

Hector's and Māui dolphins Threat Management Plan

North Island fisheries measures



Below is a summary of the new fisheries measures to support the Threat Management Plan for Hector's and Māui dolphins, which come into effect on

1 October 2020.

Hector's and Māui dolphins are only found in New Zealand waters and together are one of the world's rarest dolphin species.

Extensive measures are already in place to reduce fishing-related threats to Hector's and Māui dolphins and more is needed to be done to protect them.

The Government is extending and creating new areas that will prohibit the use of commercial and recreational set-nets in both the North Island and South Island.

While trawl fishing poses a lower risk of fishing-related mortality, given the critically endangered status of the Māui dolphin, the Government is also extending the trawl prohibition within the central Māui dolphin habitat zone.

What does this mean for the North Island?

The west coast North Island, from Cape Reinga down to Wellington, will see new measures introduced.

- New commercial and recreational set-net closures out to 4 nautical miles offshore will be created between Cape Reinga and Maunganui Bluff, and between Hawera and Wellington.
- Set-net closures will be extended between Maunganui Bluff and the Waiwhakaiho River (New Plymouth) from 7 nautical miles to 12 nautical miles offshore, as well as between the Waiwhakaiho River and Hawera from 2 nautical miles to 7 nautical miles offshore.
- Set-net closures within the Manukau Harbour will be extended to Taumatarea Point in the north and Matakawau Point in the south within the harbour.
- An extension to commercial trawl closures between Maunganui Bluff and Pariokariwa Point will be put in place, extending south to the Waiwhakaiho River (New Plymouth) and to 4 nautical miles offshore. This falls within the central Māui dolphin habitat zone.
- Commercial and recreational drift netting will be banned in its entirety in all New Zealand waters.
- A change to the regulations allows the Minister to act immediately to impose further restrictions if a single dolphin is caught in the Māui dolphin habitat within the west coast of the North Island.

How do the measures affect commercial fishers?

The measures will prevent commercial set-net fishing in the areas outlined above, extend closures to trawl fishing in the central Māui dolphin habitat zone, and prohibit drift netting in all New Zealand waters. These changes are significant to fishers who operate between Maunganui Bluff and Hawera, given the scale of the offshore extensions. However, the measures will also be notable in the Northland, Manawatu-Whanganui, and Wellington (Kapiti) regions where there are currently few or no commercial restrictions on the use of set-net.

An additional new measure will enable the use of commercial ring nets in set-net prohibition areas within west coast North Island harbours; this fishing method poses a low risk to Māui dolphins.

Other commercial fishing methods including drag netting and beach seining may continue to be used unless otherwise prohibited.



Fisheries New Zealand

Tini a Tangaroa

Will the new measures impact customary fishing?

Tangata whenua may still authorise customary fishing to be carried out by non-commercial or commercial fishers, with or without a fishing vessel, using any type of gear or method.

What do the measures mean for recreational fishers?

Recreational fishers will no longer be able to fish using set-nets in the areas outlined above, or drift net in any New Zealand waters. The set-net changes will be notable in the Northland, Manawatu-Whanganui, and Wellington (Kapiti) regions where there are currently few or no restrictions on the use of set-net.

Other recreational fishing methods including drag netting and beach seining may continue to be used unless otherwise prohibited.

What does this look like in your area?



For more information, please visit www.fisheries.govt.nz/dolphintmp or contact dolphintmp@mpi.govt.nz