

Kenepuru & Central Sounds



Kenepuru & Central Sounds Residents Association Inc.

The Minister for Primary Industries

Minister for the Environment

Executive Wing
Parliament Buildings

Wellington

Ross Withell

President KCSRA

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15 Apr 2015

Dear Sir

Scallops – Annual Harvest Plan – Marlborough Sounds

The Association wrote to you back in July of 2014 outlining our concerns over the threatened existence of the Marlborough Sounds Scallop Fishery. A copy of that letter is **attached** for ease of reference.

Subsequent to that letter you agreed with Industry a Harvest Plan totalling 30 Tonnes for the 2014/2015 fishing year. We expressed our strong reservations as to the sustainability of this figure given that the resource was clearly under stress. We have been supplied by your officials with the results of the 2014/2015 commercial scallop take from the Marlborough Sounds Scallop Fishery.

It gives us no satisfaction to see that the commercial fishers were hard put to garner only a total of 21.5 Tonnes nor that the Association's suggested limit of 15 to 18 Tonnes as a more suitable sustainable harvest plan was proved accurate.

It is distressing to record that in 2009/2010 season the predicted /actual harvest was 123/120.5 Tonnes. A graph of actual/predicted harvests from that date to now shows that the commercially available resource is rapidly diminishing to zero. Further we now understand that your officials have received anecdotal reports that disease is now present in areas of the Sounds Scallop beds.

What does it take for the Industry and NIWA (the scientists gathering the biomass data) to realise enough is enough?

Kenepuru & Central Sounds Residents Association Inc.

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We implore you to save the Industry the time and expense of another biomass survey exercise by calling a halt to commercial scallop fishing in the Sounds for, say, 2 years. This breather might, crossed fingers, allow the fishery time to recover. We also suggest an independent peer review of the part NIWA has played (or not) in the impending demise of this much-appreciated resource.

We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely



Ross Withell

President

Kenepuru and Central Sounds Residents' Association