

“The Peoples Submission”

The People's Submission, in response to the 'Shared Fisheries' proposals, has been completed and sent to the Ministry of Fisheries. Now the real work begins.

It is imperative that you read The People's Submission and give it your support. The submission offers affordable and practical solutions to manage fisheries such as snapper, gurnard, flounder, blue cod and kahawai more sustainably. This is to ensure future generations have enough fish to meet their needs and that current fishing opportunities improve to enable people to provide for their social, economic and cultural well-being.

Following four months of intense discussion by a number of people from throughout the country we submitted that:

- a. The 1996 Fisheries Act already contains the fisheries management tools and mechanisms to rebuild and manage our inshore fisheries;
- b. Proportional allocation is not the solution for rebuilding our fisheries;
- c. Claims from recreational fishers for less pressure on our fisheries will ease if the proposals in the submission are implemented and fish stocks increase to provide abundance;
- d. Cooperative strategies that bring together recreational, traditional, commercial, government and other interests will provide maximum benefits from fisheries.

Woeful Consultation

There is general agreement amongst all sectors that the 'Shared Fisheries' consultation process was woefully inadequate. At a recent meeting with commercial, customary and recreational fishing interest groups it was obvious that there was value in getting around the table and discussing the issues without MFish obstructing the process. While we don't expect to agree on everything, the opening dialogue was positive.

We have all been badly short-changed by this so called “four-month” public consultation. These tactics of consulting with the public over Christmas are unacceptable. The officials know full well that we cannot function as a team through this period. Submissions on matters of such significance are never one person's position. In the case of "The People's Submission" we saw a very good team develop a Preliminary View for public feedback – this was completed and distributed in mid December. The next opportunity for this team, by now considerably expended, to reconvene was early January. A six week sprint saw "The People's Submission" completed on the deadline. A deadline that was unforgiving and rigid.

option4 has major concerns that you have been denied ample opportunity to consider the proposals, what the implications are and how they might affect you. Did you realise that the “priority” they were offering you was a sham?

Why would anyone want a “priority” 20% stake, or a one-bag limit, in a fishery that was near-collapse?

Let’s get real; the people of this island nation deserve abundant fisheries and healthy marine systems.

What Can You Do?

It’s so important that you tell your family, colleagues and mates about The People's Submission and how they can support it and stop this Government taking away another part of our heritage.

The easiest way to support those who have stood up to protect your fishing future is to go online and read The People's Submission.

<http://www.option4.co.nz/sharedfisheries/peoplesubmission.htm>

Fill out the simple form to endorse the submission and let the Government know how you feel about their shoddy process that seeks to minimise your rights just to avoid facing up to their own failures.

http://www.option4.co.nz/sharedfisheries/people_support.htm

Do not for one moment think that because MFish have frittered away your time and set unfair deadlines that that is the end of having your say. In fact, this is only the beginning!

Your feedback is welcome. We look forward to your questions and will endeavour to be available to attend meetings or hui to offer more insight. Please contact option4 spokesperson Scott Macindoe on 0274 506065. Trish Rea is enjoying a very well earned break this March – her contribution to the coordination and compilation of "The People's Submission" has been pivotal.