



Friday update



Captain's Blog

May 26, 2017

Sea lion protection a priority in Southern Ocean squid fishery

The squid season in sub-Antarctic waters to the south of mainland New Zealand is in full swing.

And each week the Ministry for Primary Industries issues a detailed summary of the performance of the squid fishery in relation to an operational plan to manage the incidental capture of New Zealand sea lions.

It includes the number of vessels, the number of trawl tows, the percentage of tows where MPI observers were present and mortalities.

The weekly report is widely circulated to all stakeholders, including environmental groups.

No one can credibly claim the fishery is not closely monitored or that any sea lion mortalities are covered up.

Last season that was not an issue in any case.

There were no recorded sea lion deaths. That was confirmed by the independent observers. That observer coverage was nearly 100 percent.

This year, 16 weeks into the season, regrettably, there have been three sea lion mortalities, one in March and two the week before last.

That was after a total of 1200 tows, which shows such captures are rare.

The Auckland Islands, 460km south of Bluff, are the sea lions' main breeding grounds.

Last summer the annual Department of Conservation survey found a gratifying



NEW ZEALAND SEAFOOD INDUSTRY CONFERENCE

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2017 Seafood Industry Conference – Registrations now open

Registrations for the 2017 New Zealand Seafood Industry Conference are now open and we are pleased to announce that our keynote speaker has been confirmed.

The conference will be headlined by Alex Olsen of A. Espersen A/S, Denmark. Alex is a progressive thinker who will talk about 'Seafood in a changing world –how we deal with the challenges we face'. Alex started with Espersen in 2007 and has since developed Espersen's Sustainability and Governance initiatives throughout their supply chains.

Sir Ray Avery, New Zealander of the Year in 2010, is our other keynote, speaking about Kiwis' innovative attitude and what makes us different.

increase in pup numbers – up 14 percent on the previous year from 1727 to 1965 pups.

The main killer of pups is recognised as being the bacterial disease klebsiella pneumoniae. It was first noticed killing pups in 1998 and has since become endemic.

Pups also drown in deep holes in the peaty ground on the islands and wooden ramps are being installed to allow them to escape.

Claims the squid trawlers are robbing the sea lions of their food have been found to be incorrect.

Research by NIWA fisheries scientist Dr Jim Roberts has found the southern arrow squid make up less than 20 percent of the sea lion diet.

MPI's 2016 Aquatic Environment and Biodiversity Annual Review recognised "there is no single threat that is impacting on the sea lion population and recovery will require mitigation of multiple threats at the four main breeding sites".

The seafood industry acknowledges there is still work to do to mitigate its effects on the environment. Ongoing efforts are being recognised and they are proving effective.

These include the introduction of Sea Lion Exclusion Devices (SLEDs) which were introduced to squid trawls a decade ago to allow escape from nets.

These devices have markedly reduced sea lion mortalities.

Fishing activity in the stormy southern waters has developed only relatively recently.

Distant water fishing nations, notably the USSR and Japan but also Korea, began targeting the southern ocean in the 1960s and the details of their catches and activities are sketchy.

Early research cruises included Japan's Kaiyo Maru and Germany's Wesermunde. Hoki, squid, ling, hake and silver warehou were the major species assessed.

Catches also included sea lions, 10 at the Auckland Islands from just 58 tows in one year.

The introduction of the 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zone in 1977, the Quota Management System in 1986 and the foreign charter vessel review effective in 2016 have all impacted on fishing effort.

The fleet is now much reduced and the number of tows are consequently lower. This partly reflects consolidation of quota and increasing vessel efficiency. In the 1980s there were 40-plus squid vessels in the Auckland Islands region, whereas about 12 have been active in the last few years.

There is a similar trend in the southern blue whiting fishery further to the south

Other speakers include Iain Hosie of Revolution Fibres, a nanofibre production company based in Auckland, on turning hoki skins into nanofibre.

Plant and Food, MSC, DOC and ANZ will also present, along with journalist Bill Ralston who will provide an insight on the upcoming election.

[Click here to view the programme and register now.](#)

Argosy on Foveaux Strait

Great shot of oyster vessel Argosy at sunrise on Foveaux Strait this week.



In the Media

Illegal release of 6000 salmon costs farming company \$150,000

Stuff (22 May) High Country Salmon are \$150,000 out of pocket after someone cut a net, releasing 6000 salmon.

The salmon were released into the Ohau Canal, near Twizel, last Friday night. High Country Salmon manager John Jamieson said the salmon were not insured.

"It has left a hole for us, but we'll manage," he said.

The salmon could not be recovered because once they were released into natural water they were under the regulation of Fish and Game.

Senior Constable Nayland Smith called it a "malicious act."

[Read more](#)

around the Campbell Islands. Populations of sea lions and the seabirds endemic to the sub-Antarctic region are generally stable, or in several cases increasing.

Every effort is made to protect them so that commercial fishing and protected species can co-exist.

A threat management plan for sea lions is being finalised, boosted by a \$2.8 million Government investment over four years.

The current population is just under 12,000 and a breeding colony is becoming established on Stewart Island, the first new settlement on the mainland for 200 years

Government: \$30.5m boost to fisheries management

A significant boost of \$30.5 million of operating funding over the next four years in Budget 2017 will upgrade and modernise the fisheries management system, including the roll-out of cameras, monitoring, and electronic reporting on all commercial vessels, Primary Industries Minister Nathan Guy says.

"This funding will help introduce the world-leading Integrated Electronic Monitoring and Reporting System (IEMRS), which will give us arguably the most transparent and accountable commercial fishery anywhere in the world," Mr Guy says.

Vessel position monitoring and electronic catch reporting will begin on 1 October this year. This will be followed by cameras on every vessel phased in from 1 October next year. This means that every fishing vessel can be monitored at all times, no matter where they are, and any illegal activity dealt with.

[Read more](#)

CORANZ: Recreational Fishing in Quota System Opposed

A national outdoor recreation body has raised fears of a government move to put recreational fishing into the Fisheries Quota Management System (QMS).

The Council of Outdoor Recreational Associations of New Zealand (CORANZ) said the move was a veiled attempt to absorb recreational public into the quota system which would inevitably lead to recreational fishing licences.

The comment was in response to an article in the May issue of "Fishing and

'Promising' results for reseeded paua in Marlborough Sounds

Marlborough Express (23 May) A reseeded programme in The Sounds is reporting promising results.

150,000 juvenile paua were seeded in the Tory Channel in 2012, with the sites seeing a notable increase in paua biomass.

The programme saw juveniles grown in land-based hatcheries and then planted into a five km stretch in the Tory Channel.

Paua industry scientist Tom McGowan said results showed that reseeded was a good way to supplement the natural supply of juvenile paua.

"We can say that there's a higher chance that reseeded increases the biomass of paua ... There could be areas of Marlborough fisheries which could use it," he said.

[Read more](#)

Fishing companies on trial for under-reporting catches

RNZ (18 May) Hawke's Bay Seafood Limited, and a consortium of people and companies associated to them, have gone on trial in Wellington District Council.

Court documents said the companies, including Nino D'Esposito, Joe D'Esposito and Marcus D'Esposito, committed fraud by under-reporting catch figures.

Several skippers and subsidiaries are among those facing 355 charges.

The charges are for under-reporting catch of bluenose and trumpeter.

"The ministry says they under-reported between 45 and 63 tonnes of bluenose and 1.7 and 3.5 tonnes of trumpeter," Crown prosecutor Stephanie Bishop said.

"[They] were motivated by the ability to avoid [their liabilities] for fishing in those areas and the prospect of gaining export market advantage by selling bluenose and trumpeter at a lower price than competitors."

[Read more](#)

Finlayson sends letter explaining customary marine title applications

There have been 580 applications for customary marine title (CMT) and protected customary right (PCR) under the Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Act 2011, Minister for Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations Chris Finlayson

Outdoors" monthly paper telling of a move by the Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI) to set up a four person team to visit Western Australia to look at the state's system.
[Read more](#)



Seafood Stars Awards

Nominations for the Seafood Star Awards are now open.

The categories for this year's awards are:

- Young Achiever Award
- Longstanding Service Award
- Future Development Innovation Award

Seafood Stars Awards will run across all facets of the industry and will be presented to those who have made a significant contribution to the seafood industry.

[Click here](#) to download the form and nominate someone.

said.

A CMT gives Iwi, hapu or a whanau group various rights relating to conservation, resource management and consultation for the area between high tide and the outer limits of the territorial sea – 12 nautical miles from the shore. PCR are for customary activities that don't require resource management such as collecting hangi stones. Applications had to be filed under the Act by April 3.

Finlayson said a CMT or PCR does not affect the ongoing rights of the public. "CMT is not the same as freehold title. It can't be sold and free public access, fishing and other recreational activities continue in customary marine title areas." To be awarded a CMT a group must prove they have held the area in accordance with tikanga and have occupied the area, without substantial interruption, since 1840.

Finlayson said more details on the applications would be published once they are confirmed and there would be an opportunity for public submissions. "These applications require careful consideration of the facts, in each individual case, to determine whether the tests are met or not."

Ocean Bounty: Tuna

Bluefin tuna can be swimming gold. The record price for one exceptional fish was over \$1 million.

This week Ocean Bounty is off the South Island's west coast on the longliner *Sada* catching bluefin.

Tune in to Three at 5pm on Sunday to check it out and if you missed last week's episode on the southern blue whiting, [click here to watch it OnDemand](#)
