



Friday update



Captain's Blog

March 3, 2017

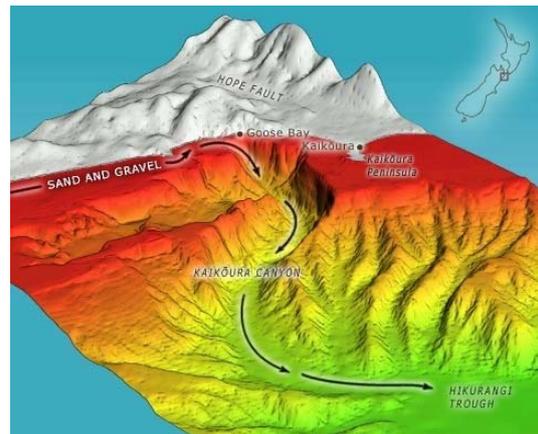


Southern Buller's Albatrosses at colony. CREDIT: Alan Tennyson

Industry continues to support albatross research

The fishing industry is supporting research into a special albatross

In the Media



Kaikoura quake: Seabed life wiped out after 'catastrophic' mudslides

Newshub (February 27) Last year's earthquake continues to bring dramatic changes, with the discovery of large underwater landslides in the Kaikoura Canyon.

A NIWA survey found some of them to be three times the size of those that continue to close roads along the coastline.

Scientists have been to the site twice since the November earthquake, observing large amounts of mud and debris that had wiped out all life. The new seafloor was distinctly different from what was observed during a 2006 survey, which had established the canyon's mud floor as having one of the most diverse range of organisms in the world.

"It was about 100 times higher than anything reported anywhere else for that

population in southern waters. Funding from the Deepwater Group will assist a long term population study of the Southern Buller's Albatross on The Snares, the northernmost of New Zealand's Subantarctic islands, about 200 km south of Stewart Island.

The survey will be conducted in April and is a continuation of a sampling series begun in 1991.

Fishing activity has been claimed to be a major threat to the birds' survival but research results have confirmed this is not the case.

And the outlook for the species is positive, with a projected population increase.

The Southern Buller's is endemic to New Zealand waters and breeds only on The Snares and Solander Islands in western Foveaux Strait.

The species was listed by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature as "near threatened" and was deemed to be "at very high risk of direct fishing-related mortality within the EEZ".

A 10-year population projection, released by the Ministry for Primary Industries in March 2016, found that at the current demographic rates, incorporating risk assessment, adult survival estimates and breeding probabilities, the population is likely to increase by nearly 6 percent over that time period.

The historical threat from fishing also appears to have been overestimated.

"Based on the overall trend in the estimated population trajectory and key demographic rates from the base model, we believe that the fisheries risk to the viability of this population over the last 60 years appears to have been small," the report said.

Titled, The 2014 demographic assessment of the Snares Islands population of Southern Buller's albatross (Diomedea bulleri bullerir), the report was authored by D Fu and P Sagar of NIWA.

Studies of the population began as far back as 1948 when 159 breeding adults were banded.

The last recorded sighting of one of those birds was in 1993, when the bird would have been over 50 years old.

The population increased markedly, more than doubling between 1969 and 2002 but then levelled off to around 8000 breeding pairs on The Snares.

The Department of Conservation's annual survey of sea lion pup numbers on the Auckland Islands further to the south has also returned encouraging results.

Pup numbers have increased by 14 percent this year.

The risk to the animals from fishing activities has been reduced significantly

kind of seabed," NIWA marine ecologist Dr Dave Bowden said.

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The battle for the Bluff oyster gets under

Southland Times (March 1) Bluff oyster season is underway, but it being a slower than hoped start.

A strong westerly slowed down harvesters on the first day of the season, with Barnes Wild Bluff Oyster manager Graeme Wright describing it as a trickle of oysters instead of a flood.

He estimated 4500 to 5000 had been harvested after the first day.

The strong wind had cut *Polaris* skipper Bill Gold's day short at seven hours after it whipped through the Foveaux Strait.

"It wasn't very pleasant at all. The westerly started out OK, then just got steadily worse," Gold said.

He said they were hoping to get back out on Thursday, but that it would be dependent on the weather, which had been unpredictable of late.

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King Salmon profits from increasing exports to the US

Stuff (March 1) A jump in sales to fine dining restaurants in the US has boosted New Zealand King Salmon's half year results.

Net profit after tax was \$8.7 million, up 52 percent on the comparable six months ending December 2015.

The result will see the company pay a fully imputed interim dividend of two cents a share.

Chief executive Grant Rosewarne said increased sales in the US to high end, retail outlets and restaurants, had helped drive exports up 19 percent.

"We sold 1200 tonnes to the USA [last year]. This year we will do considerably better than that," Rosewarne said.

The company also relaunched sales in to China with partner China Resources Ng Fung, bought just under a 10 percent stake when King Salmon listed on the ASX and NZX last year.

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Will big ocean fish cope in a warming world?

by the adaptation of trawls to include large vents that allow sea lions that are following fish into the net to escape unharmed.



Sea lion pup increase great news

The Department of Conservation's annual survey results that show sea lion pup numbers on the Auckland Islands have increased this year by 14 percent have been welcomed by the seafood industry.

Chief Executive of Deepwater Group, George Clement, said the industry remains fully supportive of DOC's conservation work in the Subantarctic and of their monitoring of the sea lion populations in particular.

"Over the past decade, while some sea lion populations have increased in size, the Auckland Islands rookeries have shown concerning declines in pup numbers, principally caused by disease and by deaths due to starvation after falling into holes.

"Industry is committed to ensuring effective mitigation of any risks to sea lions by fishing, including the use of Sea Lion Exclusion Devices (SLED), regular training of crews on how to identify and mitigate the risks, and observers on board trawl vessels to audit performance and identify where further improvements could be made.

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Moana New Zealand outraged by shark fin removal

Iwi owned fishing company Moana New Zealand is outraged that a dead shark with its fin removed has washed up on Onepoto Beach in the Hicks Bay.

CEO Carl Carrington says "We do not condone this sort of behaviour and it's utterly unacceptable. Although it is not illegal to remove the fin, that can only be done if it is landed with the trunk of the shark. Those are the rules.

"But let's also not assume it was a commercial fisherman because it's highly

Stuff (March 1) NIWA staff, along with a five member team from James Cook University in Australia, have been investigating the impact of global warming on kingfish.

The scientists have been looking into how increased CO2 levels will affect larger pelagic stocks at NIWA's \$50 million marine science centre at Ruakaka.

Oceans are absorbing more atmospheric carbon dioxide, creating still largely unknown effects on sea life.

Professor Phil Munday said they are breeding kingfish in tanks to see how they react to warmer conditions, similar to those expected at the end of the century.

"Kingfish are important not just to commercial and recreational fishers in New Zealand and Australia; people throughout the Pacific rely on these fish for their daily sustenance," Munday said.

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unlikely that it was. The market for shark fin is minimal and with little commercial benefit. It's hard to see why a commercial fisherman would undertake such a practice.”

Thanks to on-board vessel monitoring systems, Moana New Zealand could immediately find out if they had any vessels in the area at the time.

And while there was one Moana New Zealand vessel in the area at the time, it was carrying a Ministry for Primary Industries observer and also has cameras on board. A request to view the footage has already been lodged.

“This is exactly why Moana New Zealand supports bringing greater transparency to the fishing industry with GPS vessel monitoring systems and cameras on vessels” says Carrington.

[Read more](#)

Gone Fishin' Kaikoura: Part 2

We stay in Kaikoura this week, as Graeme continues to explore the implications of last November's earthquake.

Kaikoura: Part 2 will air this Sunday on Three at 4.30pm.

If you missed last week's episode, [click here](#), and catch up at Three OnDemand.
