

ECO Conference 2005

“MOUNTAINS TO THE DEEP SEA”

| | |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| 24-25 June | 26 June |
| Baptist Church | Tapu Te Ranga Marae |
| 46 Boulcott St. | 44 Rhine St |
| Wellington | Wellington |



Photo: Kim Westerskov

CONSERVATION AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROFESSIONALS, ECO MEMBERS AND PUBLIC OFFICIALS WILL GATHER IN WELLINGTON TO SET THE AGENDA FOR NEW ZEALAND'S ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION POLICIES AND MANAGEMENT NEEDS.

This year's ECO Annual Conference will look at crucial environmental issues for the next 3 years. These include energy and climate change, the future of the Resource Management Act, oceans policy and fisheries management, and global environmental issues.

New Zealand is facing some huge environmental challenges and some new ways forward must be taken urgently to protect the country's environmental quality.

For more information about the Conference call Kate Lower at (04) 385-7545 or at eco@reddfish.co.nz

* *IN THIS ISSUE*

| | |
|---|-------|
| ECO Conference 2005 | 1 |
| DRAFT Conference Programme | 2 |
| Vote for the Environment | 3 |
| Carbon Charge | 4 |
| Save Happy Valley Dissatisfied by Environmental Court Decision | 5 |
| Rainbow Warrior to Campaign on Deep Sea Life | 7 |
| OECD Environmental Performance Review of NZ: Holding the Government to Account | 8 |
| Oceans Management and Control of Fishing Impacts in International Spotlight | 9 -11 |
| ECO Conference Registration Form | 11-12 |

**YOU CAN FIND A DRAFT OF
PROGRAMME AND
REGISTRATION FORM INSIDE!**

**PLEASE REGISTER!
EARLY BIRD CONFERENCE
RATES APPLY BEFORE
13 JUNE**

PASS IT ON!

Why not to share the information about ECO Conference with someone else? You could give it to a friend or workmate, put it on your organisation's website, send to your organisation's networks, etc.

HELP THE WORD GO AROUND!

Draft of Programme for ECO's Annual Conference 2005

24-25 June, Baptist Church, 46 Boulcott St, Wellington

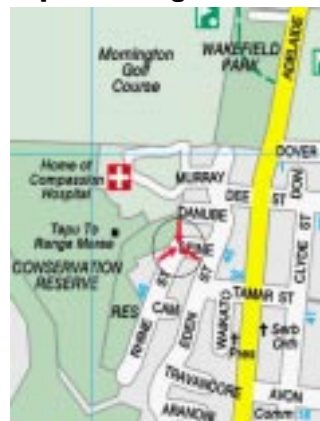
26 June, Tapu Te Ranga Marae, 44 Rhine St., Wellington

FRIDAY 8:00 - 8:45 Registration
8:45 - 9:00 Powhiri/Welcome, **Mark Te One**
9:00 - 10:30 Priorities for Conservation:
* South Pacific, **Penelope Figgis AM**, Vice-Chair for Australia and New Zealand of the World Commission on Protected Areas
* Antarctic and Southern Ocean, **Debs Martin**, F&B
* New Zealand, **Kevin Hackwell**, F&B
10:30 - 11:00 BREAK
11:00 - 11:40 Environment and Science: **tbc**
11:40 - 12:30 Trade, **Vangelis Vitalis**, Senior Negotiator and Deputy Director, Trade Negotiations Division, MFAT
12:30 - 1:15 LUNCH with RMAlink display
1:15 - 3:10 Policy and Practice priorities: 7 min presentation + 15 min workshop on each key aspect:
* Environmental Management, **Geoff Keey or Cath Wallace**
* Fisheries and Ocean, **Carmen Gravatt**, GPNZ
* Antarctic, **Debs Martin** F&B
* Energy, **Clive Monds or Nigel Isaacs - tbc**
* Climate Change, **Vanessa Atkinson**, GPNZ

Baptist Church:



Tapu Te Ranga Marae:



3:10 - 3:35 BREAK
3:35 - 5:30 Policy and Practice priorities continuation:
* DoC funding, **Kevin Hackwell**, F&B
* Biodiversity, **Kevin Hackwell**, F&B
* Biosecurity, **Geoff Keey**, F&B
* High Country, **Kevin Hackwell**, F&B
* Freshwater - **Bryce Johnson**, Fish and Game
5:30 - 7:00 DINNER
7:00 Vote for the Environment: Politicians on the Green Spot - **Representatives of parties: National (Dr. Nick Smith), Labour (Marian Hobbs), NZ First (Jim Peters), Greens (Jeanette Fitzsimons), United (Larry Baldock), Maori, ACT (Ken Shirley)**

SATURDAY 9:00 - 10:30 Think Better than Think Big:
* Introduction of Electricity Commission, **Roy Hemmingway**, Chairman
* Energy alternatives, **Molly Melhuish**
* RMA, **Cath Wallace**, ECO
* Public participation, **Geoff Keey**, F&B

10:30 - 11:00 BREAK
11:00 - 12:30 Maori Environmental and Resource Management perspective:
Jessica Hutchings, Massey Uni. and Victoria Uni.
Maiki Marks

Tbc
12:30 - 1:45 LUNCH
1:45 - 3:30 Oceans, Fisheries, Deep Sea Biodiversity - impacts what could be done?
John Glaister, CEO at MFish

Marine Biodiversity speaker - tbc
Steve O'Shea
Barry Weeber
3:30 - 4:00 BREAK
4:00 - 4:45 Alternative Energy - **Michael Lawley**, EcoInnovation
4:45 - 5:15 **Save Happy Valley Campaign** - Workshop
5:15 - 5:45 Clean up/ move to Tapu Te Ranga Marae
6:30 - 8:00 DINNER
8:00 ENTERTAINMENT: Emily Bailey's presentation about: raw footage of "Kotahi Te Ao" global grassroots film project

SUNDAY 9:00 - 9:30 Keynote Speaker - **Wendy Reid**, Sustainable Aotearoa NZ
9:30 - 10:00 Supporting Capability Building in community and voluntary organisations **Stephen Blyth**, MSD
10:00 - 11:00 AGM part I
11:00 - 11:10 BREAK
11:10 - 12:40 AGM part II
12:40 - 1:40 LUNCH
1:40 - 2:00 Clean up
2:00 Field Trips:
1. Karori Wildlife Sanctuary - **Guided introductory tour**
2. South Coast, **Ray Mercer**
3. Power Trip, **Confirmed**

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Kate Lower at 04 385-7545
Fax: 04 385 7545
e-mail: eco@reddfish.co.nz

On and after 24 June you can reach Kate Lower at 021 137-5667

Programme updates on www.eco.org.nz - subject to change

Vote for the Environment

2005 is election year and ECO, along with Greenpeace, Forest and Bird and Federated Mountain Clubs, will be again promoting a suite of environmental policies we will ask political parties to adopt and against which to assess their positions.

This election is important for the environment. Political parties are taking different positions on the environment.

Key issues identified by the groups and policy positions being discussed include:

High Country: further progress on the pastoral lease and the development of new high country conservation parks.

Marine: Passage of the Marine Reserves Bill, progress on more legislation, and more representative marine reserves including those in the EEZ and support for Marine Reserves in the High Seas and in the Ross Sea. Rejection of the current version of the Marine Protected Areas Policy which is dreadfully weak and fails to achieve international obligations.

Fisheries management changes to reverse the onus of proof so that fishers may not fish unless their methods are environmentally sound; environmental impact assessment; statutorily defined rights for public input; publicly controlled research and fisheries management planning; rejection of fishing industry control of fisheries plans and research or research commissioning for fisheries management purposes and much better protection of threatened species including marine mammals and seabirds

Support for an immediate moratorium on high seas bottom trawling and new governance for the protection of biodiversity and the environment in the High Seas.

The development and implementation of an effective, comprehensive and ecosystem based Oceans Policy. Little progress has occurred in the last 3 years and it is essential that the Oceans policy be finished and implemented in the next three years.

Biodiversity: An integrated and publicly controlled Department of Conservation with policy, advocacy and integrated conservation management responsibilities with additional funding. The Department does not now have the funds to achieve the goal of "restoring the dawn chorus" in the Biodiversity Strategy and its funding for marine conservation is so woefully inadequate that the Department does far less than is required for effective marine conservation – while a well funded Ministry of Fisheries controls the agenda.

Climate change and energy: Support for the introduction of greenhouse gas emission charges (with preferably no cap and any cap no less than \$25/tonne) in or before 2007; commitment to the Kyoto Protocol and taking an active role in the start of negotiations for the next 5 year commitment period 2013-2018.

RMA: The withdrawal of the Resource Management and Electricity Reform Bill, with instead the provision of much greater support for environmentally focused standards and National Policy Statements. Amendment to the legislation to allow appeals on non-notification.

RMA and Mining: To align New Zealand legislation with the World Conservation Union policy and recommendations on mining and conservation; removal of the privileged position of applications for conservation consents for mining which now allows input by the applicant but not by the environmental community.

Freshwater: Freshwater is a key challenge for the future. Ecosystem management based effective targets and timetables to conserve New Zealand's waterways and lakes.

Antarctica: New Zealand's position should be that the management of Antarctica is conservation focused and in particular that the management of the Ross Sea is conservation focused, with adoption of the World Conservation Union's recommendation for a large Marine Protected Area in the Ross Sea. That New Zealand should discontinue support for fishing in the Southern Ocean and the Ross Sea while supporting the international moves to control illegal, unauthorized and unreported fishing.

Hazardous substances and GE: Improved management of Hazardous Substances; controls on the release of GE.

Please contact Cath Wallace at Cath.Wallace@vuw.a.nz or Clive Monds at cmonds@wave.co.nz with suggestions or comments. For further information as this campaign unfolds, see www.environmentvote.org.nz

Budget and the Environment

There was not much in the budget for the environment or conservation. A small increase in baseline funding for DOC had already been flagged.

The budget included the welcome introduction of the carbon charge but not until 2007. Changes to tax categories and depreciation as an offset against that new charge are sensible, but are too focused on benefits to business rather than to those on lower incomes.



Carbon Charge

ECO welcomed the Government's announcement that it will introduce a carbon charge as a step in the right direction to deal with climate change.

However it has been a long slow process from Rio to reach the Government's announcement that it will introduce a carbon charge in 2007.

Following on from the Earth Summit in 1992, the National Government in 1994 set a target to introduce a carbon charge in 1997. By 1997, when NZ's position on the Kyoto Protocol was negotiated by then Environment Minister Simon Upton, a decision on implementing had been deferred. By October 1999, immediately prior to the election, National was looking at a process starting in 2008.

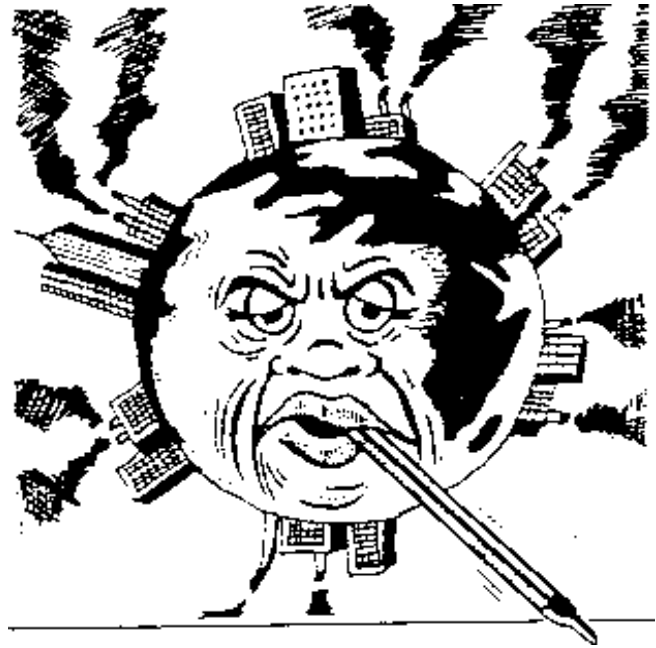
It then took three long years before Labour announced its climate change policies in October 2002, including a carbon charge, prior to ratifying the Kyoto protocol in December that year.

The announcement is an important step but the charge is only half the \$30/tonne put forward by Environment Groups in the *Vote for the Environment Charter* prior to the 2002 election as a minimum goal for implementation by 2004. The charge will need to be increased to achieve more effective reductions in emissions. It also cannot stand alone.

More importantly, such a charge needs to nest in a suite of sustainable energy policies that encourage efficient and wise use of energy. The Government has so far only announced measures to drive energy efficiency in small and large businesses. Other measures are needed to promote energy efficiency in residential households.

While we await a sustainable energy policy the government is driving in the opposite direction by pushing for large scale infrastructure development and environmentally harmful coal mining which will do nothing to limit New Zealand's impact on the climate.

ECO will continue to urge the Government to implement the carbon charge much earlier and call on all political parties to support this small measure as an important first step in action to deal with climate change.



Disclaimer: While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of information contained in this publication, ECO, its Executive and Editorial Staff accept no liability for any errors or omissions. Views and opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the policy opinions of ECO or its member bodies.

Waste Minimisation Resources Directory

The New Zealand Waste Minimisation Resources Directory that allows users to easily download a diverse range of tools and resources is now online.

Managed by the Recycling Operators of New Zealand (RONZ) with funding support from the Ministry for the Environment's Sustainable Management Fund, the Waste Minimisation Resources Directory identifies practical resources available to councils, educators, commercial and community recyclers and service

providers involved in waste minimisation programmes and initiatives.

Nationally we have published an extensive range of excellent tools and resources. The aim of this database is to compile these resources to enable easy access to them. Easy to use, you can search by category, resource type and/or target market for example composting, events, kerbside recycling, waste audits etc. Examples of resources include brochures, fact sheets, posters, education kits and reports.

Some resources are also available online as downloadable PDF files or

may be available through the RONZ lending library.

To add existing or new tools or resources to the database or for additional information please go to www.ronz.org.nz or contact RONZ by email, info@ronz.org.nz or tel 09 488 9449.

Save Happy Valley Campaign Dissatisfied by Environmental Court Decision

"With no more needed than the love of te whenua you have acted in accordance with your conscience and have highlighted the plight of our valued wild lands, threatened by the agents of the state and business as they meet the needs of their warped paradigm that has seen the earth buckle under the strain of the massive expansion in consumption over the last few decades"

Rick Barber of Te Runanga o Ngati Waewae talking about the Save Happy Valley tree sit in against Solid Energy's new proposed Cyrus Mine

Most people would be shocked to hear that their tax dollars are funding opencast mining of pristine kiwi habitat by a state-owned coal company. However, the Environment Court recently gave the go-ahead for Solid Energy to do just that in the ecologically sensitive area of Happy Valley, north of Westport. Solid Energy admits it has an atrocious environmental record: it has polluted rivers, destroyed indigenous fauna and habitat, and shown scant regard for the concerns of local communities.

The Save Happy Valley campaign is committed to stopping the destruction of this precious natural environment. Formed originally on student campuses around the country, the campaign has been characterised by creative direct action, with occupations of the proposed mine site, tree sit-ins and people chaining themselves to Solid Energy's headquarters.

Other environmental groups such as Te Runanga o Ngati Waewae, Forest and Bird, Buller Conservation Group and Ngakawau River Watch pursued legal means to oppose the mine, but Save Happy Valley had little faith in the courts. With the decision by the Environment Court in favour of Solid Energy, it is clear that only public outcry and civil disobedience will succeed in halting this ecologically devastating opencast mine.



Photo: Fiona Gibson and Rob Cadmus of "Save Happy Valley" Campaign driving their week long tree-seat and hunger strike on the road to Solid Energy's current Stockton Mine

Why are we so committed to stopping this mine? Happy Valley activist Jonathon Oosterman explains, 'Open cast mining is the most destructive form of mining. The top of the land is scraped off, horrific pollution and acid mine damage drainage is created, and local rivers are stripped of fish and invertebrates. No amount of rehabilitation effort will restore it within our, or our childrens' lifetimes.' Furthermore, the site is home to nationally threatened species such as the great spotted kiwi and *Powelliphanta* "patrickensis" snails. The mine will irrevocably scar the unique red tussock wetland landscape, beech forest and manuka shrubland.

Save Happy Valley has no faith that Solid Energy will comply with the conditions set by the Environment Court, as minimal as they are. Solid Energy has consistently shown blatant disregard for the environment in the interest of making a quick buck: their Stockton Mine has polluted the Ngakawau River to the extent that local white-baiters caught almost nothing last season. In the Upper Ngakawau River, mist from the waterfalls is so toxic it kills the surrounding foliage. In February, Solid Energy CEO, Don Elder, promised Buller Conservation Group and Ngakawau Riverwatch that Solid Energy would not mine a prominent ridge above Granity. Less than one month later the promise was broken, when locals discovered fresh mining on the ridgeline, a prominent local landscape feature, on 21st March. Solid Energy has already knowingly killed scores of rare *Powelliphanta* giant snails at their Stockton mine. Solid Energy's record speaks for itself and unless direct action is taken their callous disregard for the environment will ruin Happy Valley.

Why is this happening? Isn't the state supposed to protect our rare native habitat rather than ruthlessly exploit it? The government is hopelessly compromised and hypocritical in its stance towards coal mining in New Zealand - it consistently puts profit before people and nature. Happy Valley has been betrayed by the Department of Conservation, who supported the mine, and the local councils who will be unwilling or unable to enforce the minimal environmental standards set by the Environment Court. We have no faith in the machinery of the state to protect the environment.

Furthermore, society ignores the longer-term implications of this mine at our peril. We must make the direct connection between new coal mines here in Aotearoa and the suffering and destruction wrought by climate change to communities and the environment around the world. This Environment Court ruling shows once again that the Government's attempts to tackle



Photo courtesy of NIWA

THREAT

Bottom trawl nets are notorious for clearfelling deep sea corals such as this magnificent species (paragorgia sp.) during the initial trawls across seamounts. Some paragorgia corals grow two storeys high with trunks the size of lamp posts and provide the habitat for a variety of deep sea creatures.

Scientists believe there are 4 species of paragorgia coral in new zealand waters. Around the mid-1980s they used to be found on east cape seamounts. No photos have ever been taken of this species of paragorgia alive in it's natural environment, in new zealand waters. From paragorgia corals ripped up during bottom trawling scientists estimate minimum ages for these corals to be 350 years.

climate change are empty greenwash. The Happy Valley mine is simply the first of a series of new mines planned for the area and each will destroy additional kiwi and snail habitat, and accelerate dangerous climate change by burning more coal. We will vigorously oppose any mining near Happy Valley, regardless of conditions.

Already, we have twice occupied the proposed mine site, held a series of public meetings around the country, conducted a tree-sit-in and a fast on the West Coast. Solid Energy's headquarters in Christchurch has also been the focus for two protests: one involving 'kiwi' digging up their front lawn and the other people chaining

themselves to the entrance.

Now that Solid Energy has the green light to prepare the mine site, we - and other environmental groups - will be stepping-up our campaign. We will prevent this criminal destruction of Happy Valley through civil disobedience focused on Solid Energy. This will only succeed with strong public support. For this to happen, everyone will need to play a part, in whichever way they feel comfortable: you could do this by joining the Save Happy Valley campaign, writing to your MP, writing letters to the editor, talking to others, or taking direct

action yourself. The more people that are involved, the more difficult it becomes for Solid Energy and its state sponsors to continue on their destructive path.

If you want to get involved, we can be contacted at:

savehappyvalley@enzyme.org.nz

For more information, visit:

<http://happyvalley.enzyme.org.nz>

GreenPages

visit: www.greenpages.org.nz

Rainbow Warrior to Campaign on Deep Sea Life



Rainbow Warrior, photo courtesy of Greenpeace

In remembrance of the bombing that happened 20 years ago, Rainbow Warrior, Greenpeace's flagship vessel, soon will leave for international waters around New Zealand to campaign on the destructive impacts of bottom trawling. Around the world, scientists and environmental groups are calling for United Nations moratorium on high seas bottom trawling. By this trip Rainbow Warrior will emphasise the lack of governmental action in the face of the urgent threat that bottom trawling poses to deep-sea life.

Last year, Rainbow Warrior sailed to Tasman Sea and documented New Zealand's and Brazilian's bottom trawlers hauling in huge amounts of by-catch, rocks from the sea floor and bottom dwelling marine life, including endangered black coral.

A moratorium on bottom trawling in international waters is urgently needed to protect life in the deep sea and New Zealand and Australian Governments should join other countries in global push for one at the UN. Some time last year New Zealand

and Australian Governments made a statement about their willingness to establish a regional fishing agreement. But this sort of discussion about the ways to manage Tasman Sea started 15 years ago and so far failed to come up with any biodiversity protection.

OECD Environmental Performance Review of NZ: Holding the Government to Account

By Cath Wallace
ECO

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, OECD, is the developed nations' "club" and has a significant bias towards market based instruments and market economies. This should not make the NZ environmental community discount or ignore the opportunity for input to the OECD team that is to conduct an audit of NZ's Environmental Performance in January 2006. Such audits have in the past been influential in drawing to the government's attention its strengths and weaknesses in environmental management: and most of us can think of a fair few. At the time of Mr Muldoon's government, the OECD team's report was pivotal to changing policy – but this depends a great deal on the composition and disposition of the Review Team.

The team's 7-15 June 2005 visit to New Zealand follows extensive provision of information to it by the New Zealand government from November 2004 to April 2005. It is preparation for the January 2006 audit. Environmental organisations have not seen these reports but have been briefed on the mission and process by Matthew Everitt of the Ministry for the Environment who is coordinating the review from NZ's end, but not early enough to have provided a joint report to the OECD. This would still be a useful response if we had the capacity to do it. The team has scheduled a tiny window for input by NGOs on 9 June.

The OECD team's main focus will be on follow up on the 1995/6 Review and whether New Zealand is fulfilling our international commitments and commitments made in or since 1996.

The team will not be able to engage directly with complaints about either the Minister for the Environment or the Minister in charge of the Resource Management Act but it can deal with the substance of policy, its implementation and performance.

The team will not be restricted to those things labelled here as "environmental" since it will also be looking at Conservation policy, Sustainable Development, public participation, sectoral policies such as fishing, energy, transport and farming policies, access to information and environmental justice, public awareness and education and the cost-effectiveness and the use of economic instruments.

The information distributed to ECO about the Review Team's mission includes this:

"The focus on performance distinguishes between intentions, actions and results, with the emphasis on results. Evaluation of performance is based on the analysis of trends in the state of the environment, of the extent to which domestic objectives and international commitments have been met, and of the cost-effectiveness of the measures used. Discussions will therefore focus first on the results of past and present policies (1996-2005), before considering plans for the future.

ECO has signified its interest in this and will be making

representations on a range of the issues mentioned. Contributions are welcome.

For details and input see the Ministry for the Environment's website www.mfe.govt.nz, or contact James Caldwell of the Ministry for the Environment at 04-9177553 or james.caldwell@mfe.govt.nz. Contact ECO at eco@reddfish.co.nz or Cath Wallace at Cath.Wallace@vuw.ac.nz regarding ECO input but be sure to put OECD Review as the first words of the subject line.

Introductory Notes: Environmental NGO's

This document provides a guide for the discussions during the sessions of the OECD EPR mission (see Annex D). **THE DISCUSSION WILL FOCUS ON ENVIRONMENTAL TRENDS AND POLICY RESPONSES IN THE PERIOD 1996-2005.**

The purpose of the mission is to prepare the examination of environmental performance by the OECD Working Party on Environmental Performance (Paris, January 2006). Hence, the mission is not the examination itself.

By the time of the review mission, team members will have read the background documents provided by the national authorities. To make best use of the limited time available during the session, participants are asked to engage in a dialogue on environmental performance, focused on matters of interpretation and judgement. Any useful additional factual information is welcome in written form at the meeting.

The focus on performance distinguishes between intentions, actions and results, with the emphasis on results. Evaluation of performance is based on the analysis of trends in the state of the environment, of the extent to which domestic objectives and international commitments have been met, and of the cost-effectiveness of the measures used. Discussions will therefore focus first on the results of past and present policies (1996-2005), before considering plans for the future.

Discussion with Environmental NGO's - Wellington

1. Environmental Performance

NGO views and positions on New Zealand's environmental performance: main achievements and areas for progress in air, water, waste and nature management.

Performance in meeting international commitments.

2. Public Participation in Environmental Management

Access to environmental information, procedures for appeal (e.g. EIA).

NGO consultation and participation in environmental policy formulation.

Local Agenda 21 and other initiatives.

3. Sustainable Development

Cost-effectiveness and use of economic instruments (environmentally-related taxes, environmental charges, pricing of environmental services).

Sectoral policies and the environment (e.g. agriculture, forestry, energy, transport).

Environment-social interface: progress towards integration, environmental justice, education and awareness.

Oceans Management and Control of Fishing Impacts in International Spotlight

By Cath Wallace
ECO



International attention to the problem of how to manage human activities in and impacts on the High Seas is intensifying.

The December 2004 the 3rd IUCN World Conservation Congress called on nations to develop new mechanisms and to strengthen existing measures to protect oceans and their biodiversity (Recommendation 017). It called on Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) and other regional organisations (such as the Convention on the Conservation of Marine Living Resources, CCAMLR) to make effective and urgent moves to protect biodiversity from bottom trawling and other destructive methods. The world community at the World Conservation Congress urged that the United Nations should decide, at the General Assembly 2005, to impose a temporary moratorium on bottom trawling where there is no competent management organisation. IUCN urged countries at the UN to review the effectiveness of existing RFMOs and other competent organisations with a view to imposing a moratorium in 2006 where the management is ineffective at protecting biodiversity.

Since that meeting, world attention to the impacts of fishing and the need

to protect the oceans and the High Seas has intensified. The Convention on Biodiversity has proposed further work and more marine protected areas. The UK government has received a huge report, "Turning the Tide", on the impacts of fishing by the standing Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution.

The High Seas Task Force of the OECD has reported on measures to enhance and intensify monitoring and compliance with existing international agreements such as the UN Fish Stocks Agreement and the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing.

Canadian interest in these matters is intense: both at the governmental and the community level.

The loss of cod and the incursions of poaching fishing boats from the European Union (including Spain) has led to a growing despair in Canada at the endless words and the lack of action to protect the oceans, habitat and fish stocks.

Two meetings took place in late April and early May at St John's, New Foundland, Canada, the most north-easterly point of North America. For centuries cod has been the mainstay of local economies. Local communities

there have seen locally owned industrial trawlers clean out local stocks and head off to West Africa to clean up the stocks of some of the most impoverished African states, such as Angola. They have watched too the poaching and misbehaviour of European trawlers.

Gearshift: A Call for Healthy Fisheries at Home and on the High Seas, St Johns, Canada, 29-30th April 2005

The imperative of moving from destructive to less destructive fishing methods and of maintaining and restoring damaged marine ecosystems and overfished fish stocks took on an intensity not seen in New Zealand at the Gearshift Conference, in St John's, New Foundland, Canada. Some participants' entire community's livelihoods have been lost from the cod stock crash.

The Petty Harbour fishermen's cooperative had agreed that they would only use least damaging fishing technologies and refused to use trawling, or "dragging" as it is known there. The activities of industrial fishers using trawlers in the same fishing grounds was such that the stocks and the host environment have crashed. In some of the communities in New Foundland and Labrador, and in Nova Scotia, as many as 50% of the working people are on welfare after the stock crash. The trawlers have gone off to fish for crabs or to other fishing grounds, like those off West Africa.

This lesson is one that New Zealand needs to learn and learn fast. It is not simply the overfishing that matters, but the failure of the fish stocks to recover because of the damage to the physical substrate and to the invertebrate communities on the seafloor that provide the 3-dimensional habitat for the fish. Most New Zealand orange roughy stocks have declined fast in the 20 years of trawling under the Quota Management system, some to as low as 3% or 7% of the original biomass.

- Continued over page

NIWA has been studying the effects of fishing on seamounts and on the soft sandy seafloor affected by scampi fishing (eg Cryer et al 2002 and Clark and O'Driscoll 2003).

The Gearshift conference was attended by fishers, fish cooperative leaders, community development specialists, Canadian officials, environmental specialists and advocates, academics and scientists.

The strong collaboration between environmental and conservation organisations, fishers and community specialists was striking: an alliance against the damaging industrial fishing techniques, particularly bottom-trawling very strong.

Reflection on the job losses in Nelson and Dunedin as the hoki stocks decline under pressure from heavy fishing, the orange roughy stocks slide further, and the loss of habitats on both hard and soft substrates suggests that New Zealand would do very well to take note of the need to act before more damage is done. It is quite clear from the Canadian experience that organised labour should be paying more attention to the loss of fish stocks, invertebrates and jobs. The New Zealand Fishing Industry Guild has mostly sided with the industrial fishing companies: it might consider re-thinking this strategy.

From Words to Action

Participants from 49 Governments and the EU, various experts, academics, representatives of international agencies and a handful of approved international environmental organisations were convened from 1-5 May 2005 by the Canadian Prime Minister, Rt Hon Paul Martin.

The Prime Minister's call was "From Words to Action" – the title of the conference. With the adroit opposition of several fishing and other nations, the urgency and necessity of action to curb over fishing, over capacity for fishing, destructive fishing methods such as bottom trawling and illegal, unreported and unauthorised fishing, was not reflected in the final outcome. The plea of the Canadian Prime Minister for urgent action was stymied by those who ensured that the outcome of the meeting was no more

than a "Chairmen's report", with no resolutions or agreed actions.

The outcome must surely frustrate the Canadians, but the meeting heard enough to make it clear that action is needed and fast. The meeting heard how this can be done: from a legal and practical point of view. The essence of ecosystem based management and its implementation was outlined; the history and impetus for action covered, the elements of what is needed for better monitoring, compliance and enforcement laid out. The failings of existing RFMOs were summarised as lack of adherence to science, lack of timeliness or avoidance of decisions and lack of rigour. One might add lack of will and subservience to and domination by fishing interests.

Overcapacity and the kinds of subsidies that increased these problems were addressed – but those responsible resisted this point being sheeted home to those who provide such subsidies. Such subsidies range from the overt to those disguised as "aid" which involve the deployment of the aid-giving states' fishing fleets and or processors to the waters and shores of the unlucky recipient countries.

The need for Regional Oceans Environmental Management Organisations was canvassed, rather than fisheries organisations. This is particularly favoured by those with environmental concerns. An independent review of existing RFMOs was also favoured by many at the conference – with the exception of certain fishing states.

The start of the Words to Action meeting was marked by a Ministerial Declaration – awkward for those countries such as New Zealand whose fisheries ministers did not attend.

After expert reports and other plenary events, a series of workshops reported: only to have their reports filleted to suit certain fishing nations. Recommendations for Marine Protected Areas were largely erased from the record too.

The meeting will undoubtedly inform many delegations that go to the 31 May -3 June - 4th Informal Meeting of the Parties to the UN Fish Stocks

Agreement in New York; the UN Informal Consultation on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (UNICPOLOS), also in New York, 6-10 June 2005, where once again, the need to take action on fishing, its impacts and on those who provide safe haven or flags for poachers will be considered. So too will the question of the call by the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition for a moratorium on bottom trawling pending an effective High Seas biodiversity and environmental protection regime.

It is clear that leaving decision making to forums dominated by Ministries of Fisheries will not produce the requisite action. The Words to Action conference suffered from this.. True commitment to protection of oceans, to integrated ecosystem based management of human activities and impacts and to effective control of fishing will not come from governments as long as they are predominantly represented by their fisheries agencies.

A wider representation of thinking, more responsiveness to social concerns and a more diverse experience of integrated management is needed. So too is a greater commitment to admit the unsustainability of bottom trawling and other destructive methods and a willingness to get serious about confronting the industrial fishing interests behind most of the damage on the High Seas.

New Zealand's bottom trawlers' actions on the High Seas will come under renewed scrutiny this year as Greenpeace once again marks the UNICPOLOS meeting with surveillance of bottom trawlers.

The June UN meeting is informal: but is a prelude to the General Assembly debate on fisheries later this year and will also play its part to agenda setting for the 2006 General Assembly. In 2006 there will be a review of the UN Fish Stocks Agreement and a further General Assembly debate on Fisheries. Other relevant international meetings include the biodiversity focussed 13-17 June – Convention on Biodiversity Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Protected Areas, (Montevecchio,

Please return registration form to:

ECO Conference
PO Box 11-057
Wellington
Fax (04) 385-7545
or Email eco@reddfish.co.nz

Please choose your preferred field trip:

- (subject to confirmation and change)
- Karori Wildlife Sanctuary
- South Coast
- Power Trip

Registration

Conference Fee \$ _____
 Tapu Te Ranga Marae Accom. \$ _____
 Friend of ECO Subscription \$ _____
 Donation to ECO \$ _____
Total \$ _____

Method of Payment

- Cheque payable to ECO Inc.
 - Please debit my Visa (we only accept Visa)
- Note:** You can register and pay on www.eco.org.nz

Visa Number: _____
 Cardholder's Name: _____
 Expiry Date: ____/____/____
 Signature: _____

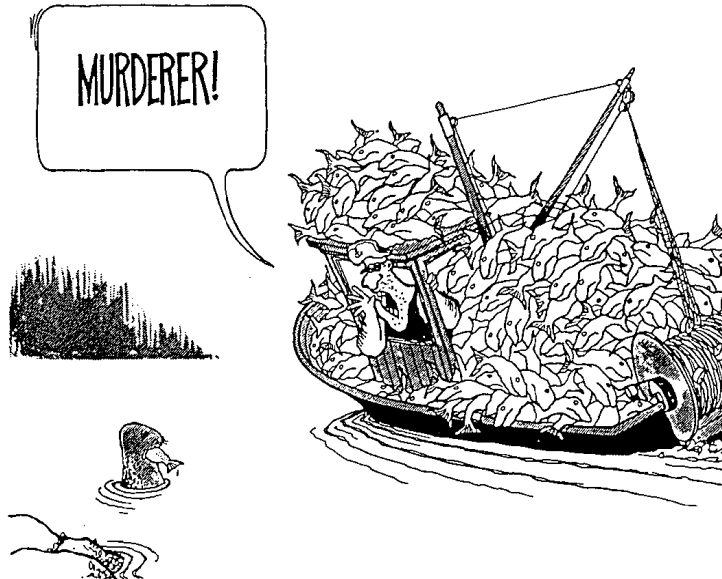
- Continued from previous page

Itlay) and the 16-24 June - 15th Meeting States Parties UNConvention on Law of the Sea (New York).. The Deep Sea Conservation Coalition, to which ECO belongs, will be in attendance.

Those countries and interests who want to resist action on fishing and its impacts, IUU fishing and on wider environmental management of the oceans of the High Seas can and will do their best to delay action, ultimately, the concerns of wider society for effective governance of the High Seas and human activities and fishing will be so insistent that it is really just a question of how much damage will have been allowed before action is taken.

SW PACIFIC REGIONAL MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION

Years of talk and no "do" by New Zealand and Australia about controlling fishing in the High Seas has finally been galvanised into the start of a formal talk process by public opinion on the devastation by New Zealand and Australian trawlers on the High Seas. Thus NZ and Australia have announced their intention to convene talks for a South West Pacific Regional Management Organisation. Chile has joined this project and other states, both those in the region and fishing states, will be invited to join.



PUBLISHED BY ENVIRONMENT & CONSERVATION ORGANISATIONS OF NEW ZEALAND

Editor: *Elizabeth Lee*; Layout: *Kate Lower*
 ECO, PO Box 11 057, Wellington
 Phone/fax 04-385 7545; e-mail: eco@reddfish.co.nz
 2nd floor, 126 Vivian Street Wellington
 Website: www.eco.org.nz
 ISSN 1174-0671
 Printed on 100% Recycled Paper

