

Fish & Game Changes - Plain English Summary



What's being planned

The Government is planning changes to how Fish & Game works. Here's what the main proposals mean:

1. Buying your licence

What's planned: All licences will be sold through one central national system instead of each region selling their own.

What this means: You will still buy your licence the same way (online or at one of our retail partners), but the money will go to the New Zealand Fish & Game Council, then get shared out to regions based on where people fish and hunt, and regional councils' responsibilities.

Example: If lots of people buy their licences through Canterbury but fish on the West Coast, the West Coast would get a funding boost.

2. Speaking up for anglers and hunters

What's planned: A national plan will establish and prioritise the most important issues and improve co-ordination across Fish & Game.

What this means: Your region will still be able to speak up for anglers and hunters and have their say in planning decisions. The difference is that Fish & Game will create an overall plan (that regions help create) to make sure work lines up and the most important things get tackled first.

Example: There will be more similar approaches across different regions about what Fish & Game wants to see for water quality.

3. Who can vote in elections

What's planned: More licence holders will be able to vote for their regional councillors.

What this means: If you've bought any adult licence in the last three years, you can vote. You wouldn't need to buy the most expensive licence. Your partner can also vote if you have a family licence.

Example: If you bought a day licence to try fishing two years ago, you can vote in Fish & Game elections.

4. Smaller councils with extra people

What's planned: Regional councils will have 8 elected members instead of 12, and the Minister, in exceptional circumstances, could add up to 2 extra people with special skills.

What this means: Your regional council will be smaller but might have people with special knowledge such as governance.

Example: If a council needed help around governance, an expert could be temporarily added to help them.

5. Reporting

What's planned: All regions will report their work the same way, and it will all be put together into one report for Parliament.

What this means: Instead of 13 different reports there will be the same way of reporting across all regions, put together into one national report.

6. Shared experts

What's planned: The national office would hire experts who could work across regions and provide support.

What this means: Experts in areas like science or law, would be hired nationally and be able to share their expertise across regions.

Example: An ecologist could work across several regions.

7. Online meetings and getting in touch

What's planned: Fish & Game could hold meetings online and contact you by email instead of just through newspapers.

What this means: Information could be shared by email and meetings could be held online when needed.

Example: You can sign up to get emails about new rule changes rather than only seeing notices in newspapers.

What would stay the same

Your fishing and hunting: The seasons, bag limits, and areas you can fish and hunt will still be decided by your local regional council.

Your licence fees: No planned changes to how you pay for licences.

User pays, user says: Licence holders will still fund Fish & Game and elect the councillors who make decisions.

Local knowledge: Your regional council will still make decisions about local rivers, lakes, and hunting areas.

When

Later this year, a bill will be introduced to Parliament and a select committee will hear views. The bill might get updated based on that and will become law as early as next winter.

Questions?

If you have questions about these plans, contact your local Fish & Game office or email us at reform@fishandgame.org.nz