

# **RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE ON *A MARINE RESERVE FOR GREAT BARRIER ISLAND? – YOUR CHANCE TO HAVE A SAY***

## **1.0 Background**

In March 2003 the Department of Conservation (the department) released a document entitled “*A Marine Reserve for Great Barrier Island? – your chance to have a say*”. This proposal document identified the area of interest for a marine reserve, and outlined the history of the proposal and the ecological values of the area of interest. Accompanying this document was a questionnaire in which the department stated: “We want to know your opinions and ideas before we prepare a formal application for a marine reserve on the north-east coast of Great Barrier Island (GBI). Your views are important, so make sure you have your say!”

The closing date for receipt of comments on the proposed area of interest was initially 30 June 2003, but was later extended to 31 July 2003 to ensure that all interested parties had adequate time for this stage of the process. Comments received after 31 July were also accepted and have been included in this summary.

Appendix 1 contains information on the distribution of the proposal document and questionnaire, and on the consultative process, prior to and following the release of the proposal document.

## **2.0 Introduction**

The information received was entered into a database by departmental staff and the summary of comments/main points field was checked by an independent reviewer. The opinion of the reviewer is that it is a fair and reasonable summary of the views expressed by the submitters. This summary database, *Great Barrier Island Marine Reserve Proposal – Summary of Submissions to Proposal*, is available on request from the department.

The data is presented in the tables below and represents what is stated on the questionnaires. If there are any inaccuracies arising from incorrect data entry, these would not be significant in terms of the overall results.

Following the tables there is a summary of the second half of the questionnaire, and this is followed by lists of points made by submitters and alternative areas suggested for protection.

In addition, as about 30% of the comments received were on forms distributed by Option4, a group of recreational fishing advocates, a summary of the views expressed on issues raised by that group is included as Appendix 2.

## **3.0 The Results**

The department received 1863 responses and most of these (1212) were returned on the questionnaire provided. One petition, opposing the proposal, was received with about 400 signatures. Some responses had letters attached in which the writers elaborated points made in the questionnaire. Five hundred and fifty seven (557) responses were received via email and all but four of these were on the Option4 website forms. Some letters and faxes were also received.

### 3.1 The first section of the questionnaire

Number & type of comments received by 30 September 2003	
Support	213
Qualified Support*	221
Objection	1258
Qualified Objection*	164
Unknown	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1863</b>

*\*Whether the view expressed by the submitter is recorded as a qualified objection or a qualified support is, in some cases, a matter of opinion and was arrived at having read the comments in their entirety. The important point is that the view is a qualified one, i.e. neither outright objection nor total support.*

It is clear that there is not a great deal of support for the proposal and there is significant opposition to the area of interest being made a marine reserve, with 11% in support, 68% in opposition and 20% with a qualified view. Loss of recreational fishing/shellfish harvesting was the most frequent reason given by those opposing the proposal.

Location of correspondents	
Great Barrier Island	259
Auckland	1187
Northland	56
Coromandel	76
Bay of Plenty	86
Waikato	62
Other North Island	64
South Island	37
Overseas	9
Not stated	27
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1863</b>

What is your involvement with Great Barrier Island?*	
Resident only	83
Landowner only	151
Resident & Landowner	180
Regular visitor	715
Occasional visitor	647
Overseas visitor	9
Other	139
Not stated	95

*\*No totals are given in the above table or other tables that include information about submitters' involvement with GBI as some submitters ticked more than one box.*

How often do you visit the north-east coast of Great Barrier Island?	
Never	72
Occasionally	995
Often	699
Not stated	97
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1863</b>

How do you use the north-east coast of Great Barrier Island?	
Recreational fishing	1439
Other recreational activities	1003
Boating	940
Diving	907
Other	709
Customary fishing/harvesting	190
Education	128
Not stated	128
Commercial fishing	61
Scientific studies	37

*\*No totals are given in the above table or other tables that include information about submitters' use of the north-east coast of GBI as many submitters ticked more than one box.*

Do you support the principle of a marine reserve somewhere on the north-east coast of Great Barrier Island?	
Yes	446
No	1373
Unsure/Yes & No	19
Not stated	25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1863</b>

Twenty-four percent (24%) state that they support in principle a marine reserve somewhere on the north-east coast of Great Barrier Island while 74% do not and 2% were unsure or did not state a position. On reading the submissions it is apparent that this question lead to some confusion at times. Therefore, even though the message is clear, the figures must be viewed with some caution.

Involvement vis-à-vis support/objection						
	Support	Qualified Support	Qualified Objection	Objection	Not stated	Total
Resident only	14	17	13	39	0	83
Landowner only	13	30	18	89	1	151
Resident & Landowner	20	54	17	89	0	180
Regular visitor	33	61	71	550	0	715
Occasional visitor	114	56	52	425	0	647
Overseas visitor	2	0	1	6	0	9
Other	27	15	13	83	1	139
Not stated	7	10	2	71	5	95

Involvement vis-à-vis use										
	Customary fishing	Commercial fishing	Recreational fishing	Boating	Diving	Other recreation	Education	Scientific studies	Other	Not stated
<b>Resident only</b>	28	2	54	35	34	64	18	4	25	0
<b>Landowner only</b>	30	3	120	89	80	103	17	5	38	6
<b>Resident &amp; Landowner</b>	62	6	127	92	92	134	28	4	29	8
<b>Regular visitor</b>	63	24	660	458	476	438	45	14	270	4
<b>Occasional visitor</b>	23	16	514	306	259	307	27	11	319	13
<b>Overseas visitor</b>	0	0	8	3	5	5	1	0	3	0
<b>Other</b>	14	16	72	52	49	44	11	7	61	16
<b>Not stated</b>	1	2	6	5	4	4	2	1	0	84

Use vis-à-vis support/objection										
	Customary fishing	Commercial fishing	Recreational fishing	Boating	Diving	Other recreation	Education	Scientific studies	Other	Not stated
<b>Support</b>	3	0	70	87	75	134	22	14	41	22
<b>Qualified support</b>	44	5	155	111	104	142	26	6	63	12
<b>Objection</b>	116	51	1065	638	624	620	66	14	550	88
<b>Qualified objection</b>	27	4	148	103	103	107	14	3	53	2
<b>Not stated</b>	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	2	4

### 3.2 Second section of the questionnaire

The rest of the questionnaire tended to be more open-ended in its approach and layout, and any numerical analysis would be unreliable and misleading. It would also probably not be very helpful and in any case, the themes and views that emerge from the three questions are clear.

#### How do you think you might benefit from a marine reserve on the north-east coast?

Generally, with regard to the benefits that might result from a marine reserve being established, those who responded in a positive manner listed a number of benefits. These are set out later in this report under the heading of ‘Some of the points raised by those who support the proposal or with qualifications’.

#### Do you think that any part of the Whangapoua Estuary should be excluded from the marine reserve proposal?

Some of those with qualified views noted that the Whangapoua estuary could be closed on a seasonal basis while others stated that there are other methods available for management of shellfish stocks. Some suggested that only iwi be allowed to take; others, that it be for iwi and/or local use only. Others stated that there should be one rule for all.

#### Area there any particular areas on the north-east coast and offshore waters that you think should not be protected as a marine reserve?

When the responses of those with qualified views are examined with regard to the section about the areas 2 through to 8 being excluded, no pattern emerges.

#### **3.2.1 Some of the points raised by those who support the proposal unconditionally or with qualifications**

- Step towards achieving 10% target
- Good basis for educational and scientific studies
- Preserve the unique natural character of the area
- Fish life will increase/improve
- Will provide for value-added tours
- Contributes to ecological preservation
- Would enhance diving and snorkelling
- It will benefit future generations
- It will protect the marine biodiversity
- Improve the Great Barrier Island economy
- The area is too big
- Expand the area

#### **3.2.2 Some of the points raised by those who object outright or with qualifications**

- Need a strategy to create a marine protected areas network rather than *ad hoc* approach
- Local residents use the estuary for ‘sustenance’ fishing
- Same rules should apply to everyone with regards to harvesting of shellfish
- Provision could be made for tangata whenua to take shellfish from the estuary
- Concern about being stopped within a marine reserve with fish on board which were caught outside of the marine reserve
- Concern about not being able to anchor in inclement weather (with or without fish on board)
- Because of inclement weather, recreational fishing/over fishing is not a real issue
- Happy to have greater restrictions on commercial fishing, including banning it
- The area is too big

- Navy area is a no fishing zone already
- If fish protection is needed, increase policing of QMA and fishing regulations
- Fish do not need protecting as they are not at risk, so a marine reserve is not needed
- The area is self-protecting due to its isolation and weather conditions/wind direction
- Where is the scientific evidence of the benefits of marine reserves?
- Taking away my rights to fish
- Only shelter in SW winds/SE to NW winds
- At the greater water depths one can't dive
- Marine reserves should be in an accessible area
- Marine reserves should be in inaccessible areas, not good recreational fishing spots accessible only by boat
- Fishing pressure would increase elsewhere
- Difficulty of policing such an area
- Questions the department's ability to manage the area

### 3.2.3 Alternatives suggested (for a complete list refer to *Great Barrier Island Marine Reserve Proposal – Summary of Submissions to Proposal*)

The following sites were mentioned by more than one submitter and are listed in descending order of frequency of mention:

- The Navy zone
- Little Barrier Island
- Needles around to Miners Head
- Mokohinau Islands
- Cuvier Island
- Rosalie Bay to Rabbit Island
- 1990's Steering Group Recommendations
- NE coast of Great Barrier Island – at least 3 (or 5) nautical miles seaward of the island and Rakitu
- Port Fitzroy

Other areas mentioned:

West Coast of Auckland; cable areas around NZ; Mercury Islands; Tiritiri Matangi Island; Ponui Island; Hen and Chickens Islands; Awana; Maraetai; Waiheke Island; Takapuna Reef; Kaikoura; Three Kings Island; Firth of Thames; Fiordland.

## APPENDIX 1

### **Distribution and Consultation Process on the Proposal for a Marine Reserve on the Northeast coast of Great Barrier Island**

The production and release of a document setting out the area of interest for a marine reserve and seeking comments on it are not required under the Marine Reserves Act 1971. However, experience has demonstrated that the pre-statutory work and in particular, community consultation, assists in deciding whether to proceed with a statutory marine reserve application and if so, what form the proposal might take.

On this basis, the department released the proposal document, *“A Marine Reserve for Great Barrier Island? – Your chance to have a say*, and questionnaire in March 2003. Approximately 4,500 proposal documents and questionnaires were distributed to 180 organisations, groups and clubs and approximately 600 individuals. In addition, 6,500 copies were provided for distribution in the *NZ Professional Skipper* and *New Horizons* magazines.

During the period for commenting, the department held meetings on Great Barrier Island, throughout the Auckland region and in Whitianga. Articles and advertisements appeared in a number of newspapers, including the *NZ Herald*, regional Auckland papers, *Dominion-Post* and *Barrier Bulletin*. Items also appeared on the following television programmes: *Breakfast*, *TV One News* and *TV 3 News*. Information about the proposal was also available on the department’s website, at the department’s offices in Auckland, Warkworth and GBI and its Auckland Visitors Centre.

List of meetings that departmental staff led:

- Ngati Rehua hapu, Motairehe, Great Barrier Island, 14 December 2002
- Ngati Wai Trust Board, Whangarei, 26 February 2003
- Ngati Rehua hapu, Papakura, 8 March 2003
- Bernie Ward, Chair of Auckland Region Recreational Fishers Association, 18 March 2003
- RnR Charters, Wellsford, 1 April 2003
- Auckland Lady Anglers Club, 28 April 2003
- Counties Sports Fishing Club, Waiuku, 30 April 2003
- Public meeting at Claris, Great Barrier Island, 17 May 2003
- Public meeting at Tryphena, Great Barrier Island, 18 May 2003
- Laingholm Fishing Club, Laingholm, 26 May 2003
- Representatives of Option 4, plus Mr Tony Blomfield, Auckland, 28 May 2003
- “Drop-in” meetings open to the public, Devonport & Auckland, 9 & 15 July 2003
- Several meetings with Ministry of Fisheries officials in 2002 and 2003

Other meetings departmental staff attended:

- Coromandel Commercial Fishermen’s Association, Whitianga, 14 April 2003
- Public meeting at Claris, Great Barrier Island, called by the Great Barrier Island Community Board, 15 April 2003
- Public meeting in Port Fitzroy, Great Barrier Island, called by the North Barrier Residents and Ratepayers Association, 10 May 2003
- Public meeting at Warkworth, called by the Leigh Fishermen’s Association, 12 June 2003
- Auckland City Council Councillors & GBI Community Board representatives, Auckland, 1 July 2003

In addition Option4, a group promoting the rights of public to fish and gather seafood in New Zealand, was active in distributing the department’s proposal document and questionnaire via its website and contacts. (Appendix 2)

## APPENDIX 2

### Option4

As noted in Appendix 1, Option4 provided a questionnaire about the GBI marine reserve proposal on its website. Around one-third of the comments received on the proposal were on the Option4 questionnaire. In addition to the fields provided by the department on its questionnaire, the Option4 form contained the following additional questions formulated by that group:

- A. Do you support the Area of Interest as proposed to become a marine reserve?*
- B. Do you believe that a co-ordinated approach to marine protection is required before this marine reserve proposal (if it receives support from the public) goes forward as an Application?*
- C. Are you concerned that DOC has no intention of arranging public meetings in Auckland to consult with public?*
- D. Have DOC advertised the process and distributed brochures to your satisfaction? Is their process adequate?*

### Summary results

Most of the correspondents answered these questions and most of those said 'No' to A and D, and 'Yes' to B and C.

The form then goes on to state:

Please indicate which of the following questions you would like DOC to answer as they justify the need for a marine reserve on the north-east coast of Great Barrier.

- 1. What is so unique that it/they require the complete protection of a no take marine reserve in perpetuity?*
- 2. Why have de-facto marine reserves not been studied or proposed as marine reserves?*
- 3. Why is fishing the ONLY threat?*
- 4. What scientific study can be undertaken in a marine reserve that cannot be undertaken whilst fishing continues?*
- 5. How does DOC intend to address displaced fishing effort and the consequential decline in fishing success in the remaining fishing grounds?*
- 6. How do marine reserves contribute to improved fishing success? Where is the evidence of those benefits?*
- 7. What are the fisheries benefits that arise from the declaration of a marine reserve? Where is the evidence of those benefits?*
- 8. What cost/benefit analysis has been done to uphold the claims of economic benefits from tourism etc?*
- 9. Where else in NZ other than Leigh do marine reserves foster an eco-tourism economy?*
- 10. Are the Leigh and Poor Knights examples supported by any proper analysis, and how widely spread are the eco-tourism benefits in Leigh and Tutukaka?*

### Summary results

Those who responded to this section of the form indicated that the Department of Conservation should answer these questions.