

Executive Summary

This document is the record of the Hokianga Accord hui held at Oturei Marae, Kaipara, on the 22nd and 23rd of April 2010. This occasion was the fourteenth overnight meeting of the Hokianga Accord, the mid north iwi fisheries forum. Included in this report is material presented during the hui, other issues and appendices relevant to the Forum's activities. This report was commissioned by the Hokianga Accord and was written by Trish Rea. Source material for this report was the video taken during the hui.

The intention of this Forum is to assist the Minister of Fisheries (the Minister) fulfil, in part, the Crown's ongoing statutory obligation to provide for the input and participation of tangata whenua having a non-commercial interest in fisheries, an interest in the effects of fishing on the aquatic environment while having particular regard to kaitiakitanga. (Fisheries Act 1996, s12 (1) (b))

The Hokianga Accord brings together the commercial and non-commercial interests of Ngapuhi, Ngati Whatua, other northern iwi and hapu, environmental and fishing interest groups. Greenpeace, the Environment and Conservation Organisations of Aotearoa New Zealand, Forest & Bird, option4 and NZ Sport Fishing Council representatives are regular contributors to the Accord's hui.

Coastal communities managing their local fisheries and having a wider say in marine protection were popular themes throughout the two-day hui. Several resolutions were reached to achieve the common goal of "more fish in the water/kia maha atu nga ika ki roto i te wai".

Accord chairman Raniera (Sonny) Tau briefly discussed the recent, controversial proposal by several South Island-based people to create an over-arching body to represent all recreational fishing interests. Both Ngapuhi and Ngati Whatua were excluded from a March meeting to discuss this initiative and there are questions around the motivation to implement such a regime without consulting with Maori. The Accord will follow this process closely now that the proposal had been presented to the Minister of Fisheries.

Ngati Whatua and Te Uri o Hau have serious concerns about Crest Energy's proposal to install up to 200 power-generating turbines at the entrance of the Kaipara Harbour. At 24 metres high, 25 metres wide and 30 metres long these turbines are massive. The major concerns relate to access restrictions and the unknown effects the swinging blades creating electro-magnetic fields will have on the fisheries and harbour ecology. Assistance from forum members was offered and gratefully accepted by Ngati Whatua and Te Uri o Hau.

Lively debate followed the Ministry of Fisheries' update on the Fisheries 2030 policy. MFish are currently developing indicators to measure their performance against the policy's outcomes. There is ongoing concern that the Ministry does not fully understand the broad nature of non-commercial interests. These interests encompass the environmental, social and cultural needs of all New Zealanders including customary and amateur fishers.

MFish are simplifying their Treaty Strategy, which sets out how the Crown through the Ministry intends to meet its statutory obligations to Maori. The Treaty Strategy has key links to Fisheries 2030. Iwi Fisheries Plans will be the mechanism used to deliver on these obligations. A major concern for the Accord was whether these plans would have any practical effect given current legislation and policies already in place. MFish welcomed any feedback at and after the hui. There was some discussion before and after MFish left the hui as to whether it was worthwhile developing community fish plans as opposed to Iwi-only plans.

Since the last hui the New Zealand Big Game Fishing Council has renamed its organisation. It was now the NZ Sport Fishing Council. President, Richard Baker, acknowledged and appreciated the support of Ngapuhi and Ngati Whatua in seeking funding from Sport & Recreation New Zealand (SPARC). Confirmation of this support from both Sonny Tau and Naida Glavish was a major boost for NZ Sport Fishing.

Jill Bradley and Tim Haggitt are involved in the research and sustainable management of seaweeds in the North Island. Their hui presentations generated wide interest in their ongoing research to determine when seaweeds grow, and optimum harvest levels and seasons. The Accord appreciated Jill and Tim sharing their

knowledge and concerns. Both committed to providing the Accord with an update when their Waihou Bay research programme is completed. The Accord will seek their advice before drafting any further seaweed submissions.

Aquaculture reforms are underway following the release of a government report. Two aspects that will have a major impact are the proposed changes to enable farms to be established outside of existing aquaculture zones, and the possibility that finfish farming will be allowed within areas currently designated for shellfish only. After an excellent presentation by Clive Monds the hui agreed to develop an Aquaculture policy that constituent organisations could distribute to MFish, the Minister, other politicians and interested parties.

Te Komiti Whakature I Nga Taonga a Tangaroa was still awaiting Ministerial approval for their Te Puna Mataitai application. This northern Bay of Islands initiative enjoyed widespread community support and the 14 hapu/marae represented by Te Komiti were very disappointed that approval had still not been granted. This delay was acutely embarrassing, particularly given the recent passing of Te Komiti chairman Judah Heihei. The Hokianga Accord resolved to write to the fisheries Minister and reiterate the Crown's obligations to recognise and give effect to the kaitiakitanga aspirations of Te Komiti.

After a four-year Court process the Minister is due to make fresh decisions for managing kahawai. There are fears that the available science will be manipulated to enable more of these valuable fish to be purse seined and exported for little value. After a detailed presentation and healthy discussion consensus was reached. The Accord's collective response setting out specific concerns was sent to MFish during the hui.

Greenpeace is actively involved in marine protection issues in Aotearoa and overseas. Recent activity has been focused on illegal fishing around the Pacific Islands. Illegal and unreported fishing in the Pacific reduces the numbers of pelagic species that normally travel to New Zealand in summer. Ongoing overfishing could have serious implications for local fishing interests, both Maori and non-Maori.

The Hiwi the Kiwi Goes Fishing project has been a huge success at primary schools throughout the country. Since the last hui around 140 schools had enjoyed the show designed to inspire children to look after the marine and fresh waterways, promote water safety and fish abundance so there is enough kaimoana for their mokopuna. NZ Sport Fishing would appreciate the support of iwi for this ongoing project.

It was frustrating that the relationship between the Hokianga Accord and Ministry was not improving. The hui agreed that the forum's Working Group would gather to thrash out a clear intention statement, a strategy to achieve that outcome and ways to positively engage with Ben Dalton (MFish Deputy CE Treaty Partnership), the Ministry and Minister.

There were a myriad of issues the Hokianga Accord has responded to since the last hui. A brief outline was given to explain the various submissions and public awareness initiatives undertaken. Following the hui several letters were developed and sent in accordance with the hui's resolutions.

Seasonal fishing to avoid spawning season is a regular hot topic at Hokianga Accord hui. There is a variety of factors that influence spawning times and these can vary from year to year, and between months. This was a complex topic and the Hokianga Accord required a good understanding of the issues before an agreed position can be reached. There are various experts that can be invited to future hui to discuss this matter.

Robust discussions during the two-day hui were interspersed with the occasional tense moment and more often good humour. There are positive signs that the Hokianga Accord is developing the long-term relationships required to enable iwi, hapu, environmental, and fishing interest groups to work constructively together.

It was going to be a busy time between this hui and the next, due in October. People will be kept informed of major issues by email and phone. Several new people were co-opted onto the Hokianga Accord Working Group before the hui finished on Friday afternoon.