

option4 Alert #14

18 September 2008

Sea's bounty at risk from unsustainable practices

Proposed changes to lower sustainability thresholds in fisheries management have been described as risky by non-commercial representatives, because of the potential to increase commercial fishing at the expense of healthy fisheries and the public's access to food.

http://option4.co.nz/Fisheries_Mgmt/section13.htm#post

Since April option4, the Hokianga Accord and NZ Big Game Fishing Council have spent considerable resources responding to the Fisheries Act 1996 Amendment Bill (No.2) developed by the Ministry of Fisheries, in collusion with the fishing industry.

http://option4.co.nz/Fisheries_Mgmt/section13.htm#bill

Arguments put forward by MFish and industry were analysed and rebutted by the joint team prior to attending the Select Committee hearing in early August.

http://option4.co.nz/Fisheries_Mgmt/section13.htm#rebut

After careful consideration, alternative solutions were put to the Primary Production Select Committee in two submissions. Those answers have been rejected in favour of making it lawful for the Minister to set the highest possible commercial catch levels, irrespective of the quality of information. This is contrary to current requirements to have sufficient numbers and quality of fish in the water to enable people to provide for their social and cultural wellbeing.

http://option4.co.nz/Fisheries_Mgmt/section13.htm#subm2

Parliament is due to read the proposed amendment to section 13 of the Fisheries Act next week. If passed, it will legalise what the courts identified earlier in the year as unlawful practice by the Minister and MFish.

http://option4.co.nz/Fisheries_Mgmt/section13.htm#high

Important questions about the amendment and the exclusion of non-commercial fishing representatives from its development process have also been raised. Answers are available in this easy-to-read Section 13 Questions and Answers guide

http://option4.co.nz/Fisheries_Mgmt/section13.htm#faq

Little more than a year ago the High Court confirmed sustainability has to be the bottom line in fisheries management. Justice Harrison also reinforced every New Zealander's common law right to fish and that commercial catch levels could be set at zero but not the allowance for recreational fishers.

<http://kahawai.co.nz/kahupdate40.htm>

This proposed amendment to section 13 of the Act is unacceptable because it will enable today's generation to flog the fisheries with no regard for the interests of our children or mokopuna.

Your future fishing success is dependent on "more fish in the water". This process seeks to deny you and your family access to abundant fisheries and a healthy marine environment.

Please read the comprehensive record of the process and take a moment to provide us with your feedback so we can do our best to protect your freedom to fish.

Links

Section 13 Amendment

http://option4.co.nz/Fisheries_Mgmt/section13.htm

option4 Update #106 – Smokescreen covers cracks in Amendment Bill

http://www.option4.co.nz/Updates_and_Alerts/update106.htm

Kahawai Challenge Update #40 – Purse seines and spotter planes

<http://www.kahawai.co.nz/kahupdate40.htm>

Hokianga Accord Update #13 – Fisheries Act Amendment important questions and answers

http://www.option4.co.nz/Updates_and_Alerts/haupdate13.htm