



Friday update



Captain's Blog

May 5, 2017

Ninety seven percent of NZ fisheries landings at sustainable levels

The overwhelming majority of New Zealand's commercial fisheries are performing well, according to MPI's latest stock assessments.

[The Status of New Zealand's Fisheries](#) report for 2016 released this week shows a record percentage of the tonnage and value of landings of scientifically evaluated stocks have no sustainability issues.

Highlights from recent assessments indicate strong performance for:

- *all stocks of hoki
 - *most stocks of rock lobster
 - *most stocks of gurnard
 - *four stocks of rig
 - *three stocks of orange roughy
 - *two stocks each of blue cod, scampi and barracoota
 - *snapper in Tasman and Golden bays
- A total of 160 stocks were evaluated, with 133 showing no sustainability issues. Ninety seven percent of scientifically evaluated landings were from stocks above or well above sustainable levels.

Of the remaining 27 stocks, corrective management action is in place for all of them to enable rebuilding.

So how do we know this?

Each year MPI convenes a large number of Fisheries Assessment Working Group meetings that are open to anyone who wants to attend.

Those meetings evaluate evidence from scientific researchers, catch and effort reports from commercial fisheries, data

In the Media

Big reforms coming for fisheries industry

Stuff (28 April) Minister for Primary Industries Nathan Guy has detailed the upcoming changes to the commercial fishing industry.

"This year we are going to see world-leading technology rolled out onto every commercial fishing vessel in the country, starting with vessel monitoring (similar to GPS) and electronic reporting from October 1," Guy said.

"This will be followed by cameras on every vessel beginning on October 1 next year, giving us arguably the most transparent and open commercial fishery anywhere in the world.

"It will mean every fishing vessel can be monitored at all times, no matter where they are, and any illegal activity cracked down upon."

Guy also highlights positive change that will come from "the biggest reforms to fishing laws in a generation."

"Included in this is a proposed law change to allow new fishing technologies, like high-tech nets that can select fish by size and species. The environmental and economic benefits from this are huge.

"One of the main developers of this technology is the Precision Seafood Harvesting project, jointly funded by industry and Government through the Primary Growth Partnership. This is a brilliant example of kiwi ingenuity and again will be world-leading."

[Read more](#)

from on-board observers and other relevant information to produce assessments of the status of New Zealand's fish stocks.

That information is summarised in two annual plenary reports, a massive 2000-page document comprising five volumes.

That information, too, is public.

There are currently 98 species divided into 642 fish stocks in the Quota Management System. Nearly half - 292 - are considered to be nominal stocks, leaving 350 that are in the QMS. Fish stocks fluctuate due to a number of environmental factors that include water temperature, available feed, breeding conditions, and predation as well as fishing. While the numbers cannot be absolutely defined, well informed estimates of stock size, as well as their levels of uncertainty, are presented.

Four performance measures are used to guide the management of each stock, consistent with the Fisheries Act 1996, the 2008 Harvest Strategy Standard and various fisheries plans.

This is where it gets complicated but the essence is the measures are a soft limit (a biomass level below which a stock is deemed to be overfished or depleted and needs to be rebuilt); the hard limit (a biomass level below which a stock is deemed to be collapsed and closures may be required); the overfishing threshold (a rate of extraction that should not be exceeded); and the management target (a biomass level or mortality rate that stocks are expected to fluctuate around).

Like Forest & Bird, MPI uses colour coding to rate stock status but its green, yellow, orange and red palate is scientifically based rather than emotionally driven and is therefore a good deal more accurate and reliable.

Where stocks are deemed to be overfished, in all cases corrective action is in place.

This includes closure of the Tasman and Golden bay scallop fisheries, bluenose catch reductions, closure of two orange roughy stocks, and bluefin and bigeye tuna rebuilding in the Pacific.

Hoki quotas were substantially reduced from 2001-07 and as a result both major stocks to the east and west of New Zealand have increased in size for the last consecutive eight years.

The stocks are currently at their highest levels this century.

Overall, this latest stock status report is good news, confirming this country is at the forefront of fisheries management, and will no doubt be hailed as such by recreational fishing and environmental lobby groups as well as the commercial sector.

Strikeforce off the West Coast

A brilliant photo from fisherman Stu Morrison off the South Island's West Coast on *Strikeforce*.

If you have any more shots from on the water send them to lesley.hamilton@seafood.org.nz or text them to her at 0274 901 345.



Fall and rise of the orange roughy explored in book

Stuff (3 May) The story of the world's largest orange roughy fishery is one of cowboys, characters and ultimately redemption.

It has all been charted in *Roughy on the Rise*, written by Seafood New Zealand chief executive Tim Pankhurst.

The story follows roughy's discovery of this mysterious deepwater fish, its exploitation, its depiction by environmental NGOs as the epitome of unsustainable fishing and the slow unlocking of its secrets.

"I agreed to write the story on condition it was a no-holds-barred account of this vital part of New Zealand's maritime history. The 1980s saw a gold rush on the high seas and the fishery was so lucrative it bankrolled the development of the New Zealand seafood industry," Pankhurst said.

The books release came six months after three orange roughy fisheries were certified by the Marine Stewardship Council, the gold standard for sustainable fishing.

Deepwater water chief executive George Clement said it was a long road to get to this point.

"In the late 1990s it was clear that we needed to start from scratch to gain as we attempted to gain reliable, scientific



Sunday's seafood TV

This week on Ocean Bounty we meet John and Sue Bennett. John captains the Sanford long-liner, *San Aspiring*.

We'll follow him in to Antarctic waters as he chases toothfish from the Ross Sea to the Falklands and South Georgia.

Colossal squid, orcas, sperm whales and icebergs, it's all in a days work for John and the crew.

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

Then on Country Calender on TV1 at 7pm, we are off the Coromandel coastline with another long-liner, Adam Clow.

Clow fishes for snapper out of Whitianga on the *Southern Cross* and is well known throughout the seafood industry for his work with seabirds.

[Check out a preview of the show here.](#)



Seafood Stars Awards 2017

Excellence and innovation in the seafood industry are again being rewarded with

data on the roughy stocks to establish the sustainable yields and to put in place a management system that allowed the stocks to rebuild in size.

"During the eighties, we were taking 54,000 tonnes of roughy at the peak - today the total allowable commercial catch (TACC) is 8700 tonnes, and 6000 tonnes of that is from MSC certified fisheries. The difference is a solid industry commitment to sustainable fishing."

[Read more](#)

[Purchase a copy of the book](#)

Moana/WWF form first conservation/fishing partnership celebrates successes

Today, Moana New Zealand and WWF-New Zealand announced the first set of achievements resulting from a long-term collaboration between them.

In the first partnership of its kind, environmental organisation WWF-New Zealand is working with the country's largest Iwi-owned fishing company, Moana New Zealand, to achieve best practice environmentally responsible seafood and advocate for greater sustainability in the wider fishing industry.

Both parties share the same core values and ultimately want the same thing - a future where people live in harmony with nature and healthy ecosystems that benefit all.

Moana and WWF-New Zealand are pleased to be celebrating some of the successes and tangible results achieved since the partnership began in 2014, including action on eliminating the threat to Māui dolphins with Sanford; reducing seabird bycatch; Aquaculture Stewardship Council certification for Moana's pāua farm; reducing resource use, and waste.

[Read more](#)

Plant and Food: Breeding blue cod brings new possibilities

Scientists have managed to successfully breed blue cod for the first time, a milestone that will support the development of a new aquaculture industry for New Zealand.

In association with Ngāi Tahu Seafood Ltd, the Seafood Technologies team at Plant & Food Research in Nelson are investigating how to breed different species of native fish in captivity,

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.

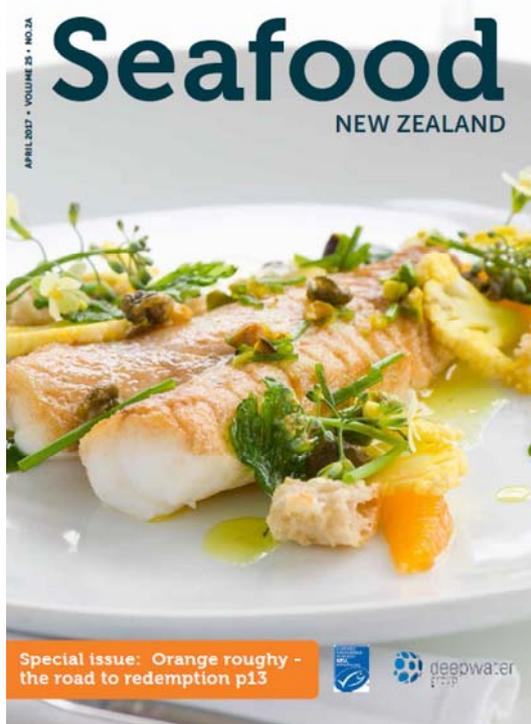
“The awards are a great way to reward innovation and excellence within our industry and tell stories about our seafood, our people and our ongoing commitment to sustainability.

“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.

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

[Click here to read our latest issue](#)



building knowledge of the conditions required for the fish to successfully reproduce.

For the first time, they have managed to breed and grow blue cod to fingerlings. New Zealand can now consider potential opportunities for this desirable table fish, such as intensive aquaculture grow out or supplementing local populations under pressure from fishing.

Chief Executive of Ngāi Tahu Seafood, Joseph Thomas, says the outcomes of this programme could have real commercial and kaitiakitanga (guardianship) benefit for the seafood industry.

“By enhancing our understanding of blue cod breeding we may be able to identify ways to replenish and strengthen our fishing stocks, which will have a positive impact on customary, recreational and commercial availability. It will help us sustain the health of our fisheries,” says Joseph.

Around 2000 hatchlings have been raised, most of which are now around 5 to 7cm long. Their parents were wild blue cod from the Marlborough Sounds.

[Read more](#)

Changes at Primary ITO

Ian Ross has been appointed the new National Sector Manager for Seafood and Emerging Fields at Primary ITO.

Ross has over 30 years of experience focused on the primary sector, including work across dairy, meat, arable and finance disciplines.

He brings extensive experience from leadership roles in the agriculture and commercial banking sectors.

You can contact him

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