

**option4 Update #1**  
**NZ Fisher**  
**November 2010**

## **More fish in the water**

option4 is a diverse group of people from around Aotearoa who rallied in mid-2000 in response to the government's Soundings policy, which sought to confine every New Zealander's right to fish.

In addition to limiting access, the bureaucrats also proposed that fishermen be licenced, irrespective if you were fishing for food or pleasure.

## **Principles**

Led by Paul Barnes, option4's Project leader, a team of dedicated people travelled thousands of kilometres talking at fishing clubs and public meetings. Overwhelming support was given for option4's principles:

1. A priority right over commercial fishers for free access to a reasonable daily bag limit to be written into legislation.
2. The ability to exclude commercial methods that deplete recreationally important areas.
3. The ability to devise plans to ensure future generations enjoy the same or better quality of rights while preventing fish conserved for recreational use being given to the commercial sector.
4. No licensing of recreational fishers.

By the submission deadline a record 60,000 Kiwis had rejected Sounding's options one, two and three. Clearly New Zealanders valued their traditional right to fish in the sea.

A website [www.option4.co.nz](http://www.option4.co.nz) was established to provide hard-to-source information and a contact point for people who want to stay abreast of important access, management and policy issues.

## **Public awareness**

option4 was also an integral part of the four-year Kahawai Legal Challenge, which concluded with the Supreme Court decision in May 2009. The outcome was mostly positive for non-commercial interests. However, recent management decisions have poorly reflected the Court's rulings.

Over the past five years option4 has evolved into providing service to organisations seeking to achieve "more fish in the water/kia maha atu nga ika ki roto i te wai". The Hokianga Accord and the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council have received much service.

The Hokianga Accord encompasses the non-commercial fishing interests of the mid north iwi of Ngapuhi and Ngati Whatua, hapu and whanau, option4, the NZ Sport Fishing Council and a number of environmental organisations.

After fourteen overnight hui with many people contributing a good understanding of each other's aspirations and mutual concerns has developed.

Today a team of experienced writers, policy analysts, fisheries management specialists and legal advisors respond to a variety of proposals and seek to offer regular updates and insight on the complex topics of fisheries management and the allocation of public resources.

For more information please don't hesitate to call or email either Trish Rea (09 8186205 [trish@option4.co.nz](mailto:trish@option4.co.nz)) or Scott Macindoe on 021 622463 [Scott@wilmac.co.nz](mailto:Scott@wilmac.co.nz).