



fifteen million. Although this fishing was south of the Hauraki Gulf it depleted kahawai populations right along the east coast. When the kahawai died the terns and shearwaters that depended on them to drive smaller fish to the surface also disappeared.

During this slaughter there were frequent outcries from recreational fishermen and concerned MAF scientists that things were out of control. But nothing was done. A catch limit of 6,500 tonnes was finally set in 1990 but this was way too high and the kahawai remain badly depleted.

Trevally gather in large surface schools and can be easily taken by purse seiners and trawlers. And that's just what happened in the 1970s. The east coast was fished especially hard and the pressure reduced the numbers of trevally migrating into the harbour during the winter. Since the QMS was introduced the trevally catch has continued to be too high to

permit a significant recovery of this long-lived species.

There has been a similar story with snapper. MAF spent tens of millions of dollars to compensate commercial snapper fishermen when the QMS was introduced in 1986. At that time a total allowable catch of 4,710 tonnes was established for the north-east coast.

Soon after the quotas were announced commercial fishermen started using the Quota Appeal Authority to regain some of their lost quota. Now the quota has increased to 6,000 tonnes, higher than the commercial catch before we paid all that money to introduce the QMS.

An increase in the price of snapper, corrupt fish wholesalers who also own boats and hold quota, and the growing use of gill nets has fuelled a black market in snapper that probably accounts for an additional 2,000 tonnes a

year. Fisheries enforcement by MAF in Northland is negligible. The result is that the snapper have continued their decline off Northland and snapper numbers in the Parengarenga have suffered even more.

Kingfish are New Zealand's most valuable tourist species but MAF has almost thrown the resource away. When quotas came in, kingfish were left without