

Kahawai Challenge Team

Update #30, December 2007

Hugh Barr of Wellington wants all New Zealanders to enjoy the opportunity to go down to the sea and fish for food. This was his main motivation for sending a \$1000 contribution to the Kahawai Challenge Fund. This is to assist the NZ Big Game and Recreational Fishing Councils defend the High Court's kahawai decision against the appeal from the fishing industry.

Although Hugh does not fish often, he supports Justice Harrison's judgment that confirmed sustainability is the bottom line and that fisheries must be managed to enable people to provide for their wellbeing.

"The team defending the common law right of every New Zealander to fish has to be given every encouragement. They are certainly not getting that from the ministry of commercial fisheries."

The High Court decision has big implications. The principles in that case relate to all fisheries management decisions. Fisheries such as kahawai, snapper, shellfish and crayfish have always been traditional food sources until the advent of large-scale commercial fishing operations.

"It's important we maintain access to these important fisheries for future generations," said Hugh.

Anticipation is growing as the Wellington Appeal Court hearing draws closer. February 26th and 27th have been set aside to hear the defence of the case lead by the NZBGFC and supported by other non-commercial fishing representative organisations.

The irony is that the original case, taken by amateur fishers, was against the Minister of Fisheries' 2004 and 2005 allocation decisions for kahawai yet it is industry who is challenging the judgment.

Both the Minister and his Ministry have accepted the High Court decision but commercial fishers have not.

Sanford Limited, Sealord Group Limited and Pelagic & Tuna NZ Limited filed notice of their appeal in April this year - barely a month after Justice Harrison ruled that the Minister, when making decisions, could set the commercial catch limit at zero but not the allowance for recreational fishers. *"In that sense non-commercial interests, both Maori and recreational, must be provided for where they exist. The same does not apply for commercial interests."*

The KLC team is vigorously defending the judgment, considered a turning point that will enable the enhancement of fisheries to previous abundance levels and also provide for the next generation's wellbeing.

Support from people such as Hugh makes the effort so worthwhile.

The legal representation costs alone will be at least \$80,000. If you want to contribute to this advocacy that seeks to protect your right to fish for food please do one of the following:

- Make a secure online donation at www.kahawai.co.nz
- Dial 0900 KAHAWAI (0900 52 42 92) to automatically donate \$20 via your phone account
- For larger amounts please contact Jo Harris on 0800 KAHAWAI (0800 52 42 92).
- Cheques made out to the 'Kahawai Challenge Fund' can be sent to the team via *New Zealand Fishing News*, PO Box 12-965, Penrose, Auckland.

Thank you to all previous contributors, the team appreciates your ongoing support.