

CONFIRMED MINUTES

NZC MEETING #171



At the **NZC Meeting 173** on **28 Feb 2025** these minutes were **confirmed with the following changes:**

Mike Baker appointed to Sub-committee rather than Mark Sceats

Name:	New Zealand Fish and Game Council
Date:	Friday, 13 December 2024
Time:	9:00 am to 5:00 pm (NZDT)
Location:	Brentwood Hotel - Totara Boardroom, 16 Kemp Street, Kilbirnie, WELLINGTON
Board Members:	Barrie Barnes (Chair), Dave Coll, Gerard Karalus, Greg Duley, Linn Koevoet, Mike Barker, Steve Haslett, Euan Williamson, Mark Sceats, Sam Speight, Lindsay Withington, Bill O'Leary
Attendees:	Corina Jordan, Maggie Tait, Richard Cosgrove, Rosamond Connelly, Graeme Nahkies, Adrienne Murray

1. Procedural Matters

1.1 Open Meeting/Welcome: NZC Meeting #171 13-14 December 2024

Meeting opened at 9.13am.

Chief Executive Officer chaired the meeting until an election for the chair was held from amongst the members.

1.2 Workshop

Graeme Nahkies provided a workshop to the members on the principals of good governance. He emphasised that Fish & Game is a creature of statute and part of the wider public service. He also reminded members of the functions of Fish & Game, the requirements for policy development and expectations of Board Members. The presentation ended with a discussion of likely governance challenges over the next term.

1.3 Apologies

Steve Haslett joined the meeting remotely for both days. Sam Speight was present at the meeting in person on 13/12 but joined remotely on 14/12.

Euan Williamson was an apology for early departure.

1.4 Election of Chair

The Chief Executive Office explained the voting procedure. There would be a call for nominations for the Chair. Each nomination must be moved and seconded. If more than one nomination was received, the election would be by secret ballot.

One nomination for the Chair was received.



Election of Chair

That Barrie Barnes be nominated as the Chair of Fish & Game New Zealand Council.

Decision Date: 13 Dec 2024
Mover: Gerard Karalus
Seconder: Mark Sceats
Outcome: Approved

As only one nomination was received, the Chief Executive Officer declared Barrie Barnes elected as Chair.

Barrie Barnes assumed the Chair for the rest of the meeting.

1.5 Interest Register

The Interest Register is to be updated with the following changes:

Linn Koevoest - Chair CSI removed.

Lindsay Withington - elected to Chair Southland.

Steve Haslett - noted his conflict of interest whereby his brother in law is a member of ECAN. The environmental health link can be removed.

Bill O'Leary - noted his membership of the Nelson/ Marlborough Conservation Board.

1.6 NZC Letter of Expectations

Members were asked to sign a 'Letter of Expectations' setting out behaviours for governance members. One copy was returned to NZC staff while members kept a second copy.

1.7 Confirm Minutes NZC Meeting #170 23-24 August - Part I

Mark Sceats was present at the August meeting. Minutes to be amended accordingly.



Minutes of the previous meeting

That NZC confirms the public minutes of the NZC meeting on 23-24 August, as corrected.

Decision Date: 13 Dec 2024
Mover: Mark Sceats
Seconder: Linn Koevoet
Outcome: Approved

1.8 Matters Arising

Euan Williamson sought clarification on the legality of the proposed budget rollover.

Action: The Chief Executive Officer to share legal opinions outlining the expenditure of licence fees.

1.9 Health and Safety Report

The Chair reminded members of their important duties for good health and safety governance. It is critical that the board undertakes actions which discharge their duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.

The Fatigue Management Policy has been circulated to regions.

Action: Staff will review the draft Fatigue Management Policy to include elected board members. Regional Council budgets will need to provide for any additional costs as agreed by the policy eg accommodation for overnight stays if driving home would create a fatigue risk. The reviewed policy will be recirculated to regions for further consideration and feedback.



That the Fatigue Management Policy be reviewed to include Fish & ...

That the Fatigue Management Policy be reviewed to include Fish & Game board members at both the regional and national levels. The new policy is to be recirculated for comment.

Decision Date: 13 Dec 2024
Mover: Lindsay Withington
Seconder: Dave Coll
Outcome: Approved



That the Health and Safety Report and attached documentation be r...

That the Health and Safety Report and attached documentation be received, subject to amendments.

Decision Date: 13 Dec 2024
Mover: Mike Barker
Outcome: Approved

The Health and Safety policy status contains a number of material inaccuracies.

Action: This work is reviewed and brought back for consultations with the regions.

1.10 NZC Risk Register

The Chief Executive Officer provided an update on risks that had developed since the paper was written. These included risks around High Pathogenicity Avian Flu (HPAI). A discussion on addressing Botulism in an HPAI context followed, particularly as climate change alters where Botulism manifests.

Action: Staff will share a spreadsheet for recording botulism cases across the country.



That the New Zealand Fish and Game Council: a. Receive the inform...

That the New Zealand Fish and Game Council:

- a. Receive the information.
- b. Review and discuss the risk assessment and
- c. Consider the annual work program and budget with a specific view to addressing those risks identified as high (2) and very high (1)

Decision Date: 13 Dec 2024
Mover: Mike Barker
Seconder: Linn Koevoet
Outcome: Approved

2. Decision Items

2.1 RMA Fund Update and New Funding Application



received

That NZC receives the information in the RMA Legal Fund Update (appendix 1 & 2) and advocacy update (appendix 3) of this report.

Decision Date: 13 Dec 2024
Mover: Euan Williamson
Seconder: Mark Sceats
Outcome: Approved



That NZC approve additional funding of \$98k for Phase 3 RMA Refor...

That NZC approve additional funding of \$98k for Phase 3 RMA Reform, as well as the replacement NPS-FM national direction.

Abstention Mike Barker

Decision Date: 13 Dec 2024
Mover: Sam Speight
Seconder: Dave Coll
Outcome: Approved

2.2 NZC Performance Report



received

That the DRAFT NZC Fish & Game Annual Report for the year ending 31 August 2024 be received.

Decision Date: 13 Dec 2024
Mover: Lindsay Withington
Seconder: Euan Williamson
Outcome: Approved

The Board would like the Fish & Game NZC Annual Report to be shared with licence holders once the report has been audited and finalised.

Errors noted on page 10 around dates of Board membership.

Action: Review dates of Board membership as recorded in Annual Report.

2.3 Research Update Licence holder perceptions



received

That the Licence Holder Survey be received.

Action: The Chief Executive Officer is to arrange a workshop with the Research Sub- Committee to discuss the methodology.

Decision Date: 13 Dec 2024
Mover: Lindsay Withington
Seconder: Sam Speight

2.4 Research update Economic assessment of the trout fisheries



That the research into Economic Assessment of Trout Fisheries be ...

That the research into Economic Assessment of Trout Fisheries be received.

Decision Date: 13 Dec 2024
Mover: Mike Barker
Seconder: Linn Koevoet
Outcome: Approved

The CEO noted that part of contract with NZIER includes an outreach component – to allow independent scientists talk with authority on the findings. The research is interesting and merits its own launch and advocacy.

Action: A copy of the report is to be provided to the Minister. Staff to organise a launch event to highlight the research and will ensure the Minister is invited.

2.5 Consultation Feedback on Budget and Meeting Schedule



That the New Zealand Fish and Game Council seeks consultation fro...

That the New Zealand Fish and Game Council seeks consultation from regional councils on holding:

- i. Five NZC meetings in the 2024-25 financial year;
 - a) 13th and 14th December 2024- Wellington
 - b) 26th Feb (online 6pm-8pm) and 28th Feb 2025 – Wellington
 - c) 11th and 12th April 2025 – Wellington
 - d) 17th and 18th June 2025 – online (6pm- 8pm)
 - e) 27h August (online) and 29th August – 2025 Wellington
- ii. One Governors Forum – (Chairs and NZC);
 - a) 1st March 2025 – Wellington
- iii. Two in-person Managers meetings;
 - a) Time and location TBC (Feb and October)

Decision Date: 13 Dec 2024
Mover: Dave Coll
Seconder: Lindsay Withington
Outcome: Approved

Note that Canterbury and Otago requested a change to the March Regional Managers meeting from 13 March to 20 March to align with regional budget setting.

2.6 Staff Development Fund Application



Delegation to CEO power to approve development fund applications

That NZC delegates to the CEO the power to approve development fund applications within budget.

Decision Date: 13 Dec 2024
Mover: Mark Sceats
Seconder: Sam Speight
Outcome: Approved



Receive information and approved additional funding

- That the NZC:
1. Receive the information.

2. NZC approves the extra funding required for the Jayde Cooper applicati
come from the research fund budget.

Decision Date: 13 Dec 2024
Mover: Mark Sceats
Seconders: Steve Haslett
Outcome: Approved

2.7 Sports Fish and Gamebird Management Plan Policies and Guidance

The CEO noted that there had been an extensive process to build these plans. The recommendation on the table is to adopt the policy document as NZC policy and then the Mana Whenua guidance should remain as guidance. A conversation followed about whether this was more appropriate to be policy or guidance. The CEO noted the Ministerial review of F&G recommended that NZC write policy on this in order to ensure that regional councils are implementing the latest policy.

Action: staff to send the historic papers through to new members so they can see consultation that has previously occurred.

A couple of points for amendment or clarification were noted:

Pg 5 – Hearings can be carried out by subcommittee – clarify

Pg 3 – Ethical behaviours anglers and hunters. What does that include? – clarify

Pg 7 – Example of issues to be provided.



That NZC adopt the following three documents as policy, with amen...

That NZC adopt the following three documents as policy, with amendments: SFGMP consultation policy, key elements and guide and that the Mana Whenua Engagement document be adopted as a guideline.

Decision Date: 13 Dec 2024
Mover: Lindsay Withington
Seconders: Mike Barker
Outcome: Approved

2.8 Game Bird Habitat Report



That the NZC Agree to: 1. The hunter licence fee contribution for...

That the NZC Agree to:

1. The hunter licence fee contribution for the Habitat Stamp being maintained a for the 2026 game season.
2. The game bird or other wildlife species to be depicted on the 2027 habitat sta open to any game bird species.
3. A photographic competition to select the artwork of the 2027 stamp.
4. Note the Trust Board's 2025 meeting will be held in Hamilton on 23 August 2

Decision Date: 13 Dec 2024
Mover: Gerard Karalus
Seconders: Dave Coll
Outcome: Approved

3. Items for Information

3.1 Compliance Report



Receive Compliance Report

That NZC:

1. Receive the information
2. Note work carried out to date
3. Note ongoing work and progress

Decision Date: 13 Dec 2024

Mover: Mark Sceats

Seconder: Sam Speight

Outcome: Approved

The CEO provided an introduction to this paper. Staff have written a draft infringement policy. This work was started five years ago but was parked. There have been discussions at NZC regarding the variations and differences we are seeing across the country in infringement practice including around diversion. The introduction of infringement fines would need to be approved by the Minister. Keen to progress this work.

3.2 Maritime Report

Adams Daniel has reviewed our maritime compliance functions. Has identified consistency across the regions as an issue including health and safety policies. It remains a concern that regions think they have the 'option' of adopting NZC policy.

All governors (at national and regional level) have responsibility for ensuring all reasonable steps are taken to protect the health and safety of our staff and volunteers. This is a serious responsibility and there are consequences for not having the right policies in place or not enforcing them.

Action: Staff to write back asking regional offices to go back and review their health and safety policies and look at their enforcement systems. This should include the legal opinion on needing to adopt nationally set policy. Also remind managers that lone working policy covers staff working from home.



Maritime Report

That NZC:

1. Create a database to document national policy and track the regions that have and have not adopted NZC policy.
2. Develop a staff intentions log policy in conjunction regions. This policy would be binding for the regions participating in the NZC Maritime Program but preferably regions would adopt a single system that would be part of a uniform national health and safety system for all field work.
3. Develop a fast-track process for policy in conjunction with regions to allow NZC to be more responsive in the future

Decision Date: 13 Dec 2024

Mover: Dave Coll

Seconder: Mark Sceats

Outcome: Approved

Meeting paused Friday 13 December at 3.02pm.

3.3 Ranger Report

3.4 NZC Finance Report

Meeting resumed Saturday 14 December at 9.53am.

The Chief Executive Officer explained that it was not possible to provide a finance report for this meeting as the Chief Financial Officer is on sick leave.

The Crawford Report (report into cost-optimisation) is not yet complete. The draft report has not been provided as it was not considered to be helpful to send out incomplete information. The report will be completed in time for our NZC strategy meeting in February. There is a standing commitment to let the Otago region view this report ahead of the other regions.

Once the report is completed there will be a presentation to NZC. When board members go back to the regions, they will have a thorough understanding of what the report is saying. There was discussion about whether the NZC meeting could be live streamed to regions, so there is no risk of inconsistent report backs.



Taupo Fishery Advisory Committee

That NZC put forward Debbie Oakley as the New Zealand Fish & Game Council nominee on the Taupo Fishery Advisory.

Decision Date: 13 Dec 2024
Mover: Barrie Barnes
Seconder: Mark Sceats
Outcome: Approved

3.5 HPAI Update and Recommendations

H5N1 is not currently present in Oceania. Biosecurity NZ has recently placed restrictions around an egg farm in Otago where H7N6 was discovered. The situation around High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza (HPAI) is evolving quickly. This paper represents our current understanding and best advice at this point in time. Regions need to stay agile as developments may occur suddenly and fast policy changes may be required in response.



Receive the Report

That NZC receive the report.

Decision Date: 13 Dec 2024
Mover: Lindsay Withington
Seconder: Gerard Karalus



Policy Recommendations

That NZC:

1. Adopt the following recommendations and request that regional councils also uphold these positions: (i) That Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) level 1 protocols are adhered to for any activities where birds are being handled (see Appendix 2) (ii) That any bird banding operations in Otago and CSI are to cease (as requested by MPI) until further notice, but banding operations outside of Otago and CSI may continue, if PPE level 1 protocols are implemented. ((iii) That if H5N1 is discovered in New Zealand and the country moves to Phase 3 on the risk framework, Fish & Game will stop routine operations involving the handling of wild birds until advised further. Note that in Phase 3 where contact with wild

birds is necessary and undertaken in conjunction with MPI, DOC or Te Whatu Ora, PPE level 3 protocols must be adhered to by all Fish & Game staff and volunteers. (iv) That permits for disturbing or culling wild birds are not to be issued as a mechanism to address concerns around HPAI transmission from wild birds to farmed birds or more generally as a response to HPAI concerns.

2. Adopt the Fish & Game New Zealand HPAI Communications Plan as set out in Appendix 3.
3. Note that the HPAI situation in New Zealand has the potential to change quickly, which may require agility in relation to the NZC recommendations.

Decision Date: 13 Dec 2024
Mover: Euan Williamson
Seconder: Mark Sceats
Outcome: Approved

3.6 Appointment of Committee Members

Nominations for membership of the Executive Committee and the Research Sub-Committee are sought.



Executive Committee Membership

That the following nominations for membership of the Executive Committee be accepted (in addition to the Chair):

Mike Barker - moved Gerard Karalus/ seconded Lindsay Withington

Dave Coll - moved Greg Duley/ seconded Mark Sceats

Greg Duley - moved Mike Barker/ seconded Mark Sceats

Decision Date: 13 Dec 2024
Mover: Mark Sceats
Seconder: Lindsay Withington
Outcome: Approved

The NZC were keen to investigate membership of the Executive Committee being revisited on an annual basis.

Action: That the Governance and Policy Advisor report back on the current wording of the standing orders executive and what changes might be required.



Membership of the Research Sub-Committee

That the following nominations for the Research Sub-Committee be accepted:

Steve Haslett and Mike Barker - moved Mark Sceats/ seconded Lindsay Withington

Note: Steve and Mike intend to co-Chair this committee

Decision Date: 13 Dec 2024
Mover: Barrie Barnes
Seconder: Dave Coll
Outcome: Approved

3.7 Public Excluded Motion



Resolution to exclude the public

That NZC excludes the public from the following parts of the proceedings namely:

Confirmation of the Public Excluded minutes of the NZC meeting on 23-24 August

NZC Forensic Review

Future of the Licence System

Rakaia WCO

CEO KPIs

GENERAL SUBJECT OF EACH MATTER TO BE CONSIDERED	REASON FOR PASSING THIS RESOLUTION IN RELATION TO EACH MATTER	GROUND(S) UNDER SECTION 48(1) FOR THE PASSING OF THIS RESOLUTION
Confirm Public Excluded Minutes NZC Meeting 170 – 24 August 2024 -	For the reasons set out in the Part I minutes held with public present.	Section 48(1)(a)(ii) That the public conduct of the whole or the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding would exist.
Rakaia WCO Update	S9(2)(h) OIA Exclusion of the public is necessary to maintain legal professional privilege.	
Future of the licence system	Improper gain or advantage s7(2)(k)	
NZC CEO KPI's	Free and frank expression Protection of members Improper gain or advantage. s7(2)(f) and s7(2)(j)	

Decision Date: 13 Dec 2024

Mover: Dave Coll

Seconder: Linn Koevoet

Outcome: Approved

3.8 Resolutions to come out of Public Excluded

3.9 Licence Working Party & Sales Update



Receive the report

That NZC receive the report

Decision Date: 13 Dec 2024

Mover: Mike Barker

Seconded: Lindsay Withington

3.10 Communications Update



Receive the Report

That NZC receive the Communications Report

Decision Date: 13 Dec 2024
Mover: Steve Haslett
Seconded: Dave Coll
Outcome: Approved

3.11 NZC CEO Report



Receive the Report

That NZC receive the CEO report

Decision Date: 13 Dec 2024
Mover: Linn Koevoet
Seconded: Lindsay Withington
Outcome: Approved

3.12 Sub-Committee Reports



Received

That NZC receive that report from the Research Subcommittee
Moved Bill O'Leary

Decision Date: 13 Dec 2024
Seconded: Dave Coll

A verbal update was received.

The Subcommittee raised the fact that a research position would be valuable. This is also one thing that Chair hopes the council will support at the next funding round.

3.13 Action List



Received for information

That NZC receive the action list for information

Decision Date: 13 Dec 2024
Mover: Gerard Karalus
Seconded: Mark Sceats
Outcome: Approved

3.14 General Business

The Chair raised the issue of different bag limits in different regions and the potential confusion this can cause at the boundary. National bags limits were discussed, however setting bag limits is a key function of regional councils and one of the main reasons people put their name forward for the role. National coordination was agreed to be a better approach.

3.15 List of Acronyms

3.16 NZC Correspondence Register

4. Close Meeting

4.1 NZC Meeting closed 3:10pm

Next meeting: No date for the next meeting has been set.

Signature: _____

Date: _____