



Friday update



Captain's Blog

December 1, 2017

Set net fishery not pushing yellow-eyed penguins to extinction

The dastardly fishing industry is at it again.

This time they are killing hoiho (yellow-eyed penguins), driving the species to extinction.

That is if you believe the alarmists claims from the anti-commercial fishing lobby. The unsubstantiated claim by Forest & Bird is that a decline in nesting numbers on Codfish Island west of Stewart Island – from 24 to 14 – is entirely due to drowning in commercial set nets.

F & B calls for "honest conversation" about this "catastrophe" before demanding Government action to "save our hoiho from extinction".

Anyone reading that would assume the beloved bird that adorns our \$5 note is about to be wiped out.

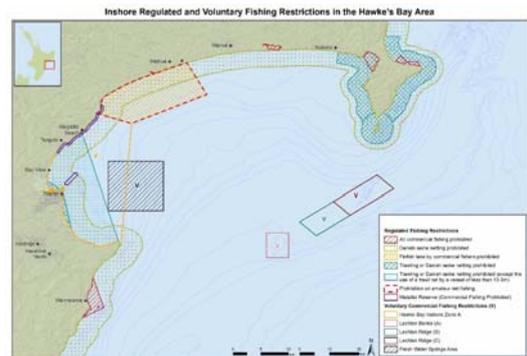
That is simply not the case.

What the emotive F&B media campaign fails to mention is that the great bulk of the yellow-eyed penguin population – about 85 percent – inhabits the sub-Antarctic Auckland and Campbell islands where no set netting occurs in coastal waters out to 12 nautical miles. In fact no fishing occurs in those waters full stop. The estimated total penguin population is 1700 pairs.

On the mainland, the estimate for the southern east coast is 246 pairs, a 6 percent decline on the previous year's count of 261.

The penguin protectors' motives are admirable but the Trump-style truthiness

In the Media



Commercial fishers agree to extend Hawke's Bay area closure

The commercial fishing industry will again support the closure of 237 square kilometres of ocean off Hawke's Bay this summer.

The voluntary measure, agreed between Napier Fishermen's Association and LegaSea Hawke's Bay is supported by Fisheries Inshore New Zealand (FINZ) and the Ministry for Primary Industries.

The area, known as Springs Box, is due east of Napier Port and to the north of Cape Kidnappers.

It was originally closed to commercial fishing for the summers of 2015/16 and 2016/17 in order to improve the recreational fishing experience.

FINZ chief executive, Dr Jeremy Helson, said the feedback from the past few years has been largely positive and the collaboration between recreational and commercial has improved relations between both sectors.

"We are committed to working with

approach is disingenuous. The tactic, which we are familiar with by now, is to take an issue of legitimate concern, highlight one aspect of it, take it out of context, ignore any evidence that contradicts the narrative and put out a one-sided media statement for maximum impact.

The fact is research by Otago University's Dr Ursula Ellenburg does not conclude that fishing is the major cause of yellow-eyed penguin deaths. She found there are many threats to the species including climate change, habitat degradation, disease and predation. However, the research does say that, of any threat caused by fishing, set nets cause the most deaths.

Avian diphtheria remains a serious ongoing issue for the birds and can affect a large proportion of newly hatched chicks, according to the Department of Conservation.

Great white sharks, barracouta, fur seals, sea lions and leopard seals all prey on penguins.

Otago University marine mammal scientist Dr Chris Lalas says one threatened species (sea lions) preying on another (penguins) creates a quandary for conservation management.

On land, introduced mammalian predators including stoats have an impact on yellow-eyed penguin chicks and dogs are a threat to adult birds.

Fishing does pose some risk to yellow-eyed penguins. Industry takes a range of precautions to limit captures and is happy to discuss what measures can be implemented to assist further.

The Ministry for Primary Industries observed 25 percent of all commercial set net activity off Southland and the southern part of the east coast over the past 12 months and found no captures of yellow-eyed penguins, according to fisheries management director Stuart Anderson.

F & B claims the real number is likely to be in the hundreds.

Set netting within four nautical miles of land is already prohibited in much of the Southland Fisheries Management Area.

The fishing industry is not in denial. Its activities do have an impact on the marine environment and its inhabitants, just as farming does on land.

It is the degree of that impact that is at issue.

The industry is committed to reducing that, a fact the environmental NGOs struggle to acknowledge.

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Fisheries Inshore New Zealand, in conjunction with MPI, have developed 10 golden rules to reduce risk to penguins and shags from setnet fishing.

And here's a suggestion to make more progress.

recreational fishers in this shared fishery. It is an excellent example of the compromise and collaboration possible between competing sectors.

"To this end, LegaSea Hawke's Bay has also agreed to monitor the recreational catch within the Bay, with a particular focus on the Springs Box area during the closure. This will give all concerned an indication of the effectiveness of the closure through an improvement in recreational fishing," said Helson.

Data will be collected using the existing Colin Murray Ramp Survey method.

The closure will apply to all commercial fishing, with the exception of fishers trolling for tuna, for the period 1 December 2017 to 28 February 2018.



Visit OpenSeas

OpenSeas is a transparency initiative driven by the New Zealand seafood industry.

Its purpose is to provide businesses with a single, comprehensive source for information about the environmental, social and production credentials of the New Zealand seafood industry.

Information contained in the site covers New Zealand's approach to sustainable use of its vast marine environment, the systems and processes used to ensure supply chain integrity and the legal protections for the welfare of workers and indigenous communities involved in seafood production.

The site also features individual species profiles, which include the most up-to-date harvest details and independent environmental certification or risk assessment scores.

[Click here to visit OpenSeas](#)

Three Vietnamese fishermen who absconded from their vessel when it docked in Bluff have been found. Detective Sergeant Dave Kennelly said they were located just after 5 am Wednesday on the southern outskirts of Invercargill in good health. They are in

Instead of pillorying the seafood industry with half truths, seek a dialogue first, avoid simplistic claims, put the issue in context, show respect and goodwill to other parties and work to find compromises to reach a satisfactory solution.

Or maybe we should ban sea lions and great white sharks to fully protect penguins.

And do away with dogs too.



From left, Meri Leask, Carol Brown and Maureen Jones.

Industry pays tribute to longtime radio operators

The Southland fishing industry has celebrated three women who have amassed 116 years of service to the sector between them.

A dinner was held in Invercargill last week for industry legends Meri Leask, Maureen Jones and Carol Brown, the fishermen radio operators in Bluff, Stewart Island and Fiordland, respectively.

Local fisherman Garth Haggerty spoke at the dinner and described the women as “absolutely amazing”.

“Ladies, the fisherman and their families are truly indebted to you, for your devotion, unselfishly giving up your time and for being a friend to talk to,” he said. The women deserved credit for always being there when fishermen needed them.

“Their time has very rarely been their own.

“We have a chat on the radio, check in, talk about the weather or the rugby. Just pleasant to hear a friendly voice from the other side.”

Haggerty said being an operator carried considerable challenges that are often not spoken about.

“All three ladies have experienced the heartbreak of talking to a fisherman one

custody under the Immigration Act and the matter has been handed to Immigration New Zealand. The men are crew members on board the *Southern Ocean*, which had docked in Bluff on Monday after a Chinese crew member died. The vessel is not flagged to New Zealand and had been fishing in international waters when the death occurred.

The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) and the Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) have announced the launch of the ASC–MSC Seaweed Standard. The joint standard marks a first for the two certification programmes, bringing together expertise in sustainable fishing and responsible aquaculture. The standard will focus on minimising the environmental and social impacts of seaweed operations. Certification will be assessed according to a third-party verification system.

Cellular agriculture: Does it pose a threat to the seafood industry?

The world of disruptive innovation may have reached the seafood industry. Strategic innovation consultant Dr Rosie Bosworth said the wave of startups driving the latest tech-craze in Silicon Valley with cellular agriculture is now out to fix the flaws of our fisheries using science and biology.

Without having to feed, breed and or kill living animals, cellular agriculture is a potentially viable option to keep feeding the world our favourite animal products (like juicy cuts of meat, as well as creamy dairy milk products) without the devastating environmental, health and ethical baggage that comes with traditional animal agriculture, she said.

[Read more](#)

Ross Sea MPA celebrated

Last night at Parliament, a celebration was held to mark a significant international collaboration between the fishing industry and environmentalists. After five years of debate, today sees 1.5 million square kilometres of the Ross Sea in the Antarctic become a Marine Protected Area (MPA).

The MPA was agreed in 2016 after a joint proposal by New Zealand and the United States was unanimously voted in by the 25 members of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources. From today, this part of the Southern Ocean will become a ‘no take’

day, and then never again. The emotional strain is an aspect that is not often talked about.”

The women were presented with a tree and glass plaque, with the inscription:
*A listening ear when our fishers go out,
Friendly reassurance that all is well, to
end a working day.
Connecting land and sea, fishers and
families,
Grateful thanks from fishing
communities.*

zone for fishing and for minerals. Dr Stuart Hanchet of NIWA said; “It’s hard to think of a more significant event in the history of marine conservation. To get the agreement of 25 of the most powerful nations on the planet to agree on a Marine Protected Area of this size is nothing short of breathtaking and gives us hope for the future.” The function at parliament was hosted by the Foreign Minister, the Right Honourable Winston Peters.