



Marlborough Marine Futures

Newsletter April 2017

A Marine Park for the Marlborough Sounds

In this newsletter, we put forward the case for a Marine Park for the Marlborough Sounds and illustrate some of the background research that has gone into our thinking.

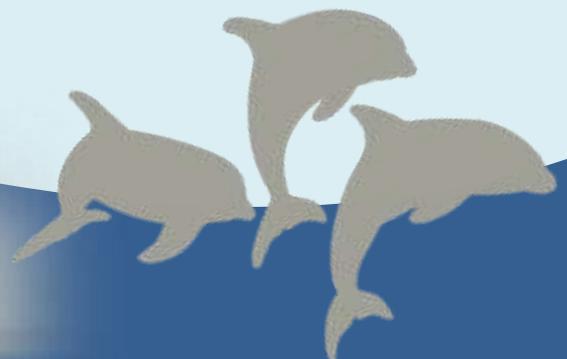
“Only a Marine Park will really work to enable integrated protection and utilisation of the Marlborough Sounds” said Peter Lawless, Coordinator for Marlborough Marine Futures on returning from his Winston Churchill Fellowship travel investigating marine protection around the world.

“New Zealand lacks legal provision for integrated management of special marine protected areas. We have done great things with marine reserves and the like, but these are not the right tool for complex highly utilised environments which also harbour treasures that need to be protected. This has led to communities in Fiordland and Kaikoura taking matters into their own hands to develop solutions, and in both cases special legislation was needed to implement the outcome. In the Hauraki Gulf a marine park was created, but without any power to control activities, so this time the councils initiated the Sea Change process.

To look for models we could adopt here the Winston Churchill Trust funded a study tour to Australia, Canada and the USA. Each of these countries had lessons to teach us, but none had the perfect model. Australia has the best integrated marine protected area in the world at the Great Barrier Reef, but is only in the very early stages of recognising the role of their indigenous Aboriginal and Torres Strait people. British Columbia has overcome that hurdle and made ground breaking joint marine plans with its indigenous people, but the federal Government has failed to engage appropriately and prevented fisheries management being integrated. In California, the federal Government has created marine sanctuaries that control little, and it has been left to the state Government to make marine reserves out to three nautical miles.

I have therefore recommended to the Marlborough Sounds Integrated Management Trust that it champions a Marine Park. This would be founded on recognition of the role of tangata whenua and sustaining their association with the sea. It would enable fine scale solutions that resolve fishing and resource use conflicts. Above all it would allow for sustainable utilisation, while placing preservation and restoration of ecosystem health and of important habitats as the overarching goal” said Peter.

The Trust has received Peter’s reports and resolved to consult with Stakeholders on forming an integrated Marine Park for the Marlborough Sounds. You can find Peter’s reports on our website at <http://www.marlmarinefutures.co.nz/resources>



British Columbia coast,
Vancouver Island.



Great Barrier Reef Marine Park

A Marine Park where the boundary and the goals are set in law and a special purpose body the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority is established and resourced to sort out regulation, zoning and sort out the issues.

John Day, Townsville, leader of the Great Barrier Reef rezoning process described the Park and its history “The Great Barrier Reef is the largest coral reef ecosystem on the planet. The Great Barrier Marine Park covers 344,400km². Its western boundary is generally the mean low-water mark on the mainland coast of Queensland and the Park extends seaward between 80 and 250km offshore, well outside the outer reefs into deep oceanic waters to a depth of 1000m. The Great Barrier Reef was included on the World Heritage List in 1981. Informants say that the Great Barrier Reef has greatly influenced many subsequent marine protected area efforts around the world. It is regarded by many as ‘the grandfather’ of modern marine protected areas. The passing of a federal Act in 1975 provided for the protection and management of the Great Barrier Reef. It also established a special purpose body, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority to manage it. This has led to a zoned multiple use area where a range of activities are provided for within an overall conservation purpose.”

USA National Marine Sanctuaries

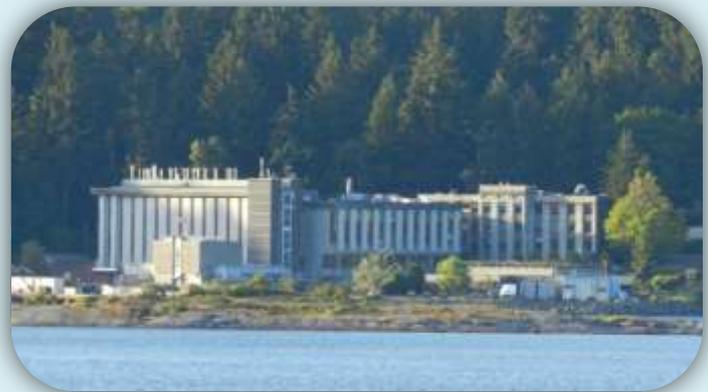
Marine Sanctuaries in USA are a Federal overlay on management of nationally important areas.

Dr Charles Wahle of the NOAA Marine Protected Areas Centre explained how the approach works “NOAA’s National Marine Sanctuary Program is arguably the US’ primary system of exclusively marine (including Great Lakes) protected areas, established to conserve their ecosystems and cultural resources for this and future generations. Now spanning 14 sites, including two Marine National Monuments, the sanctuary system protects some of the nation’s most treasured ocean areas. A new public nomination process holds the potential for the designation of new sites based on input and support from local communities and user groups. Fundamental to the sanctuary system’s goals and management approach, and the source of its greatest strengths and challenges, is the fundamental statutory mandate to facilitate multiple human uses that are compatible with the primary mission of resource protection. Consequently, many sanctuary sites have relatively few restrictions on ocean uses and rely instead on educating and engaging local communities and users as effective stewards of these areas to ensure their long-term conservation and sustainable use. Clearly, this more community-based approach places a premium on understanding and addressing the risks posed by ocean uses, especially as the human footprint on the ocean expands and the affected ecosystems respond to a changing climate.”

British Columbia Tries to Honour Treaty Relationships

British Columbia tried to recognise the sovereignty of its indigenous people over the sea, but has been stymied by Federal opposition.

Doug Biffard, then of the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation as a Lands Specialist explains “Many indigenous people value and refer to their relationship as being with the Queen rather than the current state entities. However, Gordon Campbell, the Provincial Premiere 2000 to 2010, took a bold step in recognising the sovereignty of the aboriginal of British Columbia. This changed the whole basis of the relationship. The aboriginal governing entities effectively became legitimate governments with which treaties and like instruments could be formed. The Race Rocks Ecological Reserve was selected as one of the pilot areas for the Oceans Act designation process. Federal government has control of navigation and fisheries. A paper was prepared setting out what was to be done in classifying areas, including a no-take fishing area at Race Rocks. Everyone including the Federal officials agreed. Part of this agreement was that the new regulation would exclude all fishing except indigenous fishing. The indigenous people however would exercise their sovereignty by an ancestor-honouring ceremony that would mean that their people would not exercise their right to take fish from the area. When the regulation was drafted in Ottawa, however, the terms were changed to ban fishing by the indigenous people. They then wrote saying that under the Douglas Treaties they would not accept this and would keep fishing. The designation then fell apart and bands in other parts of the country lost trust in the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.”



Pacific Research Station, Vancouver.



Marlborough Coastal Research Strategy

From the Marlborough District Council's (MDC) 2015 State of the Environment Report, it is clear that Marlborough's coastal waters are under pressure.

Widespread habitat damage and destruction from bottom-trawling, dredging, and anchoring; overfishing; and sedimentation from land-uses and fishing activity have all combined to negatively modify our marine ecosystem.

Historic research and sediment coring studies are revealing a dramatic loss of fish and shellfish abundance, and a significant decline in habitat integrity and diversity, along with degrading ecosystem services and loss of resilience.

MDC is working to better define causes and consequences of human activity on our coastal waters through targeted science and research. The aim is to provide high quality information to Council, government agencies, iwi, and the wider community, so that the right solutions are developed to reverse the decline.

MDC is keen to work through the Marlborough Marine Futures forum to develop a coastal science strategy.

This is particularly important for the Marlborough Sounds, given the multiple pressures on water quality, seabed ecosystems and species.

Surprisingly, given the importance of the Sounds to Kiwis, our knowledge about fundamental ecological processes and habitat quality is not as comprehensive as it needs to be for good management.

MDC has started to address some gaps with its multi-beam sonar mapping of the seabed throughout Totaranui/Queen Charlotte Sound (QCS), and the recent development of hydrodynamic models in QCS and Te Hoiere/Pelorus Sound (Pelorus).

There is also research underway funded by the Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) to identify habitats of critical importance for juvenile blue cod and terakihi, and the Sustainable Seas National Science Challenge is funding research into how organic matter (energy) moves through the food web from salmon farms.

Your involvement in helping to determine our research priorities will send clear signals to funding agencies. It could also inform future management strategies and lead to better integration.

The process will be useful in sharing knowledge about what has been done to date, and what that has told us and in helping us determine where we need to go next.

A lot of knowledge is held by individuals with many years of observations from fishing, boating or living in the Sounds. Iwi also hold traditional knowledge (Mātauranga Māori) which can help modern science studies better interpret findings.

One of the first steps will be to do a stock-take on the state of our collective current knowledge, what science is currently occurring, and what gaps can be identified.

A brief thematic overview will be sent out prior to the next Marine Futures forum, as a primer for discussion at a future forum meeting.



2011 Summer phytoplankton bloom near New Zealand. Photo: MDC

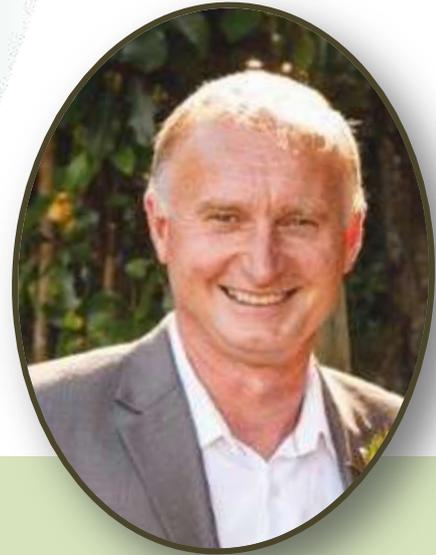


Sediment coring, Pelorus Sound. Photo: MDC



Spotlight on

Roy Grose



Kia ora koutou

I'm originally from Christchurch and have fond childhood memories of holidaying at Waikawa Bay and exploring the Marlborough Sounds. Back then it was quite different from today in so many ways. These short visits to Marlborough were the start of my love for the outdoors and my affinity with the Marlborough Sounds.

My past work as a national park ranger has taken me to some beautiful parts of the country including the Bay of Islands and MT Ruapehu. It was by chance I returned back to the Marlborough Sounds where my wife Claire and I brought up our three children living in Picton. Claire and I now reside in Blenheim.

It was a real privilege to live in the Picton community, to work in and serve the Sounds community as an operational manager for the Department of Conservation (DOC) for over 25 years. I now work across Te Tau Ihu, the top of the South Island as an Operations Director for DOC.

Pretty early on during my time in the Sounds I found there were a number of shared issues when it came to the marine environment which were difficult to grapple with for individuals, iwi, industry, community and organisations. These issues all centred round a shared limited resource with a number of competing interests. After a while it was pretty obvious solutions existed if people were able to work together rather than take an adversarial approach, however many of the issues then are still common today. No single individual, company, community or organisation can single handily solve complex issues, it requires an integrated approach. Land and sea are intertwined and connected. When it comes to the marine environment I personally believe we should take a "Ridge to Reef" view due to the complex interactions at play.

I would like to think we are learning how we best manage land... the stuff above the water but we tend to have an "out of sight, out of mind" approach when it comes to marine habitats. We are starting to gain a clearer picture of what makes up the various habitats under the waves and what some of the impacts may be. In my view enhancing our broader knowledge and understanding the various marine habitats through sound observations and science is one of the fundamental building blocks for making good decisions for the future.

The Marlborough coastline including the Cook Strait is a special and unique place locally, nationally and internationally. We are good at taking from or utilising the marine environment as a common shared resource but we are not very good at putting something back in terms of habitat protection, enhancement and long term sustainable management. To this end I believe we all have a collective obligation to look after what we have so we leave others who follow us with a healthy and productive marine ecosystem.

The journey ahead is not an easy one but we have an opportunity to make a difference through collaboration and everyone willing to give up a little. I look forward to Marlborough Marine Futures being able to assist and help facilitate meaningful honest dialogue and action between all interest groups. Together we can help identify the key issues facing us today and to work toward solutions in a positive way so the generations a head can enjoy, utilise and care for a healthy and productive marine environment in Marlborough.