

SECURING A FISHING FUTURE





Why are we here

- Limited effect at Government level
- Fragmented representation
- Constant funding problem
- Dedicated individuals overwhelmed by the demands of advocacy and effective representation
- Recreational fishers sector is losing important issues and status



Where are we coming from

Began with a meeting with southern fishers in Dunedin in May 2009 which, in part, was triggered by the Ministry of Fisheries' restructuring and the implied consequent Fisheries disengagement with recreational stakeholders

Invited to speak at NZ Recreational Fishing Council AGM (July 2009)

Challenged from this meeting to show the proposal is practical and given three months to report back to parties concerned

A report on progress presented to southern fishers, NZ Recreational Fishing Council members and other interested groups in Christchurch, October 2009

This meeting resolved that a presentation be made to all national organisations involved in marine recreational fishing in Auckland, March 2010

A look down memory lane at marine recreational fishing!



1990 – Government managed and funded
Top of the heap or at least “first among equals”
Recreational, Commercial and Customary

The harsh reality



2010 – Government “undermanaged and underfunded”
Commercial and Customary – top of the heap
Recreational – bottom of the heap (in fact out the bloody door)



How did this happen?

Commercial & Maori got organised and moved to the top of the heap!

Commercial sector

- The QMS was introduced to manage commercial fishing
- Representative stakeholder companies have been set up for most commercial fisheries
- QMS administered by commercial
- Ministry now co-manages some fisheries with commercial sector

Maori

- Commercial – Settlement moved Maori into the business of fishing
- Customary – Fishing regulations for tangata whenua to manage customary fishing
Taiapure and Mataitai to involve tangata whenua in managing fisheries in significant local areas

Some of the costs

Kawhai fund needs more money - please donate

Set netting banned from nearly all of NZ coastal fisheries areas

**“Trial” Cockle harvesting approved in Dunedin Harbour
despite huge opposition**

Hectors Dolphin near extinction according to WWF

Forest and Bird propose huge Marine Reserve

**Commercial receive huge increase in crayfish
TACC plus an extended season**

Minister concerned over “fragmented” representation

**Recreational catch too high says commercial – Spokesperson
blames lack of fish on recreational fishing**

**As there is inadequate data regarding the recreational
catch there will be no increase . . .**



What's been the overall cost?

Cumulative loss of:

- Fishing areas
- Catch – bag limits/increased size
- Fishing methods/associated species
- **Status of recreational fishers/credibility with politicians**

Input into fisheries management decisions compromised by:

- No one representative body/ inability to get organised
- No funding
- Inability to participate in MFish processes – research/ harvest/management – conflict re allocation
- Inadequate data about recreational fishers & fishing

MFish & Government moving on:

MFish restructuring

2030 Vision



What can we do about it?

GET ORGANISED!

We need:

- One integrated body representing the interests of all marine recreational fishers – recognised and mandated by Government
- The body needs to operate effectively for fishers at all levels (the grass roots, regional and national levels)
- **ALL FISHERS** need to be identified so that info and feedback for robust fisheries decisions in research planning, management, monitoring and compliance can be provided
- Sufficient and reliable funding for the body to function, canvass views and advocate for recreational fishing interests within the sector, with the agencies, Government and other organisations



What will motivate and unify?

A shared vision or goal

To facilitate the provision of professional, full-time advocacy furthering and protecting the rights, aspirations and ability of recreational fishers to access a fair and sustainable share of “available fish in the water” at the highest levels of decision making re policy and regulation. Also to promote the involvement of recreational fishers in the management of their fishery, including representation at forums involving Maori and other stakeholders



A brief look at similar organisations

There are several organisations with similar advocacy roles and structures and they are:-

- Fish and Game New Zealand
- Forest and Bird
- Federated Farmers of New Zealand
- World Wildlife Fund
- Greenpeace
- Forest and Game

Of these, only Fish and Game has statutory protection while the rest, excluding Federated Farmers, rely on voluntary membership and donations.



So what can we take from these organisations?

Features in common:

- One representative body mandated by the wider group
- Regional and national structure
- Effective communication up and down from every level
- All members identified, flow of information, opportunity to be actively involved
- Sufficient and reliable funding



So what are we proposing?

- A representative governing body elected by the fishers
- This “body” to be responsible for the appointment and management of a professional advocacy group tasked with presenting and advancing all fishing matters and interests relevant to recreational fishing
- This professional group to be the recognised advocate for recreational fishing concerns and initiatives from around the country
- Actively encourage existing groups to provide the current levels of input into fisheries management through the unified body



And also to -

- Ensure that these concerns are advanced to the relevant Minister/Agencies fairly and forcefully.
- Liaise with all recreational fishing groups, regional and national forums and provide a conduit for all fishers to have their concerns addressed.
- Conduct dialogue with all other Stakeholders.
- The establishment of a reliable database of recreational fishers



The benefits of fisher identification

- Communication to, from and between recreational fishers will finally be possible
- Fishers can be kept informed about their organisation, about issues and developments at the local, regional and national levels, about agency and political initiatives and those of other relevant organisations
- Fishers can be canvassed and provide their views about proposals and issues
- Fishers can feed information about their fishing areas, methods, species and harvest into a database that will allow the organisation to effectively advocate for recreational fisheries in the range of research and management processes conducted by Government regionally and nationally
- Such a database will be enormously valuable for all aspects of managing and monitoring recreational fisheries over time



So just how many rec fishers are there?

100,000

Maybe 600,000

Could be 1,500,000

Possibly 800,000

What about 900,000

**The fact is . . .
nobody really knows**

Reality check?

Obviously an organisation such as that proposed will require serious funding

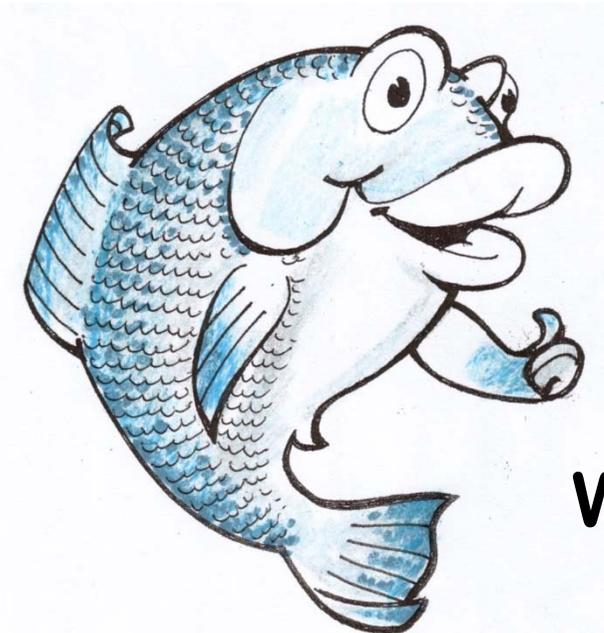
Such funding will need to be

- Adequate
- Ongoing
- Secure

Let's look at the possibilities



FUNdraising



With the help of “Bluey the Cod”

Courtesy of ‘Pearly AI’ Allison

Funding Objectives

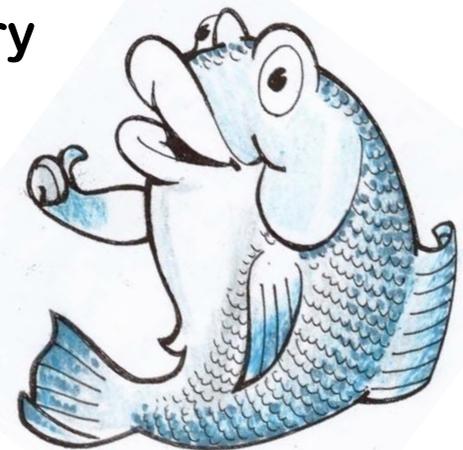
Sufficient and ongoing funding to support the proposed organisation and its objectives

Maximise benefits and opportunities for recreational Fishers

Establish a database of recreational fishers and fishing. This is a top priority as, at the moment, there is nothing which accurately indicates recreational activity and catch. Having such a database will provide enormous leverage in TAC setting and negotiations about allocations and provide very valuable information to Govt and agencies as well as giving fishers the opportunity to play a fundamental role in contributing to the database itself

“Bluey says”

“Now pay attention you lot”



Funding

Targeted Sales Tax

Free Membership

Dedicated Fuel Tax

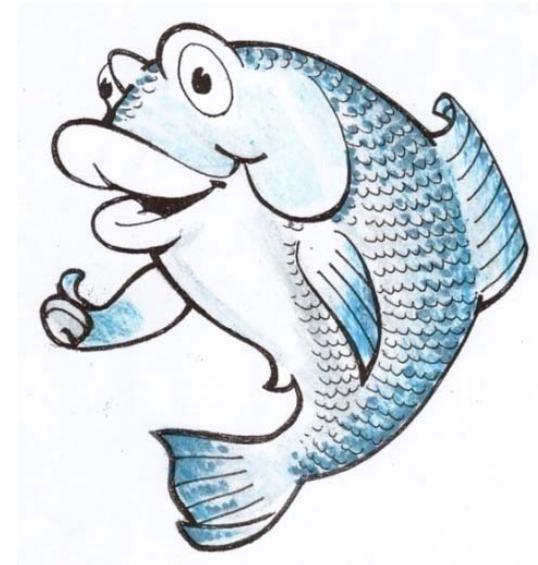
Marine Industry Levy

Government/MFish funding

Self Funding

“Bluey says”

“Lets look at each one individually”



Targeted Sales Tax

Pros:

Sufficient ongoing income
if “ring fenced”

No financial impact on Recreational Fishers?

Cons:

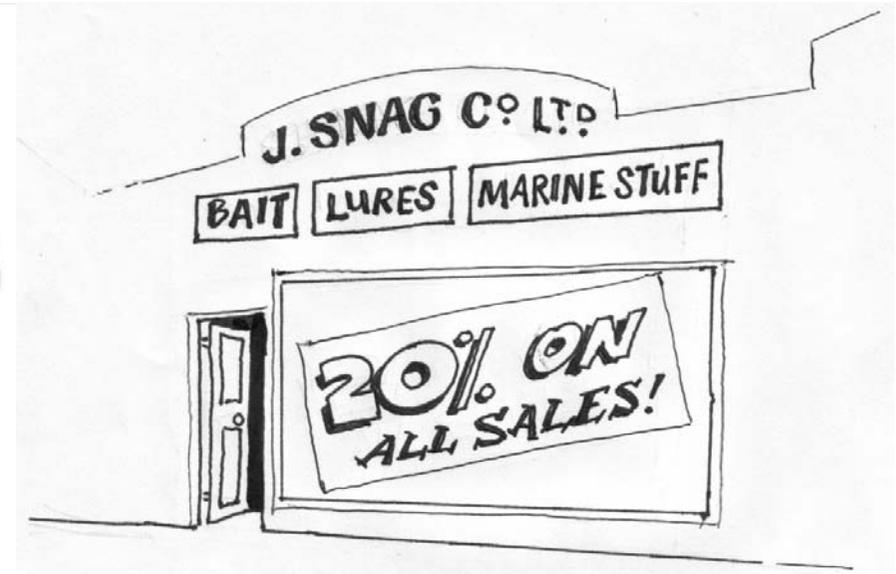
Already allocated?

Require legislation and be a cost to Government

Other Groups?

Separation difficulty

No Database



“Bluey says”

“Tax for the memories”

Free Membership

Pros:

Little or no cost to fishers

Benefits to members

Voluntary membership

Provide a limited database

Cons:

Limited database

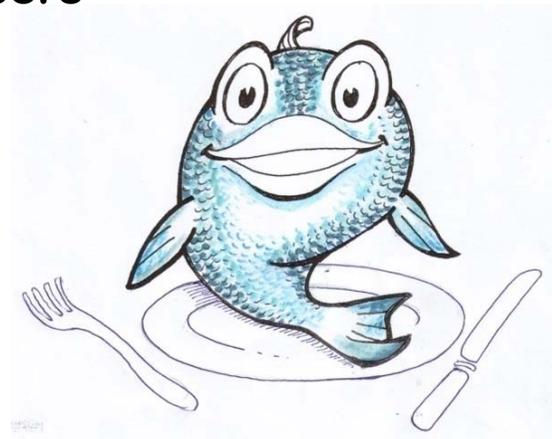
Uptake? Both from fishers and advertisers

Continued high cost of regular funding

Funding uncertainty

“Bluey says”

“There’s no such thing as a free lunch”



Dedicated Fuel Tax

Pros:

Would if “ring fenced” provide sufficient ongoing income

No financial impact on recreational fishers

Cons:

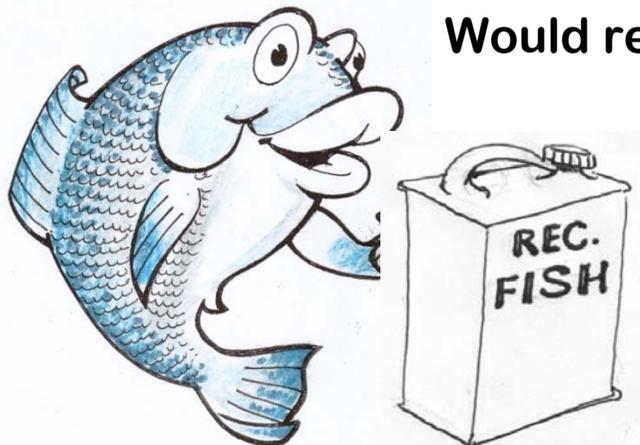
Some fuel tax already allocated?

Could open door to other groups

Difficulty in separation from farm, commercial etc.

Costly to administer

Would require Legislation

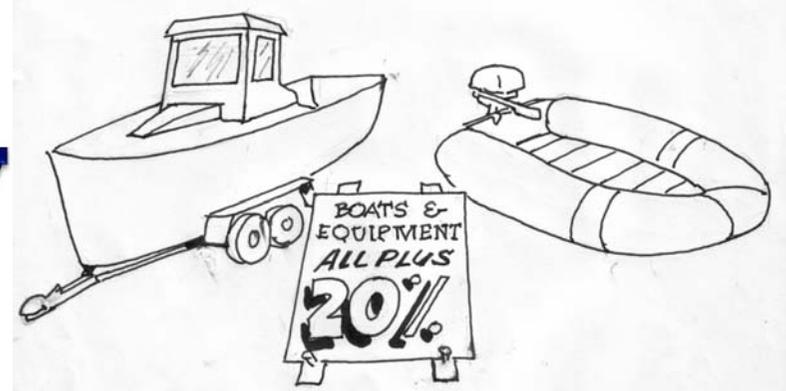


“Bluey says”

“It looks like a bloody long queue”



Marine Industry Levy



Pros:

Would provide sufficient income

Would be easy to target marine industries

Cons:

Difficult to administer unless NO exemptions

Levy would simply be passed on to consumers

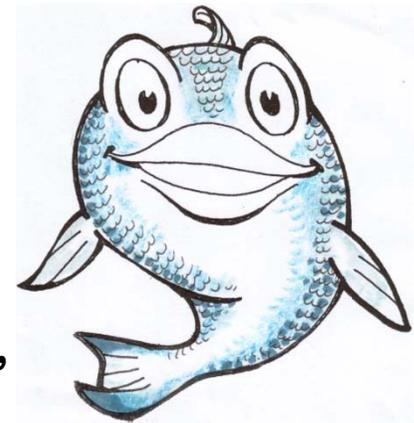
Administrative costs would impact on the marine retail sector

Other groups would demand the same

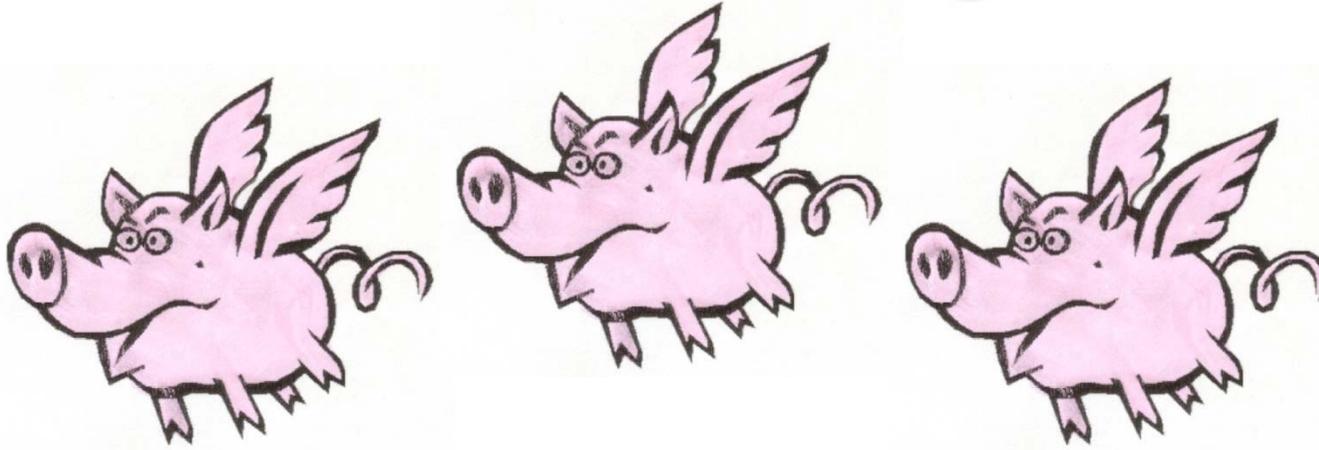
Would impact on fishers through increased prices

“Bluey says”

“Levy schlevy, it’s just gonna cost us more”



Government Or Agency Funding



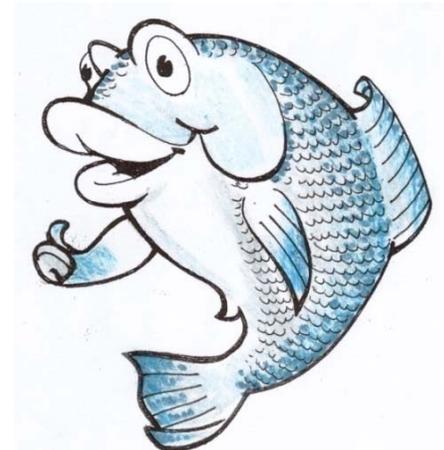
Not in the short, medium or long term horizon seen as a permanent long term option –

Although . . .

Some one-off funding for initial set-up may be available

“Bluey says”

“Tui anyone”



Self Funding

Pros:

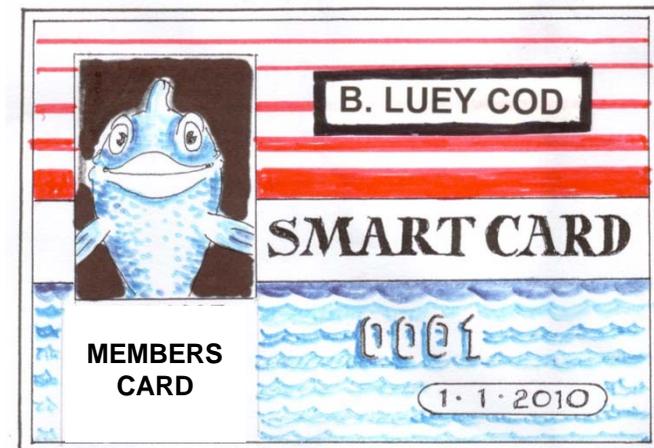
- Adequate ongoing and secure funding
- Simple to implement
- Exemptions decided by the body
- Politically acceptable if initiative is from fishers themselves
- Minimal cost to Government
- Fee kept to around \$20-30
- Excellent Database through “Smart” card membership system

Cons:

- Does have an impact financially, albeit small, on fishers
- An entrenched aversion by some to self funding
- Will require legislation
- Associated administration costs
- Possible lack of compliance

“Bluey says”

“Now that’s a ‘Smart’ idea”



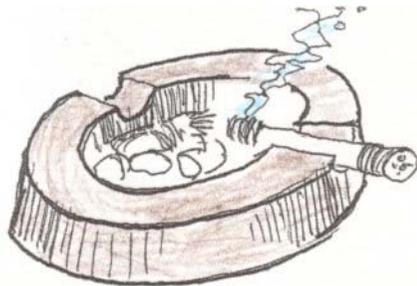
Things you could buy with around \$20-30



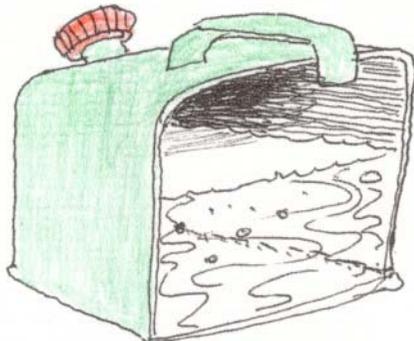
1/2 a Fish



1/2 Bottle of
Firewater



Packet of
Smokes



1/2 Can of Gas



3 x Fishing
Mags



2 x Jugs of
Suds



5 x Burgers



So much for the analysis, now for the story so far

Approach to possible mentors (ie Gareth Morgan)

Approach to George Benwell, Dean of the Business School Otago University

Meeting with Environment Southland

Meeting with Finance Minister and Deputy PM Bill English

Approach to “Smart” card suppliers –

Sonya McGill of ECARDZ Christchurch (ongoing communication)

Peter Neil of Red Crater Software Solutions

Meeting with Eric Roy MP

Approach to VideoNZ & SIT regarding DVD production

Initial contact with Ngai Tahu

Progress report in Christchurch, October 2009



Let's talk about the Smart Card

- Every fisher will be issued a membership card containing identification details
- The card is the cornerstone of the establishment of a comprehensive fisher database
- All data will be owned by the unified body
- The card can also be used for monitoring and research on a local, regional and national basis
- Other groups could have access to the data through password encryption
- The card is also a discount card and has the potential to be at no cost through normal purchasing over a year

How the Recreational Fishing system works

2. Smart Card



3. Ruggedized Reader



4. Data uploaded to PC on return to base



5. Secure link



1. Angler / Card holder



How the Discount system works





So where to from here

Presentation to Government / Ministry

Initial Sponsorship



DVD of Presentation and expert commentary / opinion

NZ-wide Roadshow canvassing fishers' support and opinion (mandate)



Present mandate to Government and all political parties

Formation of integrated body



“Recreational” fishers’ mandate and rights . . . an ideal solution!

The most effective way of securing a mandate and rights for the recreational (amateur) fishing sector is through legislation.

Legislation would need to include the following components:

- Purpose of the Amendment (recognition of the amateur sector)
- Establish one integrated representative organisation (recreational fishing mandate)
- Identify functions and responsibilities (a way to define recreational fishing rights)
- The basic format of a structure and how it would operate
- The means to identify all recreational fishers (allowing flow of information and views to and fro)
- A means of accessing adequate, secure and ongoing funding



A Win-Win Approach

Amateur Fishers

- One integrated organisation
- All fishers are identified members
- Governing “body” elected
- Negotiates amateur fishing rights
- Professional advocate and negotiate on behalf of sector
- Open communication fundamental to the organisation
- Fisher informed database
- Adequate, ongoing and secure funding from members’ fees

Government/Agencies/other groups

- Know who to talk and listen to
- A clear mandate from the “huge” number of amateur fishers
- Confidence that the “body” is representative
- Able to negotiate rights with representative body
- The team has expertise, time and resources to participate in all processes
- Assured that members’ views will inform the representatives
- Amateur fishing data – an upgraded component of research, management and monitoring
- Dealing with a reliable/credible organisation

**Trust and confidence develops both ways -
FISHERIES BENEFIT**