

ENRP No: 05 of 2020-21

**Memorandum for Economic Development Committee**

**SUBJECT** **Fish Catch Limits to Support Fishing Licencing Policy**

Memorandum by Director of ENRP

**ADVICE SOUGHT** **The Economic Development Committee is being asked to endorse the catch limits for those fish species where limits are included on the Catch Limits Table.**

**BACKGROUND & CONSIDERATIONS**

1. In January 2020 EDC endorsed the St Helena Fishing Licencing Policy (FLP) following a period of public and stakeholder consultation. A Catch Limits Table will form part of the Policy (as attached) for all fishing licence types.
2. Further information has been added to the Catch Limits Table to provide justification as to why the various limits have been set as listed.
3. The sports spearfishing number across the pelagic species have been updated to 4 per boat per day. The earlier proposal was for 2 per boat per day and further representation was received from sportsfishermen for 6 per boat day. A compromise on the number to 4 per boat day has been proposed to support sports sportsfishing and tourism business growth through attracting increased tourism numbers to St Helena for sports fishing.
4. Discussion has been held on the Table at the end of June with elected members through Caucus and Chairpersons Assembly forums and the key concerns were as follows:
  - catch numbers per person per day for recreational angling was too low.
  - whether it was possible to move from daily to weekly catch limits for recreational angling.
5. The table has been updated to move from a daily limit on catch per person for recreational angling to a limit per vessel per day. In doing so this will enable the licensee to make decisions under his licence based on the daily limits for his vessel rather than on a per person basis and allow fishing effort to be spread across those species available to fish. It is not the intention to prevent recreational fishing but rather to prevent significant impact on a single ground fish species. It should be noted that current catch limits proposed allow a variety of species to be caught, with some 187 ground fish, 6 lobsters and 14 pelagics (12 of which is SKJ) able to be landed per vessel per day under recreational angling (even with an appreciation of the seasonality of some species).
6. A move from daily limits per person or per vessel to weekly limits per person or per vessel for recreational angling will be problematic in ensuring effective compliance and enforcement of recreational licences as it will not be possible to monitor weekly catches. Therefore is not being recommended for this type of fishing.
7. No financial implications is expected for SHG as a result of setting catch limits to implement fisheries licencing and related enforcement activities.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

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**ECONOMIC  
IMPLICATIONS**

8. Setting of catch limits will contribute to promotion of sustainable and economically viable fishing aspirations for the Island through ensuring there are daily/annual limits to the harvesting of the various species of fish.

**CONSISTENCY  
WITH  
INVESTMENT  
POLICY  
PRINCIPLES**

9. Implementing the recommended options would be consistent with the following Investment Policy principle:

No.2. Encourage growth through import substitution, export promotion and domestic production.

**PUBLIC / SOCIAL  
IMPACT**

10. Setting catch limits for harvesting of fish species is important for achieving current levels of demand for fish and is important for sustainable fishing activities in the medium and long term.

11. Members of the public may have strong views on the best way to set or implement catch limits or restrictions to achieve current demand levels for the various species and for future sustainability.

**ENVIRONMENTAL  
IMPACT**

12. A positive environmental impact is expected through setting limits towards sustainable harvesting of fish resources.

**PREVIOUS  
CONSULTATION /  
COMMITTEE  
INPUT**

13. Committee was consulted in August 2019 on the catch limits schedules as an Appendix to the draft FLP that was approved for consultation. Further consultation was had with Committee in January and May 2020.

14. A period of public and targeted stakeholder consultation for the FLP was undertaken in September/October 2019, and included the catch limits

15. Further consultation with sportsfishing operators was undertaken during November 2019 with regards changes proposed to licencing conditions for sports spearfishing activities.

**PUBLIC  
REACTION**

16. It is expected that, if adopted, generally there would be a positive reaction to SHG setting catch limits across our fisheries resources to eventually determine and implement sustainable levels of harvesting of our fish resources.

**PUBLICITY**

17. All stakeholders will be informed of the catch limits adopted through inclusion of the Annex within their fishing licence, and the public through being able to publish the complete FLP.

**SUPPORT TO  
STRATEGIC  
OBJECTIVES**

18. The options support “All Together Wealthier and Altogether Healthier” SO’s.

**LINK TO  
SUSTAINABLE  
ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT  
PLAN GOALS**

19. This paper supports the following SEDP Goals:

- Increase Exports
- Substitute Imports

**OPEN /CLOSED  
AGENDA ITEM**

Open

*DD*

**DATE OF MEMO**

2/07/2020

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