

# NEW ZEALAND FEDERATION OF FRESHWATER ANGLERS (INC.)

*Working to protect NZ's wild trout fishery*

Patron: Sir Peter Tapsell KNZM, MBE

## Trade & Commercialisation News

[Return to News Page](#)

### Poaching threatens Toheroa

Almost a thousand toheroa were found in a vehicle stopped by Police and Fisheries Officers after an honorary Fishery Officer approached the occupants of the vehicle on Ripiro Beach. The officer was told by the occupants they were digging tuatua and they were handed Fisheries pamphlets on what species and quantities could be taken. However, the action of the group later caused concerns to local residents who again rang the Fisheries officers and as a result of this second call, Police assistance was used to locate the vehicle and the 999 toheroa were recovered. A 23-year-old man from Putaruru will face charges in the Dargaville Court for taking prohibited shellfish. His vehicle has been seized and he will face a fine of up to \$20,000 and stands to forfeit his vehicles if convicted of the offences.

The Acting District Compliance Manager for Northland, David Turner, says he is extremely disappointed at the selfish act which puts the sustainability of toheroa at risk. People are warned of the serious implications. An instant fine ticket system has recently been implemented and Fishery Officers can now give out instant fines of up to \$500 for each offence detected. Mr Turner encourages the public to report suspicious activity by ringing 0800 4 POACHER. For those who wish to check the rules before taking seafood, they can ring 08004 RULES. There are different rules in various parts of New Zealand, particularly when it comes to quantities. Mr Turner encourages members of the public to obtain a copy of the rules prior to harvesting and to remember "use your share with care".

Dargaville and District News 1/1/02

### Bill aims to curb water powers

A new bill being considered by Parliament is strictly opposed to further privatisation of water services by New Zealand's local authorities. The Local Government Act is getting its first major overhaul since the late 1980s, and Local Government Minister Sandra Lee says the bill contains provisions that clearly say "no" to any form of future private sector profiteering from water services. "We are not going to agree to allow councils to sell what is not a commodity - the access to clean water - but a fundamental human right," Ms Lee told Parliament during the bill's first reading.

During her speech, Ms Lee also warned Auckland Mayor John Banks and others that councils contemplating a retreat from supplying pensioner housing could be prevented by law changes.

"Likewise, the alienation of strategic assets by councils, and the uncertainty, fear and frustration that it causes communities, will not be able to be achieved by local authorities without first of all going through a defined consultation process with the community," she said. "When the people of Auckland got 'Banksie', they never knew they were getting 'Mr Birchie' as well, whose history in New Zealand as a former Minister of Finance is very well recorded."

Ms Lee said the new bill seeks to reform the old legislation significantly. Though it will not go as far as it did almost 15 years ago, when 700 local or special purpose authorities nationally were amalgamated into fewer than 90 district and regional councils. "It is becoming increasingly clear that as time goes on the current Local Government Act is not well suited to meeting the changing needs of our communities as they exist in the 21st century. "This bill, which is the culmination of the work done on the recent review of the Local Government Act, is nevertheless an extremely important step forward. "It is both a reaffirmation of the place that local government has within our democracy, and of the rights of local people in their communities to exercise controls over their aspirations, their decisions and the democracy that affects them," Ms Lee said. "This bill is all about the fact that if these objectives are to be achieved by local government they must have a more effective legislation base than the one that currently exists.

"Above all, the bill is about empowering communities, not as some might imagine by the empowerment of councils to exert greater and greater power and authority over their electors, but rather, the empowerment of New Zealanders within their local communities to exercise even greater control over their elected representatives and councils, and over the environments and communities in which they live." The bill is with the Local Government and Environment Committee and is due to be reported back to Parliament by May 14.

Central Leader 8/1/02

## **Lodge sold to UK company**

Lake Rotoroa Lodge near Murchison has been sold to UK investment company Shackleton International, making it their flagship New Zealand property. It is the end of an era for former owner Bob Haswell, who with his partner Anne Czech now lives at a Ruby Bay clifftops property which they are renovating into a private retreat. Mr Haswell formed the lodge 20 years ago with the two business partners, when they bought the Victorian lakefront property and turned it into a luxury fishing lodge.

Mr Haswell remained at the helm of the business until recently, but will remain as a marketing and financial adviser for as long as needed, he said. He has resisted several offers from potential buyers over the years to protect the lodge's core purpose as a luxury trout fishing retreat. "We were looking for the right buyer - someone who would carry on with what we were doing, and we fought hard to preserve that flavour," Mr Haswell said.

Shackleton International owns a handful of luxury fishing lodges around the world among a portfolio of exclusive business interests. Mr Haswell said Lake Rotoroa Lodge's management direction will come from London, but it will continue to offer a New Zealand experience. He declined to comment on how much the property had sold for. Final takeover was not until January 31. Mr Haswell said he and Ms Czech had been affected by the lifestyle change more than they had imagined.

"We have left a whole family of people who have been coming to the lodge for years. We developed lots of close friends," he said. However, they said it was nice to be away from the hard grind of running an accommodation business, when the only concern in life was "wondering if the ride-on mower was going to go". Ms Czech said they were gardeners now, and Mr Haswell had become the proud owner of a ride-on mower which he enjoyed racing around the lawns on. Mr Haswell said lawn-mowing provided valuable thinking time.

The couple said they had plans to develop other business ventures, including becoming involved in

the wine industry. Mr Haswell would not say what, other than it did not involve growing grapes. He was keen also to rekindle an interest in developing the Hurricane Wire site around the Nelson waterfront, having been part of a group actively bidding for the site in recent years with the idea of building an international hotel there.

The Nelson Mail 9/1/02

## Call for ling ban angers fisherman

A Nelson fisherman had responded angrily to suggestions that the ling fishery be closed after hundreds of sea birds were accidentally caught and entangled on his lines. About 300 seabirds, many of them white-chinned petrels, died on long lines cast from the fishing boat Sonrisa during a recent trip to the Chatham Rise. Boat owner Andy Smith of Nelson-based JS Fishing, which employs 25 people, said the incident was unfortunate and had never happened to him before.

It prompted criticism from Conservation Minister Sandra Lee, the Worldwide Fund for Nature and the Forest and Bird Protection Society, with the latter calling for the ling fishery to be closed. "Cries to close the ling fishery are basically the same as going to the funeral of someone you do not like and cheering," Mr Smith said. Fishing, like many other industries, had an impact on the environment but closures and "ludicrous" rules were not the answer, he said.

"Perhaps I could suggest that, to get the road toll down, we ban cars. "The ling fishery earns in excess of \$80 million for New Zealand and employs approximately 460 people at sea and ashore." No fisherman wanted to catch sea birds and they had spent tens of thousands of dollars trying not to, he said. "All serious fisherman are interested in conservation and sustainability as our livelihoods depend on it. "I believe in conservation absolutely but we've got to get a balance."

No one had even assessed how many of the seabirds there were - the industry was working on that with government agencies at the moment, he said. Mr Smith's boat had been following all the recommended procedures when the birds were caught, including having two government observers on the boat at the time. "Interestingly enough, with all the hype, shouting and publicity of the catch, nobody from any minister's office or Forest and Bird or WWF has bothered to contact me to ask for my input into the problem. "That's probably because these people don't want to know the truth and they certainly do not deal in the facts." Average New Zealanders would end up without jobs if conservationists kept knocking down primary industries before they looked at the facts, he said.

The Nelson Mail 17/1/02

## Japan Spending Millions to Buy Support for Whaling

The Japanese government has spent over \$US320 million since 1987 on buying a return to commercial whaling, said Greenpeace today after its expedition ship MV Arctic Sunrise docked in Melbourne. After six weeks pursuing the Japanese whaling fleet in Antarctica, Greenpeace activists on board the Arctic Sunrise expressed frustration that despite all their efforts money may be the deciding factor in the future of the whales.

Japanese factory ship Nisshin Maru and Greenpeace inflatable square off in the Southern Ocean, December 14, 2001 (Photos courtesy Greenpeace)

"The Japanese government is determined to restart whaling by any means. It's buying votes and ultimately it's buying the world's whales," said Greenpeace campaigner Sarah Duthie



at a press conference on the Arctic Sunrise. The group said if governments that support whale conservation do not move right now to stop vote buying in the International Whaling Commission, Japan could overturn the international moratorium on commercial whaling, which has been in place since 1986.

A research document released by the environmental group today showed new figures on how much money is changing hands to overturn the ban. In 2001, over \$US47 million was spent buying the votes of six countries - Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia and St Vincent and the Grenadines. This money is described by the Fisheries Agency of Japan as fisheries aid grants. But Lester Bird, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda admitted that the money was given to his country in return for voting with Japan on whaling issues at the International Whaling Commission (IWC). The Caribbean News Agency quoted Prime Minister Bird saying, "So long as the whales are not an endangered species, I don't see any reason why if we are able to support the Japanese, and the quid pro quo is that they are going to give us some assistance, I am not going to be a hypocrite; that is part of why we do so." Japan has also publicly admitted that it is buying votes, but no one has previously added up the cost to Japanese taxpayers.



Japanese whalers turn water cannon on Greenpeace protesters from the Arctic Sunrise, December 16, 2001.

According to Japanese Official Development Assistance figures and publications from the Japanese Institute of Cetacean Research, fisheries aid grants exceeds \$210 million while subsidies for research whaling amount to \$113 million - over \$US320 million dollars. Greenpeace reports that Japanese government departments have hired international lobbyists and a PR firm as well as paying for advertising campaigns.

"While the Japanese economy is failing, our Government is wasting billions of yen to force the world to restart whaling," said Japanese campaigner Yuko Hirono on board the Arctic Sunrise. "Japan should not be using such extreme methods to get what it wants. Every member of the Japanese public pays for this and they don't even

realize it." Japan gets around the commercial whaling ban by taking a self-imposed quota of 440 minke whales in the Southern Ocean under the guise of scientific research and a similar number in the North Pacific. During the past two years, Japan has taken sperm and Bryde's whales as well as the more numerous minkes, raising protests from the United States and other nations that are attempting to conserve whales. A coalition of anti-whaling South Pacific nations is forming around Australia and New Zealand to challenge the Japanese led whaling coalition at the upcoming IWC annual meeting in Shimonoseki, Japan, in May.

ENS 18/1/02

## Scallopers Deny They've Stripped Sounds

Commercial scallopers have denied claims they have stripped the Marlborough Sounds of the shellfish. The Chief Executive of Scallop Enhancement, Russell Mincher, said allegations by the Guardians of the Sounds group that the scalloping grounds had been devastated was nonsense. He said the latest scientific survey estimated scallop numbers at 70 million and since then the company had seeded 27 million more in the Sounds. Mr Mincher said the scallop season should end next week, with commercial scallopers reach their 720 tonne total allowable catch.

NewsRoom 19th January 2002

## European Fishing Quotas Slashed to Save Species

BRUSSELS, Belgium, - Too many European Union fishing boats are competing for too few fish, resulting in what the European Commission is calling the "alarming state of fish stocks." The commissioners have proposed steep cuts in fishing quotas for 2002. Quota reductions are the first step in a multi-annual strategy to help the recovery of a number of fish species, in particular cod and hake, "whose capacity to replenish themselves is threatened," the Commission said.

### Fishing boats in Whitby Harbour, North Yorkshire, England (Photo courtesy Freefoto.com)

All European Union Member States with fishing fleets will be affected by these reductions in Total Allowable Catches (TACs). Some TACs which were substantially reduced last year will be maintained at those reduced levels this year. Among the TACs which the Commission proposes to reduce significantly for the first time is the cod TAC in the Kattegat by 58 percent, haddock in the Irish Sea by 52 percent, sole in the North Sea by 25 percent and langoustines in the Bay of Biscay by between 45 and 50 percent.



Scientists also warn that the level of fishing is far too high for haddock in the Irish Sea. In the case of west of Scotland whiting, and sole in the western English Channel, the amount of adult fish able to reproduce is well below the levels required for the regeneration of these species. The Commission's proposal does not include catch quotas for a group of fish populations that the European Union co-manages with Norway which is not an EU Member State. These 2002 quotas must be decided in the Fisheries Council December 17 and 18.

Commissioner Franz Fischler, who is responsible for agriculture, rural development and fisheries, said, "I am well aware that this is another black day for European fishermen. The Commission is anxious to limit the hardship for fishermen as much as possible. But if we want to avoid the complete extinction of some fish stocks, which would spell the end for our fishermen, decisive action is the only way forward. We have to preserve what our fishermen make their living from - fish." Fischler called on EU Fisheries Ministers to "show courage and resolve to refrain from political horse-trading and set the TACs at levels that ensure sustainable fisheries." "We can now see the results of too many years of excessive fishing due to the substantial overcapacity of the EU fleet," Fischler said. "We now have our backs to the wall. The stocks are down and fishing pressure is too high. If we are serious about securing the future of the European fisheries sector, there is no way around significant reduction of catches and fishing."

December 5, 2001 (ENS)

## Pair face crayfish fraud charge

An alleged black market rock lobster operation that may have grossed \$40,000 a year and evaded more than \$100,000 in annual levies and quota fees is before Palmerston North District Court this week. A Feilding woman and a Bunnythorpe man face a Crimes Act fraud charge brought by the Ministry of Fisheries. But the court heard yesterday from the prosecution that the ministry was unable to establish charges against two alleged "bigger fish" in the case.

Charged with conspiring to defraud the New Zealand public over five years of the economic benefit of rock lobster, and of the rock lobster resource, are Vicky Maria Lambert, 47, a Feilding housewife

(represented by Steve Winter) and Bunnythorpe labourer Kevin Alwyn Morris, 48 (represented by Fergus Steedman). Both have denied the charge. Prosecuting for the Crown is Russell Collins. The trial is before Judge Les Atkins and a jury.

The court heard how a November 1999 e-mail advertising crayfish at \$10 each from Lambert to Palmerston North Hospital staff, was referred to Napier fisheries officers. Two officers posed as customers and Lambert offered them the goods, talking freely about the business. Officer Shane Hay uplifted two rock lobsters from Lambert's home on December 14, 1999, paid his \$20 and immediately returned to the house accompanied by uniformed officers with a warrant. They seized 21 frozen and cooked rock lobsters. Lambert had been "obviously upset" and "co-operative", explaining how she took the orders and dealt with the customers and how Morris received the rock lobster from Porangahau and cooked them. Her orders list was produced in court - at the time of the raid totalling more than 150 rock lobster. It showed she her customers were individuals, plus a range of workplaces and groups.

Mr Hay said Lambert acknowledged having run the sales for "four or five seasons" and that she had sold about 4000 lobster in the 1998 season. Five customers gave evidence of their purchases. Darryl Sykes, chief of the NZ Rock Lobster Industry Council, gave evidence of the impact of "fish thieves" on the fishery management system. The total annual catch available to bona fide, commercial fishers who pays levies and respect the quotas, and recreational fishers (771 tonnes for the Hawke's Bay-Wellington region) had to be reduced by about 10 percent as a buffer to ensure the illicit take did not endanger the resource's sustainability. The economic impact of the estimated 4000 rock lobster a year (between three and four tonnes) going through the operation, he suggested, could be gauged by looking at quota costs and levies on landed catch. The most recent sale of an on-going regional rock lobster commercial quota, he said, was at \$306,000 a tonne. Mr Hay acknowledged to Mr Winter there was no evidence of Lambert having made any effort to conceal any aspect of her rock lobster activities.

Manawatu Evening Standard 11/12/01

## **Bering Sea Poaching by Russian Mafia Uncovered**

WASHINGTON, DC, - The World Wildlife Fund today issued the findings of a year long investigative study by TRAFFIC, its wildlife trade monitoring network, that accuses "the Russian mafia" of illegal fishing in the western Bering Sea. Without naming names, the report claims that organized crime operators poach fish in amounts worth four billion dollars each year, putting numerous marine species at risk, and contributing to the collapse of the fishery that supplies Russia and the United States with more than half of their fish harvests.



**Unloading Alaskan pollack on the deck of a Russian ship (Photo by Alexey Vaisman courtesy TRAFFIC)**

The Bering Sea is the large marine region enclosed by the Russian and Alaskan coastlines, the Aleutian Islands, and the Bering Strait. The sea covers nearly one million square miles and supports vast populations of fish, shellfish, birds, and marine mammals such as polar bears, whales, walruses, and sea lions. Fishermen in the western Bering Sea take pollack, cod, herring, rockfish, halibut, flounder, crab, shrimp, and squid. The report's findings are based on interviews with scientists, with fisheries inspectors and managers, and on examination of customs data, trade statistics, and population assessments.

Alexey Vaisman, a WWF-TRAFFIC researcher and author of the report, "Trawling in the Mist: Industrial Fisheries in the Russian Part of the Bering Sea," found that catches are illegally transferred to Russian carrier vessels bound for ports in Japan, South Korea, China, the United States and Canada. The study found that fish smugglers favored the South Korean port of Pusan, where the Russian vessels do not face regular inspections. On the Russian side of the sea, management systems have "fallen into such disarray that virtually every level of the fishing industry is involved in illegal activities," TRAFFIC reports.

Vaisman says, "Inappropriate legislation, weaknesses in the enforcement system and widespread organized crime in Russia all contribute to the current situation."

On the U.S. side of the line, the U.S. Coast Guard maintains a constant presence in and over the Bering Sea to prevent poaching and overharvesting on the rich fishing grounds. The fact that the Bering Sea fisheries alone accounts for over five billion pounds of fish - 40 percent of the annual U.S. yield - underscores the magnitude of this mission.

### **U.S. Coast Guard approaches a fishing trawler in the Bering Sea. (Photo courtesy USCG)**



"The outlook for Alaskan pollack is bleak," said Vaisman. The pollack populations and the catches both have been declining since 1982, but the annual quota set by government has risen since 1996. The volume of Alaskan pollack actually caught exceeds the quota by an estimated 150 percent, TRAFFIC investigators discovered. "This clearly reflects a significant level of poaching, as well as government's inability to prevent it," added Vaisman. The report found evidence of fishing in prohibited areas, use of prohibited gear, and concealed harvests. Fishermen were found to have distorted data on the volume and size of fish caught and the species composition of the catch. For example, Russian vessels recorded exporting \$113 million worth of seafood from the Kamchatka region to Japan in 1997, while Japan recorded importing \$442 million worth of seafood from Kamchatka that same year.

WWF and TRAFFIC are calling for greater cooperation between Russia and the United States to jointly develop a preventive commercial fishing strategy, and to create marine protected areas where commercial fishing would not be allowed during critical periods. "Somewhere on the agenda for bilateral discussions between the U.S. and Russia should be efforts to better manage the Bering Sea," said Margaret Williams, director of WWF's Bering Sea program.

U.S. Coast Guard and Russian officials have been cooperating to improve fisheries law enforcement operations on the Bering Sea at least since last year. On October 17, 2000, a Russian delegation led by Lt. Gen. Nikolai Lisinsky, commander of the Russian Federal Border Service, arrived in Juneau, Alaska for enforcement enhancement talks with Coast Guard Rear Adm. Thomas Barrett. Fisheries law enforcement officers from both countries form teams to board and inspect trawlers of all nations suspected of breaking regulations. "So far this year, the Russian Federal Border Service and Coast Guard have cooperated in the seizure of four factory trawlers caught by the Coast Guard illegally fishing in U.S. waters," Capt. Vince O'Shea of the 17th Coast Guard District told reporters on the day of the high level meeting.

Caroline Raymakers, director of TRAFFIC Europe, said that kind of coordination is critical for sustainable use of the Bering Sea fisheries. "Only through increased cooperation and support from all nations involved in the fisheries in the western Bering Sea will future generations be able to enjoy the rich bounty of this remarkable region."

ENS 13/12/01

## Let the big one get away

Fish is a staple menu item in restaurants across North America — including cities far from the coast. It's even more important in developing countries. Around the world, 80 million tons of fish are consumed every year, making up 16 percent of our total animal protein intake. But we don't often consider where that fish comes from or how (or if!) those fish stocks are being managed to prevent overfishing. That's why a new study on catch rates is so troubling. For years, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the only organization to formally track international fish-catch data, has been reporting stable or increasing catch sizes. This information has pushed further investment in the fishing industry in many countries under the assumption that there are still plenty of fish in the seas.

But are there? Studies around the world in recent years have concluded that most major fish stocks are in trouble. And the FAO itself classifies more than 70 percent of major marine fisheries as fully or over exploited. So how can these well-documented problems be reconciled with apparent increases in global fish catches? The problem is that the FAO relies on member countries to provide catch data, and according to a new study published in the journal *Nature*, those data can be seriously misleading. The study, by Reg Watson and Daniel Pauly of the University of British Columbia, used more detailed information to reanalyze the FAO data and create a model of expected catch sizes. Their calculated numbers corresponded pretty well with catch sizes reported by most countries, with one key exception. China's reported harvest was double what the model predicted.

The researchers surmise that Chinese officials, until very recently, have been promoted according to production increases in their respective fields. For fisheries managers, that means catching more fish — or at least reporting that more fish were caught — even when catches may actually be declining. The Chinese fishery is one of the largest in the world, representing 15 percent of total global harvest. If officials have been misrepresenting catch rates for more than a decade as is suspected, then global fish stocks have actually declined by 10 percent since 1988. Marine biologist Jane Lubchenco says that this declining global trend can only be halted with a drastic overhaul of fishery management. That will prove contentious, as some commercial and many recreational fisheries groups strongly oppose stricter conservation measures.

However, new evidence suggests that such measures are in the long-term best interests of all groups. For example, a study on marine reserves (areas where all fishing is prohibited) recently published in the journal *Science* found that these underwater parks can have a profound effect on neighboring fish stocks. The study, by an international team of marine scientists, found that the size of both commercial fish catches and recreational trophy fish catches off Florida and in the Caribbean greatly increased when small marine areas in the region were protected. In fact, near the island of St. Lucia, fish catches increased by up to 90 percent in surrounding waters just five years after the creation of a protected area.

One of the key reasons for the success of the reserves is that they act as nurseries, offering a safe haven for fish to breed and grow to marketable and even record sizes. A recent examination of more than 100 studies of such reserves around the world has found that creating them often leads to rapid increases in the abundance and size of commercial species, as well as an increase in species diversity. Fish are an important source of protein and livelihood for people around the world. But with so much demand and so many boats plying the waters, the need for effective fisheries management has never been greater. Creating marine reserves is one tool towards that end. If we want to ensure a bountiful catch in the future, we have to give the fish a fighting chance today.  
14/12/2001, Environmental News Network

## Faced with dwindling stocks, EU member states haggle how to



## divide catch cuts

BRUSSELS, Belgium--The European Union started talks Monday to drastically cut catch quotas for some of the most popular fish species in an attempt to save them from commercial extinction.

Fisheries ministers held bilateral talks on the proposals of the EU's executive Commission to cut some allowed fish catches by up to 58 percent in key waters before opening a joint session of all 15 nations later Monday.

The proposed catch quotas from the Commission have been criticized by the industry as going too far and further choking a sector that has been sinking along with fish stocks.

But even such fishing nations like Britain have seen the need for increased conservation.

"People do understand that fish is a premium product, and part of sustainability is making sure we don't take too much out of the sea," said Britain's fisheries minister Elliot Morley.

In the annual setting of quotas, Commission proposals often get seriously watered down to safeguard the interests of the industry. But conservationists argued too much bartering will only hurt the stocks further.

As usual, the quota setting is expected to go well into the night and possibly Tuesday.

So far, years of catch cuts and mandatory reductions in the fishing fleet have failed to stop the decline of several key species. The EU has about a quarter million fishermen, with many more involved in secondary industries.

EU officials say a dozen species are near the level of collapse compared to only four last year.

Under Fischler's proposals, the overall catch will decline by some 14 percent this year but several species will face much tougher cuts.

Fischler proposed reducing the catch of cod, a gastronomic favorite in Europe, in the Kattegat strait between Sweden and Denmark by 58 percent; haddock in the Irish sea by 52 percent; sole in the North Sea by 25 percent and prawns in the Bay of Biscay by up to 50 percent.

Even though fishing accounts for less than 1 percent of the Union's gross domestic product, it is of critical importance in such regions as northern Spain, France's Atlantic coast and Scotland.

18/12/2001, Associated Press

[Return to News Page](#)

<a href="#">Home</a>	<a href="#">Noticeboard</a>	<a href="#">Issues</a>	<a href="#">News</a>	<a href="#">Site Index</a>	<a href="#">Contact Us</a>
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*New Zealand Federation of Freshwater Anglers, (Inc.) Dated: February, 2002*