

7 March 2008

Sonny Tau
Hokianga Accord
PO Box 37-951
PARNELL
AUCKLAND

Tēnā koe Sonny

You gave me a list of questions from the 10th Hokianga Accord hui held at Waipapa Marae in November 2007. I tabled these questions at the Ministry of Fisheries Obligations to Maori Co-ordination Committee on 22 November for the Committee's consideration. All relevant Manager's within the Ministry are aware of the questions you asked.

As you passed the questions to me I feel I should give you a response. I've outlined below what I understand is the current situation in relation to your questions and, where I can, provided an answer.

Forum requirements and provision for input and participation

You've asked questions about the criteria for meeting the requirements of a Ministry Iwi Fisheries Forum and how the Hokianga Accord can do this. Related to this you have also asked what actions the Ministry will take to provide for the input and participation of Ngapuhi, Ngāti Whātua and Ngāti Wai.

I understand that subsequent to raising these questions, Iwi leaders from the mid north met with Stan Crothers (Acting CEO) and Jonathan Peacey (Fisheries Operations National Manager) on 19 December 2007. I understand that these discussions led to agreement on an engagement model between Iwi of the mid-north and the Ministry.

Fee payment

Regarding your request that the Ministry repay an outstanding fee for the Hokianga Accord hui at Naumai Marae in July 2006, I have been told that this matter is being resolved by the office of Te Kahui Pou Hononga.

Mataitai Guidelines

Yes the 'mātaaitai reserves policy' document you refer to is in fact the Mataitai Guidelines. I have requested that a copy of the final version of these guidelines be sent to me so that I can forward a copy to you. I understand the Guidelines are awaiting a final peer review by Terry Lynch, Policy Manager. I will forward a copy to the Accord as soon as I am able to.

You've also asked about the "weighting given to information supplied by Tangata Whenua compared to Ministry information when a mātaaitai application is being considered". I put your question to my colleagues in the Spatial Allocations Team who assess mātaaitai applications. Here is their response:

“Pursuant to the information principles set out in section 10 of the Fisheries Act 1996, decisions should be based on the best available information. This means the best information that is available without unreasonable time, cost or effort.

In relation to the assessment of the criteria required to establish a mātaimai reserve, MFish generally relies on information:

- provided by applicants as part of their application and subsequent dialogue during the application process;
- provided by submitters in the two rounds of consultation required under the regulations; and
- held by MFish in relation to commercial, recreational and customary entitlements and catch data.

Where considered necessary, MFish will seek additional information on issues brought to its attention that may require further investigation. The Minister will also be informed where the information received or statements made in submissions have not been or cannot be verified.

The weighting given to the information received from tangata whenua and any other source will depend on the level, accuracy and relevance of that information. Each application will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.”

Deed of Settlement Funds

Your questions about how \$17.045 million of Vote Fisheries Bid 2004 funding has been spent has been the subject of an article in the New Zealand Fishing News (January 2008). The Minister of Fisheries has provided a response which I have attached to this letter.

Finally, I'd like to thank you and the rest of the Accord for the manaakitanga exhibited to George Riley and myself at the 10th Hokianga Accord.

Naku iti nei.

Jonathan Dick

EXTENSION SERVICES MANAGER