

Exploring Future Opportunities for the Taupō Fishery

September 2012

New Zealand Government



Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai



Terms of Reference

Exploring Future Opportunities for the Taupō Fishery

Objective:

Objective: to ensure that management of the Taupō Sports Fishery:

- ⌘ delivers an internationally renowned and sustainable trout fishery, and
- ⌘ contributes optimally to the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of the region.

The Taupō Fishery is managed by the Department of Conservation (DOC). To achieve the objective the Department wants to ensure that:

- Taupō is an internationally renowned sustainable fishery and destination for anglers,
- The Taupō fishery is an integral and integrated part of Destination Great Lake Taupō, and DOC's management contributes to the social, economic and cultural wellbeing of the region,
- Angler participation in the Taupō Sports Fishery is at the optimal level
- the tino rangatiratanga and kaitiakitanga of Ngāti Tūwharetoa over Taupō-nui-a-Tia and the fisheries within the Tūwharetoa rohe is acknowledged and recognised
- DOC is meeting the Crown's obligations under the 2007 Deed to Ngāti Tūwharetoa as the owner of the Taupō lake bed.
- DOC understands and is well integrated and aligned with the aspirations of other fish and game and fisheries managers (including the Lake Rotoaira Trust), the angling community, district and regional councils and energy companies,
- As the Taupō Fishery manager, DOC has the confidence of its key partner, anglers, stakeholders and the support of the wider community,
- Management of the fishery is financially sustainable

The key element of the review process will be to obtain the views and aspirations of the full range of participants (past, current and potential) in the Taupo fishery about how these objectives can best be met.

Context and Background to Review:

The 1926 Māori Land Amendment and Māori Land Claims Adjustment Act established a relationship between the Crown and Ngāti Tūwharetoa to manage the Lake Taupō Sports Fishery. The Crown, initially through Internal Affairs, Wildlife Service and then the Department of Conservation (since 1987), has exercised its part in this relationship through the management of the fishery. Further to the 1926 Act, in 2007 an agreement between the Crown and Ngāti Tūwharetoa clarified property rights and further simplified payments from those specified in the 1926 Act (including in respect to revenue from the fisheries). The 2007 agreement clarified that Ngāti Tūwharetoa owns the bed of, subsoil and space occupied by water in, and the airspace above Lake Taupō, including the Waikato River to Huka Falls and the tributaries that flow into Lake Taupō.

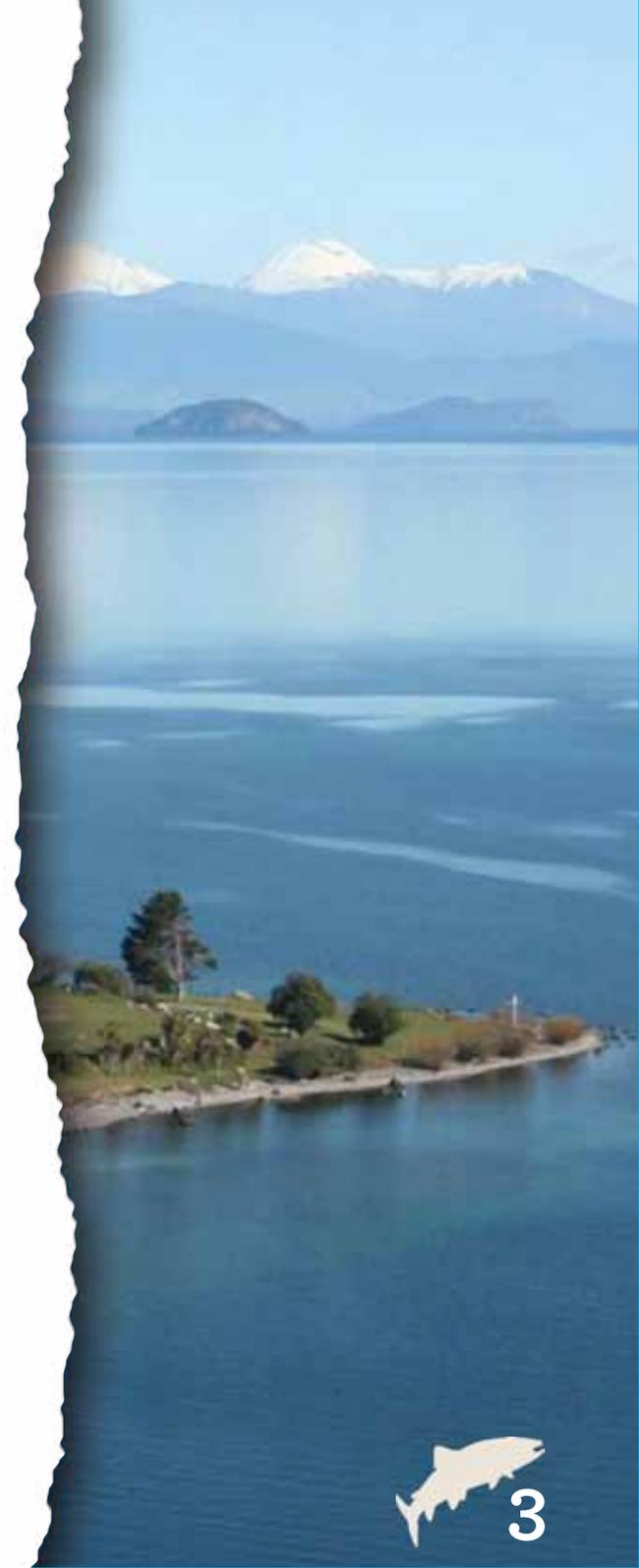
The Department's vision is for New Zealand to be the greatest living space on earth. While this vision is bigger than DOC and conservation, DOC's purpose is to provide a conservation leadership role for a prosperous New Zealand. Ultimately DOC wants to see New Zealanders gaining environmental, social and economic benefits from healthy functioning ecosystems, recreation opportunities and living our history.

Lake Taupō is the largest freshwater lake in the southern hemisphere and has some of the best trout fishing in the world and receives the highest level of angling use of any fishery in the country providing approximately 40% of New Zealand's total freshwater sports fishing. It provides for exciting river and lake fishing all year round and attracts anglers from all around the world, in a stunning natural setting. It is integral to the economic wellbeing of Taupō and the wider region. The Taupō Fishery includes Lake Taupō and its tributary rivers including the Waikato River to Huka Falls; Lakes Moawhango and Otamangakau and the Waikato River between the control gates bridge and Huka Falls. Although Lake Rotoaira is part of the Taupō Fishing District, it is privately owned and administered by the Lake Rotoaira Trust.

The Department's management of the Taupō sports fishery is critical to environmental, economic, social and cultural wellbeing. The Department is undertaking a review of its management to ensure that its investment in fisheries management is well targeted and contributing optimally to the overall wellbeing of the region. To do this it will engage widely to hear the views of anglers, the tourism and economic sector, local authorities, other fisheries managers (Fish and Game and the Lake Rotoaira Trust) and from the Crown's partner in the fishery, Ngāti Tūwharetoa. Once those views have been heard they will be used to guide the long term direction of the management of the Taupō sports fishery for the benefit of all.

The Conservator has also identified this as a particularly important project in context of the current world-wide economic downturn and a recent perceived decline in the health of the fishery. The latter has drawn concern from some in the angling community as well as other stakeholders, including the Taupō District Council. The Taupō Sports Fishery Management Plan is due for a formal review in 2012. It's timely, therefore, to discuss the present management regime and identify opportunities and options for future improvement.

Additionally, there have been several recent structural changes within DOC culminating in a merger between the Tongariro Taupō and Wanganui conservancies. The newly created Tongariro Whanganui Taranaki (TWT) conservancy includes a new Area office joining the Fishery and Turangi Taupō Areas into one, known as the Taupō-nui-a-Tia Area.



Key issues and opportunities for exploration

In order to achieve its overall objective, the Department has identified eight critical areas for the Review Team to examine. These are:

1. Meeting the needs of primary customers

- Anglers – past, present and potential - are the primary customers of the Taupō Sports Fishery:
 - How can the fishery best meet the needs of the anglers
 - How do anglers currently view the fishery?
 - What is the relationship currently like with anglers?
 - What opportunities are there to work better with anglers?
 - How accessible is the Taupō fishery to anglers?

2. Effective and transparent governance

- Governance and advisory processes:
 - How well are they working?
 - How well do they meet the key partner and stakeholder's expectation?
- The Taupō Fishery Advisory Committee model:
 - How effective is it?
 - How responsive is it to licence holders?
 - What are the improvement opportunities?
- The interface with the Tūwharetōa Māori Trust Board (TWMTB) and Conservation Board
 - How does this work?
 - What improvements are needed?



3. Management direction and systems

- Vision and goals
 - How well are they currently defined and articulated?
 - How well aligned are they with:
 - The Department's strategic direction?
 - Other fishery agencies' strategic thinking?
 - The Tūwharetoa Iwi Environmental Plan?
 - Taupō District Council's community outcomes?
 - The aspirations and expectations of licence holders/anglers?
- How effective is the Sports Fishery Management Plan as an instrument to set the long term direction and management philosophies?
- How does the Sports Fishery Management Plan interface with existing Conservation Management Strategies?
- Financial and internal systems and processes
 - How well integrated and transparent are existing financial systems?
 - How are resources allocated?
 - How are outputs aligned with outcomes?

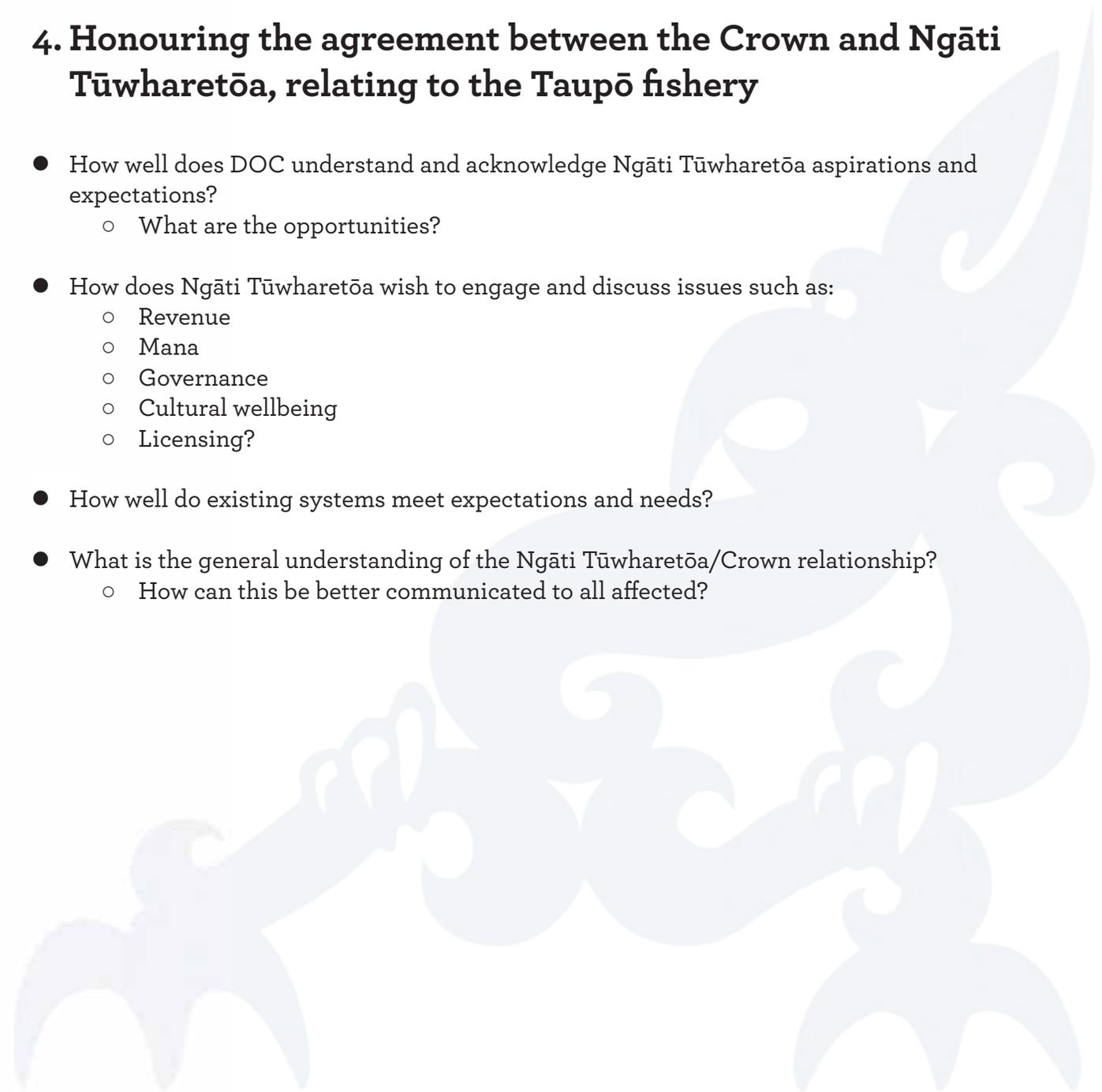




Tauranga Ika Fisheries

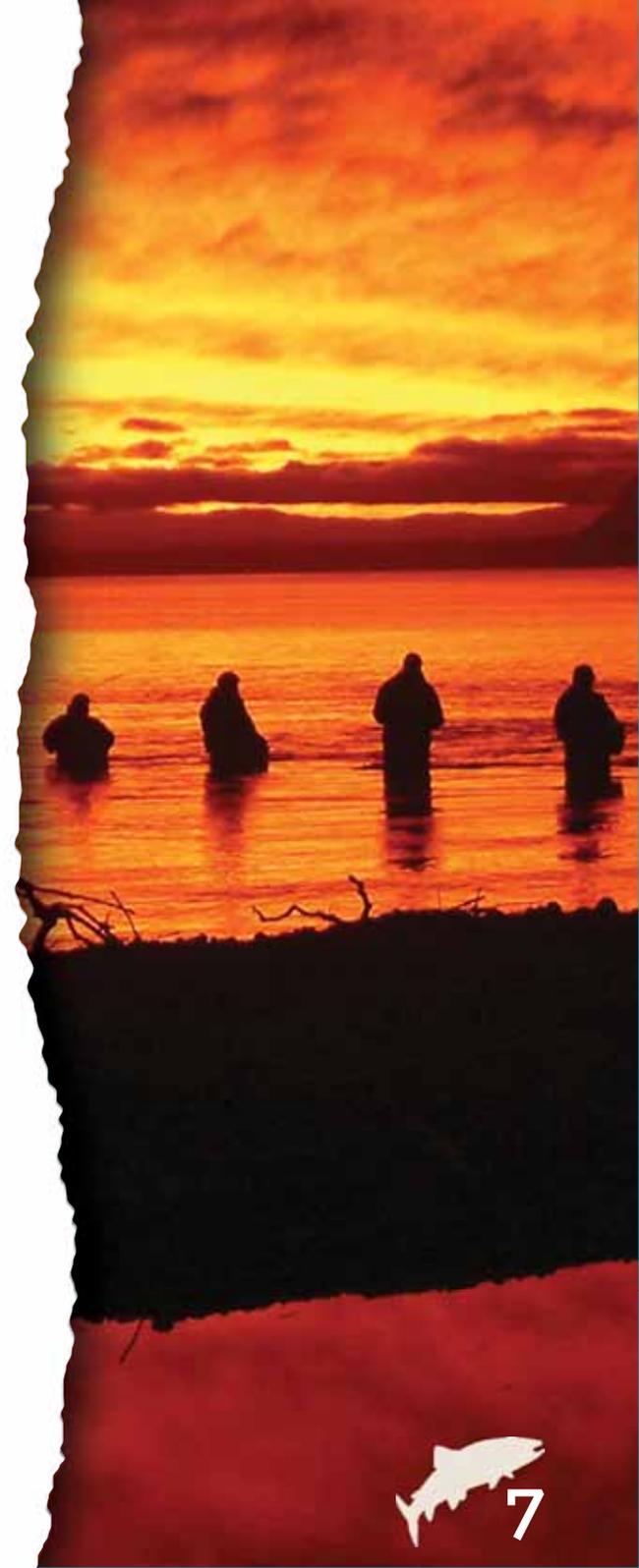
4. Honouring the agreement between the Crown and Ngāti Tūwharetōa, relating to the Taupō fishery

- How well does DOC understand and acknowledge Ngāti Tūwharetōa aspirations and expectations?
 - What are the opportunities?
- How does Ngāti Tūwharetōa wish to engage and discuss issues such as:
 - Revenue
 - Mana
 - Governance
 - Cultural wellbeing
 - Licensing?
- How well do existing systems meet expectations and needs?
- What is the general understanding of the Ngāti Tūwharetōa/Crown relationship?
 - How can this be better communicated to all affected?



5. Productive and positive relationships

- How well do we understand and acknowledge wider community and other stakeholder expectations and aspirations?
- What is the current state of relationships with stakeholders?
- What are the opportunities to grow, improve and/or integrate with them? For example with:
 - Lake Rotoaira Trust
 - Fish and Game Councils at both a national and regional level
 - Destination Great Lake Taupō
 - Taupō District Council
 - Taupō Fishery Advisory Committee
 - What is the role of National Trout Centre?
- How effective are the current methods of communicating with, and reporting to, licence holders and other stakeholders and what future opportunities can be identified?



6. Examine the current state of the fishery:

- What are the opportunities to improve it?
- What are the current interventions and what are the possibilities?
- What role does the National Trout Centre have in terms of research and intervention aimed at improving the fishery.
- How well is the threat of a didymo incursion and/or other pest species understood?
- How can fishing pressure be relieved?

- How are science needs currently determined?
 - How are they applied and what are the future opportunities?
 - What are the issues regarding genetic engineering?

- The Taupō fishery is cyclical:
 - How well understood is this understood?
 - How can this be better communicated?

- What role and input does the Taupō Fishery have in the broader catchment and lake management?
 - Where are future opportunities?

- What is the role of the Taupō Fishery in freshwater advocacy?
 - What are the future opportunities?

- Fishery access:
 - How is the fishery accessed?
 - Who uses and access the fishery and its associated facilities? (e.g. families, individuals, commercial operators)
 - What are the issues and how are they currently managed?
 - What are future opportunities?

7. Optimising the economic contribution of the Taupō fishery to the region

- Identify the current contribution of the Taupō fishery to the regional economy.
 - How can this be increased e.g. by destination marketing, a focus on the overall visitor experience, new licensing packages, improving the angling opportunities etc.
- What are the current revenue trends and how can they be increased?



Te Waipuna
Water





8. Maximising the Taupō fishery's contribution to the social wellbeing of the community

- Growing the market:
 - What are the opportunities to keep current licence holders 'in the game', and to bring back 'lapsed' licence holders?
 - What are the opportunities to attract new anglers – residents and visitors?
 - How can these opportunities be communicated?
 - What is the current approach to education?
 - What are the opportunities?

NB: The above list is not conclusive and as part of the review process it's anticipated that other issues and opportunities will be identified.

Under each area the aim of the Review Team is to summarise key issues and opportunities as well as to highlight the gap between the current state and desired outcomes and to provide these recommendations to the Conservator.



Scope

The review process includes:

- An examination of the current state of the Taupō fishery and its management.
- Identifying opportunities for improvement and recommendations to the Review Sponsor

The review process excludes:

- Structural changes (e.g. the fishery will continue to be part of the Taupō-nui-a-tia Area Office)
- Changes to the current legislative framework
- Changes to the Crown's management role under the 1926 Agreement with Ngāti Tūwharetoa.

Expected Measurable Outcomes

A report that clearly identifies strengths and weaknesses of the current management model and approach together with opportunities for future improvement.

This report must be of sufficient quality to be used as direction and guidance for the formal statutory review process (Taupō Sports Fishery Management Plan) and be used by managers to drive improvement. It will address the two key areas identified in the context section by:

- Researching and providing recommendations on the structures, processes and systems employed in DOC's fishery management to ensure confidence in its efficiency and effectiveness.
- Examining, and providing recommendations on the long term direction and management philosophy.

