

Hiwi the Kiwi Goes Fishing Project - Update

Evan MacKay, Vice President, NZ Sport Fishing Council

Evan MacKay has been a member of the NZ Sport Fishing, previously the New Zealand Big Game Fishing Council, for around 25 years. Evan lives in Tokerau Beach, Karikari Peninsula. Around five years ago Evan began investigating ideas to get more children involved in fishing. He met with Mark and Chris de Lacy and now NZ Sport Fishing have agreed to work together on the Hiwi the Kiwi Goes Fishing project.

Hiwi the Kiwi Goes Fishing is being presented by Mark, aka 'The Minstrel' to hundreds of primary schools around the country. Evan has been liaising with the schools and NZ Sport Fishing clubs in the regions to encourage participation. The programme is designed to inspire children to look after the coastline and the fresh waterways, promote water safety and fish abundance so there is enough kaimoana [seafood] for their mokopuna [descendants].

Since July 2009 the Hiwi the Kiwi Goes Fishing show has been presented to around 140 schools. It has been a great success and Evan offered several supportive testimonials from schools.

Around \$50,000 was raised to initiate the project. School material and a CD have been produced, in addition to brochures, stickers and a new website www.hiwithekiwi.co.nz. More recently a book and CD have been developed and distributed for sale in bookshops.

Firmans Marine from Napier and several other tackle industry firms have sponsored a boat and fishing package as a prize for a nationwide raffle. The Hiwi the Kiwi Goes Fishing programme was due to be a headline feature at the upcoming Hutchwilco Boat Show in Auckland, in May.

Funding has been received from a number of sources, including the industry sponsors, the Guardians of the Sea Charitable Trust *Nga Kaitiaki mo Tangaroa*, NZ Sport Fishing and Black Magic Tackle.

By the end of the three-year project Hiwi the Kiwi Goes Fishing will have been presented to at least 400 schools throughout the country. 'Fishing for the Future' was the main focus of the programme.

Evan then played a DVD of The Minstrel presenting the show to a Rotorua school. The children were captivated.

Evan issued a challenge to the Accord's participants. To date the project has not received any formal support from iwi, but acknowledged the positive feedback from earlier Hokianga Accord hui. Evan looked forward to the day when iwi were featured in the Hiwi the Kiwi promotional material as being a sponsor or supporter.

Evan confirmed The Minstrel was fully booked but he was available to meet with Iwi Runanga to discuss possible support for the project, which promotes sustaining kaimoana – food from the sea.