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Media Release

Freshwater management must improve to protect fish species, TIA says

The tourism industry is calling on the Government to focus on ensuring New Zealand has healthy freshwater, to protect both indigenous freshwater fish and trout and salmon.

While Tourism Industry Aotearoa supports proposed increased efforts to protect indigenous freshwater fish, it says it's also essential to preserve New Zealand's international reputation as an angling destination.

"The poor state of our rivers and lakes has been an issue of significant ongoing concern to TIA. We say a healthy freshwater environment is the key focus to maintaining and growing freshwater fish populations, both indigenous and introduced species," TIA Chief Executive Chris Roberts says.

In its submission to the Department of Conservation on the Conservation (Indigenous Freshwater Fish) Amendment Bill, TIA says a proposal in the Bill that would potentially give greater priority to Freshwater Fisheries Management Plans over Sports Fish and Game Management Plans is not in the interests of the tourism industry. Its implementation could result in requiring trout and salmon to be removed from some water bodies in order to give priority to indigenous fisheries.

"When the environment is well-managed, both indigenous and introduced species are able to co-exist and thrive. A focus on reducing trout and salmon numbers is not the answer."

TIA has reminded the Government of the value of freshwater sports fish to the tourism industry.

New Zealanders take up to 1.7 million trips each year to enjoy freshwater fishing, Mr Roberts says.

"Most of these trips take Kiwis well off the beaten track, spending money on accommodation, dining, petrol and retail in regional centres that often don't see many other leisure visitors."

International anglers also make a huge contribution. The New Zealand Professional Fishing Guides Association notes in its submission that angling for freshwater fish makes a significant contribution to New Zealand's economy. Anglers spend from \$1100 to \$3750 per day, including guiding and other services such as accommodation, dining and travel.

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New Zealand has 77 species of freshwater fish. 53 of them are indigenous and most of those are endemic (found nowhere else in the world).

“We must protect these native species, but that does not require removing trout and salmon from our rivers and streams.”

To read TIA’s submission, go to

<https://tia.org.nz/advocacy/recent-submissions/environment/>

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KEY FACTS

- Tourism in New Zealand is a \$99 million per day industry. Tourism delivers around \$40 million in foreign exchange to the New Zealand economy each day of the year. Domestic tourism contributes another \$59 million in economic activity every day.
- Tourism is New Zealand’s biggest export earner, contributing \$14.5 billion or 20.7% of New Zealand’s foreign exchange earnings (year ended March 2017).
- 14.5% of the total number of people employed in New Zealand work directly or indirectly in tourism. That means 399,150 people are working in the visitor economy.
- The [Tourism 2025](#) growth framework has a goal of growing total tourism revenue to \$41 billion a year by 2025.

Visit www.tia.org.nz for more information

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