

Bay of Islands Maritime Park Inc

Special Meeting and Workshop "Marine Protected Areas"

Tuesday 10 February 2009

Copthorne Hotel, Waitangi

Attendance

55 people, comprising BOI stakeholders, hapu, and members of the public plus visitors from Kaitaia, Doubtless Bay and Whangaroa.

Opening Karakia from George Riley, Te Runanga a Iwi o Ngapuhi.

Introduction by chairman, Peter Richards.

Peter outlined the fact that the BOIMP is an umbrella group bringing together approximately 30 tangata whenua, business, community, recreational, environmental and governmental organisations and associations that have an interest in improving the environmental health of our BOI. Naturally this is a group bringing together different cultures, different ideas, different philosophies, and differing opinions all trying, with dialogue between us all, to find ways to "heal" the Bay, so that all generations in the future may use and enjoy it.

Speaker: Alan Moore, Ministry of Fisheries

"North East Biogeographic Region Marine Protected Areas Plan"

Presentation as per handout.

Summary: Ministry of Fisheries working with DOC on a Marine Protected Areas Plan to create a network of protected areas. Unlike the previous approach which was to handle things on an individual case-by-case basis, this will take a more holistic approach drawing on community and interest groups. It is a government initiative, run by a Forum with Ministry of Fisheries and DoC in a support/administrative role.

The size and complexity of the area is reflected in the fact that there are 5 DOC Conservancies, 3 Fisheries Management Areas, 4 Regional Councils, 17 District Councils, 36 iwi, 1.4 million people and about half a million recreational fishermen in the NE Bioregion.

Speaker: Vince Kerr, DOC

"Marine Protected Areas"

Goals and what's happening

What should be goals? Restoring our future, looking to past to inform future decisions.

To take an integrated approach, look at tools available and use them in best way.

Tools may include:

- Marine Reserves
- Fisheries Act Tools
- Resource Management Act Tools
- Special Legislation
- Wildlife Refuges, Sanctuaries and Management Reserves
- Other Conservation Areas
- Customary Fisheries Management Tools
- Marine Mammal Sanctuaries
- Cable Protection Zones
- Crown Minerals Act Tools
- Maritime Transport Act Tools
- Biosecurity Act Tools

Local Fisheries Management possible tools:

- Local fisheries plans
- Input to MinFish plans
- Set netting control areas
- Dredging control areas
- Non-commercial zones
- Temporary & rotational closures
- Minimum and maximum size and catch limits
- Seasonal closures, e.g. spawning
- Protected species lists, e.g. hapuka, packhorse crays, red crayfish
- No-take fish feeding sites for tourism

Examples of Australia and Channel Islands, California were given and can be taken as benchmarks.

Network Design Principles:

- The MPA network will protect examples of the full range of natural marine habitats and ecosystems
- MPAs should be designated, based on a consistent approach to classification of habitats and ecosystems
- The MPA network should be viable
- National priorities for additions to the MPA network will be developed, and reviewed on an annual basis
- An evaluation programme and monitoring programme will be undertaken

Essentially a network design is principally informed by a biologically-based sets of objectives. Opportunity for us to define a local list of objectives for what's relevant to the Bay and then see how it can be implemented.

Biologically-based Objectives:

- Protection and maintenance of areas with high biological diversity;
- Protection of rare and unique features of the Bay of Islands marine biota. This refers to range distributions, endemism, and rare and unique community compositions;
- Protection of ecosystems and key habitats within these ecosystems that carry out important functions and services;
- Protection of endangered species and vulnerable habitats;
- Protection and maintenance of trophic interactions (i.e., food webs) including maintenance of interactions and associated linkages among similar and different ecosystems;
- Protection of all ecosystems (e.g., estuarine and shallow rocky reef) utilised by different life history stages (juvenile and adult) of a particular species;
- Protection and maintenance of migration pathways, feeding grounds and spawning grounds.

Coastal and Deepwater Classification:

- Classification is three-dimensional, taking into account water column and benthic features
- Extends from tidal limits in the coastal zone to the deep oceans, and applies to tidal wetlands, estuaries and coastal and oceanic systems
- Coastal/Deepwater boundary at 200 metre depth contour

- Not all habitat and ecosystem types that may be defined by the classification will necessarily be present or mapped in each biogeographic region or MEC class

Example of Mimiwhangata study by Kerr and Grace to show how it can benefit an ecosystem.

Moving forward...

There is a major study underway in the Bay with the Oceans 20/20 BOI Project

Aim is to fill the gaps to complete basic map to inform those members of the Forum that drive the development of the plan. This is the principal.

The question is what information should be included?

QUESTIONS

An extended question time to Vince Kerr and Alan Moore then commenced.

Q

Bryce Smith, Whangaroa

Taking into consideration the 670 Ha allocated by NRC for marine farming is there any thought as to how much area would be allowed for protected areas and also how they would be distributed?

A

Alan: NRC established this info through a consultation process. The MPA Forum will obtain similar info to dovetail with NRC consultations. The ideal was for 10% of coastal area in marine protection.

Vince: I'm interested in your question "How are these areas distributed?" They can be scattered area or close to each other; which do we choose and how do we choose? In the MPA plan we have guidelines of how to handle something on this large scale. Local Communities have the opportunity to be smart and get involved to make sure the areas are distributed to best effect for the Bay. 10% is ambitious, but perhaps it's just a beginning? This is the start of a process.

Q

John Kenderdine

Doubtless Bay Marine Protection Group

Fisheries forums – there are ten different fisheries forums looking at various management plans – how do they coordinate? How do you expect to draw together the results from all of these for a cohesive operation. Or is it a case of divide and rule?

Also a MPA Forum of only 14 members is not comprehensive enough. Should there be sub forums?

A

Alan: Links between the groups are crucial – they all are there for different purposes but some have overlapping interests. 14 members – how will they represent an entire area? The MinFish looked at the possibility of having multiple forums reporting to umbrella forum. From a government perspective this is complicated and expensive and the budget is limited. The key is that if there is one forum and if a subcommittee goes out to consult on a sector, they are reporting back to the decision makers. Keeping close to the decision makers means that meaning/feedback is less likely to be watered down. What is the key is finding good forum members who will look after their sector in way that is well consulted and simultaneously a focus on the broad

vision/greater purpose is maintained. The importance of forum members cannot be understated. However, the fundamental plane is to integrate local opinion.

Q

David Clarkson, BOIMP , BOICW

Getting good people on the forum means you should be asking experts or quality people, such as Dr Roger Grace, who would be required to forgo significant earning potential to volunteer for the Forum. Have you thought about paying to get the best?

A

Alan: There will be an honorarium to chairperson. The decision not pay volunteer forum members is a possible threat. Budgetary restraints. Travel expenses etc. will be covered.

Q

John Booth, EBOIPS, BOIMP

Dialogue thus far has not addressed policy to give special protection to outstanding/unique areas. (*Vince concedes omission, assures that it is*).

How many subregions are in this bioregion? How many communities do you have to deal with?

A

Alan: Ultimately the forum will decide how, but estimation in terms of budget were 10 community based meetings across the whole area. In terms of tangata whenua – we are still working on this one?

Q

Rod Brown, Vision KK, BOIMP

23 local authorities etc etc....given the number of bodies involved it is clearly a complex situation on land, hence the diversity of bodies. Although sea is one entity, the people involved in it are no less complex than on land. Should the biogeographical area be divided into three governance groups? Hard to marry the huge biogeographical region with the reality of people in multiple communities.

A

Alan: For forum to decide but perhaps more meetings....

Q

Steve Radich

BOIMP, recreational fisherman & journalist

Agrees MPA's are a good idea, but fishermen are always blamed. There is evidence that what we are putting into the ocean, sedimentation, sewage, fertilizer are equally destructive ...is there a parallel programme to manage the effects of **people** on the water. Got to fix all the problems, not just focus on one.

A

Vince Kerr

Million dollar question. Solution to the dilemma is the formation and ongoing work of this kind of group. It is an opportunity to tackle the catchment management issues of the BOI as well. BOIMP approaching problems from holistic view and thus the answer lies in this room.

Alan

The ministry is interested in land-based effects on fishing. Refer to research by Dr Mark Morrison on effects of land activity on fisheries.

Q

Jacquie Reed

NRC

Introducing herself. Previously with NIWA, now in NRC so aware of Mark Morrison's research. Worked on catchment issues – estuarine, sedimentation issues and land activity management in Auckland. Now will be following MPA process as NRC representative here.

Q

Owen Kingi, Whangaroa

How much is this for Pakeha and how much for Maori? Asking you to give the hapu in Whangaroa the opportunity to teach; and also, take away the oysters – seriously damaging the environment. Criticism that council work is usually down to the dollar. Appeal to take tangata whenua seriously and learn from it; let traditional knowledge inform process, not just glib use of name without substance. Official view is upside down; relying on old scientific information. Question of trust. Why should we trust you? At present we don't trust you. We want to build a relationship so that Maori are included in the process. Questions wisdom of Ngati Rehia mataitai; claims it was a mistake supported by the fisheries. Criticism of NRC for not being honest about intentions and only paying lip service to Maori. Appeal from the heart for you to talk to us and make use of life-learned knowledge of an area to preserve our resource.

A

Alan

A timely reminder. We recognize that we need to get to local people; the forum has the ability to reach all areas of the space to make sure all voices heard.

Q

Robert Willoughby, Ngati Kuta, Te Rawhiti

Good points have been raised here by the previous speaker; traditional knowledge and historical understanding of how Maori fished and used the sea, a nature-based system should be revisited. Secondly, areas in BOI, Whangaroa, Doubtless Bay etc. each have their own unique ecosystems. You need local knowledge of each of these. Without this knowledge there is a serious risk of trying to make results fit a process rather than finding truly valuable information and using it in best way possible. Knowledge is localized, still being sought and not easily assimilated. Current plan and process is not right. If the base line is a fishery that needs help and everyone wants to be managed better then all well and good. The dynamics of the waterway and the many different users is hard to bring together.

Q

David Wheeler

Are you looking at permanent protected areas or are they protected for a time period that will rotate?

A

Vince: We can look at all possible options. The point is to look at all the tools available and see how they can work. Rotational enclosures are possible; there are provisions in the fisheries act for that. We have to work within legislation...although it may be considered a successful outcome of the process to produce a series of recommendations for new legislation.

Q

Julie Kidman

So the MPA proposal will work within existing legislative areas in order to apply for status?

A

Vince: This is a community involved process to make recommendations within existing legislation. The Minister evaluates and makes recommendations to the departments which then puts in place the statutory process. What we are dealing now with is the first stage: to harness local knowledge and local participation.

Q

Martin Leiding, Russell Protection Soc, BOIMP

How much is this initiative supported by our current government?

A

Alan: The policy was introduced by the previous govt. No indication that the process will be discontinued. At present process going ahead and resources have been allocated.

Q

Chris Richmond

Pacific Ecologic

Query about network design and principals: what are these based on?

A

Vince: In summary, this is based on a series of principals much as in land care etc. It is about establishing a classification system then a set of objectives to protect representative areas around that classification, also including high level protection for special unique areas. The devil is in the detail. [See MPA policy for full description]. Because of the scale of the geographic spread there is a challenge to combine detail of local knowledge alongside the coarser level at a regional level. There is a need to make sense of a bioregion on both a local scale and on a practical, broader scale in order for the plan to proceed.

Q

Ken Ross

Northland Conservation Board, FNDC

Picking up comment from Bryce. Is this happening against a background of NRC and aquaculture. Is this picking up the pieces?

A

Alan: In some ways, yes. The aim is to minimise adverse effects on existing users – marine farmers, commercial fishers, mineral extractors. If NRC has done job right, aquaculture areas shouldn't be in areas in need of protection. We are partly relying on their processes and precedents and this will fit in with that landscape.

Vince: That is an implied valid criticism. The purpose of this is to bring everything into one planning process. The criticism is that this was not done earlier.

WORKSHOP

With David Clarkson BOIMP as “facilitator” the participants divided into 4 groups, selected a chairperson, were given an “ideas” handout, then set to work to discuss the MPA process in relation to the BOI.

The groups were asked to think about such questions as -

- How can we make the MPA process work for us
- How can we influence the selection of people to be Forum members.
- Do we need to, as a group, further develop our “best shot” ideas for MPA's to present to the Forum when they start in July.
- Is co-management a good concept to follow.
- Should the “Gifts and Gains” process be used in the Bay.

To stimulate discussion and for ideas, the participants were given copies of –

- The Guardians of Fiordland “Gifts and Gains” process. Each stakeholder “gifts” some of their benefits or rights to the environment in the overall interests of a better marine environment.
- Jim Peters ideas for the Marine Park process, which reflects the view of many stakeholders in the Bay.
- A plan of the Ngati Konohi initiatives, which is a very interesting form of co-management.
- A plan of the Jervis Bay Marine Park, showing what the Aussies have done across the ditch. Jervis Bay has many similarities to the BOI.

After 30 minutes each of the 4 chairpeople presented the meeting with their group's list of the most important and/or significant points.

These points to be conveyed to the MPA bureaucrats as they further develop the MPA Forum plan.

Results of workshop.

Group 1

1. Backcasting – looking forward and then working backwards to achieve these future goals.
2. Must include landcare groups/riparian management – taking a holistic approach
3. Looking at other ideas and what has worked before; successful precedents worldwide
4. Moratorium on fishing in spawning ground and
5. Throw back the big ones (fish) – must also include these two in MPA process – gifts and gains
6. Need more than 14 representatives – need local involvement/representation.

Group 2

1. Must build on existing networks and community groups for local knowledge and feedback
2. Gift & Gains principal (e.g. Fiordland) better than separate community and iwi based consultations
3. Ensure integration with all other processes/policies already in place

4. Recruit paid Forum representatives. Risk of bias/partiality if volunteer-only based.
5. Draw on locals from the outset – consider co-management
6. Size of area and representation inadequate: set up for failure.

Group 3

1. Must have holistic approach - Improve water quality by Forum working with Landcare, NRC and other existing agencies
2. Encourage more fish: limit on catch size, throw big ones back, commercial limits, no fishing competitions, temporary closures and sustainable fishing also as part of holistic “package” – in combination with, not just MPA’s in isolation..
3. Education and enjoyment involving MPA’s, schools, dive groups to make it an attraction. (Example: existing EMR group)
4. BOI Economy protection – gift and gains process, acknowledging all groups interest , knowledge and rights – better than proposed separate consultation processes.
5. Economic spin offs from MPAs
6. Make full use of the benefits of customary protocols and knowledge

Group 4

1. Select multiple “Cupboards” within representative ecosystems to replenish/restore the Bay
2. Be proactive – using the existing maritime groups throughout region to liaise, report and communicate with the Forum
3. Raising profile of MPA’s: PR and media (local newspapers to start with)
4. Regular consultation of Forum with BOIMP and its stakeholders plus joint meetings: need commitment and communication protocol to ensure full use of local and traditional knowledge plus ongoing feedback.
5. Need stakeholder representative for Forum from BOI, not East Cape – if not, then reconsider using SubForums.
6. Concern with commercial pressures on Forum.

At the close of the meeting Vince Kerr (DOC) gave the participants a firm commitment that he would put these minutes containing the participants wishes and hopes before his Conservator and Vice Conservator as well as tabling them at the NE Bioregion MPA Forum meeting on March the 12th 2009.