

[7 July 2008 - provided to Minister's Office]

Talking points on agreement to Section 13 and withdrawal of the Section 10 Bill

- The Cabinet Policy Committee last week considered my paper on amendment to section 13 of the Fisheries Act 1996 and agreed this should proceed.
- Support across parties for this vital amendment depends on the agreement of Te Ohu Kaimoana and the fishing industry through the Seafood Industry Council
- In turn their support depends on the withdrawal from the Order Paper of the Fisheries Act 1996 Amendment Bill (109-1). This Bill was introduced in 22 Feb 2007, was referred to the Primary Production Select Committee on 15 March. The intention of this Bill was to amend section 10 of the Fisheries Act to better reflect the internationally accepted precautionary approach to fisheries management.
- I raised the issue of withdrawing this Bill from the order paper in an oral item at POL last week. The Committee agreed that the Bill remain on the order paper.
- I am now asking that Cabinet does not confirm that decision, agrees that the Bill should be withdrawn, and that the note of the item at POL be removed from the minute [POL Min (80) 11/19].
- I have consulted with the Green Party co-leader on the withdrawal of the Section 10 Bill and she has agreed to this as a reasonable course of action.
- *Widely differing views among stakeholders in submissions meant that the Committee was unable to reach a consensus about how to proceed. This resulted in the Bill being discharged back to the House on 2 November 2007*
- The Bill is currently on the order paper at number 22. Note that I have prepared a letter to the Clerk of the House requesting that the Bill be removed from the Order Paper.

This is not the end of this important issue, but clearly there needs to be a greater level of agreement on the policy and how it should be drafted into the Act before this can be progressed further.

This matter will be dealt with in an upcoming review of the policy and legislative framework signalled by the Ministry of Fisheries in their most recent Statement of Intent. This will allow wide public consultation and discussion of this important issue.