



THE UPDATE

Captain's Blog



National's Kermadec decision 'unprincipled' - Nash

The failure to establish the 620,000 square kilometre Kermadec Islands' Marine Sanctuary was one of former Prime Minister John Key's regrets, who admitted the opposition by Maori to the idea came as a surprise.

Key was badly advised, and the current Labour-led coalition government say they will not repeat that mistake.

At the Maori Fisheries Conference in Auckland last week, Fisheries Minister Stuart Nash made it clear National had bungled the deal and they, as a coalition would continue to consult with Te Ohu Kaimoana and iwi to reach a successful conclusion that would allow the sanctuary to go ahead.

While many in the media and public saw the industry's vocal opposition to the original proposal as 'patch protection' the truth was more complex.

This opposition had little to do with any fishing that was currently occurring in the Kermadecs and everything to do with the rights of Maori under the 1992 Fisheries settlement with the Crown. Te Ohu Kaimoana's legal challenge said the Bill undermined those rights and the former National government's unilateral decision to create a sanctuary had to be challenged.

The Kermadec Marine Sanctuary would prohibit all commercial, recreational and customary fishing activities in FMA10 – activities that are already highly restricted through a no-take marine protected area around the Kermadec Islands' territorial seas and benthic protected areas, which prohibit dredging and bottom trawling to 50 metres above the seabed in both territorial waters and EEZ waters.

All of which is pretty much a moot point because very little or no commercial fishing is occurring in Kermadec waters. Until 2016, there were a few long-line vessels hunting the highly-migratory tuna as it passed through the islands for three months each year but the foreign charter vessels that were catching New Zealand tuna quota were excluded in 2016 with the passing of the Foreign Charter Vessels legislation.

However, Maori were allocated fishing rights in the Fisheries settlement and although there has been no fishing under this quota for more than a decade – and it is yet to be allocated to iwi – concerns still remain on the impact a sanctuary will have on any future development of fisheries in the Kermadec area. The cost of that lost opportunity, and any compensation for that loss, is yet to be established.

Nash told the conference the government was committed to progressing the sanctuary, however this must be in a way that is consistent with treaty obligations. He said the way the previous government managed the Kermadec decision was unprincipled, there was not nearly enough consultation to get it across the line and he would not resile from that.

He said the Labour-led coalition is actively seeking solutions that work for both parties and he was sure they would get there. He said the critical first step was meeting treaty obligations.

This sentiment was also voiced by Kennedy Warne, founding editor of New Zealand Geographic who, in a thoughtful opinion piece in the July 2016 edition, said of the Kermadec decision; “MPA creation has become highly politicised. Governments welcome the chance to win environmental plaudits, and large MPAs in remote parts of the ocean offer big, easy gains. I believe in marine reserves. I have seen how they restore broken ecosystems and replenish depleted seas. I also believe in paying more than lip service to the Treaty partnership. The pursuit of one need not be at the expense of the other.”



New Zealand Seafood Industry
Conference and Technical Day

Registrations open

Registrations for the 2019 New Zealand Seafood Industry Conference and Technical Day are now open.

This year the conference will move to New Zealand's tourism capital Queenstown, with the technical day taking place on Thursday 8 August and the conference on Friday 9 August.

The theme for this year's seafood conference is Blue Growth – Charting Seafood's Future, looking at how one of New Zealand's key primary sectors can best position itself for future growth and success

We have a great array of speakers, details of the full programme will be available soon on the Seafood New Zealand website www.seafood.co.nz/conference-2019.

Seafood New Zealand has negotiated accommodation rates at the conference venue and neighbouring hotels. Details are on the [Information](#) page of the website along with links to Air New Zealand for group flight bookings.

Get in quick to secure accommodation and flights at reasonable prices.

[Register now](#)

Seafood Stars Awards

The 2019 Seafood Stars Awards are now open for nominations. The awards are a wonderful opportunity to celebrate our industry people and their achievements. This year's award categories include:

- Future Development and Innovation Award
- Young Achiever Award
- Longstanding Service Award

For more information on each category [visit our website](#), or [download the form](#) to nominate someone today.

Fighting bacteria with fish

A mucus which coats the bodies of some fish, has been found to protect from harmful bacteria, fungi and viruses.

Researchers from Oregon State University are hopeful the microbiomes in the mucus could be an effective agent for combatting drug-resistant pathogens.

Undergraduate student Molly Austin said the properties are especially interesting given the complex environment fish live in.

"They are in contact with their environment all the time, with many pathogenic viruses."

Of the 47 bacterial strains contained in the slime, five were found to restrict the growth of Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA), a difficult to treat staph infection or "superbug". A further

three strains suppressed *Candida albicans*, a fungus responsible for yeast infections, and bacteria in the Pacific pink perch was found to stave off colon cancer.

When the mucus of young deepsea and surface-dwelling fish was compared with older fish, researchers found another difference. Younger fish had a greater abundance of mucus which was put down to a more immature immune system that requires more protection.

Lead researcher Sandra Loesgen said the mucus serves to trap pathogens before they can penetrate the skin.

“We believe these microbiomes add chemistry to the antiseptic power of the mucus.”

However, it's unclear whether the bacteria studied in the fish are typical of their microbiomes, she said.

“They could be protecting their hosts, or the bacteria may have just happened to hitch a ride on these individual fish.

“For us, any microbe in the marine environment that could provide a new compound is worth exploring.”

It's anticipated the findings could be applied to fish farming, where increasing the mucus of fish could reduce the need for antibiotics.

The microbiomes could be used to protect humans too, said Austin.

Understanding what a normal and healthy fish microbiome is and how environmental factors affect them will be the next focus of the research.



A 3D illustration of the Staphylococcus aureus bacteria.

Seafood giants show a unified front

An initiative formed between 10 of the world's largest seafood companies has been called one of the most important developments in the seafood industry.

The Seafood Business for Ocean Stewardship (SeaBOS) panel held in Boston last week, saw chief executives from each of the ten companies aligning their policies on ocean stewardship and seafood standards.

Championed by SeaBOS, the group will show a unified front on key issues such as traceability, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and more. The objective is to persuade other core seafood retailers to adopt the policies and influence the remaining supply chain to also act responsibly.

"There is a big need for transparency, especially for aquaculture and wild fish," said Nutreco sustainability director Jose Villalon.

"The next natural step will be for the demand side to adopt it. That's where real change will occur."

A number of task forces will be responsible for developing a broad set of policies.

One group will address IUU and forced labour, vetting crew with digital technology and installing GPS devices on all vessels to provide consumers with the origin of their seafood.

A second group has been assigned seafood traceability. The Global Dialogue for Seafood Traceability, a group of 56 seafood companies, will be assisting in the development of a set of voluntary guidelines for traceability.

The third group will work with SeaBOS to influence and shape global fisheries and ocean policies, whereas the fourth group has the crucial role of turning agreements into formal commitments amongst industry players.

SeaBOS expects the work to have a visible impact on the industry as a whole within the next year and for policies to be fully integrated into the industry within the next three years. Each policy will knit into existing initiatives.

News

Hawke's Bay Seafoods has been sold and will be operating under the name Takitimu Seafoods as of April 1, *Stuff* reported. Incorporated on March 1, Takitimu's sole shareholder is Kahungunu Asset Holding Company Ltd., which manages assets on behalf of Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi Incorporated. Chairman Ngahiwi Tomoana announced the potential purchase in February just days after the Hawke's Bay Seafoods sentencing. In

February, Tomoana said iwi intended to buy a controlling interest in the company at the time it was raided by MPI in 2014, at which point negotiations to buy into the company were suspended. More than 250 people were employed by the company, “many of whom are our own people”, said Tomoana. “Ngāti Kahungunu will seek to ensure that environmental, cultural, social and economic benefits are paramount.”

A 42-year-old Kaikoura man has been fined \$600, plus \$200 reparation and \$130 in court costs, after impersonating a Ministry for Primary Industries fishery officer. Daniel James pleaded guilty to one charge of falsely claiming to be a fishery officer during his appearance before the Kaikoura District Court last week. James approached three French tourists who had been free diving in South Bay last November and identified himself as a fishery officer. He told the tourists that two of the fish they caught were undersized and the third was unfit to eat. James said the trio would need to pay a \$1600 fine for the first fish and a \$700 fine for the second. Alternatively he could waive the penalty if they paid a \$200 cash donation, he said. The tourists asked for James' business card, with which said he was on his day off. James proceeded to threaten the group with taking away their passports and setting a court date unless they paid him immediately. One of the tourists drove to an ATM and withdrew the \$200. MPI spokesperson Howard Reid said James' actions undermines the public's trust in the law. "Our fishery officers do a very important job. They're out and about ensuring everyone knows the fishing rules in their area and understanding why they exist."

Otago Regional Council (ORC) councillors have adopted new maritime bylaws for safer boating. The bylaw covers maritime safety in almost all inland waters and all coastal waters out to the 12-nautical limit of the territorial sea of Otago. The bylaw becomes operational on May 1. Key features of the bylaw include:

- an updated and fit for purpose set of bylaws that are applicable throughout the region and are aimed at better improving safety and maritime education in and on Otago's waterways
- an update to the lifejacket bylaw, and the size of vessel to which this bylaw applies
- a requirement for improved communication in the high-risk Halfway Island area to improve safety.

A new harbour patrol vessel, arriving on April 29, will improve marine safety further.



Check out the latest Seafood Magazines

