



# THE UPDATE

## The Captain's Blog



### **New Sealord trawler Tokatu arrives at Port Nelson**

The Sealord trawler Tokatu arrived at its new home at Port Nelson this morning after a six-week delivery voyage.

The high tech vessel is not only a proud addition to Australasia's biggest fishing port.

It represents a huge leap in investment in the country's deepwater fleet and is testimony to optimism over the sustainability of the fishery.

The \$70 million vessel was built over 16 months at the Simek shipyard in Flekkefjord in Norway.

At 82 metres it is not the longest fishing vessel in our waters – the Ukrainian-built BATM class vessels have that claim at 104 metres – but at 4706 gross tonnes it is the largest and certainly the most expensive.

Tokatu is the first deepsea trawler commissioned for the New Zealand fishery since Sealord's Rehua in 1997.

It is jointly funded by Sealord's equal shareholders – Maori-owned Moana New Zealand and Japan's Nippon Suisan Kaisha.

The name is drawn from the Maori phrase he tokatu moana – a rock that withstands the power of the sea. Toka is rock, tu is to stand.

It is a strong name, seen as fitting for a vessel that will be Sealord's most advanced, efficient, versatile and sustainable.

Like the rest of the Sealord fleet, Tokatu will use the innovative Precision Seafood Harvesting trawl that brings fish to the surface in prime condition.

It is designed to fish all species, including mackerel, southern blue whiting and squid as well as the prime target of hoki.

Nothing will be wasted. The operation includes headed and gutted high-volume species, skinned and trimmed fillets of higher-value fish, high grade fish oil for further refinement ashore and fish meal.

Its capacity is huge – 1300 tonnes of processed fish, 300 tonnes of fish meal and 60 tonnes of fish oil.

That is twice the capacity of the Rehua.

Another innovation is an electric winch package that doubles as a generator.

It will draw power only when needed and when the trawl gear is being shot away it will produce a megawatt of power, sufficient to power the propulsion.

The crew of 75 will enjoy cabins more like hotel rooms and attractive mess facilities.

The vessel also has a fully equipped gym and two lounges – one a movie theatre and the other space to relax in.

For the mechanically minded, it's a Rolls Royce Bergen nine-cylinder main engine doing the business, producing 5400 kw or 7200 horsepower giving a cruising speed of 16 knots.

"This significant investment by Sealord demonstrates our shareholders' long-term commitment to the business," Sealord chief executive Steve Yung said, on hand to see Tokatu steam through the Cut into Nelson Haven, escorted by two tugs and local kayakers.

The public were invited to attend the arrival, warmed by free coffee and a fish (of the chocolate variety).

A karanga and kapa haka from Sealord staff greeted the vessel at the wharf, followed by a waiata.

Tokatu will be blessed and lunch held on board for skippers and engineers and their wives, some of whom have been parted for a long time.

Stephan Fridell was the delivery skipper and he and Rex Chapman will alternate as Tokatu's skippers.

The state of the art technology will be immediately in evidence when Tokatu returns to Nelson to unload.

About 70 workers are needed to unload Rehua, hard and hazardous work in cold conditions.

Whereas with Tokatu the catch will already be sorted and palletised, unloaded by forklift and directly transferred into a container or the coolstore.

The vessel will undergo some final preparation before being put to work – catching hoki off the West Coast in a four-week voyage.

A fuller launch celebration is planned for later in the year.



Sealord's new trawler vessel Tokatu

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## Promising plans for pāua

The pāua industry has been carefully managing commercial harvesting of pāua fisheries for many years now. Practices such as catch spreading, fine-scale management and the use of ACE shelving to adjust commercial harvest levels are widespread. But these management practices took a big step forward this week with the formal notification of a draft fisheries plan for the Chatham Islands (PAU4) fishery. The fisheries plan provides a framework for actions that the industry will take to manage commercial harvesting of the PAU4 fishery. Management settings will be adjusted on an annual basis, through a process that involves community input and integrates with the Minister's responsibilities for ensuring sustainability under the Fisheries Act.

The plan, which has been prepared by industry organisation PauaMAC4 on behalf of PAU4 quota owners and divers, is a strong expression of industry investment in responsible, sustainable management of pāua stocks.

Six weeks ago industry representatives presented the plan to Minister of Fisheries Stuart Nash, with supporting letters from the Iwi and Imi of the Chatham Islands (Ngati Mutunga and Moriori), the Chatham Islands harvesters forum, and the Chatham Islands Fisheries Forum on behalf of the local community. The Minister's response to date has been encouraging – after all, what's not to like about industry accepting responsibility for its own performance? Te Ohu Kaimoana has also backed the plan. The high level of endorsement bodes well for the consultation process which is now underway. Submissions close on 20 July.

It's not only the Chatham Islanders who are looking forward to the approval and implementation of the fisheries plan. For many years the seafood industry has seen the fisheries plan provisions in section 11A of the Fisheries Act as an excellent, but sadly underutilised, opportunity for the

industry to exercise its harvesting rights in a responsible, co-ordinated manner. Close attention will be paid to the PAU4 fisheries plan in the expectation that it will set a positive precedent for inclusive, more sophisticated management of New Zealand's fisheries.

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### **Seal of approval for Precision Seafood Harvesting technology**

After six years of trials, the team behind Precision Seafood Harvesting (PSH) celebrated the technology's approval to be used commercially in New Zealand deep-water hoki, ling and hake fisheries. The announcement makes PSH the first non-mesh commercial fishing innovation of its kind to be approved since fishing regulations changed last year.

This new fishing method was developed to add value to deep-water species through the use of a non-mesh net that lands the fish in near perfect condition.

PSH programme Manager Dave Woods accredited the better quality fish to PSH's low-velocity water flow conditions that it holds fish in. The escarpment holes also allow undersized fish to escape underwater and are likelier to survive compared to traditional trawl nets.

"We can get a higher value because the fish aren't damaged. For hoki, that means more product at the higher end of the quality cascade, such as skinless fillets or whole chilled hoki, and less volumes of the lower end products like B-grade fillet blocks, mince or fishmeal." Woods said.

The \$44 million project is a collaborative 7-year Primary Growth Partnership between MPI, Sealord Group, Moana New Zealand and Sanford Ltd.

Woods said the approval has boosted the confidence of those involved, demonstrating how PSH is contributing to the sustainable growth of the industry. Gaining approval for PSH to be used commercially on other species will be the next challenge.

"The next step will be the innovation that we expect from our skippers and fishermen over the next 10 years through increasing usage of this new technology. The learning curve and innovation curve from now will be exciting."

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## Seafood New Zealand Conference

Registrations are now open for 2018 New Zealand Seafood Industry Conference and Technical Day, to be held on the 1st and 2nd of August at Te Papa. [Click here to register.](#)



### NEW ZEALAND SEAFOOD INDUSTRY CONFERENCE AND TECHNICAL DAY

August 1 & 2, 2018, Te Papa, Wellington

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### Extended closure looming for scallop fisheries

Scientific surveys showing a significant decline in scallop abundance over the last 10 years has prompted Fisheries New Zealand to consider renewing the temporary closure of the Southern Scallop fishery (SCA7) in the South Island.

The small recreational fishery, Port Underwood, is also expected to remain closed in order to protect it from displaced harvest pressure.

SCA7 has been closed to both recreational and commercial scallop fishing for two years – halting Marlborough’s 2016 and 2017 scallop seasons. Golden and Tasman Bay experienced a collapse of the scallop’s biomass in the early 2000s, with levels continuing to remain low today. The biomass of Marlborough Sound’s scallops also showed patterns of decline between 2009 and 2015.

Results from January 2017 survey indicated stabilisation of scallop biomass and a January 2018 survey established an increase in biomass of some scallop beds in the outer Marlborough Sounds. High densities were confined to comparatively few scallop beds in the vicinity.

Despite improvements, the overall low biomass of the scallops has persisted, meaning the improvements between each survey are not statistically significant. Consequently, Fisheries New Zealand has stated that it’s probable SCA7 stock will fall below the hard limit – a biological reference point where policy states closure must be considered.

Comprehensive research to investigate the decline has been commissioned by Fisheries NZ, with results expected later in the year.

Until then, the ministry is seeking public feedback and submissions on extending the closure of SCA7 before the season opens again next month.



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## Ocean Bounty - Aboard Tangaroa

On the sixth episode of Ocean Bounty, host Graeme Sinclair looks at the Department of Conservation's efforts to reduce the mortality of New Zealand sea lion pups. Deepwater Group will also be helping fund research on the Campbell Islands and NIWA scientist Richard O'Driscoll will be aboard Tangaroa looking at the research and MSC certification of hoki.



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## News

New Zealand's export earnings from seafood are on the rise, with aquaculture leading the way, says Fisheries Minister Stuart Nash. The Ministry for Primary Industries' Situation and Outlook report for June 2018 predicts New Zealand's seafood export earnings will grow from \$1.8 billion to \$2.1 billion by June 2022.

"Aquaculture is set to be the main driver for the forecast growth, thanks largely to increased mussel harvests, and higher prices as demand continues to grow in key markets," says Nash. "It is clear the environmental credibility of our seafood products will be a vital factor in our export success. The Marine Stewardship Council has certified many of our fisheries as sustainable. Further certification of this kind will support export prices."

State Services Commissioner, Peter Hughes, announced the retirement of MPI Director-General, Martyn Dunne, on Tuesday. Hughes stated there would be a rotation of five Chief Executives and announced the appointment of Ray Smith, the current Chief Executive of Corrections, as Dunne's successor. Dunne, who has completed two tenures in the role, will be retiring on 1 November after 50 years of public service.

The fishing industry says vessel owners should refuse to carry observers only if they have a valid reason. Monitors from the Ministry for Primary Industries are a legal requirement but some fishing boat skippers have been refusing to allow them on their boats. Fisheries Inshore New Zealand Chief Executive, Dr Helson, said the majority of cases highlighted in the Ministry for Primary Industries observer data related to “maritime manning limits”.

“Our skippers do co-operate in the vast majority of cases and relationships with the 100 or so observers are good. We don’t condone refusal to carry an observer where there are no valid reasons.”

Research conducted in New Zealand and led by the University of Sydney shows that under warm water events the nutritional balance of fish and squid changes and is of lower quality, while under cold water events it is of higher quality. The project used a highly successful marine predator seabird - the Australasian gannet - as a biological monitor of the marine environment and food sources.

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