



THE UPDATE

The Captain's Blog



The mass release of historic fishing reports will cauterise the past, Fisheries Minister Stuart Nash said in Nelson yesterday.

"Let's hear the story of how fishing has changed," he said. "I want to talk about the future, not be hijacked by the past.

"A lack of transparency encourages conspiracy theories."

Nash told the 60th New Zealand Federation of Commercial Fishermen annual conference at the Rutherford Hotel that he would not hear bad things said as we go forward but I'm not going to defend some practices of the past.

"In the past this has been seen as the Wild West. That's not the way it is now.

"We all start from the same place. We all want more fish in the sea.

"The Government wants a successful, sustainable and profitable seafood industry."

In a wide ranging, lively address he quoted Karl Marx: "Sell a man a fish and you make money. Teach a man to fish and you ruin a great economic opportunity."

"We are not going to scrap the QMS (Quota Management System," he assured. In a Q and A session, Wairarapa fisherman Richard Kibblewhite said his 30 years in the fishery had been marked by banging heads against the ministry with very little change. "It's been frustrating."

"I get that," Nash responded, "but don't give up. There will be change. Put your submissions in, don't just whinge to your mates. Your engagement is vital. We

have got to get this right."

His reform targets included deemed values that "encourage perverse behaviour" and cameras on vessels.

"We are working on a range of options. No decisions have been made yet."

Taranaki trawlerman "Curly" Brown said how hard it was to be so misrepresented in the New Zealand media and by NGOs.

"This industry is so embattled. I know life was not meant to be easy, but life should not be cruel. We are so poorly judged, we are treated like pariahs."

Yet fishing involved the extraction of a natural high protein, low-fat brain food that involved no fertilisers, insecticides, herbicides or water use.

Nash praised the current Promise campaign and related code of conduct that embodies sustainability and guardianship.

"You've got great campaigns running that will change the narrative. It is beginning to happen."

He said NGOs had a part to play but he expected them to engage in a constructive way.

Seafood New Zealand has labelled the leaking of reports into 2011 and 2012 risk assessments in the hoki and southern blue whiting fisheries and misrepresentation of those as tantamount to economic sabotage.

The anti-fishing lobby is trying to discredit New Zealand internationally, undermine certification and close deepwater fisheries.

Nash added fisheries management had changed in other more light hearted ways.

He intended to hold a launch function for the new Fisheries New Zealand body on a Friday afternoon in Nelson, Australasia's biggest fishing port.

Officials had suggested a cup of tea.

Nash replied two kegs of beer were more like it.

"That is how New Zealand works, a couple of beers in a relaxed situation, chewing the fat."

The conference had its traditional fish'n'chip dinner last night (snapper, tarakihi and gurnard).

Auctioneer extraordinaire Richard Kibblewhite then led the selling of 90 items, from trawl doors to nets and paintings and mystery objects, in aid of shipwreck relief.

New Zealand seafood industry under fire after leaked reports

Greenpeace has said the Ministry for Primary Industries has been "captured" by the fishing industry and is failing in its duty as a regulator.

A leaked internal government report, produced by the Ministry of Primary Industries and released by Greenpeace showed under-reporting and dumping of fish in the southern blue whiting fishery – a similar pattern to the report Greenpeace released last week detailing the under-reporting of hoki in 2012.

Greenpeace executive director Russel Norman said compliance officers found lots of evidence that push for prosecutions and are calling for an independent public enquiry to the fisheries management system and its regulator.

MPI stated its procedures have changed since the 2013 report and defended its decision not to prosecute.

Head of compliance officer Gary Orr asserted that the reports were never meant to be evidential; rather, they were risk assessments only. As a result, Orr stated that recommendations were made and the industry has improved its fisheries management. Processing procedures have drastically improved and conversion factors have been altered. The assessments have served to ensure that fish processing is more transparent and reporting is accurate.

In the report, MPI investigators said a "conservative" estimate was that dumped fish amounted to between three and six percent of the total allowable catch - up to 2677 tonnes.

Norman said the practices would continue to be widespread until the government forced the ministry to enforce the law. He told Morning Report the fishing industry and MPI wanted an MPI-led review.

Forest and Bird chief executive Kevin Hague stated "Sadly, the fishing industry's worst enemy is themselves. The onus is now on them to prove that they are committed to transparency and truth-telling."

The Ministry has since made the decision to release its historical reports dealing with compliance risk profiling of the Southern Blue Whiting fishery.

The seafood industry has welcomed the decision.

Seafood NZ chief executive Tim Pankhurst says the industry is concerned at the drip-feed release of leaked reports aimed at discrediting a key export and domestic sector.

"These reports have been fed piecemeal to media by opponents of the commercial fishing industry.

"These historical documents were assessments to better inform fisheries management and issues identified have been addressed.

"The fact they are being used to try to discredit New Zealand internationally, undermine certification and close deepwater fisheries is tantamount to economic sabotage.

"To be clear. These documents are historic. The issues raised in them have been addressed.

"Also to be clear. This industry has admitted publicly that it hasn't always got it right in the past but it is constantly upping its game and striving to do better.

"We are proud of the advances we have made and we stand by our Promise campaign.

"We suggest that those who seek to undermine us through half-truths, misinformation and the leaking of documents without context examine their motives and instead work with us to further improve our performance and reputation."

Gary Orr provides some real balance to these reports on Radio NZ's rural news:

<https://www.radionz.co.nz/national/programmes/ruralnews/search/results?utf8=%E2%9C%93&q=southern+blue+whiting&commit=Search>



Jeremy Helson and Tim Pankhurst (and random photo bomber) at last week's Bluff Oyster and Food Festival.

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.](#)



Code of conduct rolls out in Dunedin

Twenty four fishermen were introduced to SNZ's code of conduct in Careys Bay, Dunedin last week; as the industry works to better its reputation and public trust.

Port Chalmers Fishermen's Co-operative president Ant Smith said the idea was to get all "on board and committed to following the principles"

The meeting marked the 13th of the code's nationwide roll out this year was received with welcome support by Dunedin skippers. The right to a clean and abundant fishery comes with responsibilities for the industry, and the fishermen wanted to "stand up and take control of that".

Smith who has been in the industry for 30 years, said it was sustainable, and was only getting better.

There was a full wharf of boats at Careys Bay yesterday, where 15 years ago there had been only about six or seven vessels.

The genesis of the code was concern the industry's reputation and public trust "isn't as strong as it should be". It was an important and sustainable industry, held in high regard internationally, but less so in New Zealand.

SNZ CE Tim Pankhurst said the industry was under greater scrutiny, and had to not just do the right thing, but be seen to do so. The code was developed to underpin that.

"We've got plenty of detractors out there, and yet we think we're good people doing good things," he said.

Ocean Bounty - New Zealand king salmon

Join host Graeme Sinclair this week as he discovers the innovation and sustainability driving the world's largest king salmon producer - New Zealand king salmon. Aquaculture and fish farming will also provide insight into the global demand for protein. Tune in to TV3 this Saturday at 5pm for another engaging episode.



News

After a report on New Zealand's hoki fishery from years ago was leaked by Greenpeace last week, Seafood New Zealand feels the mass release of all such reports will prevent their use in discrediting the industry in future. According to SNZ, the government -- in the form of Fisheries New Zealand -- has decided to release all risk reports into fisheries. The industry is concerned at the drip-feed release of leaked reports "aimed at discrediting a key export and domestic sector", said Seafood NZ chief executive Tim Pankhurst.

Video footage of two fishermen pulling a dead Hector's dolphins aboard a set net vessel, disentangling it and discarding it into the sea, shows the reality of endangered dolphin bycatch. The footage was made public by MPI in 2012. This week International Whaling Commission scientists renewed their calls for New Zealand to take action, stating that "no new management action regarding the Māui dolphin has been enacted since 2013" and expressed concern over the status of the small and depleted subspecies.

The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) says its procedures have changed since a report in 2012 found faults with recording catch levels at the southern blue whiting fishery. The report was leaked by Greenpeace and released by the Ministry yesterday afternoon. It found the unreported catch of whiting was at

least 3 percent to 6 percent of the total amount of fish that was legally allowed to be caught. Greenpeace has complained that no one was prosecuted. But MPI has said the report was never meant to be evidential, rather it was undertaken to examine risks. It's manager of compliance investigations, Gary Orr, said as a result of this, several changes were made.

"They [the fishers] spent a lot of time and money in some cases changing that equipment.

"We got a better process out of it, that we can have more confidence in the level of reporting," he said.

More than 100 mussel farms are closed in the Marlborough Sounds after toxic algae - *Alexandrium catenella* - ripped through the region earlier this month - the biggest shutdown the industry has experienced in over a decade. The bloom has turned the Pelorus Sound, right up to Nydia Bay, a murky red. One hundred and twenty two farms have closed and 128 located further away from the bloom, have voluntarily stopped harvesting.



[Check out the latest Seafood Magazines](#)