is not subject to fishing
- As a condition of certification the fishery must develop a plan to increase the understanding of fishing impacts on protected coral.

Reducing impacts on other species

- Between 2002 and 2012, no marine mammals were incidentally caught by the fisheries
- Between 2002 and 2012, 46 seabirds were incidentally caught and recorded by the certified fisheries, a number that has been assessed to not harm seabird populations.



Scientific research

- The New Zealand government and seafood industry have invested in mapping the seafloor, developing science and effective management techniques which minimise environmental impact
- New techniques assess the numbers of orange roughy, including an Acoustic Optical System, capable of surveying orange roughy in real-time at depths of 1,000m.

Effective management

- All fishing crews undergo environmental training
- Environmental performance is independently monitored by government observers (20-50% observer coverage)
- The New Zealand government requires strict documentation; high levels of surveillance, including satellite monitoring and rigorous monitoring of catch reporting; and enforces large penalties for infringements.

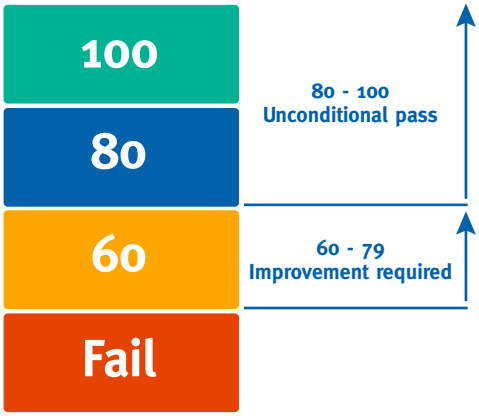
Actions for improvement

Where there is room for improvement, MSC certified fisheries are given conditions of certification. These aim to raise performance from 'good' (a score of 60-79) to 'outstanding' (a score of 80-100).

The orange roughy fisheries have conditions to:

- Develop further evidence that stocks are within the management target range (one fishery)
- Collect further information to demonstrate that fishing is not causing unacceptable impacts on corals (two fisheries)
- Undertake an external review of management systems (three fisheries).

Continued certification is dependent upon these conditions being met. The fishery will be audited yearly to check on progress. Certification lasts for five years.



The MSC Fisheries Standard

The MSC Fisheries Standard is widely recognised as the world's most credible and robust standard for sustainable fishing. It is founded on three principles: a healthy fish stock, protection of the surrounding marine ecosystem, and effective fishery management.

These requirements have been developed in consultation with scientists, NGOs and industry experts. They reflect international scientific consensus and conform to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing and the FAO Ecolabelling guidelines.

msc.org/orange-roughy

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