Recreational Charter Vessel Registration and Reporting: 
Adding value to management through improved information

Key issues:

>> The number of recreational charter vessels operating in New Zealand is unclear, as is the effect this fishing is having on our resource.

>> Charter vessel operators are not subject to specific regulations.

Policy Proposals:

>> A register of charter vessels that can:
   > Track the total number of charter vessels operating in New Zealand.

>> A national activity reporting scheme that can:

   > Track charter vessel activity by region
   > Provide real-time information on changes in relative abundance in fisheries targeted by charter vessels
   > Inform advice on establishing marine reserves and other spatial management measures.

>> Catch reporting — for selected fish stocks to generate more accurate stock assessment advice.

This information will improve the total value gained from those fisheries where commercial, recreational and customary uses intersect.

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Estimated number of charter vessels by Fisheries Management Area (FMA)
Policy proposals

- **Comprehensive Registration**
  - Define charter vessels as a specified class of fishing vessel
  - Charter operators must register vessel name and contact details with MFish
  - Infringement notice penalties for not being registered

- **Charter vessel activity reporting**
  - Phased in by FMA
  - Fishing locations specified by latitude and longitude
  - Number of fishers and hours fished
  - Identify top 3 target species

- **Catch reporting for selected stocks**
  - Improve stock assessments in at least two species – groper (*Polyprion oxygeneios*) and kingfish (*Seriola lalandi*) in FMA 1 and 2
  - Potential to include further stocks in subsequent years
Benefits of registration, activity and catch reporting

• Provide MFish and the sector with a comprehensive register of charter vessel operators;
• Track the number of charter vessel operators by region;
• Provide timely information on changes in effort in amateur fisheries targeted by charter vessels;
• Assist with advice on spatial management measures;
• Inform decision making in fish stock management;
• Support/negate anecdotal evidence in advice on the need for changes to amateur bag limits;
• Assist stock assessment decisions in some fisheries.