

Hon Nathan Guy  
Minister for Primary Industries  
Executive Wing  
Parliament House  
Wellington

3 July 2017

Dear Minister

### **Marlborough Sounds Scallop Fishery – Closure for 2017 Season**

I am writing this letter on behalf of an alliance of Marlborough community and recreational organisations (Marlborough Recreational Fishers Association, the Pelorus Boating Club and the Kenepuru and Central Sounds Residents' Association).

Naturally we are **very pleased** with your recent announcement that, due to your concerns as to the sustainability and stressed nature of the scallop resource in SCA7, and in particular the few remaining beds in the Sounds, you have decided to close SCA 7 and the Port Underwood area for the 2017 season.

We are all too aware of a last minute effort by aggrieved commercial interests wanting to persuade you and your officials to allow them to carry out another intrusive biomass survey in order to have these few remaining stressed beds opened up for a commercial harvest effort. We **applaud** you and your officials for standing firm.

We are **also pleased** that you used your announcement to commit to the setting aside of around \$400,000 for research into the deplorable state of this scallop resource. As per our previous correspondence with you and your officials we respectfully urge the Minister not to let this funding be concentrated on the failed Tasman and Golden Bay areas but make sure the Marlborough Sounds gets the focus and research expenditure it deserves. The Sounds contains the last remnants of this once plentiful resource. Lets see if we can use good peer-reviewed independent science to also assist in its restoration and on-going good health and viability.

Over the years the Alliance has been working on trying to save this resource for future generations it has become clear to us that allowing commercial interests to have a majority say in the management of the resource has not worked and has been a significant contributing factor to the parlous state of the resource in SCA7.

We respectfully again urge the Minister to take steps to have the Memorandum of Understanding between MPI and Industry restructured to allow a more inclusive say from non-commercial interests, particularly in regard to the remaining resource in the Sounds.

You as the responsible Minister should, we respectfully suggest and urge, convene a Scallop Sounds Working Group composed of all stakeholders.

A **senior** MPI official (at, say, Director level) should be tasked with bringing the Working Group together and coordinating an action plan with two overall elements. The first would involve a collaborative review by the Working Group of the governance of the Fishery with the objective of a more inclusive group being tasked with making recommendations to the Minister as to the operational management of the fishery. That is, a review and reworking of the current Memorandum of Understanding as it relates to the scallop fishery.

Once progress has been made on that aspect we see the second element as relatively straightforward - the working up of an agreed package of operational management measures for your consideration.

Minister, we appreciate **and congratulate** you on the amount of effort you and your officials have put in to try to arrest the collapse of this much-treasured resource, to say nothing of the efforts of volunteer groups such as the Alliance. We strongly suggest the time is now right for you, as responsible minister, to steer the management of this resource towards a sustainable future in the manner we suggest.

Naturally we would be happy to come to Wellington to meet with you, such is the degree of our concern and we are also acutely conscious that we have only a relatively short window of opportunity to put in place a better governance structure.

We look forward to hearing from you.

For and on behalf of the:



Kenepuru and Central Sounds Residents' Association  
Marlborough Recreational Fishers Association  
Pelorus Boating Club

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