

Press statement

Marlborough Marine Futures Project Launched

The Marlborough Marine Futures project was launched by local MP Stuart Smith and the Councillor Trevor Hook of the Marlborough District Council today at Kaikpupu Point in the Marlborough Sounds.

Stuart Smith MP for Kaikoura welcomed the initiative on behalf of the Government. “This Government is highly supportive of stakeholders sorting out solutions that work in their local environment. Kaikoura showed what could be done and the Government got behind that consensus and enacted special legislation to implement what the community had agreed to. We all know the Marlborough Sounds is bigger and more complex, but if this can be done anywhere it can be done here. I applaud the hard work of the Marlborough Sounds Integrated Management Trust and their courage to kick things off. I will be watching progress with interest and help where I am able” he said.

Eric Jorgensen Chair of the Marlborough Sounds Integrated Management Trust said:

“Our community is ready to be a testing ground for better ways of protecting the marine environment. Nowhere in New Zealand is the management of the land and water so intimately related. A better approach to marine protected areas is one of the building blocks we need.

We have been working towards a more integrated approach for some years. Only something like this will provide the basis for sorting out the issues we face in a sustainable and fair way. Dr Kay Booth said the management issues in the Marlborough Sounds were “wicked” and “messy” and that has certainly been our experience.

At this moment our recreational fisheries are under pressure and our commercial fisheries are facing problems. This region has 80% of the country’s marine farming and this has been the subject of extensive litigation. We have just one marine reserve, and no Maori fishing reserves.

We have multiple local and central government processes underway or proposed in our area. There is huge need for effective integration of these and of collaboration with the local communities and stakeholders. We are stepping up into this role.

Starting on 8 March 2015 we will be working alongside our Council to sort all this out and the first step is to establish a credible and well supported Stakeholder Working Group. Everyone will get to have their say and we will be supporting the development of local leadership and regional consensus in the future of our marine environment. We want to have the community choose the Stakeholder Working Group members and we have set 22 March for that to happen. There is a lot going on already and the community voice needs to be heard as soon as possible” he said.

The Marlborough District Council is backing the Trust, with funding and support, because it can see the value of an independent body committed to bringing everyone to the table to tackle some very difficult issues. Council regional development committee chairman Trevor Hook says it’s very rewarding to see how the diverse groups with a stake in the Marlborough Sounds are committing to working partnerships.

“The Council is very clear that the way forward must be collaborative; there are many voices to be heard and we have the best chance of achieving genuine integrated management by working through the issues in a constructive manner” he said.

Anyone interested in these events can register at info@marlmarinefutures.co.nz and for more information see the website at www.marlmarinefutures.co.nz or phone Peter Lawless on 021 894 363.