

Letter to the editor of the Bay Chronicle newspaper

21 October 2010

**So who's right?**

In his recent letter Mr McNee, the Ministry of Fisheries' chief executive, refutes claims about a declining northern kahawai fishery.

Hundreds of hapu and whanau representatives have attended Hokianga Accord hui and reported significant declines in kahawai numbers.

Recently we described the Minister's decision not to reduce commercial kahawai catch limits as a national shame. Ngapuhi stand by that statement.

Mr. McNee can use all the contrived computer models he can buy to justify that decision but what we witness at sea does not match their "science". So who is misleading who?

If they are right and the kahawai stock is 30 percent larger than the legal level then we seriously need to question why sustainability levels are set so low.

It is not acceptable that spotter planes and purse seiners fishing for craybait and petfood have greater access to kahawai than our local people seeking kai for their dinner.

The 'technical adjustment' from 1680 to 900 tonnes in the overall allowances is a major reduction because eventually bag limits will be cut.

We live in hope that our mokopuna will be able to catch enough to feed their families, because we cannot. That will be the true sustainability test Mr. McNee.

Sonny Tau

Te Runanga A Iwi o Ngapuhi chairman