



# THE UPDATE

## Captain's Blog



### **Auckland Fish Market epitomises seafood development**

Wellington's weather came to Auckland for the opening of the Sanford Fish market this week.

Nearly 300 guests basked in warm sunshine into Monday evening as the exciting new waterfront precinct was officially opened by Fisheries Minister Stuart Nash and Sanford chief executive Volker Kuntzsch.

The development on the historic Sanford site includes eight new restaurants, a courtyard bar and a revamped and renamed retail fishmonger – Sanford and Sons.

Volker's vision is of a world-renowned market that is a major tourist attraction.

The Sydney fish market was known for shrimps, Seattle for salmon, Tokyo for tuna, he said.

Auckland's point of difference was its diversity, with over 100 different species.

Blue mackerel was a personal favourite, yet it was unknown to most New Zealanders.

He said everyone could play a part in maintaining a sustainable fishery by moving beyond the top five species.

Fisheries Minister Stuart Nash said Sanford had become a provider of seafood solutions.

The production of collagen from hoki skins and development of mussel powder were examples of adding value and enhancing the New Zealand brand.

Earlier in the day Nash released a discussion document, titled *Your fisheries – your say*, aimed at improving fisheries management around returning catch to the sea, offences and penalties, streamlining catch limits and technical changes.

Industry has urged tackling these issues and will fully engage in the process.

Public meetings will be held throughout the country up to Mar 17 when consultation closes.

Simplifying often complex and unclear fishing rules will help improve reporting and compliance and increase incentives for good fishing practice, Fisheries New Zealand said.

Nash said there would eventually be mandatory on-board cameras, but the policy needed to be worked out and would include separate public consultation later this year.

The previous Government had announced the policy without working out the details, Nash said.

"It's not a matter of going down and buying a GoPro, whacking it on a boat, and saying, 'Hey guys, you've got to record your stuff.'

"There's nothing worse than politicians sitting in their ivory towers in Wellington and rolling out a policy that has no basis in reality."

Back at the fish market, Auckland Mayor Phil Goff apologised for lateness, saying he was going to blame the traffic but then somebody would say that was his fault.

He said Auckland needed developments like the fish market to be seen as a world class city.

He recalled the original market was opened in 2004 by then Prime Minister Helen Clark.

Since then the Viaduct Basin had been transformed with the America's Cup defences, the next due in 2021, and the Wynyard quarter was now under major development.

Sanford chief customer officer Andre Gargiulo had been overseeing the fish market project for three years.

He had second thoughts on day one when he found how strong the smell was at the existing premises.

After much money, design work, construction and drainage, the site was a showpiece, a celebration of the fishing industry story.

The aromas are now from the different cuisines on offer.

The firm's founder, Albert Sanford, began catching and selling fish, mainly kauri-smoked Hauraki Gulf snapper, in 1864 at the old Queen St wharf.

By the early 1900s Sanford Ltd owned more than 20 fish shops in Auckland, serviced by a fleet of modified Fords.

The current Jellicoe St site was established in 1924.

It now houses the Auckland Seafood School, teaching people to prepare and cook fish, and a daily seafood auction.

An online seafood order service, Freshcatch, has also been established, delivering fresh fish to the door just as Sanford and Son did a century ago.



Matt Maihi of Ngati Whatua Orakei (left) with Sanford chief executive Volker Kuntzsch and Fisheries Minister Stuart Nash.

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## Changing tides for fisheries management

Discards, penalties and catch limits are just some of the areas proposed to change under Fisheries New Zealand's latest fisheries review.

Fisheries Minister Stuart Nash released a discussion document on Monday, entitled 'Your fisheries - your say', with the aim of improving commercial fishing practices.

Tangata whenua, the commercial fishing industry, recreational fishing groups and environmental organisations all want a better fisheries management system, Nash said.

"The rules being discussed in today's document set the framework for the next steps in fisheries management reform.

"They are designed to encourage a culture of change so that every fish is valued by the commercial fishing industry."

Four key areas of reform have been proposed:

- Amending the rules for what fish must be brought back to port and what can be returned to sea. This includes options to tighten the rules so fewer fish are returned to sea, or increasing flexibility so more fish can be returned
- Reviewing the offences and penalties regime to ensure it's fair and effective

- Streamlining and updating the ministerial decision-making process for setting catch limits
- Technical changes to the Fisheries Act.

The core take-outs were to improve the protection of fish stocks and to set punishments that suit the level of offending.

Suggestions for an improved penalty system included graduated offences, where the magnitude of offending would be reflected by the magnitude of the fine; the introduction of infringement notices for offending involving smaller amounts of fish; and the removal of defence for returns to sea that are approved by a fisheries officer or observer.

Three options for rules on landings and returns from commercial catch were also put forth. Option one includes tightening the rules for returning fish to the sea – reducing the quantity of fish that can be returned to sea, as well as allowing live returns under certain conditions. The second more flexible option is for dead fish to be returned to sea based on biological and economic grounds while allowing for live returns under specified conditions. Status quo was the final option – that is, no changes will be made to the current rules.

Landing undersized fish and having these smaller fish in shops will be a challenging concept at first, but Nash said he was sure that fishers would not be put out of business.

“If after all of the consultation and the research, we actually come to the conclusion that these small inshore fishers are going to go under if we make them land everything, then we are going to have to come up with a different model.”

The quantity of fish brought back by vessels, including undersized fish, will help to measure the true health of the fishery, he said.

Fisheries Inshore chief executive Jeremy Helson said while he welcomed some of the changes, it was not as simple as requiring his members to land everything they caught. Fishers could not be expected to get by on selling undersized fish alone.

“We need to quantify the number of fish that have been discarded, then you need to potentially add that into the allowable catch, so that the fish that was previously discarded can now be landed and balanced against quota.”

All three options would be considered on their merits once consultation begins, assured Nash.

“We have not arrived at any definite conclusion by any stretch of the imagination.”

Consultation meetings will be held across 10 centres. The first meeting is on February 11 in Whangarei and the final will be on February 28 in Invercargill. Feedback from the meetings and hui will be captured and analysed along with formal submissions.

For more information on the full discussion document, or to make a formal submission, go to <https://fisheries.govt.nz/haveyoursay>

Submissions will close 5pm, 17 March 2019.

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## Greenshell mussels head back to the wild

Wild Greenshell mussels could soon be back in the Marlborough Sounds thanks to the latest conservation project.

Led by the Marine Farming Association (MFA), the project aims to replenish the natural biodiversity in the Sounds by restoring the wild Greenshell mussel beds that once covered the area.

The Ministry for Primary Industries is backing the endeavour with a \$398,230 grant, and MFA is contributing a further \$100,000 as a kick-start.

MFA president Jonathan Large said the aim of the project is to find an effective way of restoring wild mussel beds while matching improvements made by similar initiatives that have created beds in other areas of the country. Several Greenshell mussel companies will be assisting with the trials.

“We’ve seen how natural places in the Sounds bounce back when they are restored,” Large said.

“We want to lead the way for restoring the wild mussel beds for the Sounds and all that comes with that.”

Six experimental mussel beds will be set up in three locations in the Sounds. Using a variety of methods, researchers will deposit local mussels onto the seabed to form natural mussel beds.

University of Auckland and NIWA will be monitoring their progress and assessing which methods of deployment are most effective for forming sustainable mussel beds. Environmental effects will also be analysed, specifically, how mussels alter their surrounding environment in terms of changes in biodiversity, sediment composition, fish nursery habitats, and nutrient cycling.

It’s hoped that restoring the beds will act like a sea reserve, increasing biodiversity and providing Marlborough sounds marine species, especially juveniles, with an ecosystem to thrive in.

The three-year project will commence in the middle of the year.

It’s estimated the beds will take up to two years to be fully established at which stage the community and mussel farms will be able to utilise their full potential.

Marine farmers are expected to benefit from increased wild spat production and will be able to gather more wild mussels from the Sounds as the breeding population grows.

Smart and Connected aquaculture steering group chair Brendon Burns said divers would be able to harvest mussels from the beds once they’re more established too.



Photo, Shaun Lee.

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## News

Seafood New Zealand said Sea Shepherd's "outlandish" call for the United States to ban Kiwi seafood to protect maui dolphins is based on inaccurate allegations, *Stuff* reports. The group called on US President Donald Trump to immediately ban seafood from all New Zealand fisheries over concerns endangered maui dolphins are being driven to extinction due to bycatch. Sea Shepherd NZ managing director Michael Lawry said the group wanted the Trump Administration to use the Marine Mammal Protection Act under the US law, which aims to reduce bycatch of marine mammals in national and international waters. The US previously imposed the law to protect marine species in the Gulf of Mexico. Seafood New Zealand chief executive Tim Pankhurst said conservation measures for the prevention of maui dolphin captures were working, with no sightings or captures of the dolphin in more than 2230 observer days since 2012. "The effectiveness of these measures has been verified by independent government observers on board fishing vessels in the māui dolphins' known habitat range," said Pankhurst. He said there are already prohibitions on the use of set nets and trawls up to seven nautical miles through almost all of Maui known habitat range. "These outlandish claims by activists put at risk our nearly \$2 billion export industry and the thousands of jobs it provides for New Zealanders," said Pankhurst.

Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) fishery officers caught seven individuals taking 400 excess and undersized pāua between January 16 and January 21 in the Coromandel region. Officers patrolled areas known to be targeted by divers taking advantage of extreme low tides, particularly in the early evening and after dark. MPI spokesperson Jason Howat said in one instance, three Waikato men were stopped by fishery officers and found to possess 165 excess and undersized pāua. "An inspection of another catch resulted in one Waikato man being caught with 163 excess and undersize pāua, while

another stopped and inspected was found to be in possession of 64 excess and undersized pāua,” he said. "These men all had the vehicle they were using seized and are each likely to face serious charges under the Fisheries Act. An infringement notice of \$750 was issued to another two Waikato fishers who were found to be in possession of 39 excess and undersized pāua. MPI are encouraging the public to keep an eye out for pāua poachers and to report suspicious activity: 0800 4 POACHER line.

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## Voices from the roadshow

The Promise roadshow today visits Nelson, at Trailways, at noon. All are welcome.

This follows the Napier and Gisborne visits last week. See the video below.



The Promise roadshow, Napier & Gisborne 2019.

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