



GREENPEACE

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Hokianga Accord



Hon. Phil Heatley
Minister of Fisheries

cc. Ministry of Fisheries

Parliament Buildings
Wellington

17 June 2009

Dear Minister

Fisheries 2030 and an alternative collective view

It was heartening to hear you confirm at last week's Hokianga Accord hui, that all your future fisheries management decisions will be based on improving the health of our fish stocks. This is good news for all New Zealanders who have an interest in abundant fisheries and a healthy marine environment.

Our organisations share major concerns about the current *Fisheries 2030* strategy and its focus on maximising use and economic benefits from the marine environment to the detriment, we believe, of our social, environmental and cultural wellbeing.

The environmental and non-commercial fishing interest signatories to this letter wish to go on record that we do not support the *Fisheries 2030* strategy, vision and process in its current form.

In the interests of being constructive and progressing the discussion we offer you an alternative management strategy and a vision that is supported by the following organisations:

- ⇒ Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society of New Zealand;
- ⇒ Environment Conservation Organisations of Aotearoa New Zealand;
- ⇒ New Zealand Big Game Fishing Council;
- ⇒ New Zealand Recreational Fishing Council;
- ⇒ Hokianga Accord, mid north iwi fisheries forum;
- ⇒ Guardians of Hawke Bay Fisheries
- ⇒ Greenpeace Aotearoa – New Zealand;
- ⇒ option4; and
- ⇒ New Zealand Angling and Casting Association.

Initial dialogue on the 2030 project began in mid 2008 with an outline of the project's objective - to work towards a shared vision for our fisheries. Indeed the programme was called "Vision 2030" and we were initially very supportive. We entered into the discussions in good faith, in the hope that it would help deliver an improved approach to fisheries management in New Zealand.

Following release of the Price Waterhouse Cooper (PwC) report, it has become very clear to us that the *Fisheries 2030* programme has veered away from the original objective. Cabinet instructed the Ministry of Fisheries (CAB Min (09) 9/8A) to work in collaboration with tangata whenua and fisheries stakeholders to build on the PwC report and confirm a shared direction and plan of action.

The PwC report and *Fisheries 2030* programme, as currently drafted, do not reflect the views of non-commercial environmental and fishing interests.

Despite repeatedly being told the PwC report is a draft, we are disappointed that it is already being used to guide Ministry direction and decision-making, such as the Ministry's restructuring. As a result, there is now a considerable concern about the significant bias in the reporting, the programme's intended purpose, and the switch from consultation to mere 'engagement' to seek sectors' views, all designed to achieve a preconceived agenda.

Our organisations support, in principle, the development of a shared vision for *Fisheries 2030*. However, the *Fisheries 2030* process, to date, has not sought to reach agreement with non-commercial environmental and fishing interests on that vision, and has instead moved on to the discussion of a range of proposed actions to achieve a vision that none of us support. The objective of "unlocking economic potential of the New Zealand fisheries sector" and actions to do so must not over-ride a vision for our fisheries.

New Zealand's fisheries management requires both vision and prioritised urgent action, but without agreement on a vision the *Fisheries 2030* process is doomed to fail. Furthermore, enhanced economic potential and returns from our fisheries will result from putting our fisheries on a truly sustainable footing, but the PwC proposals will not deliver enduring fish stocks or an intact environment.

As environmental and non-commercial fishing interests we share significant concerns about the direction of the *Fisheries 2030* process, and frustration that our fundamental concerns are being sidelined or ignored. This common frustration has led to a strengthening of our relationships with one another.

We collectively propose an alternative approach to *Fisheries 2030*. Attached as a 'work in progress' is a response document sent by some of our organisations to MFish. Our agreed vision, goal and prioritised actions are:

Vision: *Healthy and abundant oceans with more fish in the water, providing all New Zealanders with access to kai moana and our future generations with the opportunity to enjoy a healthy ocean and sustainable fisheries.*

Sustainable fisheries indicators:

- ⇒ Fish stocks in a healthy abundant state providing a sustainable catch for customary, recreational and commercial fishers and for non-harvest values.
- ⇒ No use of fishing practices and land uses that damage or destroy the marine environment and threatened species;
- ⇒ Future generations enjoy the riches and benefits of healthy, abundant and diverse marine ecosystems; and
- ⇒ Particular regard is given to the principle of kaitiakitanga in all management decisions.

Goal: *To achieve ecologically sustainable management of the marine environment and fish stocks so that present and future needs of tangata whenua and all New Zealanders are met and the 2030 vision is accomplished.*

Urgent actions:

- a. Specify management objectives and target biomass well above B_{MSY} or its proxies for key fish stocks with a clear rebuild timeframe.
- b. Strengthen s10 of the Fisheries Act to allow the Minister to make precautionary decisions, to protect the fish stocks and environment, in the face of uncertain or inadequate information. This must be uni-directional in that TACs can only be decreased under these circumstances and not increased.
- c. Identify and protect areas of important fish habitat or marine biodiversity (e.g. nursery and spawning areas, traditional fishing areas and areas of high biodiversity) using an array of tools. These can include customary management, area based management, method, seasonal, and tonnage restrictions and no-take zones, as appropriate.

Long-term actions:

- a. Develop policy and a management framework that ensures use of marine resources in an equitable and ecologically sustainable way.
- b. Reduce marine resource waste and increase promotion of added value from our fisheries (including targeted catches, gear selectivity, reduced discarding and more efficient processing).
- c. Strengthen community and regional management led decision-making, guided by national standards and overview.
- d. Undertake targeted research and information gathering (across all sectors), ensuring transparency of this information for stakeholder use.
- e. Eliminate ecologically destructive fishing techniques (e.g. dredging and bottom trawling) in favour of sustainable technologies.
- f. Ensure that the Ministry of Fisheries undertakes fisheries management and commissions fisheries research.

Minister, we would all be happy to meet with you to discuss our shared concerns about *Fisheries 2030* and our collective alternative strategy, vision, goal and actions outlined here. We believe a meeting would be beneficial and we look forward to your favourable reply.

Yours sincerely,

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