Dear Mr Jeavons

  Thank you for your time and consideration over the past few months regarding the current end of quota year situation for the WZ GC.

  Your decision to support our industries application for an overcatch allowance demonstrates your commitment to manage our fishery in an astute and considerate manner with our long term goals in mind.

As explained during this period of discussion the challenges faced by deep sea crabbers at this time of the year are almost overwhelming with current and wheather making it difficult to remain financially viable particularly in the last trip when a decision must be made to leave quota uncaught or suffer a break even or loosing trip. The existing overcatch allowance of 20 kg may suit the rock lobster sector from where the crab overcatch regulation was taken many years ago, however it is inadequate for our crab fishery where a single animal often weighs up to 10 kg and the average weight of individual crabs can vary up to 1 kg from trip to trip making it impossible to judge with any accuracy the total weight of crabs on board the vessel at the end of a trip. This leads to a problem of compliance or undercatch.

The new 5%  overcatch allowance will give crabbers the flexibility to catch crabs when the conditions permit and give better access to large male crabs that are active in May and June that are thought to play a less important role in reproduction . The landing of these large male crabs will reduce fishing pressure on the rest of the biomass having a long term positive effect on the stock.

Sincerely Anthony Olver