



Friday update



Captain's Blog

November 10, 2017

No telling porgies to US consumers

American consumers will soon know New Zealand's snapper by another name. That is because the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the body that regulates fish names, says we can no longer export the species under the snapper name.

The reason is simple: our snapper is not technically a snapper.

In the world of complicated fish names, the only consistent international rule is the agreed scientific name.

In New Zealand snapper is the legal common name for the species *Pagrus auratus*.

However, according to the FDA, *Pagrus auratus* cannot be called snapper, that is reserved for species originating from the *Lutjanidae* family.

And New Zealand's prized catch actually belongs to the *Sparidae* clan, also known as porgy – hardly a marketer's dream.

Snapper is not the only fish with dual identities.

New Zealand ling is from the *Ophidiidae* family (cusk-eel), whilst in Europe it's from the *Lotidae* family.

Red cod and deepsea cod come from the *Gadidae* family – the cod species. Our blue cod is really a sea perch.

Fish names can be a highly confusing business.

Some of the problem stems from early European settlers who incorrectly named fish based on Old World experience.

They did the same with tree species, but most have fallen by the wayside and the established Maori names are now

In the Media

A researcher is pointing to set-nets as a cause for the continued decline in the endangered Hoiho (Yellow eyed penguin) population. The Hoiho have a colony on Codfish Island, in Foveaux Strait. Researchers recently returned from the island and said the once thriving population had dwindled significantly. One researcher told *Stuff* that as penguins foraged in the same area and depth as set-nets, it was possible they were the cause of the decline.

A marine mammal sanctuary off the South Taranaki coast is a priority for the Green Party, new Conservation Minister Eugenie Sage says. Sage told *Stuff* she has directed DoC to provide advice on the best way to establish the sanctuary. The investigation will focus on how to protect against the effects of oil and gas exploration "rather than the impacts of recreational or commercial fishing on marine mammals," she said. Any sanctuary would have to be implemented using the Marine Mammals Protection Act which requires consultation and stakeholder engagement.

Marine reserves are needed around Waiheke Island to help the ocean environment recover from fishing, says a marine ecologist. The assertions are made in a report released by eCoast, a marine and freshwater consultancy. eCoast's Tim Haggitt told *Stuff* a lack of rock lobster and kina barrens around the Island were signs of over-fishing. To read the report, [click here](#).

Fishers are being told to stay out of

preferred.

Snapper, our iconic inshore species, generates \$33 million in exports, of which approximately 20 percent goes to the US.

But in that market our snapper is no longer snapper.

It is now likely to be known as sea bream. Industry is in the process of making an application with that name to the FDA.

It still needs to be approved, but sea bream, and variations of it are used for many of the 154 species included in the *Sparidae* family, making it more likely to be accepted by the American regulators. The push for change from the FDA was born after they became concerned that some exporters, retailers and restaurants were passing off a wide range of other species as the highly valued *Lutjanidae*. Fish fraud continues to be a global problem.

According to US-based organisation Oceana, species such as grouper, cod and snapper may be commonly mislabelled and replaced with fish that are less desirable, cheaper, or more readily available.

But, change can be a good thing and there are cases where a different name has meant a boom in price.

The most famous relates to Chilean sea bass.

That species is technically a cod icefish also known as *Nototherniidae*.

It is commonly known as Patagonian or Antarctic toothfish and has become highly sought after.

The rebranding to Chilean sea bass by an American importer saw the previously little-known species go from fish finger favourite to being awarded 2001's "Fish of the Year" by famed food magazine Bon Appetit.

No telling porgies – more smart marketing.



Celebrate World Fisheries Day

Enjoy World Fisheries Day with a "Green Drinks" event and celebrate sustainable fishing.

The event will take place at Wynyard Quarter in Auckland on November 21.

Head down to enjoy drinks, sustainable seafood nibbles and a panel talk all within the Sustainable Coastlines pop up venue.

Speakers will include the Iwi Collective's Maru Samuels and Marine Stewardship Council Oceania program director Ann Gabriel, with more to be announced.

[Click here to register](#)

the Kapiti Marine Reserve after an increase in illegal fishing. Guardians of Kapiti Marine Reserve chairman Ben Knight told the *NZ Herald* there had been four incidents reported in only a few days. "To knowingly fish in the reserve is incredibly disrespectful to all those law-abiding fishers who respect the reserve and the conservation values it supports," he said.

Wakatū aquaculture expert receives prestigious scholarship

Wakatū's aquaculture expert Andy Elliot has been awarded a prestigious Nuffield scholarship.

The 12-month programme allows participants to spend time away from their business, to travel and learn about their industry. It includes up to 20 weeks spent overseas.

Elliot heads the R&D and business development activities for Wakatū, and has spent 20 years in commercial aquaculture development.

He is not the only person in the Wakatū organisation to receive a major prize this year.

Earlier this year, Rachel Taulelei, chief executive of Wakatū subsidiary Kono, was awarded a Prime Minister's Business Scholarship allowing her to study anywhere in the world.

She planned to take up the scholarship at Stanford in 2018.

[Read Seafood New Zealand's latest magazine here](#)

