

Hon Phil Heatley

Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture

16 November 2010

Media Statement

First reading of Aquaculture Amendment Bill

The Aquaculture Legislation Amendment Bill (No 3) had its first reading today. The aim of the Bill is to put New Zealand's marine farmers and the aquaculture industry on track to achieve earnings of around \$1 billion by 2025.

"The Government is committed as part of its Economic Growth Agenda to enabling the aquaculture industry to grow," says Fisheries and Aquaculture Minister Phil Heatley.

"Growth is expected to come from increases in marine space actually farmed and through making better use of existing space with research, innovation and investment into different species and new technologies.

"The proposed new law will enable aquaculture to fulfil its economic potential, while ensuring that development is environmentally sustainable and balanced with other uses of our coastal space," says Mr Heatley.

"The management approach introduced in 2004 resulted in no new space being created due to its complexity, cost and uncertainty. This is something the Government is determined to rectify.

"This Bill streamlines planning and consenting processes and will reduce costs to industry to provide stronger incentives for industry development," he said.

The Bill is designed to help regional councils manage high or competing demand for space within the coastal marine area and enables central government to take a more active role in aquaculture planning.

It removes the requirement for Aquaculture Management Areas.

This particular change will impact on the mechanism for delivery of the Maori Commercial Aquaculture Settlement to iwi in respect of new space in the coastal marine area. The Ministry of Fisheries plans to engage with iwi to discuss the most appropriate way to deliver the settlement under the new legislation.

"I need to acknowledge all of those who have worked so hard to create aquaculture reforms. The development of this Bill required a tremendous effort from the government agencies involved, as well as from the aquaculture and fishing industries, regional councils, environmental organisations and other stakeholders that made submissions during the reform process," said Mr Heatley.

Any interested parties will have the opportunity to make a submission on the Bill once the Select Committee calls for submissions. Information on the submission process and timeframes will be provided by the Select Committee.

The Bill and supporting information can be found via the Ministry of Fisheries website, www.fish.govt.nz

Media contact: Anna Woolnough 04 8179707 or 021 242 8269