

THE HECTOR'S & MAUI'S DOLPHIN
THREAT MANAGEMENT PLAN.

To the Minister of Fisheries Hon J Anderton,
And
To the Minister of Conservation Hon C Carter.

19th October 2007.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

History of my involvement in fishing and in the Industry.

I first started my interest in fishing as a child. I had a great love of fishing and spent most of my spare time in the river mouths fishing for bait for my fathers fishing business or up the river fishing for trout. My father had a small fishing vessel of which he commercially fished. I at first was not allowed to go fishing with him until I was 12 years old, so before that I helped my father make the fishing nets, make up the long lines and bait up for him for the next days fishing. I then progressed to helping him on the vessel. When I was at High school I worked part time at one of the local Fish Factories processing and packing fish. At the age of 17 I left school to work full time in this factory. Over the years I have worked in several different parts of the Seafood Industry, Fresh fish retail, Fish & chip retail, deep sea fishing and a Fish Processing Factory out of town. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. They also had their Fish Receiver Licence and a small fishing vessel. They sold the business and kept the fishing vessel. I went to sea with my father and we worked the vessel together and today I am the Skipper of their vessel. As you can see I have a great passion for the fishing industry. I have the sea in my blood and know nothing else, it is my life. I am also a registered weigh master for our local Sports fishing and underwater club. I love my recreation fishing and in the past we have caught several Marlin and tagged and released 90% of these. In my own way I am a conservationist.

Over the years I have always dreamed to own my own Processing Factory. This dream came true in [REDACTED] when I opened my own Whole sale Retail Fresh fish factory in [REDACTED]. I have only been operating 10 months and this business is growing every day well above expectations. The People of [REDACTED] love it. I do not want to see my investment slide from under me because of the Threat Management Plan for the Maui Dolphin. Option 2 & 3 will do this to me.

██████████ employ 3 fulltime staff and will have to employ a further two as the business is growing rapidly. There are two fishing vessels fishing full time into my factory of which their methods are; one is a set net and long line vessel the other is a trawler, set net and long line vessel. I have also other vessels that land fish on occasions into my factory. The fish these Vessels supply is processed within the factory for the local market and my retail shop. I have also my export certificate and will be exporting fish this new fishing season.

My investment in the Industry is ██████████ Projected turnover next 12months ██████████
Building and plant ██████████

The building is in the ██████████ it comprises of a fish factory and two retail shops, one I use as a fresh fish retail shop and the other I have leased is a high class Fish & Chip retail shop of which is a thriving business. This business is called ██████████ and it was a ██████████ up front investment for the lessee. It currently has turnover of around ██████████ and employs 9 full time staff and 7 part time staff. It is providing a quality product that caters not only to the local market but also the tourist market. Please note the electronic beepers allow the customers to explore the marina area while they wait for their meal being cooked. I supply it with fresh fish. Without the access to fresh local fish from the processor ██████████ ██████████ they would not have risked their initial investment and without continuing access to local supply, they would not be able to provide their unique quality product. It is not possible to import fresh fish such as Gurnard Snapper Warehou etc due to lack of availability and geographic location. Basically their investment along with mine, the employment, the economic activity would disappear together with the seafood industry. I also supply another Restaurant within the ██████████ area. The public of ██████████ have become to like the atmosphere that this has created People from all over ██████████ and beyond come for the freshness of the fish and I am proud of that. I love my work within the Seafood Industry and I would be gutted to see it taken away from me.

As you can see I have a great passion for fishing. I am now ██████████ old and have a life time ahead of me. When I have spare time I will go fishing I have ██████████ a ██████████. I also own my own home of which I have mortgaged for my business.

I strongly oppose any changes to the present protection for the North Island Maui Dolphin, **I Support Status Quo.** West Coast North Island Maui Dolphin.

REASONS

- 1 No adequate evidence has been provided to demonstrate that the numbers of the Maui's Dolphin are declining since the last protection measure commenced.
- 2 The level of recorded deaths attributed to commercial fishing in the Taranaki area is nil since 2003.
- 3 Existing measures (both regulatory and voluntary) are working well and are sufficient to protect the Maui Dolphin.

- 4 There is no adequate evidence that Maui Dolphins are found in the Taranaki waters south of the Pariokariwa Point and in waters deeper than 3.3 nautical miles on the West Coast of the North Island.
- 5 Significant costs will be imposed on the fishing industry, individual fishers and communities by the imposition of any more restrictions that far outweigh any extra benefits to the Dolphin.
- 6 In my 25 years fishing out at sea I have never caught a Maui Dolphin in fact I have never seen one in real life off the Taranaki Coast.
- 7 If by any chance I did see one of these Mammals, I would not set my nets. I am happy to set my nets in the Taranaki waters as seeing one of these dolphins are less than zero. I have taken several local Fisheries Officers out on our vessel over the years for their training without hesitation (and for no charge) this we will still do in the future. We have run our business 100% by the book. To get through to you all the facts and figures we could also write a 289 page document but I have been given a limited time.

I am against Option 1,2 & 3

Reasons against
Option 1.

This will not directly affect me as a fisherman but it will as a processor as the ability to purchase fish caught from these areas will be limited. I cannot as a Commercial fisherman put other fishermen out of business.

If and when there is proof that the dolphin numbers are increasing and they are seen in other areas then work with the fishermen and come up with further protection. Don't go against them as nothing will be worked out. To come out with the Threat Management Plan Document of 298 pages of which has disparities/inconsistencies, the people you have promoting it have not even read it all the through. This is wrong and unfair. This question was asked at our public meeting in New Plymouth "have you read the whole document" and the answer was no. To make such crucial decisions on an unread and flawed document is unfair.

Option 2.

This will close my business down.

In the Threat Management Plan as tabled 7.3.5.2 page 84 would not have an impact on our fishing BUT this is contradicted on page 92 of the TMP. **Taranaki set netters required to stay with their nets and not set at night**, it also goes on to say that nets could be retrieved if a dolphin is seen.

I will start with the last one nets COULD be retrieved if a dolphin is seen.

You cannot visually see the nets that you have set. From what we have been told these dolphins have a limited time under the water so to retrieve when they are seen would take quite some time. My nets are spread over 2 NM. area in two to three sets, we set up to 3000 meters of net in one days set.

Taranaki set netters to stay with their nets and not set at night.

90% of the fish are caught on the night tides, our vessel is only 40 foot long and parking up with the nets in the Taranaki waters is not an option. I have from experience had very poor catches of fish in the day time. On occasions we have set the nets then the weather has change so we have gone back to retrieve them and not caught a fish. This would be a great waist of time and money.

We as fishermen have a good relationship with our local DOC officer. When we see rare and unusual fish and Marine mammals we notify him that they are in the area. Also I belong to the local Taranaki Commercial Fishermen's Association and we are currently reviewing the Challenger Finfisheries Set Net Code of Practice.

You make it hard to write a submission when you don't know yourselves what this is all about and there are disparities/inconsistencies within this document.

Option 3

This will close the entire Fishing industry within Port Taranaki. I will be unable to repay my Mortgage so I will be without a house as the bank owns this, I will not have a business to run as the bank owns this. I only know the Fishing industry and I have no desire to re train. I love what I do and I am very passionate about fishing, it is my life

To change the fishing method is not an option as there is an abundance of snapper in the Taranaki waters and it is hard to obtain ACE to cover this. Also with the increase in deem pricing the price for the ACE has increased making this species a very unprofitable fish to catch.

Quota values will drop as there will be quota left uncaught, as it has happened to us from the present closure for the North Island Maui Dolphin.

Support for the SeaFIC submission

I endorse the submission on the Hector's and Maui's Dolphin Threat Management Plan sent in by the New Zealand Seafood Industry Council.

The Marine Mammal Sanctuary

Now that I have finished with the TMP submission and I get to the end of the TMP and hello there is a Marine Mammal Sanctuary proposal that I have to deal with. I have a business to run and a fishing vessel to run my life is busy. I have a family I would like to spend time with. As I have said previously we had an understanding with the local doc officer re notifying them about any rare fish and Marine mammal sightings, this will disappear if restrictions are put onto us as we will be put out of business and not out fishing.

Social impact

The social impact this will have on Port Taranaki will be huge if the fishing industry is closed down in Taranaki. We are there for the recreational fishermen if they get into trouble we the commercial fishermen have always been there and I have towed in many a vessel in distress over the years. We are looked upon and relied on by these fishermen.

Health.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] I worry about my investment, if I had known this was to happen I would not have gone up this path. [REDACTED] As will the next two months, this is a waiting game and is hard on the health.

Planning for the current fishing season is hard as we will not know the out come of this for a couple of months. There is ACE to get for the vessels, there is new staff for my Factory that is needed and I don't want to employ just to tell them there is not now a job for them.

Sirs could you please in your final decision think of the impact this will have on New Zealand, the fishing Industry, the people that work in the industry and indirectly. I realise these Dolphins are special but so is the fishing industry, so please do not destroy the Fishing Industry.

Could you please confirm that this submission has been received and read?

Submission from

[REDACTED]