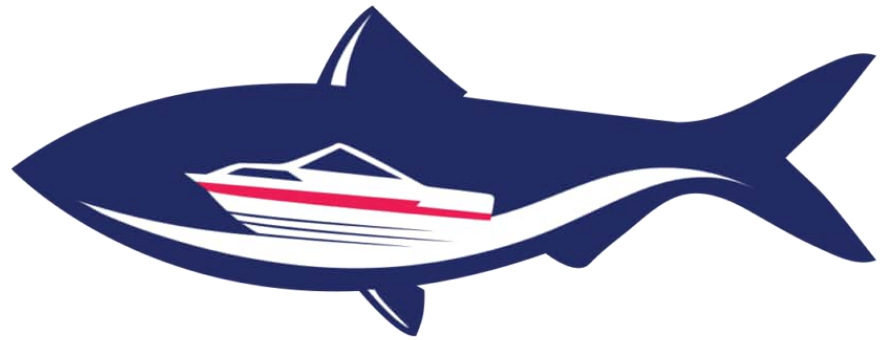




**PATEA & DISTRICTS
BOATING CLUB** INC.



Taranaki VTM Project Conference

22 Oct 2025

Our Clubs



Pātea & Districts Boating Club

Founded in 1965, this club focuses on boating safety and fostering a strong community, hosting annual fishing competitions.

Wanganui-Manawatu Sea Fishing Club

Established in 1972 this club organizes major fishing events and collaborates on coastal marine infrastructure projects in Whanganui.

Key stakeholders with 'existing interests' in the South Taranaki Bight since from at least when the clubs were formally founded

South Taranaki Bight: Lifelong Bond

Deep, intergenerational connection to the South Taranaki Bight – a source of food, and foundation for social connection, identity, and recreational enjoyment.

Recreational activities include:

Fishing (shore, boat, inshore, offshore, competition)

Scuba diving, boating, swimming, beach use

Informal environmental monitoring

Local knowledge built through decades of time on the water- making observations, reading tides, currents, and weather

Detecting changes in water clarity, temperature, and marine life

Identifying spawning grounds and reef habitats.



Our Values

Stewardship and Sustainability

We protect sensitive habitats and foster sustainable fishing practices to care for our environment.

Knowledge and Marine Ecology

We understand local marine ecology, encouraging education and awareness within our clubs

Responsibility and Ethics

We practice safe boating, ethical fishing, and environmental education through club events to ensure responsible enjoyment of the water.

Connection and Wellbeing

Our values strengthen community bonds and enhance wellbeing, recognising health benefits of time spent on the water.



Why the South Taranaki Bight is Unique



- **Exceptional fishing & diving:**
Rich benthic habitats and reef systems support high biodiversity.
- **Accessible waters:**
Shallow shelf allows safe use by small vessels and recreational users.
- **Dynamic marine conditions:** challenging require skill and care
- **Natural protection:**
Rough seas limit overuse, helping preserve sensitive habitats.
- **High productivity:**
Fast catch rates, diverse species – “best fishing in the country!”
- **Local expertise:**
Deep knowledge of swells, tides, and seasonal fish movements.
- **Strong infrastructure:**
Boat ramps and community facilities support active marine use.



Recreational Fishing Overlooked

1. **No engagement:** Despite decades of active use and local expertise.
2. **Monitoring plan lacks credibility:** Developed without input from affected users; raises concerns around trust, relevance, and privacy.
3. **Local knowledge ignored:** Critical insights into marine conditions, habitat identification, and species behaviour excluded from assessment.
4. **Integrity undermined:** Without genuine engagement, the application cannot credibly assess recreational impacts

TTR – ‘There is no evidence of recreation economic value’ you can’t say there is no evidence if evidence has not been sourced or assessed!’

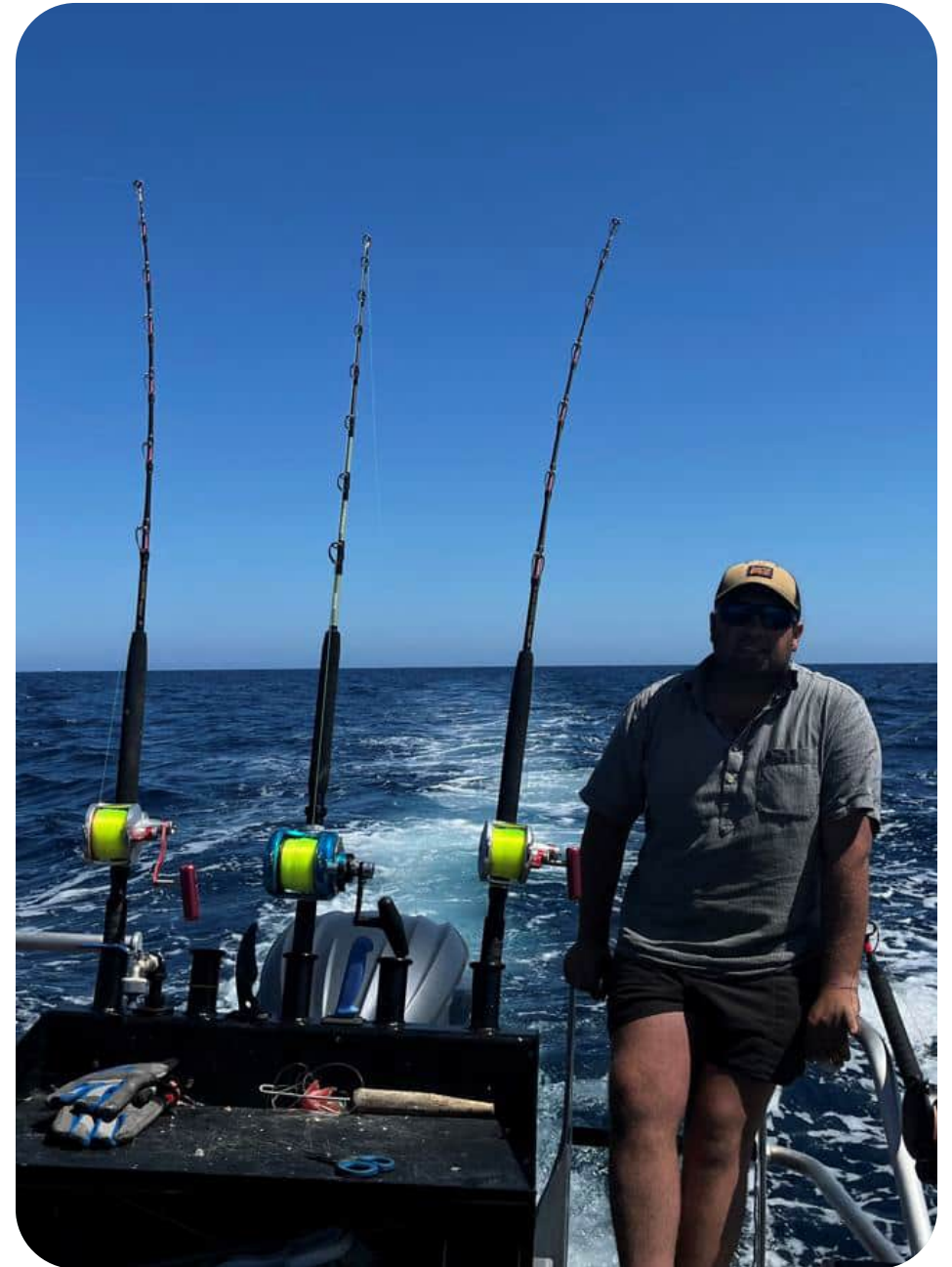
Outdated & Underrepresented Recreational Fishing Assessment

Applicant's Claim

- *Most recreational fishing occurs **within 20km offshore** (Greenaway & Associates, 2015).*
- *Offshore activity beyond 20km is acknowledged but considered **infrequent**.*
- *Effects on recreation are assessed as "**less than minor**."*

Our Response

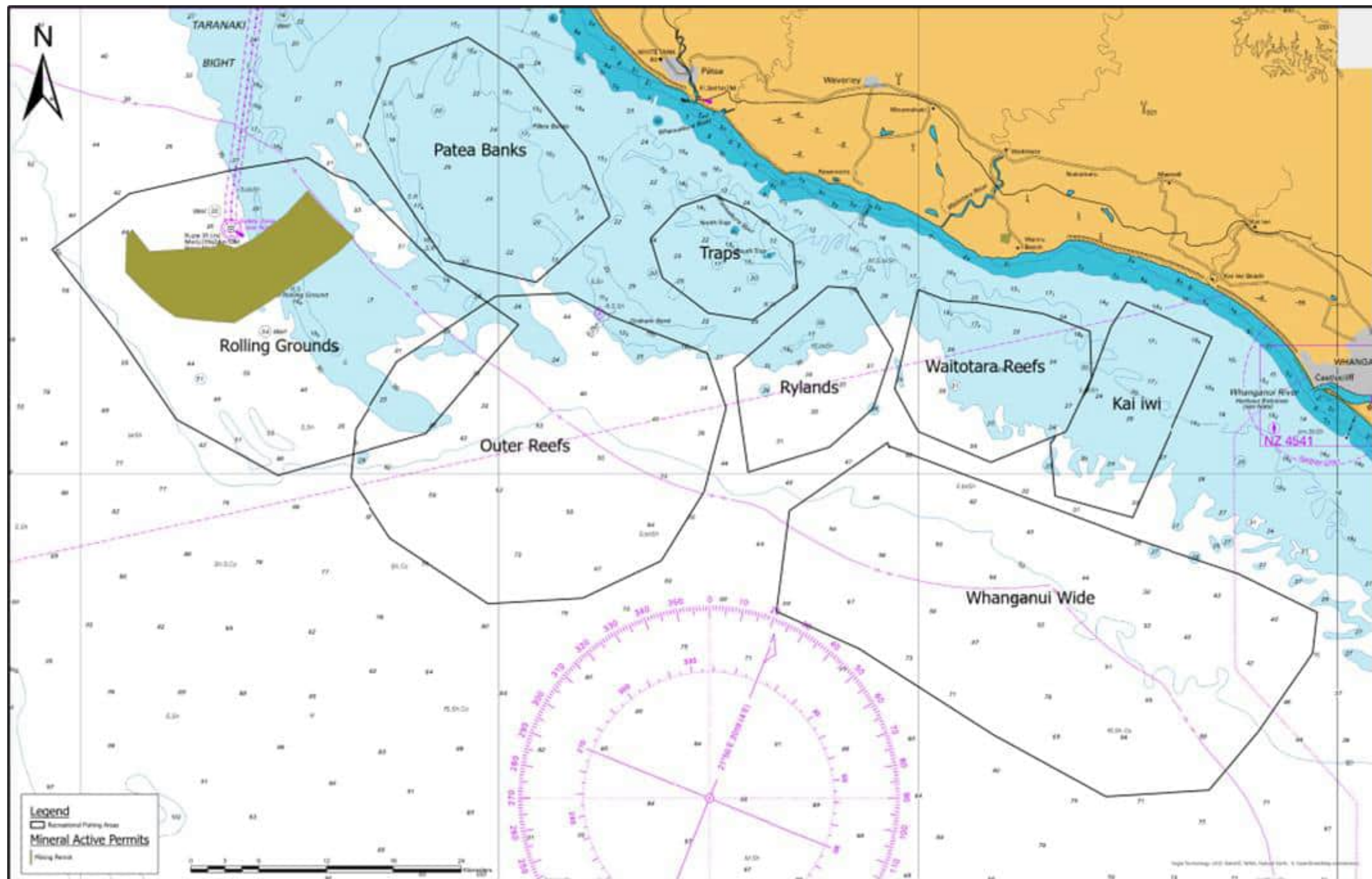
- **We disagree** – the assessment is **outdated (+10 yrs)**, based on **limited data** and **minimal recreational input**.
- **Fails to reflect:**
 - Actual current use – no boat counts, POB counts, or catch effort
 - Growth in offshore fishing
 - Advances in technology
 - Changes in fish species health and behaviour
 - Evolving recreational patterns over the proposed consent duration
- **Fishing beyond 20km (10.8NM)** – this is not infrequent use.
- The commissioning of a **Coastguard vessel for >12NM** confirms regular offshore activity.





We are local fishers and divers, **do you want to test our knowledge?**

- **We know our fishing grounds** – where to go, when to go, and what species to target and how. Our members have decades of experience reading the sea and making decisions based on real conditions, not models and limited datasets.
- **We know our habitats** – reefs, seabed contours, and nursery areas that **do not appear on any scientific maps**.
These areas have been **ground-truthed by local divers**, not inferred from remote data.
- **We understand the interconnectedness** of inshore and offshore ecosystems.
We know the currents, tides, and wave behaviour – not in general terms, but in **site-specific detail**. We know how conditions shift hour by hour, season by season, and how they influence fish movement and habitat health.
- This is **fine-scale knowledge** – built from lived experience, passed down through generations, and refined through thousands of hours on the water.





Fished Species Impacts

Seabed mining poses impacts to fished species:

- **Seabed disturbance:** damages feeding and spawning grounds
- **Sediment plumes:** reduce visibility, clog gills, disrupt foraging
- **Noise, turbidity, light:** displace fish from traditional grounds
- **Loss of nursery areas:** affects recruitment and seasonal catch
- **Juvenile entrainment:** threatens population sustainability

Recreational Fishing Impacts

- Reduced catch success
- Increased effort to locate fish
- Displacement from valued grounds
- Loss of seasonal and cultural fishing opportunities.

These impacts are **real, measurable, and unacceptable**

Impacts Cannot Be Set Aside

Photo- Southern Bluefin Tuna caught in the STB- critically endangered but recovering since 2009. Reappearing in 2022 in the STB.

BCO8 Oct 2025 Blue Cod Management & Key Issues with FN96 Report

BCO8 Oct 2025 letter- Minster Fisheries & Oceans

BCO 8 is a small, shared fishery. In recent years there have been anecdotal reports of declines in blue cod abundance from fishers across commercial, recreational and customary sectors. Over the last decade there has been a declining trend in annual commercial BCO 8 landings and estimated recreational catch has declined over a similar period.

I acknowledge that the status of this stock is uncertain and there are no current estimates of biomass relative to *MSY* to inform management of BCO 8. However, I consider the concerns expressed by fishers across multiple sectors are compelling enough to warrant a significant reduction in the TAC and recreational daily limit. I consider the decreases I have decided for these settings are appropriate to address the immediate sustainability concerns many stakeholders expressed during the recent consultation.

6 October 2025 Letter - Annex One – Minister Oceans and Fisheries

The applicant's assessment of effects does not consider impacts on nursery habitat for blue cod⁴ identified in the South Taranaki Bight, which has been discussed in recent reviews of the catch settings for a number of fisheries.⁵ The full extent of the nursery habitats at the Pātea Shoals (Rolling Grounds), which includes seaweed and sponges on subtidal rocky reefs, is unknown. As blue cod is declining in this area, maintaining the function of this nursery habitat is particularly important for supporting the stock. This habitat is within the zone identified in the application as impacted by the effects of the sediment plume. The applicant has not considered whether the level of sedimentation (and reduced light penetration) over these habitats is likely to constitute material harm. I recommend the applicant assess and monitor these effects on seaweed and sponges that may contribute to the habitat function as a nursery.

Fisheries NZ Review – October 2025

Fisheries New Zealand confirms the **uncertainty and fragility** of the BCO 8 blue cod stock.

Calls for **precautionary management** due to declining abundance and lack of robust data.

FN96 Report

Limited Data Sources

FN96 mainly uses occasional ramp surveys and ad hoc samples, providing incomplete coverage and reduced accuracy in results.

Misrepresented Fishing Effort

Fishing effort is attributed to launch sites, not actual fishing grounds, causing distorted patterns of fishing activity.



Including Local Marine Mammal Knowledge

Diverse Marine Mammal Sightings

Local communities regularly observe various marine mammals- firsthand information and easy to capture with todays technology.

Importance of Informal Data

Omitting local recreational knowledge from assessments ignores decades of valuable, informal data that support scientific research.

Enhanced Monitoring and Management

Integrating local knowledge improves baseline mapping, population assessments, monitoring efforts and management.



Seabirds Guide Local Fishers

Seabirds Signal Fish Locations

Seabirds like gannets, gulls, and petrels reveal the presence of bait balls and gamefish, helping fishers find productive spots.

Local Knowledge Matters

Ignoring the fisher-seabird connection overlooks valuable local insights that improve fishing success and resource management.

Recognise and Assess Impacts

We request recognition of seabirds' recreational value and assessment of impacts from sediment and vessel lighting on their behaviour.

Include Local Knowledge in Monitoring

Incorporating local fishers' observations in monitoring efforts improves the understanding and protection of seabird-fish interactions, again modern technology can assist in this space.

Assessing Noise Impacts in The Bight

- The STB **natural quiet** is highly valued by fishers and divers.
- The application **ignores human impacts** – focusing only on marine mammals.
- **Noise from mining and vessels** may:
 - Deter fish and disrupt marine life
 - Reduce enjoyment and safety
 - **Attract sharks** – a serious diver safety concern

Recreational boats will operate to **1NM** of the mining vessel (*current proposed exclusion*)

- **What will the noise be like at that distance?**
- **Real-world proximity** must be assessed – our users will be present.





Erosion and sedimentation reduction efforts.

Community-Led Catchment Protection

Our members sedimentation by practicing land management and restoration at catchment and farm scale through collaborative efforts.

Threat from Offshore Mining

Offshore mining introduces large sediment plumes, posing risks that could undermine catchment restoration and protection activities.

Recognising the value Local Efforts

We urge for recognition and economic value assessment of on land efforts to reduce erosion and sedimentation.

Cumulative Impacts Cannot Be Ignored

We disagree that cumulative effects can be dismissed.

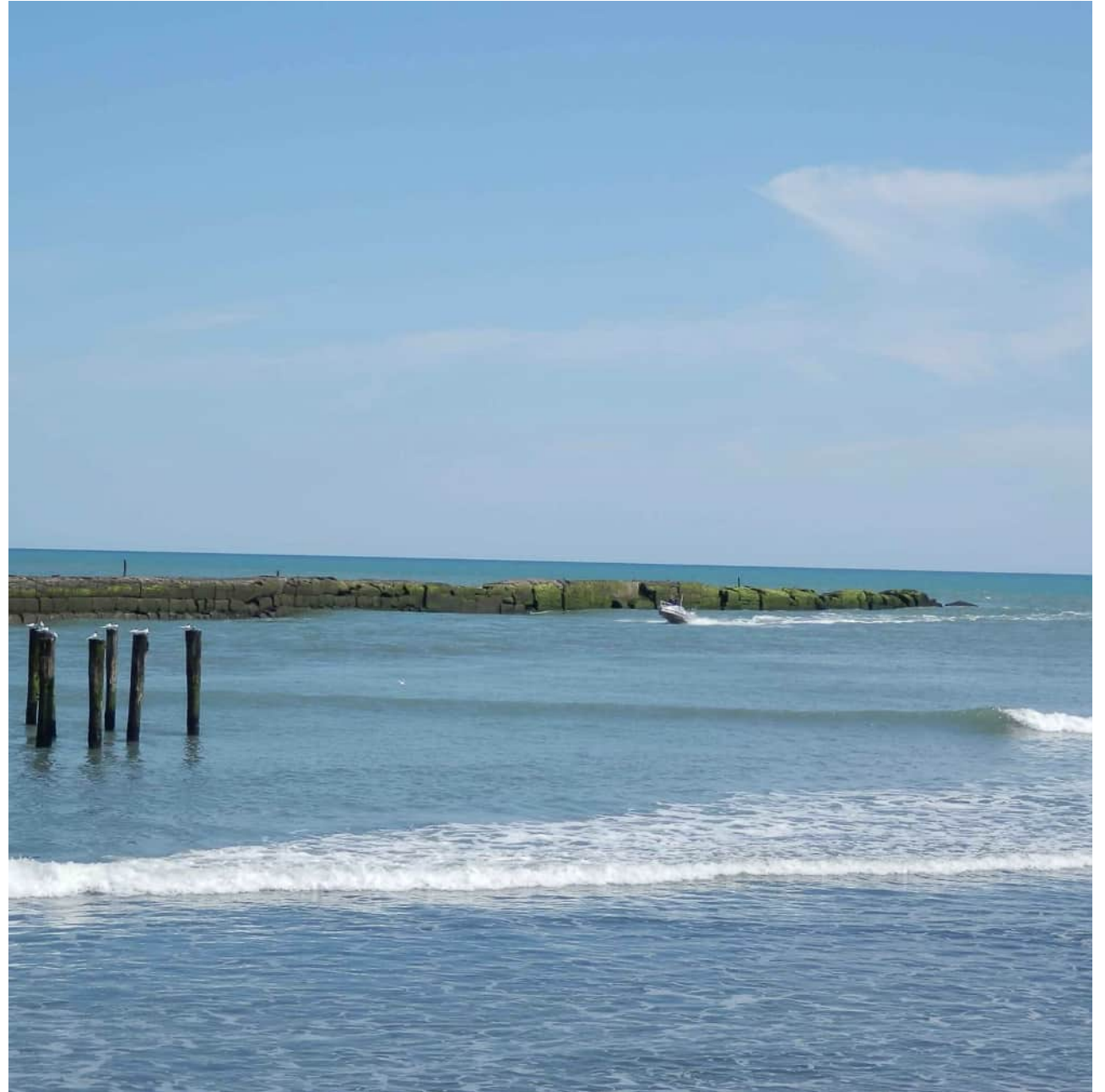
The applicant's claim that other human activity poses greater risk is **general** and not specific to the STB.

Recreational fishing is limited by tides and weather – mining is not.

Mining will **move across a large area** over 20 years – not a fixed site.

Past damage from trawlers shows **recovery is not guaranteed**.

The assessment lacks **local recreational fine scale information**.



Recreational Fishers' Rights



Our Position

- **Recreational fishers are existing interest holders**, not just part of the “community.”
- Exclusion from proposed monitoring structures (TRG Group) is inappropriate particularly when TTR have proposed representation inclusion from the commercial fishing industry.
- **Local knowledge is equal to technical expertise** — proven in the BCO8 Oct 2025 Blue Cod fishery management decision.

Key Concerns

- **No current relationship** exists between the applicant and recreational users.
- Advisory roles lack decision-making power — **we do not agree to be engaged only in an advisory capacity.**
- A **complaints register is reactive**, not preventative — it fails to protect values before harm occurs.



https://youtu.be/BuBTPzXHmhQ?si=AGTYv_PzEZgK8Xpt

[Wanganui Manawatu Sea Fishing Club | Facebook](#)

[Patea and Districts Boating Club Inc. | Facebook](#)