



Friday update



Captain's Blog

June 9, 2017

Zero seabird deaths the goal

Forest & Bird is right – seabirds do need conservation.

And that is exactly what the seafood industry is striving to achieve.

The Ministry for Primary Industries' National Plan of Action – Seabirds, which the seafood sector subscribes to, notes the need to balance the adequate protection for the tens of millions of seabirds living within our Exclusive Economic Zone with the important part of our economy that the fishing industry represents.

New Zealand is renowned as a special place for seabirds. More species of seabirds – notably albatross, petrel, penguin and shag species – breed here than anywhere else in the world. The mortality target the seafood industry is ultimately working to is zero. That is an aspirational goal, just like a zero road toll, but the unfortunate reality is there will likely always be some casualties.

That does not make it any more acceptable and the good news is mitigation measures have been increasingly adopted and are working. These include weighting lines to make them sink quicker, setting lines at night, dyeing baits, storing offal and using bird-scaring devices to screen hooks and wires.

There is absolutely no evidence that New Zealand fishing activities are driving albatross or any other species to extinction, as Forest & Bird claims. It is a pity that they have not



NEW ZEALAND SEAFOOD INDUSTRY CONFERENCE

OCEANS OF INNOVATION
ENHANCING A WORLD CLASS FISHERY

THURSDAY 3 AUGUST, 2017 | TE PAPA

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.

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

acknowledged the Department of Conservation resourced work in the tuna fleet in the past year to greatly improve that sector's performance in reducing risk.

While the Antipodean albatross is acknowledged as declining that is due to unknown causes of mortality occurring outside New Zealand waters when the birds are in their migratory mode across the eastern pacific. When they forage for their chicks in the New Zealand zone they are doing so successfully.

Furthermore, in the case of the Southern Buller's albatross, which is endemic to The Snares and Solander Islands, surveys show population growth since 1970.

The number of observed seabird captures in the commercial surface longline fishery in 2015–16 was 138, according to MPI.

That is captures, rather than mortalities – some birds are released alive.

That figure was extrapolated across the entire fleet of 35–40 vessels to produce an estimated capture of 1009 birds by species.

This will not be accurate as both fishing effort and seabirds operate in different places at different times and the science based approach to estimate captures properly takes account of this as "back of the envelope" work cannot.

The 2016 mortality figures included the death of 39 albatrosses caused by an individual fisherman on the West Coast who failed to comply with mandatory seabird mitigation measures.

That was a disappointing event and the skipper concerned was prosecuted, lost his job and was sentenced to 300 hours' community service.

Seafood NZ supported the prosecution taken by MPI.

As the June issue of the Seafood NZ magazine details, accidents can and do happen and the lessons learned need to be and are acted on.

The Dong Won 701 had a gear failure earlier this year while trawling for squid east of Stewart Island.

That resulted in 101 seabirds being drowned in a twisted net on the surface. The incident was recorded by a Ministry of Primary Industries observer, who counted 76 sooty shearwater (muttonbirds) and 25 white chinned petrels.

"We're feeling really bad about what happened and we're very sorry about it," Tae Wang, chief executive of the vessel operator DW New Zealand said.

"We have been fishing here for 28 years and have never seen anything like this before."

He said crews had been instructed that if there ever was a similar gear failure, the net was to be taken fully out of the

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.](#)

In the Media

An oyster vessel returning from Foveaux Strait.

Bluff oyster fishermen urge action to keep deadly parasite at bay

RNZ (7 June) Bluff oyster fishers are urging the Ministry for Primary Industries to have all farmed oysters in Big Glory Bay in Stewart Island pulled out of the water.

There are major fears the parasite, *Bonamia ostreae*, will infect the wild fishery in Foveaux Strait if the issue is not dealt with swiftly.

The parasite has been found in two oyster farms in Big Glory Bay.

Bluff Oyster Management Company operations manager Graeme Wright said the time for action is now.

"So the science advice is quite clear, based on overseas experience, that if you want to reduce the risk of mortality in the Foveaux fishery you need to remove all the infected oysters from the infected farm sites, you could certainly severely reduce the risk," Wright said.

One of the farms affected is a joint venture by Sanford and their chief operating officer Greg Johansson said protecting the wild fishery was top priority.

"We'll follow any advice from MPI as to what they believe the best course of action is, because we are also ... the second largest quota owner in the wild fishery, so we have very close interests on both sides," he said.

water where possible.

There are no accurate estimates of the total New Zealand sooty shearwater population, but it is estimated to be 21 million birds based on assessments of breeding birds on The Snares (where they are fully protected) and islands off Stewart Island (where they are harvested under customary permits).

The Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment's report on native birds released last month did make for disturbing reading.

"Most of our native birds are in trouble," Commissioner Dr Jan Wright said.

She singled out three in particular danger of becoming extinct – kea, the world's only alpine parrot; wrybill, the world's only bird with a beak curved to one side; and whio, a duck that paddles through rough water like a white water kayaker.

But in the case of seabirds, while black petrels and the Antipodean wandering albatross remain a concern, it said there had been some progress.

"For instance, deepwater trawlers are using devices such as bird-scaring lines and bafflers to keep birds at a distance," the report said. "As a result, the number of albatrosses killed by flying into steel cables in the squid trawl fishery has halved. Almost all skippers on commercial bottom longline fishing boats in the Hauraki Gulf have completed training on how to avoid catching seabirds and are now involved in a camera trial to see how effective their efforts are."

In 2004 New Zealand adopted a plan to reduce the incidental bycatch of seabirds in fisheries, across commercial, recreational and customary. The plan was updated in 2013 and a further update is underway and scheduled for completion in 2018. The initial advisory meeting, which included MPI, commercial fishers, scientists and eNGOs, was held this week.

A seabird liaison programme, funded and managed by the Department of Conservation under a levy on commercial fishing vessels, has been developed and progress is being monitored.

Two experienced operators, John Cleal and Gary Levy, have been recruited under the direction of seabird expert Richard Wells, all crews have been trained and a risk management plan applied to each vessel.

Far from being unconcerned, the seafood industry is demonstrating its commitment to reducing seabird mortalities even further.

[Read more](#)

MPI report doubts whether trawler cameras enough for court

Newshub (6 June) A leaked Ministry for Primary Industries report has raised doubts about whether cameras on fishing trawlers can be used in court as evidence of illegal practices.

The report was leaked to Greenpeace and found there were challenges in working out the size of fish because of the quality of the footage.

It said this would make it hard for MPI to prove in court that legal fish were being dumped.

Greenpeace NZ executive director Russel Norman said the report was a blow to MPI's credibility.

Minister Nathan Guy said the report was only "half-finished".

[Read more](#)

Campaign to improve safety of skippers and crews launched

RNZ (2 June) A campaign to keep fishers safe whilst at work has been launched. It was in response to a Nielsen survey that found one in four fishers are injured when working.

Safe Crews Fish More was launched by the Federation of Commercial Fishermen, in conjunction with Maritime NZ, at its conference in New Plymouth last week.

"We're aware of the fact that there's a large number of small scale injuries across the board and I guess at the end of the day one in four is not a surprise," Federation president Doug Saunders-Loder said.

"I have no doubt at all that commercial fishermen take their responsibility seriously in that respect but I guess it's just a reminder that they have to be on the ball in terms of meeting all their safety expectations,"

"There's a lot of injuries that occur on our boats based on the fact that we're on a moving platform and we deal with a lot of relatively minor injuries."

Safe Crews Fish More will run for a year and will focus on safety on deck, winches, uncovered machinery, fatigue, manual handling, and intoxication at work.

[Read more](#)



2017 Seafood Star 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

The 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.](#)

A conversation on trade

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade are holding meetings to discuss New Zealand's trade negotiations agenda.

The event will include presentations on:

- the proposed European Union–New Zealand Free Trade Agreement
- the New Zealand–India Free Trade Agreement
- the upgrade of the New Zealand–China Free Trade Agreement

The following sessions will be held, with anyone welcome to attend:

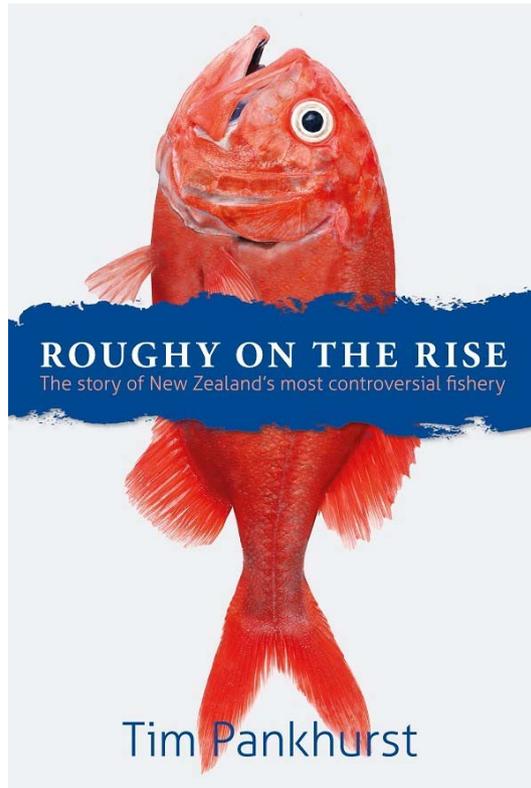
Auckland

- 20 June 2017 at 5:30pm until 7pm, a public panel discussion hosted by Auckland University of Technology (free).

Christchurch

- 22 June 2017 at 5:30pm until 7pm, a public panel discussion hosted by the University of Canterbury (free);

- 23 June 2017 at 7:30am until 9am, a business breakfast hosted by the



Roughy on the Rise on sale now

You can now purchase a copy of Roughy on the Rise, the story of New Zealand's most controversial fishery. The story of orange roughy is one of cowboys, characters and conservation.

Roughy 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](#)



Ocean Bounty

This week Ocean Bounty visits Hawke's Bay to see how commercial and recreational fishers, along with iwi are

Ministry at the Novotel Cathedral Square (free).

Wellington

– 26 June 2017 at 5:30pm until 7pm, a public panel discussion hosted by Victoria University of Wellington, Rutherford House, lecture theatre 2 (free);

– 27 June 2017 at 7:30am until 9am, a business breakfast event hosted by the Wellington Chamber of Commerce (tickets \$15).

If you going to attend, RSVP by email to FTA_outreach@mfat.govt.nz or for more information [click here](#).

working together for the betterment of a shared fishery.

Add in some incredible trawl innovations, a few characters, a superb culinary creation and you have a great story.

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

Sign up for *Catch Up*

Fisheries Inshore NZ and Deepwater Group have started a newsletter promoting a conversation from sea to land about news and ideas from New Zealand's commercial deepwater and inshore fisheries.

To sign up, [click here](#)