

Hokianga Accord Update #43

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Abundance of topics at Oturei hui

Another successful Hokianga Accord hui was held in mid May. This was the 15th overnight hui of the mid north iwi fisheries forum and people left Oturei Marae with a better understanding of the complex and often abstract concepts of fisheries management and marine protection. Topics varied from a lack of frogs in local, Kaipara waterways to the protests against deep sea drilling off the East Coast.

An important aspect of these multi-cultural hui is that valued relationships are reinforced and nourished with mutual respect, aroha, generosity and hospitality.

Kaikoura area innovations

Mark Solomon, chairman of Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu, and Ranui Ngarimu spent a day at Oturei. It was encouraging to hear Mark's explanation of how the Kaikoura community had joined together to achieve their vision for local management.

Commercial, customary and amateur fishing interests are working with council and conservation officials, tourism operators and locals to raise public awareness of the need to conserve fisheries for future generations' use. Collectively they are making progress. <http://fishnet.co.nz/teamkorowai/>

Kaipara turbines

Local hapu Te Uri o Hau are continuing their opposition to the Crest Energy proposal to install up to 200 underwater, power-generating turbines at the Kaipara Harbour entrance. Settlement Trust representatives Mikaera Miru and Deborah Harding said it was hugely disappointing to have the Environment Court and the Minister of Conservation, Kate Wilkinson, recently approve the project.

Roger Dewhurst's scientific analysis, that the project will fail mainly because the magnetic sands will damage the turbines and disturb tidal flows, was of particular interest. Locals are considering placing a rahui at the Harbour entrance. http://www.option4.co.nz/Your_Rights/kaipara-turbines.htm#2011

Foreshore legislation

Royal assent was given to the Marine and Coastal (Takutai Moana) Bill on March 31st, but this is not the end of the matter. Many tribes who lost land through confiscation and unjust means have signalled to the government that they will continue to oppose the (now) Act, even if the issues are not resolved until the next generation.

Issues and debates

Healthy debate followed the New Zealand Recreational Fishing Council's discussion to change how amateur fisheries and fishermen are managed. This would lead to the establishment of a statutory body and the Council would not rule out licensing.

More than 50% of Maori fish in the sea so taxing people fishing for food will have a major impact on our hapu and whanau. Maori already have enough diet-money related issues. Limiting access to a healthy food source does not make sense, financially, socially or culturally.

In a tag team-type presentation the implications of increased aquaculture development was discussed from both a commercial and non-commercial perspective. Maori have a major commercial interest in developing aquaculture, but there are environmental and social issues associated with marine farming. The Accord will continue to monitor the progress of the Aquaculture Legislation Amendment Bill (No3).

Greenpeace's Karli Thomas and Mike Smith presented some startling data on purse seine catch of tuna in the Pacific region and the latest protest activities against the potential deep-sea oil drilling in the Raukumara Basin, off East Cape.

Their contribution and that of many others to the two-day hui is highly appreciated. Feel free to download a copy of the hui report from www.HokiangaAccord.co.nz