



Co-operation not condemnation key to conservation success

A new approach to conservation in Aotearoa is being spearheaded by the American-based The Nature Conservancy (TNC).

Rather than demonise key primary sectors such as dairy and fishing - the business model adopted by Greenpeace and, increasingly, Forest & Bird - TNC seeks to collaborate with all parties to find solutions to pressing environmental issues.

With a 65-year-history, activity in 72 countries, 600 scientists employed and a healthy bankroll, it has had plenty of practice.

TNC this week sponsored a symposium in Auckland on freshwater and marine issues, challenges, initiatives and opportunities, opened by Conservation Minister Eugenie Sage.

That followed its initial foray into New Zealand in 2016, a study of the world-leading Quota Management System that it found "offers lessons relevant to many other countries that are contemplating fishery reform efforts".

Eugenie Sage listed the many pressing environmental issues contributing to a decline in biodiversity.

They included habitat loss and predation, sediment from poor land management, kelp and coastal fisheries being impacted, irrigation changing river flows, algal growth from sewage runoff and agricultural nitrates, invasive weeds limiting nesting sites.

She said only one freshwater fish had legal protection. That is the grayling - and it is extinct.

In the marine sphere priorities included promoting abundant fisheries,

extending marine reserves, restoring the Hauraki Gulf and working with iwi to advance the Kermadec Ocean Sanctuary.

Jamie Tuuta, a Maori trustee and chair of Te Ohu Kaimoana, [outlined a clear Maori perspective](#) on the stalled Kermadec sanctuary to the northeast of mainland New Zealand covering 600,000 square kilometres.

The proposed sanctuary was announced by the Key Government without consultation and is seen by Maori as hostile to the customary principle of sustainable use.

"The Kermadecs discourse shows that beneath the rhetoric of sustainability is the desire for New Zealand to be lauded as a pioneer in marine conservation," Tuuta said.

"Our pursuit for leadership in the marine conservation space needs to be one that is culturally, scientifically and intellectually robust."

He said that everything that had ever gone wrong between Maori and the Crown since 1840 was a clash of ideology.

"We must adopt a Maori world view, one where conservation solutions meet multiple social and ecological goals.

"This will not be achieved as long as conservation is framed as a human versus nature contest."

He said the concept of kaitiakitanga - guardianship - speaks to wise and enduring use that was summed up by his grandfather: We protect future generations from the claims of the present.

"We simply cannot be kaitiaki of our land and sea if we have lost ownership or control and influence over it.

"In a fisheries context it was always understood by Maori that fisheries might rise and fall on the science of sustainability.

"Where stocks are under pressure, fishing effort would reduce. We saw that with the hoki and the orange roughy resources over the last 10-15 years and they are now in great shape. We accepted the cuts in quota to help rebuild."

He added he was hopeful that our new Prime Minister's statements of her desire to achieve a true partnership with Maori come to fruition.

Department of Conservation director-general Lou Sanson said the two major environmental challenges facing his department with its \$380million budget were reversing the biodiversity decline and responding to a significant increase in tourism.

They were encouraging partnerships to deal with those issues.

As for TNC's role, the stage is set for it to take leadership in meeting some of the many challenges confronting us.



Upgraded Chatham Islands wharf launched

A new \$52 million wharf is about to make life on the Chatham Islands a whole lot easier.

Minister for Internal Affairs Tracey Martin launched the Waitangi Wharf on Wednesday and said the upgrade was significant for the local community.

"The increased operating capacity of the wharf will also have flow on effects for the local economy, with exports accounting for a significant proportion of the Chatham Islands income," Martin said.

"The upgraded wharf will make shipping more reliable, improve the health and safety of those that use Waitangi Wharf and improve animal welfare for exported livestock."

Paua Industry Council chairman Storm Stanley said having a state of the art facility would have a substantial impact on local industries.

"Instead of losing about 70 days a year to bad weather - the freighters would have to anchor until they could come in and dock - they predict they will only lose seven to eight days a year," he said.

"It will save an enormous amount of money."

For the fishing industry, the upgrade means much improved offloading facilities for the rock lobster and paua fleets, and launching and servicing facilities, he said.

Minister of Civil Defence Kris Faafoi said the wharf was a critical lifeline for the Chatham Islands.

"This upgrade will provide greater security for the supply of vital supplies, such as diesel for the electricity grid, fuel for air services, and regular transport of basic essentials such as food," Faafoi said.

Attending the celebration were a congregation of current and former ministers - including Fisheries Minister Stuart Nash, MP for Rongotai Paul Eagle and Dame Tariana Turia - officials and media.

The upgrade includes:

- a 163-metre breakwater made of 4000 Xbloccs (an interlocking concrete block designed to protect the wharf from the impact of incoming waves)
 - 10,700 square metres of port area
 - a 90-metre long cargo wharf
 - a 35-metre fishermen's wharf
 - water tanks for 100 cattle
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News

An aquatic ecologist is the latest expert to raise concerns over the South East Marine Protection Forum, Southland Times reports. Laurel Teirney oversaw the successful Fiordland Marine Guardians between 1995 and 2003, a process that resulted in the Fiordland Marine Management Act 2005.

She said the Otago process was flawed from the outset, for two reasons.

"One, then Minister of Conservation Nick Smith predefined an environmental objective for the forum and appointed an environmentalist chairperson; and two, the forum members were neither put forward by their respective interest groups, nor balanced in the interests and views they represented, with a majority from the environmental side of the argument once more. Inevitably with that set-up, you're going to get results born of conflict, rather than cooperation and buy-in from the various parties," Teirney said.

Conservation Minister Eugenie Sage disagreed and said the process was 'robust'.

"The forum's report was part of a collaborative effort with everyone around the table able to contribute. For some fishing representatives to pull their support for the process at the last minute, having been involved all the way through, is simply disappointing," she said.

The seafood industry's code of conduct will put pressure on those who do not operate ethically, Egmont Seafoods manager Keith Mawson told the Taranaki Daily News . "It's a pretty responsible sort of thing for the industry to be doing," Mawson said. "The big thing is that we have commitment from the fishing operators who understand they have a responsibility to the whole of New Zealand."

Ocean Bounty

This week Ocean Bounty is in search of southern blue whiting. It shows Chris Carey and the crew as they trawl near the Auckland Islands. There is stunning footage from the Snares, where Paul Sagar and his team are surveying the Buller's albatross, and

Graeme also speaks to NIWA scientist, Richard O'Driscoll about the importance of research. Tune in to Three at 11am on Sunday to check it out.

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