

Dear Stakeholder

Please find attached a draft Threat Management Plan for Maui's and Hector's dolphins. These dolphins are a special New Zealand species and an important taonga to Maori. The Draft Plan outlines a range of options to manage threats to the dolphin species. These dolphins are under threat from a range of human activities including fishing.

The government strongly supports the development of a strategy to ensure populations of these iconic marine mammals can be enjoyed by future generations. We have real concerns about the current status of the species, particularly the small populations such as Maui's. In general terms we want to increase the numbers of dolphins as quickly as practicable.

Our initial view, based on current information, is that further measures may be needed to better ensure the long term survival of the dolphins. However, no decisions have yet been made. We seek your input about whether further measures are required and if so, what measures. We want to hear your views on the options in the Draft Plan and receive any further information you may have that will help us make good decisions.

The Draft Plan is large and contains a broad range of potential measures. However, it is structured to allow you to focus on particular sections, depending on your interests.

- **The Executive summary** provides an overview of the Draft Plan and outlines the management options.
- **Part I** discusses non-fishing related threats and proposes national measures for the long-term management of these threats .
- **Part II** focuses on fishing related threats to the dolphins and options for managing those threats by fishing method. The section looks at fishing threats across the species and regional populations. This approach allows you to focus on the populations and regions and fishing methods of most interest to you.

We also draw your attention to the Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) at the back of Part II, which provides a useful overview of the fisheries impact issues and measures.

- **Part III** outlines preliminary proposals for Marine Mammal Sanctuaries. The Sanctuaries are proposed in areas of high dolphin abundance and important habitat for dolphins.

If we decide further measures are needed, our preference is for a consistent approach to measures applying throughout the range of the dolphins. Reasons for this include transparency, compliance, cost and efficiency.

Applying a consistent approach means that Fisheries Act 1996 measures would apply in Marine Mammal Sanctuaries and in areas outside the Marine Mammal Sanctuaries. This will also provide an integrated approach to threat management.

The Department of Conservation prefers measures within the Marine Mammal Sanctuaries that will give the greatest protection. They consider these measures will best meet the objectives and intent of the sanctuaries.

Your submissions are important to support the decision making process. We particularly want your feedback on the following questions:

- Are all the threats to the dolphins identified?
- Do you believe further measures are required or are current measures enough to ensure the long term protection of the dolphins?
- Do you consider the range of measures outlined in the Draft Plan will ensure the long term survival and growth of the dolphin populations? Which option/s do you prefer and why?
- Can you provide any more information on the impacts (economic, cultural and social) of options outlined in the Draft Plan?

We recognise the importance of Hector's and Maui's dolphins to tangata whenua and want to provide for input and participation from tangata whenua in our decision making process. We welcome tangata whenua views on the draft Threat Management Plan and any input that helps us make the best decisions.

If there are to be any new measures, the Government aims to have them in place before the end of 2007. Submissions on the draft plan must be received no later than 24 October 2007 and be directed to:

Dolphin Threat Management Plan or [Hectorstmp@biodiversity.govt.nz](mailto:Hectorstmp@biodiversity.govt.nz)  
P.O Box 11-146  
Wellington 6011

If you have any questions or require clarification on any part of the draft plan please contact the nearest office of the Ministry of Fisheries or Department of Conservation.

We look forward to your constructive input into this important process.

Yours sincerely



Hon Jim Anderton  
**Minister of Fisheries**



Hon Chris Carter  
**Minister of Conservation**