

Just electioneering

Photo opportunities for television by Conservation Minister Nick Smith over a new marine reserve at Akaroa are just electioneering.

And a meaningless series of small marine reserves in a desert of over-fished and over-exploited ocean is just posturing. On his dive, Smith excitedly exclaimed he saw a solitary starfish, but apparently nothing else; is this not symptomatic of the ailing fishery resource?

Minister Smith should study fish population dynamics. Fish migrate seasonally each year, ignoring any line on a map marking a marine reserve. Marine reserves may have a feel-good warm fuzzy feeling but, while the whole resource is plundered, they become relatively insignificant and meaningless.

New Zealand's fishery resource has a string of over-exploited species. Orange roughy, kahawai, snapper, groper etc, are under constant threat by corporate

companies whose policy is to aggregate fishery quota under the flawed tradeable quota system and maximise profits.

12/6/14
BILL BENFIELD
Co-chairman
Council of Outdoor Recreation
Associations of New Zealand

Diving ministers

Like Bill Benfield, co-chairman Council of Outdoor Recreation Associations of NZ (June 10) I saw the Ministers of Conservation and Environment, Smith and Adams

respectively, diving in the new marine reserve at Akaroa.

Marine reserves have their place in the overall management. But suggesting that a few pocket handkerchief reserves is the saviour of our mismanaged fisheries is really pushing the boundaries of credibility.

Mr Benfield rightly quoted some over-exploited fish species but in the Marlborough Sounds there is a classic case of overfishing in the plundered scallop beds. The commercial fleet via corporate companies have over-fished the Tasman and Golden Bays beds and now seeks to move in on to the Sounds beds.

One problem with fisheries management is that "fat cat" corporate companies seem to have an inordinate influence and access to fisheries ministers that has been going on for years stretching back to the 1970s.

The corporate cronyism seems even more entrenched today than ever.

When will politicians realise they are public servants elected to serve the public interest and not the bank balances of corporate buddies?

The reserve is simply, as Bill Benfield pointed, out "just electioneering".

14/6/14
TONY ORMAN
Marlborough

Bridge design

Congratulations on your story on the pollution of Christchurch waterways (May 29) and raising the issue that we are all responsible for our waterways - it is not just dairy farms who are doing the damage, albeit some of them do a fair bit of it.

However, the NZ Transport Agency seems to have dodged a bullet in your piece, particularly as it is standard practice when designing and building a bridge to simply channel rainwater from the bridge surface straight into the river below, delivering a solution of oils and metals into our most valuable resource, freshwater.

I suspect those that do such damage are not freshwater fishers as anglers are always first to bear the consequences of such reckless actions.

14/6/14
DAVID HAYNES
NZ Federation of Freshwater Anglers
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