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## **Hector’s and Maui Dolphin Management Submission**

Dear Meena

This submission is from option4, an organisation which promotes the interests of non-commercial marine fishers in New Zealand, to the Ministry of Fisheries in response to the latest information regarding the NIWA analysis of Hector’s and Maui’s dolphin populations and the Department of Conservation sightings information. Due to a lack of resources we have not had sufficient time to review and make particular comment on that information by the MFish deadline of 20<sup>th</sup> April.

option4 provided a submission to MFish in October 2007 on the understanding that Ministerial decisions were due by December. This process has now been extended twice due to more information being released by MFish and DoC. We object to the ad-hoc consultation process being executed by both departments and reaffirm the comments made in our October submission, online at [http://option4.co.nz/Fisheries\\_Mgmt/documents/Dolphin\\_Submission\\_option4.pdf](http://option4.co.nz/Fisheries_Mgmt/documents/Dolphin_Submission_option4.pdf).

In particular, we reiterate the following:

- The submitters share the concern about the dwindling numbers of Maui dolphin and are keen to support measures that will address the real cause of their deaths. Clearly set netting in West Coast harbours is not the major issue.
- The Minister of Fisheries has a statutory obligation to both mitigate the adverse affects of fishing on the environment and manage fisheries to enable people to provide for their social, economic and cultural wellbeing. The lack of evidence to support any further restrictions to people’s ability to fish for sustenance means option4 support the status quo for the West Coast harbours.
- option4 supports increased public education on the use of nets, particularly for ethnic communities who have a high incidence of net use and increasing the enforcement of current regulations and a greater presence of MFish compliance staff in popular fishing areas.

option4 want to be kept informed of further consultation on this matter of importance to non-commercial sustenance fishers, both customary and amateur interests.

Trish Rea  
On behalf of the option4 team