

Hokianga Accord Update #24

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Matariki, celebrating a new year in fisheries management

Fishing may have slowed down in some places but the momentum continues for a collective non-commercial response to the Ministry of Fisheries' 2030 Vision proposals. The Hokianga Accord has had major input into an alternative strategy document for the Minister's consideration, which seeks to achieve "more fish in the water/kia maha atu nga ika ki roto i te wai".

After the Accord's hui in June mid north iwi, amateur fishing groups and three environmental organisations sent a joint letter to the Minister expressing our concerns about the *Fisheries 2030* proposals.

While we understand the government's intention of improving the economic returns from our fisheries, we believe there is greater potential in giving meaningful effect to the statutory obligations on the Minister to have particular regard to kaitiakitanga/guardianship of our taonga, our fisheries and environment.

To assist the Minister we proposed an alternative management strategy that, amongst other things, outlines practical measures to improve harvesting techniques and the economic returns from our fisheries. We have since been invited to Wellington in early August, to discuss this alternative strategy with the Minister.

Benefits of implementing these measures include providing food and jobs for New Zealanders, while reducing the risks to the health and abundance of our fisheries and marine environment.

Maori's long-term interests in fish span all facets of commercial, customary, and amateur fishing and environmental sustainability. So it is natural for us to be concerned when the government proposes short-term solutions, which will most likely translate into greater commercial catch.

To us this means more dead fish and a further threat to the health of our seas.

There are better ways to increase the value from our fisheries. Stocks managed at higher levels would produce sufficient fish to fulfil each sector's needs while ensuring our mokopuna/grandchildren enjoy access to abundant fisheries.

Further information is online at http://option4.co.nz/Fisheries_Mgmt/2030.htm.

Atamira in the City

Ngapuhi representatives were pleasantly surprised at people's reaction to the Hokianga Accord material supplied during the recent three-day Atamira festival. The event, held in Greenlane, Auckland, was a celebration of Matariki, the Maori New Year.

It was an opportunity to provide an update on the various programmes being initiated by Te Runanga A Iwi o Ngapuhi.

Hokianga Accord brochures were freely given away to all those wanting to understand how Ngapuhi and Ngati Whatua are working together for their fishing interests.

Shelley Naera, Events coordinator for Ngapuhi, welcomed the positive response to the Hokianga Accord initiative.

“It was such a pleasure to give people good news about our increased participation in fisheries management. While many understand the Runanga manages the commercial fishing asset they are also very aware that when they go fishing to feed their whanau there are not so many fish as there used to be.”

Officials estimate one in four Maori go fishing. Many of those people fish for sustenance, to put food on the table for their mokopuna.

Shelley continued, “Food fishers are most affected by a lack of fish in the water, and the Accord is working for their interests. The encouragement we received confirms our flax-roots interest in fisheries remains strong.”

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