

Hokianga Accord Update #30

NZ Fishing News April 2010 edition

February 2010

Next hui to discuss more fish in the water

April Accord hui

Thursday 22nd and Friday 23rd April is the confirmed dates for the first Hokianga Accord hui in 2010. Venue for the hui is Naumai marae, Ruawai, on the highway to Dargaville. Everyone is welcome to attend. For more details visit www.HokiangaAccord.co.nz call Shelley Naera on 0275 872466 or Trish Rea on 0274 175121.

Fisheries 2030

In late 2009 Cabinet approved the Ministry of Fisheries' 2030 project that sets out how our fisheries will be managed over the next twenty years, to achieve greater economic returns.

Prior to Christmas MFish invited a mix of fishing and environmental personnel to Wellington to discuss how the programme will be implemented and monitored. Two people went to that multi-stakeholder meeting and have reported back to the Accord.

The February 9th meeting was another valuable opportunity to talk with representatives from all interests groups. In addition to the Ministry staff, others at the meeting included customary, commercial and amateur fishing interests, Te Runanga A Iwi O Ngapuhi, Te Ohu Kaimoana, Forest & Bird, the Hokianga Accord and option4, the NZ Sport Fishing Council and the Environment and Conservation Organisations of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Concerns were raised at the meeting that MFish would use the workshop as simply a 'tick the box' exercise and not necessarily take everyone's input seriously.

MFish has essentially proceeded with their original plan, irrespective of the well-considered feedback already submitted by the various interest groups.

The Hokianga Accord dedicated a lot of resources to compiling a collective response to the proposals after the forum's June 2009 hui. The Alliance of environmental and non-commercial interests, many of who were at this recent meeting, spent months developing submissions and corresponding with both the Minister and Ministry regarding this project.

It was frustrating that MFish had ignored much of the earlier input and were not prepared, in their words, to "re-litigate 2030".

However, an important point from the Accord's perspective was reiterated at this meeting - Success will be achieved when fisheries management decisions are based on the principle of kaitiakitanga [guardianship] of the resource and the people.

Fishing is one of the last hunting opportunities widely available to all New Zealanders. The whole experience of preparation, knowledge, going on the hunting expedition, returning with the catch, sharing it with family and community; this activity is so enriching for communities in the way it expresses a basic human social benefit of caring and sharing.

Only a generation or two ago this experience was enjoyed by a good percentage of the population. Now it is becoming a rare event, and this has been to our collective detriment.

The drive to dice and slice our fisheries resources, and find an "owner" for the wild creatures of the sea, in

response to modern untested economic theory, is resulting in the public being progressively separated from access to our fisheries. This affects Maori and non-Maori alike.

The social and cultural well-being of the people is immeasurably enriched by having access to abundant fisheries and the ability to integrate fishing and manaakitanga [hospitality] into every day life while exercising kaitiakitanga [guardianship].