

## **Hokianga Accord Update #20**

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### **Hui postponed**

Due to the unavailability of key people the next Hokianga Accord hui scheduled for May 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> at Omaha marae, Leigh, has been postponed. The new dates are Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> and Friday 12<sup>th</sup> of June. The hui venue will be confirmed in the next Hokianga Accord Update and posted on the web at [www.HokiangaAccord.co.nz](http://www.HokiangaAccord.co.nz).

### **Deep Water Cove rahui**

Deep Water Cove in the Bay of Islands holds special memories for many fishermen and sailors. It is a safe anchorage in any wind except southwesterlies, so has been a favourite haven for coastal travellers. In order to preserve the uniqueness of the area the local community, lead by resident hapu Ngati Kuta and Patukeha, have declared a rahui for two years, from the 16<sup>th</sup> of March 2009.

Te Rawhiti community want people to respect the two-year rahui and not fish or gather shellfish in Maunganui Bay (Deep Water Cove) inside the line of Motuwheteke and Putahataha islands. Including the Bay, this area represents less than one square nautical mile.

Their objective is to rebuild depleted fish stocks, so there is no restriction on anchoring, diving or swimming in the Bay. Ongoing research to monitor the fishery within Maunganui will assist the local community to determine longer-term goals.

Since sinking the ex-Navy frigate the *Canterbury* in November 2007 divers have noticed an increase in the numbers of juvenile fish and reef species. Aside from being a refuge this artificial reef has become a popular tourist attraction for local and international divers.

Encouraged by this rejuvenation Ngati Kuta and Patukeha, as traditional kaitiaki/stewards, want to exercise their customary obligations to manage, protect and enhance the environment for the benefit of the whole community.

Unlike a no-take-forever marine reserve managed by the Department of Conservation, the local hapu and community are promoting this two-year initiative. There will be no fines or forfeiture if the rahui is breached. Ngati Kuta, Patukeha and the local community are relying on visiting divers and fishers to support this rahui by exercising self-discipline within Maunganui Bay.

### **Briefings to Fisheries Minister**

In early December the Hokianga Accord, in conjunction with option4 and the NZ Big Game Fishing Council, wrote to the new Minister of Fisheries, Phil Heatley. This joint submission provided an outline of the issues facing the government in enabling the Minister to achieve sustainable use of our fisheries.

It was important the Minister was given a perspective of what non-commercial fishing interests, customary and amateur, require to enable people to provide for their well-being through fishing.

Two other briefing papers were provided to the Minister, one from MFish and the other from the NZ Seafood Industry Council. These November papers contained a number of contentious and unclear statements. A joint letter seeking clarity was drafted and sent to the MFish Chief Executive, Wayne McNee prior to Christmas.

Mr McNee's March reply provides some answers and an assurance that all sectors will be kept informed of any proposals to reform the Fisheries Act 1996. The Accord will keep you updated on any developments as they occur.

Visit [www.HokiangaAccord.co.nz](http://www.HokiangaAccord.co.nz)