

QUOTA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (QMS)

What is the Quota Management System (QMS)

In Aotearoa New Zealand, by law, catch limits for every fish stock have to be set at levels that ensure long-term sustainability. The New Zealand law or system used to achieve sustainable fishing is called the Quota Management System (QMS).

Under the QMS, a yearly catch limit or Total Allowable Catch (TAC) is set for every fish stock. By controlling the amount of fish taken from each stock, the QMS helps keep New Zealand fisheries sustainable.

The TAC includes an allowance for recreational and customary fishing and other fishing-related deaths. The remainder is the Total Allowable Commercial Catch (TACC). By law, catch limits for every fish stock must be set at a sustainable level. Only commercial fishers (those who fish using quota) can legally sell fish.

Who looks after the QMS

Fisheries New Zealand (Tini a Tangaroa) who are part of the Government Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI) look after the QMS and fisheries. Fisheries New Zealand put a lot of effort into monitoring [looking at] the amount of fish caught compared to catch limits they set.

Quota Management Areas

Under the QMS, a yearly catch limit (the total allowable catch, TAC) is set for every fish stock. Fish stocks are divided into Quota Management Areas (QMAs). For example snapper is divided into six management areas. Different rules for commercial, recreational and customary fishers can exist in each QMA.



QMAs for Tāmure / Snapper

Source: [Fisheries New Zealand](https://www.msc.org/tangaroa)



Keeping an eye on fish stocks

If less fish are being caught than the catch limit, or it takes longer than usual to catch the limit, then this can be a sign that the catch limit is too high (see Topic 3 for more on this). Fisheries New Zealand keep an eye on the health of fish stocks using the following tools:

- Target level = sustainable fishing. Fishers can earn a living and the fish stock remains healthy.
- Soft limit = overfished. If fish stock goes below this level then it is overfished. Fishing will continue but some controls or reduced catch limits will be needed to rebuild.
- Hard limit = collapse. If a fish stock goes to this limit or below it has collapsed. The fishery will need to be closed to allow it to recover.

Breaking the law

There are financial penalties for commercial fishers who catch more than they are allowed in a year. Those who deliberately break the law can face serious consequences, including having their fishing vessels taken away from them, and going to jail.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Visit the following web pages to find out more about the Quota Management System:

Fisheries New Zealand webpage about the [Quota Management System](#)

Te Ara Encyclopaedia webpage [Quota Management System](#)



QUESTIONS

What did we learn?

Multiple choice

Circle the correct answer

- The New Zealand law or system used to achieve sustainable fishing is called the _____.
 - Quota Management System (QMS)
 - Total Allowable Catch (TAC)
 - Total Allowable Commercial Catch (TACC)
 - Fisheries Management Area System (FMAS)
- Which of the following includes the recreational and customary catch?
 - Total Allowable Commercial Catch (TACC)
 - Total Allowable Catch (TAC)
- Who has responsibility for looking after the QMS?
 - Ministry for the Environment
 - Department of Conservation
 - Fish and Game New Zealand
 - Fisheries New Zealand
- Under the QMS fish stocks are divided into Quota Management Areas (QMAs). _____ rules for commercial, recreational and customary fishers can exist in each QMA.
 - The same
 - Different
 - No
 - Only two
- The _____ is a level of fishing that is sustainable. Fishers can earn a living and the fish stock remains healthy.
 - Target limit
 - Soft limit
 - Hard limit
 - No limit
- If a fish stock goes below the _____ this level then it is overfished. Fishing will continue but some controls or reduced catch limits will be needed to rebuild.
 - No limit
 - Target limit
 - Soft limit
 - Hard limit



FOR TEACHERS

Answers

Multiple choice

1 (a); 2 (b); 3 (d); 4 (b); 5 (a); 6 (c)