Hapuku

*(Polyprion oxygeneios)*

**EXPLOITATION STATUS**

*UNDEFINED*

No detailed stock assessment available. NSW landings of this species are very small compared to landings in New Zealand and by Commonwealth fisheries.

**SCIENTIFIC NAME**

*Polyprion oxygeneios*

**STANDARD NAME**

hapuku

**Background**

The hapuku or New Zealand groper (*Polyprion oxygeneios*) is a circum-global temperate species inhabiting waters around New Zealand, the southern half of Australia, southern Chile and a number of Southern Ocean islands. Small juvenile hapuku have a pelagic stage when they are associated with flotsam in surface waters and are rarely captured. At about 50 cm in length and (estimated) 3-4 years of age, they become demersal in habit. In New Zealand waters, they can be found in depths as shallow as 20 m but around Australia they mainly prefer continental slope depths of 200-500 m. Hapuku are large, long-lived fish with reports of specimens almost 180 cm in length and 80 kg in weight, and living longer than 60 years. New Zealand studies of hapuku found them to mature over a wide size range, with 50% maturity at 80-85 cm for males and 85-90 cm for females, corresponding to 10-13 years of age.

Hapuku are caught in small numbers along the whole NSW coast. Some are caught by trawlers but most are taken by deepwater dropliners in the Ocean Trap and Line Fishery when targeting blue-eye trevalla. Since 1997/98, hapuku catches have been recorded separately from the similar bass groper (*P. americanus*), and annual catches have remained fairly stable at around 5 to 10 t. This small catch contrasts with the New Zealand catch (combined for the two species of *Polyprion*) of more than 1500 t per year.
Additional Notes

- A deepwater demersal species with a prolonged pelagic phase that lasts 2-3 years (juveniles up to about 50 cm are found near the surface).
- Landings in NSW are small (<10 t) compared with landings from Commonwealth fisheries and New Zealand.
- Commonwealth fisheries harvest this species, but catches are not managed by quota, and no stock assessment is available.
- There is a combined recreational bag limit of 5 hapuku, banded rockcod, bass groper, gemfish and blue-eye trevalla. Additional restrictions apply to gemfish.

Catch

Recreational Catch of Hapuku

The annual recreational harvest of hapuku in NSW is likely to be less than 10 t.

Historical Landings of Hapuku

Commercial landings (including available historical records) of hapuku for NSW from 1997/98 to 2008/09 for all fishing methods. Prior to 1997/98 bass groper were mainly reported in ‘mixed’ catches with hapuku.
Further Reading


Please visit the CSIRO website, [http://www.marine.csiro.au/caab/](http://www.marine.csiro.au/caab/) and search for the species code (CAAB) 37 311006, common name or scientific name to find further information.