

option4 Update #102

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Guardians of the Sea

As much of the country goes into a financial tailspin there is hope on the horizon for those wanting “more fish in the water” with the added benefit of tax relief. The Guardians of the Sea Charitable Trust has been established to champion healthy fisheries, sustainable practices and assist people who care for their environment.

The Guardians are now seeking contributions from individuals, groups, companies and other Trusts to establish a capital fund. This will be used to support organisations, innovation and education that contribute to healthy fisheries and the wellbeing of all New Zealanders.

A timely change to the tax laws in April means the cap on charitable donations has now been removed, allowing people to make a gift and claim a tax deduction of 33.3 percent. There are some qualifiers to this, for further explanation contact the Trustees or secretary online at www.guardians.org.nz. While online take a moment to look through the new Guardians website.

Tom Fox, an Auckland company director, is chairman of the Trust Board. All five trustees have complementary business skills and an empathy with the Guardian’s objectives that aim to:

- ⇒ Achieve “more fish in the water” through promoting excellence in sustainable management
- ⇒ Promote cooperation between all interests in fisheries and the marine environment
- ⇒ Foster community understanding and the benefits of kaitiakitanga (guardianship).

Grants have already been made including several to a Napier trawlerman, Rick Burch, who is testing innovative techniques yielding dramatic reductions in juvenile mortality, bycatch and fuel consumption while reducing seafloor contact by 95 percent. Exciting developments for the sustainability of our fisheries and environment.

Fisheries Act Reform

An urgent review of section 13 of the Fisheries Act 1996 is underway due to a recent High Court decision that went against the Fisheries Minister. option4, the Hokianga Accord and NZ Big Game Fishing Council have jointly written to the Minister offering to assist in the amendment process. A record of correspondence is online at http://www.option4.co.nz/Fisheries_Mgmt/section13.htm.

Maui and Hectors Dolphins

April 20th was the last day for submissions on the most recent dolphin information released by the Ministry of Fisheries and Department of Conservation. MFish received few submissions, most were focussed more on the process than the information released in March. MFish advice should be with the Minister by mid-May and a decision is expected by the end of the month. Read the brief option4 submission online at http://option4.co.nz/Fisheries_Mgmt/dolphins.htm#subs.

Blue Cod

Debate about Blue Cod management in the Marlborough Sounds has raged for years. In response to the most recent MFish proposals, the Marlborough Recreational Fishers Association organised several public meetings and contributed to a submission made by the Council of Outdoor Recreation Associations of NZ. option4 also submitted and endorsed CORANZ's comments. http://www.option4.co.nz/Fisheries_Mgmt/bluecod.htm.

Marine Reserves

option4 understand MFish have made recommendations to their Minister regarding DoC's application for a marine reserve off the northeastern coast of Aotea (Great Barrier Island). The Minister is yet to announce whether he has given his agreement. option4 is monitoring progress and will advise any developments in later Updates.