

30 October 2017

Hon S. Nash
Minister for Fisheries
Executive Wing
Parliament Buildings
Wellington

Email:

Marlborough Sounds Scallops – New Governance Structure required

Dear Minister

I am writing this on behalf of an alliance of Marlborough Sounds Community groups that have fought hard and long over the last few years to save the sole remaining scallop fishery in the top of the South Island from a commercial sector seemingly hell-bent on running it into the ground.

These organisations are the Kenepuru and Central Sounds Residents' Association (KCSRA), the Pelorus Boat Club (PBC) and the Marlborough Recreational Fishers Association (MRFA).

However, before I set out our request, firstly we would like to congratulate your party for having won the right to form a coalition government and secondly, to congratulate you personally for agreeing to take on this Ministerial portfolio.

What we are asking for

In a nutshell, our alliance is pressing for an equal say for non-commercial interests in the governance of the Sounds Scallop fishery. This would require the existing Memorandum of Understanding between the Crown and the industry representative body (the Challenger Scallop Enhancement Company – CSEC) to be restructured before the current moratorium on **all** scallop fishing in the top of the South Island runs out.

Background

By way of background we note that relatively recently there was a plentiful and robust scallop resource in the top of the South Island (SCA7). This was contained in three separate fisheries: Tasman Bay, Golden Bay and the Marlborough Sounds.

The previous two main scallop fisheries have not sustained a commercial fishing season for many years (Tasman Bay since 2006 and Golden Bay from 2010). We

believe that this is primarily due to poor governance of the commercial take. The science supports this view.

Our alliance was appalled to realise that there was a real danger of this happening for the remaining viable SCA7 fishery (the Sounds) as the commercial sector was prepared to ignore the independent surveys showing a rapidly declining biomass. As a first step we fought for and achieved the closure of the SCA7 area to **all** scallop fishing effort for the last two seasons. It is too early to say if we have been successful but arguably we may have stopped the plunge to zero.

Required Next Steps

In order to preserve these gains for future generations we need to achieve a restructuring of the governance arrangements whereby non-commercial interests, such as the alliance and iwi, have an equal say in making recommendations as to management process and procedures to you - the responsible Minister.

Sadly this aspect seems to have gone off the radar of the Ministry for Primary Industries. We respectfully urge you to discuss the matter with your officials with a view to getting this work stream back on track.

Meeting

A representative of our alliance will be in Wellington on the 22nd and 23rd of November and would be happy to discuss this matter with you in more detail. Otherwise perhaps the next time you are in Blenheim or Nelson?

We look forward to hearing from you

Yours sincerely



Andrew Caddie
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For and on behalf of KCSRA, PBC and MRFA.

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