



Horizon Research

Fisheries survey

November 2025

Prepared for
Greenpeace Aotearoa



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Executive Summary

Approach

Results are from a Horizon Research survey conducted between 13th and 19th November 2025. The total sample size was 1,036 adults, 18 years of age and over.

The maximum margin of error is ±3% (at the 95% confidence level). The data was weighted on age, gender, ethnicity, personal income, region and Party Vote 2023 to match the New Zealand adult population.

The report compares results with previous surveys for Greenpeace in which similar questions were asked.

Summary

Support for changing commercial fishing practices and passing stronger laws to protect oceans and marine life has been growing steadily.

- **73%** (equivalent to around 2,825,000 adults¹) think that **commercial fishing practices need to change**, up from **70%** in 2024
- Most continue to say that the **Government should pass stronger laws** to protect oceans and marine life - **74%** (2,864,000 adults).

78% (3,019,000 adults) are in favour of a **ban on bottom trawling in the South Pacific high seas**, significantly up from **71%** in September 2025.

There is strong support for the **global ocean to be protected in Ocean Sanctuaries**.

- **77%** (2,980,000 adults) think more should be protected
- **79%** (3,050,000 adults) support the **establishment of ocean sanctuaries in the South Pacific Ocean**.

83% (3,197,000 adults) think the Government should ensure activity-monitoring **cameras are on all commercial fishing vessels operating in New Zealand waters**.

¹ Population estimates based on New Zealand adult population from 2023 Census = 3,865,235. All estimates rounded to nearest thousand.

Report

Before answering questions, respondents were given the following information:

Globally less than 1% of the global ocean (international waters) is in marine protected areas, also known as ocean sanctuaries, where there can be no commercial fishing, mining or other human activities.

Scientists recommend at least 30% of the global ocean should be in ocean sanctuaries.

An area in the South Pacific ocean between Australia and New Zealand, known as Lord Howe Rise/South Tasman Sea, has been earmarked for early protection as one of the first proposed ocean sanctuaries in the high seas, because of its high biodiversity values and ecological significance.

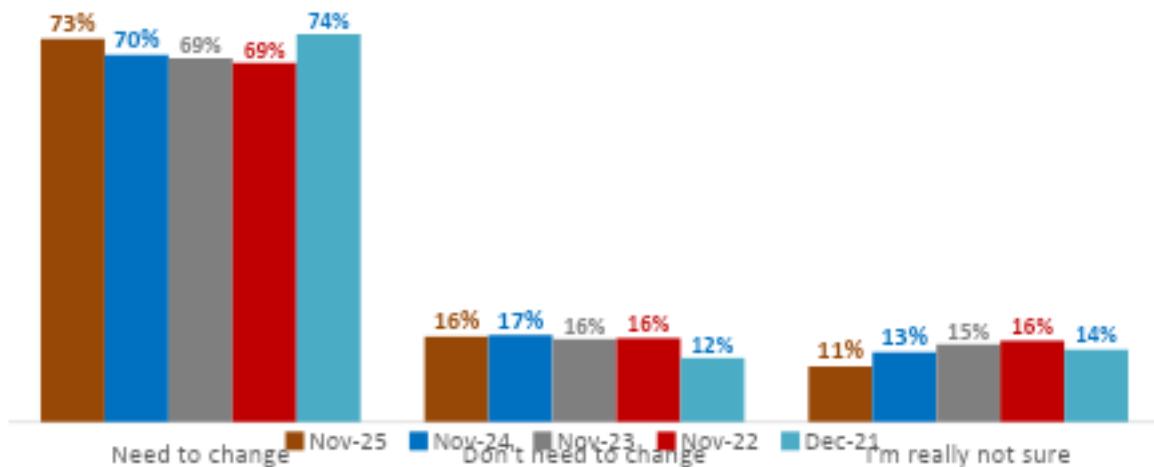
Commercial fishing practices

Support for a change in commercial fishing practices to help protect the environment has been growing steadily since 2023.

In 2025, **73%** (2,825,000 adults) think that commercial fishing practices *need to change*. Up from **70%** in 2024.

16% (630,000 adults) say they *do not need to change*, and **11%** are *unsure*.

Do you think commercial fishing practices need to change or not change to help protect the environment?



Sample: Total sample

Significant differences across demographic groups are detailed in the table below.

<i>Overall, do you think commercial fishing practices need to change or not change to help protect the environment?</i>	Total	Significantly more likely ▲	
Need to change	73%	Pasifika Living in Auckland/Wellington/Christchurch Household income \$150k+ Personal income \$100k-\$150k	88% 78% 80% 83%
Don't need to change	16%	Asian	29%
I'm really not sure	11%	Household income \$70k-\$100k	19%

There is support among voters across the main parties for commercial fishing practices to change.

Strongest support is among Green, Labour and Te Pāti Māori voters. Strong majorities of ACT, National and New Zealand First voters also support change.

<i>Overall, do you think commercial fishing practices need to change or not change to help protect the environment?</i>	ALL	PARTY VOTE 2023					
		ACT New Zealand	Green Party	Labour Party	National Party	New Zealand First	Te Pāti Māori
Need to change	73%	70%	98%	81%	64%	67%	87%
Don't need to change	16%	18%	0%	9%	23%	21%	7%
I'm really not sure	11%	13%	2%	10%	13%	12%	6%
N (unweighted)		1,036	98	120	298	271	63
32				271			

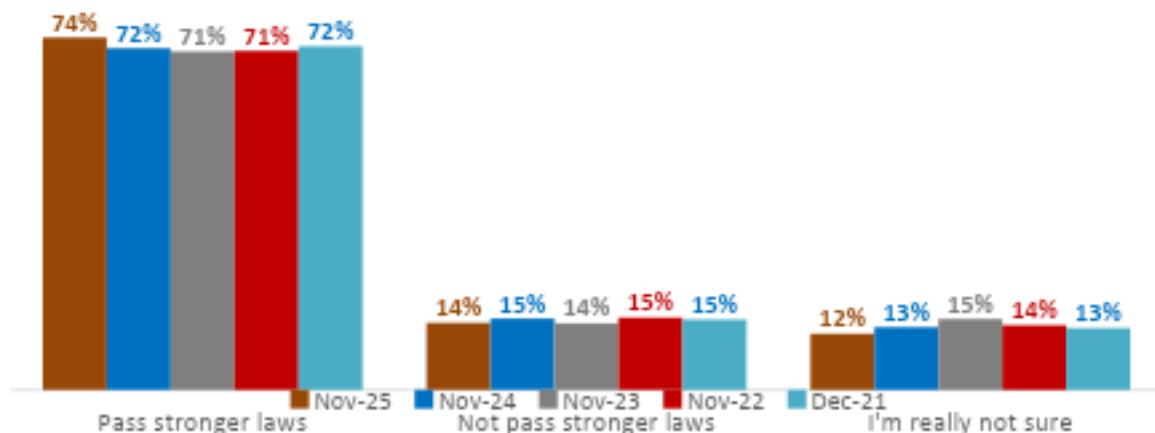
BLUE = significantly higher than total sample RED =significantly lower than total sample

Stronger protection laws

There is a slight increase in the number of people who believe that **the government should pass stronger laws to protect oceans and marine biodiversity from commercial fishing**. On an adult population basis the numbers equate to:

- **74%** (2,864,000 adults) who think the government should pass stronger laws
- **14%** (545,000 adults) who do not
- **12%** (456,000 adults) who are unsure.

Should the Government pass or not pass stronger laws to protect the ocean and marine biodiversity from commercial fishing?



Sample: Total sample

There are very few significant differences across demographic groups, which are detailed in the table below.

<i>Should the Government pass or not pass stronger laws to protect the ocean and marine biodiversity from commercial fishing?</i>	Total	Significantly more likely ▲	
Pass stronger laws	74%	Living in Auckland/Wellington/Christchurch Household income \$20k-\$30k	79% 88%
Not pass stronger laws	14%	Living in South Island (not incl. Christchurch) Household income less than \$20k	22% 26%
I'm really not sure	12%	No significant differences	

There is strong support among Green, Labour and Te Pāti Māori voters for the Government to pass stronger laws to protect oceans from commercial fishing.

National supporters (21%) are more likely to believe the Government should not pass stronger laws than respondents overall, though the majority of these parties' voters support stronger laws.

<i>Should the Government pass or not pass stronger laws to protect the ocean and marine biodiversity from commercial fishing?</i>	ALL	PARTY VOTE 2023					
		ACT New Zealand	Green Party	Labour Party	National Party	New Zealand First	Te Pāti Māori
Pass stronger laws	74%	70%	97%	85%	65%	68%	88%
Not pass stronger laws	14%	21%	1%	8%	21%	23%	12%
I'm really not sure	12%	9%	3%	7%	14%	9%	0%
N (unweighted)		1,036	98	120	298	271	63
							32

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Bottom trawling in South Pacific

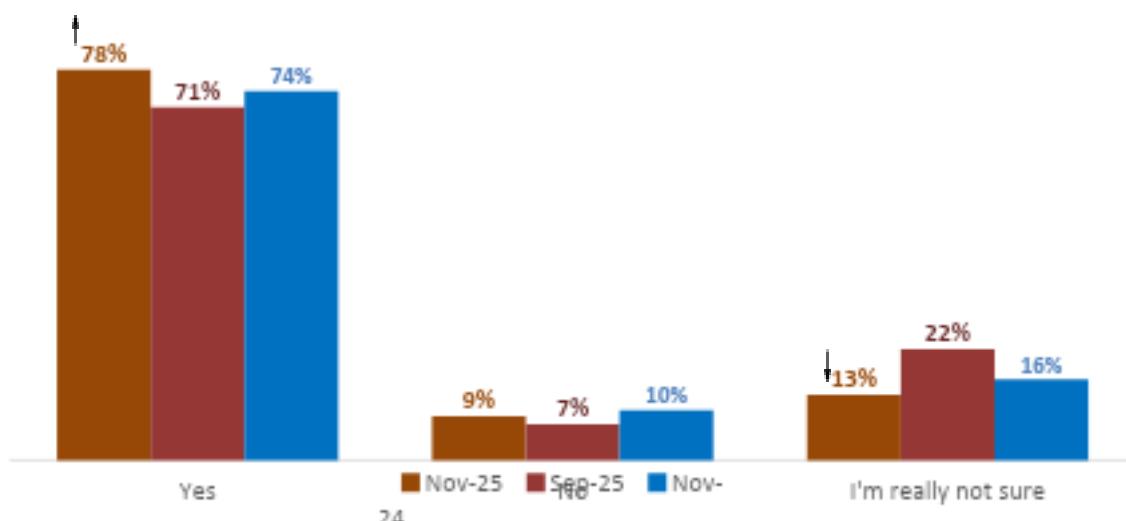
There has been a significant increase in support for a ban on bottom trawling in the South Pacific high seas.

78% (3,019,000 adults) are in favour of a ban, significantly up from **71%** in September 2025.

9% (340,000 adults) are not in favour of a ban.

13% (506,000 adults) are unsure, significant drop from **22%** in September 2025.

Should countries implement a ban on bottom trawling in the South Pacific high seas?



Total sample

KEY ↑↓ Significant change from Sept 2025.

The table below shows significant differences across demographic groups.

<i>Should countries implement a ban on bottom trawling in the South Pacific high seas?</i>	Total	Significantly more likely ▲	
Yes	78%	65-74 years old Living in Bay of Plenty Household income \$100k-\$150k Personal income \$50k-\$150k	88% 90% 85% 83%
No	9%	Under 35 years old	13%
I'm really not sure	13%	Living in South Island (not incl. Christchurch)	16%

Strongest support for a ban on bottom trawling in the South Pacific comes from Green, Labour and Te Pāti Māori voters.

82% of ACT voters are in support of a ban.

<i>Should countries implement a ban on bottom trawling in the South Pacific high seas?</i>	ALL	PARTY VOTE 2023					
		ACT New Zealand	Green Party	Labour Party	National Party	New Zealand First	Te Pāti Māori
Yes	78%	82%	93%	85%	74%	73%	89%
No	9%	7%	3%	5%	10%	13%	3%
I'm really not sure	13%	11%	5%	10%	16%	14%	8%

N (unweighted)	1,036	98	120	298	271	63	32
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Protecting Ocean Sanctuaries

Respondents were told:

Globally less than 1% of the global ocean (international waters) is in marine protected areas, also known as ocean sanctuaries, where there can be no commercial fishing, mining or other human activities.

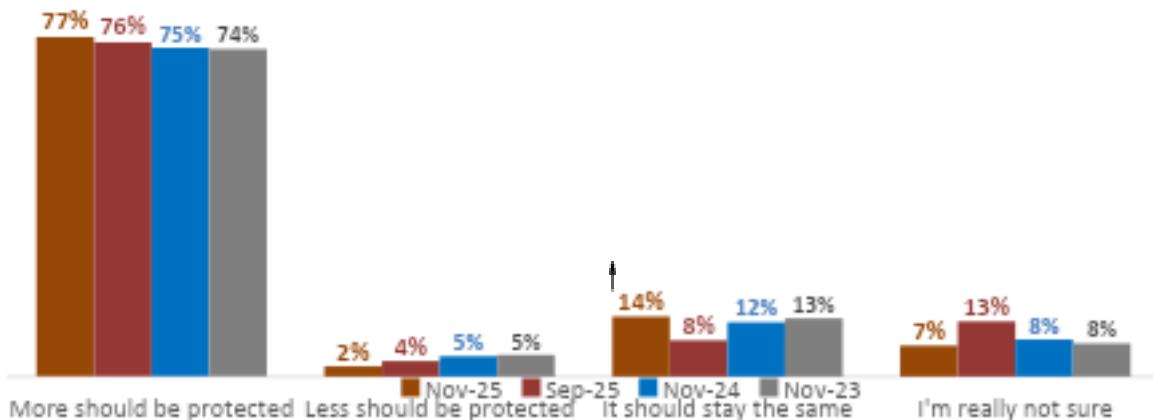
Scientists recommend at least 30% of the global ocean should be in ocean sanctuaries.

An area in the South Pacific ocean between Australia and New Zealand, known as Lord Howe Rise/South Tasman Sea, has been earmarked for early protection as one of the first proposed ocean sanctuaries in the high seas, because of its high biodiversity values and ecological significance.

They were asked whether they think **more or less of the global ocean be protected in Ocean Sanctuaries/Marine Protected Areas**. There has been little change in results with the majority saying more of the global ocean should be protected.

- **77%** (2,980,000 adults) think more should be protected
- **2%** (89,000) think less should be protected
- **14%** (526,000) say it should stay the same, a significant increase from 8% in September 2025
- **7%** (271,000) are unsure.

Should more or less of the global ocean (international waters) be protected in Ocean Sanctuaries/Marine Protected Areas?



Total sample
KEY ↑↓ Significant change from Sept 2025.

There are few significant differences across demographic groups.

<i>Should more or less of the global ocean (international waters) be protected in Ocean Sanctuaries/Marine Protected Areas?</i>	Total	Significantly more likely ▲		
More should be protected	77%	Pasifika	94%	
		Household income \$200k+	86%	
		Household income less than \$50k	83%	
		Personal income \$50k-\$70k	86%	
Less should be protected	2%	Under 35 year olds	5%	
It should stay the same	14%	55+ year olds	18%	
I'm really not sure	7%	No significant differences		

There is strong support across parties for more protection, including **68%** of National, **67%** of ACT and **77%** of New Zealand First voters.

Support for protection is higher among Green, Labour and Te Pāti Māori voters.

National and ACT voters have higher numbers than overall who believe it should stay the same.

<i>Should more or less of the global ocean (international waters) be protected in Ocean Sanctuaries/Marine Protected Areas?</i>	ALL	PARTY VOTE 2023					
		ACT New Zealand	Green Party	Labour Party	National Party	New Zealand First	Te Pāti Māori
More should be protected	77%	67%	94%	85%	68%	77%	91%
Less should be protected	2%	5%	2%	2%	3%	0%	0%
It should stay the same	14%	20%	1%	6%	25%	13%	3%
I'm really not sure	7%	8%	4%	8%	5%	11%	7%
N (unweighted)		1,036	98	120	298	271	63
							32

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Support for ocean sanctuaries in the South Pacific

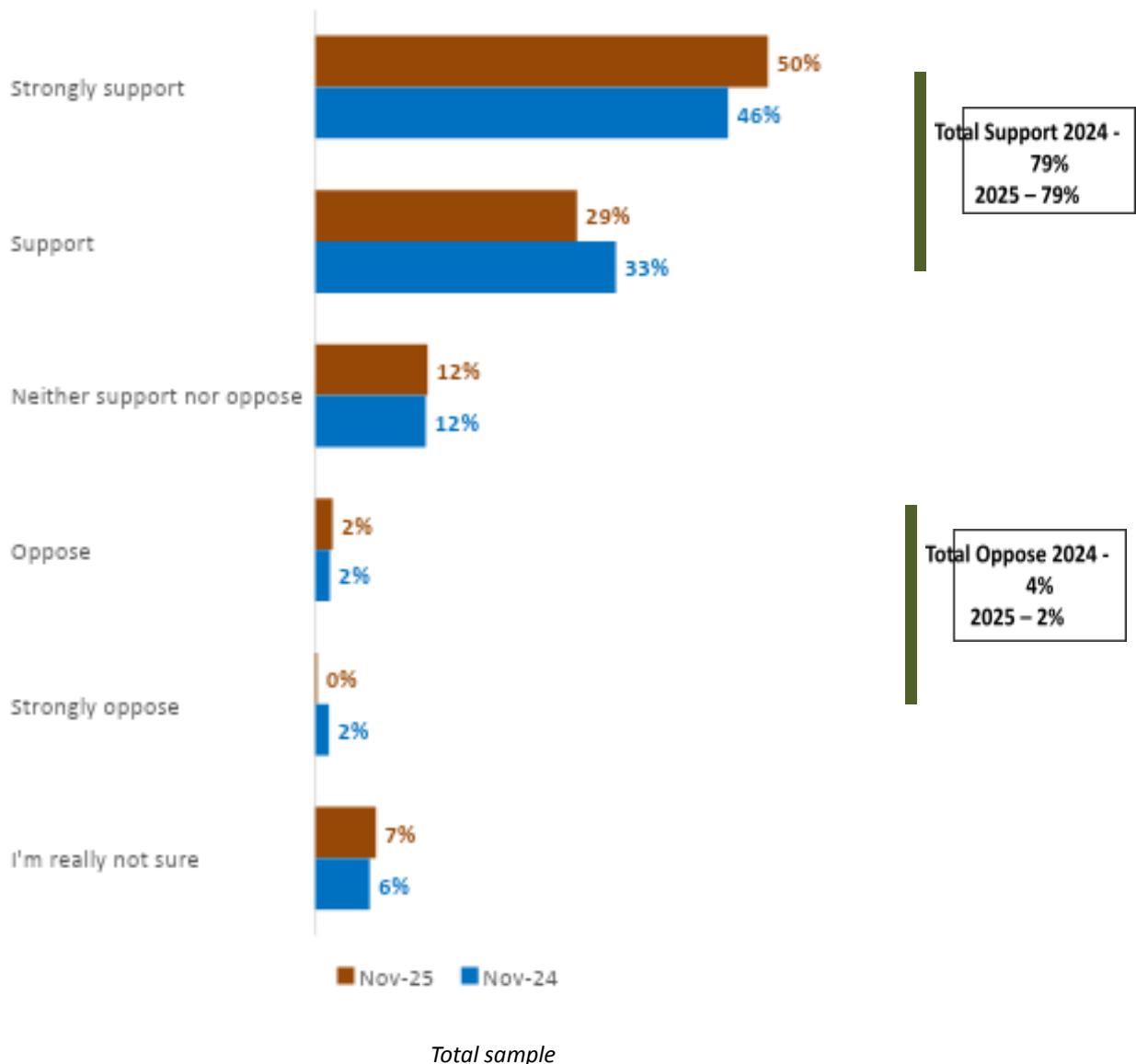
A large majority support the establishment of ocean sanctuaries in the South Pacific Ocean.

79% (3,050,000 adults) support establishment of ocean sanctuaries.

- **50%** (1,933,000 adults) strongly support it, up from **46%** in 2024.

2% (81,000 adults) oppose establishment of ocean sanctuaries.

Do you support the establishment of ocean sanctuaries in the South Pacific Ocean?



There are few demographic differences among those who strongly support the establishment of ocean sanctuaries. The people more likely to strongly support are:

- Pasifika - 66%
- Living in Wellington – 66%
- Have household income more than \$200k – 62%.

There is strong support across all parties' voters for establishing ocean sanctuaries in the South Pacific Ocean, including supporters for the current three-party coalition government: **72%** of ACT, **76%** of National and **76%** of New Zealand First voters.

<i>Do you support the establishment of ocean sanctuaries in the South Pacific Ocean?</i>	ALL	PARTY VOTE 2023					
		ACT New Zealand	Green Party	Labour Party	National Party	New Zealand First	Te Pāti Māori
Strongly support	50%	39%	83%	65%	34%	50%	70%
Support	29%	33%	14%	24%	42%	26%	12%
Neither support nor oppose	12%	16%	2%	5%	19%	11%	14%
Oppose	2%	5%	0%	0%	2%	4%	0%
Strongly oppose	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
I'm really not sure	7%	6%	1%	7%	3%	8%	5%
Total Support	79%	72%	98%	88%	76%	76%	81%
Total Oppose	2%	6%	0%	0%	2%	4%	0%
N (unweighted)	1,036	98	120	298	271	63	32

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Cameras on commercial fishing vessels

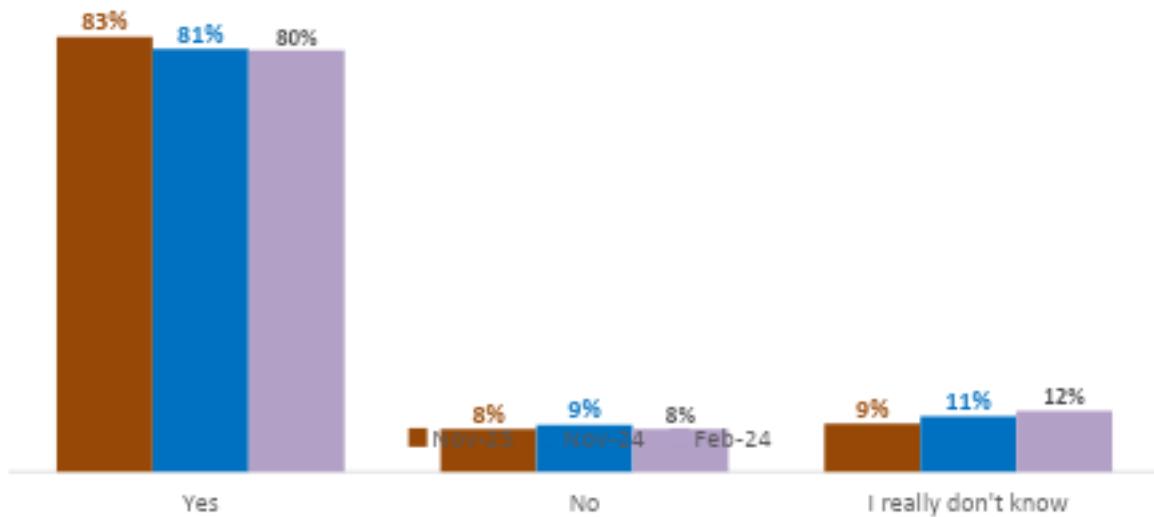
Respondents were given the following information.

Currently the government is rolling out a programme to install cameras on 300 boats in New Zealand's commercial fishing fleet. The cameras help monitor fishing activity to make sure commercial fishers stay within the law and minimise harm to protected species. Even though installation is not yet complete, cameras have captured an increase in catches of species fishers were not targeting.

While 300 boats is the originally proposed goal, it is only a part of the New Zealand fishing fleet. Some believe that the programme ought to be expanded.

Support for commercial fishing vessels operating in New Zealand to be monitored by cameras remains strong. **83%** (3,197,000 adults) think cameras should be on all commercial vessels operating in New Zealand waters to monitor activities.

Do you think the government should ensure all commercial fishing vessels operating in New Zealand waters have cameras monitoring their activities?



Total sample Nov 2025 n=1,034; Nov 2024 n=1,036; Feb 2024 n=1,038

There are few who are significantly more likely to support cameras on vessels. **91%** of Pasifika are more likely to support cameras on vessels.

There is strong support for cameras on vessels among voters of the main parties. Among voters for the governing coalition, **83%** of National, **78%** of New Zealand First and **76%** of ACT voters support cameras.

<i>Do you think the government should ensure all commercial fishing vessels operating in New Zealand waters have cameras monitoring their activities?</i>	ALL	PARTY VOTE 2023					
		ACT New Zealand	Green Party	Labour Party	National Party	New Zealand First	Te Pāti Māori
Yes	83%	76%	95%	87%	83%	78%	88%
No	8%	18%	2%	4%	9%	9%	6%
I really don't know	9%	6%	3%	8%	8%	13%	6%
N (unweighted)	1,034	98	120	298	270	63	32

BLUE = significantly higher than total sample RED =significantly lower than total sample

Appendix – Sample

Results are from a Horizon Research survey conducted between 13th and 19th November 2025.

The total sample size was 1,036 adults, 18 years of age and over. Respondents are from Horizon's own panels and a third party research panel used for source diversity.

The maximum margin of error is $\pm 3\%$ (at the 95% confidence level). The data was weighted on age, gender, ethnicity, personal income, region and Party Vote 2023 to match the New Zealand adult population.

November 2025 sub-sample respondent counts and margins of error are shown below.

All respondents		
	Count	Sub-sample margin of error
TOTAL NOV 2025	1036	$\pm 3\%$
<u>GENDER</u>		
Male	494	$\pm 4.4\%$
Female	533	$\pm 4.2\%$
Another gender	9	
<u>AGE GROUP</u>		
18-24 years	116	$\pm 9.1\%$
25-34 years	192	$\pm 7.1\%$
35-44 years	170	$\pm 7.5\%$
45-54 years	164	$\pm 7.7\%$
55-64 years	169	$\pm 7.5\%$
65-74 years	125	$\pm 8.8\%$
75 years or over	100	$\pm 9.8\%$
<u>ETHNIC GROUP</u>		
Asian	91	$\pm 10.3\%$
Indian	40	$\pm 15.5\%$
Māori	189	$\pm 7.2\%$
NZ European/ Pākehā	693	$\pm 3.7\%$
Other European	55	$\pm 13.2\%$
Pasifika	65	$\pm 12.2\%$
Other	46	$\pm 14.5\%$