

Friday update



Captain's Blog

April 28, 2017

Auckland University continues to shield shonky Simmons report

Auckland University prides itself on its top ranking amongst the country's tertiary institutions.

It also wins hands down in the hypocrisy stakes.

The university continues to dodge seafood industry requests under the Official Information Act for data detail on its deeply flawed catch reconstruction report in the New Zealand fishery over 61 years to 2011.

The report headed by Auckland University Business School's Dr Glenn Simmons and Prof Nigel Haworth, who is also Labour Party president, has been dismissed as unreliable by MPI, NIWA and international fisheries scientists.

But its authors are undeterred and continue to use their highly politicised report as a cudgel against the seafood industry and the Quota Management System that underpins it.

They claim actual catches since 1950 were nearly three times those reported to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation.

The only way the conclusions could have been arrived at was to make a guess.

The report relies on anecdotes masquerading as facts and would not meet rigorous scientific peer review, given science is driven by data and not opinion.

The sample is hopelessly biased. It includes interviews with 300 people, none of whom are named, and 200 of whom

In the Media

Blue mussels breakthrough

Stuff (23 April) A newly formed group of aquaculture experts are exploring ways to make money from blue mussels.

The smaller and stronger tasting blue mussels are considered a pest, with the Smart and Connected Aquaculture initiative wanting to turn them into slurry for fertiliser, pet food and other products. Jonathan Large, who is part of the group and also president of the Marine Farming Association, said there is big potential for them.

"They occur naturally in the Marlborough Sounds and they're edible but they don't fit with the more specialised market for greens. They're considered weeds," Large said.

"They're inter-tidal which means they thrive in that part of the water column affected by tides. That's also why they've evolved their colour because they get more sunlight. Even greens get darker near the surface."

Other members include Sanford mussel farming manager Zane Charman and Andy Elliot, research and business development manager at Kono.

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Commercial fishing the focus of Graeme Sinclair's new show

Gone Fishin's Graeme Sinclair is set to release a new hour-long documentary series on commercial fishing.

Ocean Bounty, which begins on *Three* on Sunday, April 30 at

were crews on foreign chartered vessels complaining about their treatment.

Yet the report has been uncritically covered by media.

A notable exception is National Business Review editor-in-chief Nevil Gibson who this week warned support for science is in danger of being hijacked by those with political motives.

He said campaigns such as those against fossil fuels question the forces of industrialisation and globalisation that underpin modern civilisation.

"The fishing industry is another that says a lot of claims about overfishing and dumping are exaggerated by Greenpeace, when in fact scientists are working hard to ensure fisheries remain bountiful," he said.

The seafood sector has been frustrated in its attempts to deconstruct the Simmons report given its opaque methodology. The university has rebuffed a request to refer the matter to its ethics committee.

The subversion of the OIA by a taxpayer funded institution has been referred to the Ombudsman by law firm Chapman Tripp acting on behalf of SNZ and a ruling is due.

The university's secretive stance was also attacked earlier this month by Otago University law professor Andrew Geddis on a separate matter.

He was critical of its decision to charge media for emails relating to a bid by Waikato University to launch the country's third medical school, rivalling those at Otago and Auckland.

Auckland University also refused to release additional material relating to the proposal.

Universities are expected to act as the critic and conscience of society and must be open to public scrutiny, Prof Geddis said.

"It appears Auckland University is not applying the Ombudsman's guidelines on OIA matters correctly," he said.

At the same time Simmons and his colleagues are critical of MPI for not releasing "internal reports relevant to our ongoing research" that relate to alleged fish dumping and have taken their own complaint to the Ombudsman.

Transparency is the only way we can get to grips "with the problems facing the fishing industry", they said.

The words pot and kettle spring to mind.

Here are some questions for Simmons et al to ponder in their quest for transparency.

How come a catch of some 7000 tonnes of orange roughy was attributed to recreational fishers when there has never been any such fishery?

How could there have been an industrial catch of 112,000 tonnes of orange

5pm, shares stories about the diverse nature of modern-day fishing from around New Zealand and further afield.

"There are 13 stories, predominantly about the commercial industry, but in a lot of cases it's also about the environment, science and the nature of a shared fishery," Sinclair said.

"Plus some real bloody characters and unbelievable photography."

Sinclair, a former underwater cameraman and adventure guide, began his TV career in 1993 with *Gone Fishin'*.

24 seasons and over 600 episodes later, he may have taken on his greatest challenge yet.

"*Gone Fishin'* is a doddle, you can go out and do it in a day, but some of these shows have taken weeks to film. It requires a different budget and there's a lot more detail in making an hour of television and ensuring you hold a story for that length of time requires plenty of action.

"This is *Gone Fishin'* on steroids."

[Visit Ocean Bounty's Facebook page to learn more](#)

[Press release](#)

Fish oil products meet labelling claims

Nutraingredients-Asia (25 April) A new study has proven 11 widely available omega-3 supplements are in line with their labelling claims, debunking a 2015 study.

The research, by Plant and Food and University of Otago, involved shooting lasers at the target material in the capsules and then measuring the light that was scattered.

The scattered light provided the chemical composition of the capsules.

"In performing our research, we found the concentration of omega-3 oils across all 11 commercially available samples to be in line with their labelling claim, which should give consumers reassurance regarding the quality of the oil in the capsule," Plant and Food marine products scientist Dr Daniel Killeen said.

This research challenges the results from a 2015 University of Auckland study which claimed that only three of 32 fish oil products meet their labelling claims.

[Read more](#)

roughly from 1950 to 1978 before there was a known, targeted roughy fishery in New Zealand waters?

Why is there no estimate of uncertainty around their catch reconstructions?

How come their findings are so at odds with NIWA's publicly available reports showing non-reported catches in New Zealand's deep water fisheries, where the bulk of fish are caught, at just 4 percent since 2002?

Why are the detailed methods and data used to create the estimated catch still being withheld?

How come the New Zealand study is so out of kilter with the wider University of British Columbia Sea Around Us project that attempts to quantify the world's actual catches, rather than those reported to the FAO?

A request was also made by Seafood NZ to Sir Peter Gluckman, Chief Science Advisor to the Prime Minister, to review the Simmons report given its potential to damage a key export industry.

Sir Peter responded it was not his place to take on such roles.

But he did say: "This indeed is a complex analysis with much potential for bias and interpretation and I understand the origin of your concerns."

Prof Matthew Dunn, former Victoria University chair in fisheries science, was among those to query the report's credibility.

"If it was accurate, there could be more than twice as many fish in the sea as previously thought," he said.

"That means sustainable catches and catch quotas could also be higher if that was true.

"The QMS and the deemed value system is not perfect but it doesn't detract from the fact that a privatised fishery system like the QMS is still considered to be amongst the best, if not the best, way of managing fisheries resources.

"We want our fisheries management and industry to be looking forward, not worrying about what happened 50 years ago."



Seafood Stars Awards 2017

Excellence and innovation in the seafood industry are again being rewarded with the Seafood Innovations Ltd – Seafood Stars Awards that will be presented at the New Zealand Seafood Industry Conference this year, chief executive Tim Pankhurst says.

"The awards are a great way to reward innovation and excellence within our industry and tell stories about our seafood, our people and our ongoing commitment to sustainability.

"We are seeking nominations now and urge you to select your star achievers and tell us why you think they are the best choice."

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.

The categories are:

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

To nominate someone, [click here](#) and [download the form](#).



Sanford's Volker Kuntzsch named IntraFish Person of the Year

Sanford's chief executive Volker Kuntzsch has been named Person of the Year by IntraFish, a leading seafood industry media outlet.

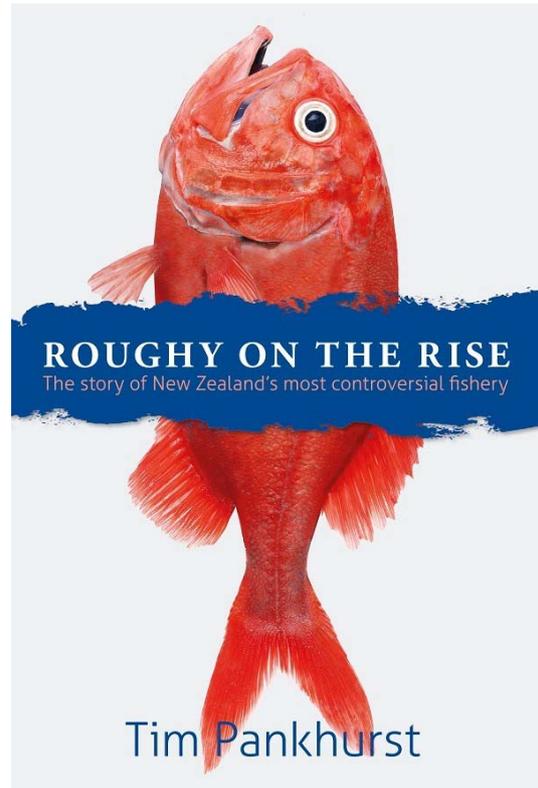
Kuntzsch was selected for his vision to make Sanford the world's best seafood company through initiatives to inform and engage with staff, improve sustainability and enhance value from key brands.

"It's all about provenance and making sure people understand the story," Kuntzsch told IntraFish.

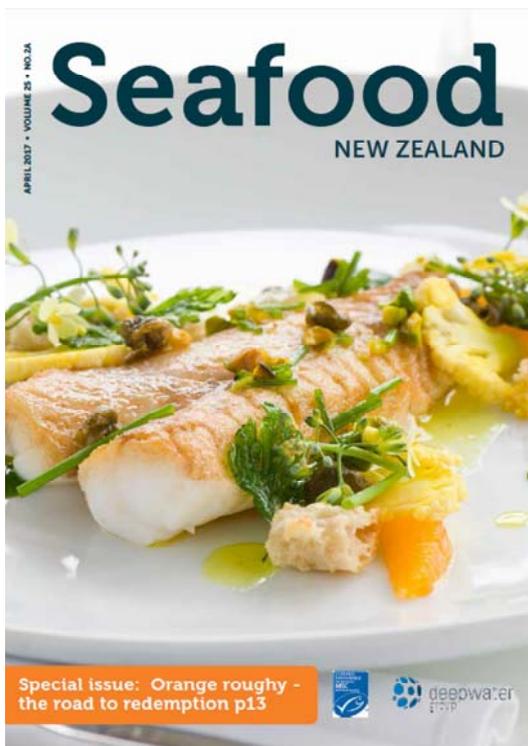
"You're at the end of the world here – it's just pure, pristine nature."

Now in its 10th year, the Person of the Year award is awarded by the IntraFish Media editorial team to recognise seafood executives that demonstrate exceptional leadership, innovation and inspiration to the global seafood, fisheries and aquaculture industry.

Past winners include executives from Thai Union, Bumble Bee Seafoods, Marine Harvest and Cooke Aquaculture.



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***Roughly on the Rise* on sale now**

You can now purchase a copy of *Roughly on the Rise*, the story of New Zealand's most controversial fishery.

The story of orange roughy is one of cowboys, characters and conservation. *Roughly on the Rise* charts the discovery of this mysterious deepwater fish, its exploitation, its depiction by environmental NGOs as the epitome of unsustainable fishing, the slow unlocking of its secrets, its key role in bankrolling the development of the New Zealand seafood industry – and latterly its recovery.

[Click here to purchase a copy.](#)

Marine Stewardship Council releases 2020 strategy

On its 20th birthday MSC has released an ambitious goal of having 20 percent of global marine catch certified or engaged in their sustainability programme by 2020.

They hope to increase that to 30 percent by 2030.

"Twenty years ago, the MSC was a bold new idea developed by WWF and Unilever to address the challenge of unsustainable fishing," MSC's chief executive Rupert Howes said.

"Twenty years on this bold innovation has become a proven concept, and a global

sustainable seafood movement has emerged to work with all stakeholders to drive this transformation.”
MSC has certified or engaged 14 percent of global marine catch so far.
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