



Marlborough Marine Futures

Newsletter April 2015

Foundation Workshop - 8 March 2015

The Workshop on 8 March began the public process for the Marlborough Marine Futures project. The day gave participants an overview of plans to establish stakeholder leadership for integrating management and resolving the big issues in the Marlborough marine environment.

Where citizens initiate processes to develop solutions to shared issues there is no external body with the power to direct things. The Marlborough Sounds Integrated Management Trust was very clear on the day that their role is to get the resources, initiate things and manage relationships with agencies and politicians. They are not seeking to direct particular outcomes.

This means that it will be up to citizens and stakeholders to select the Stakeholder Working Group that will develop the Strategic Plan for the marine area. The group will be the prime focus for developing solutions that maximise gains and minimise losses across the whole system. It was evident at the workshop that selecting the SWG is the primary concern of participants. Some parties are concerned that the size of the group suggested by Trustees might lead to their interests not being well represented. Others wanted to be sure that selection processes would lead to the inclusion of individuals with formal mandate from particular interest groups.

The Trust took these concerns on board and is working through how the best possible SWG can be formed. To help that they are circulating a series of documents on scope, terms of reference and process. They intend to make their thinking transparent and provide a clear basis for decisions on participation.

The facilitators emphasised the need to have the right people in the room for the second workshop, now to be held on 3 May in Picton. This is because in a "bottom up" process the participants need to be able to assess the potential members of the SWG face to face. The people in the room are the pool of candidates and they are also the selection panel. Their job is to select a working group that is the best one for the long haul. They need to assess the way individuals are connected to stakeholder sectors, how well they can work cooperatively, their commitment to the bigger picture and the wellbeing of the Marlborough marine environment. The people in the room also need to assess the SWG as it forms, noting gaps and overlaps and becoming confident that this new group is the one that they will mandate to do the job.



Nick Main – Independent Chair - Stakeholder Working Group, Sea Change Tai Timu Tai Pari

Nick Main gave important insights into how collaboration can work in practice for dealing with complex issues in the marine environment. The Sea Change Project has made great strides in the Hauraki Gulf and is due to report in July 2015 with a spatial plan.

Their Working Group is small, just 14 members, and it was important that they were appointed from the stakeholders not from “above”. It succeeds based on the three Cs: collaborative, committed, connected.

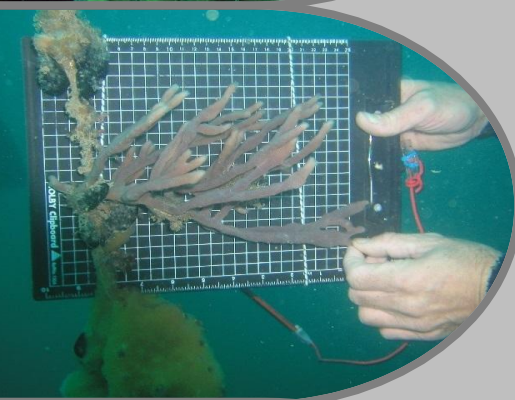
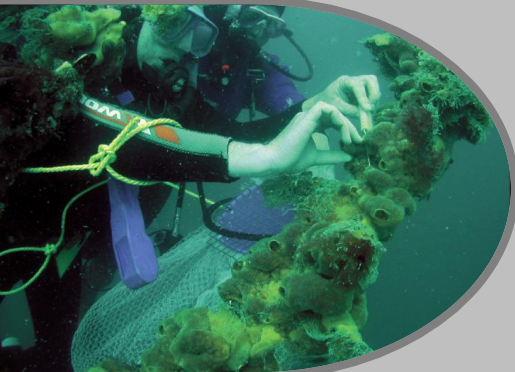
Nick emphasised the need for working group participants to *collaborate, be brave, maintain focus, and commit to the kaupapa - to the very end*. He said that members have had to work hard to understand where Maori values and world view were unfamiliar. They have taken advantage of differing perspectives to resolve issues creatively and done this by dealing with the facts and the issues rather than the person or personalities.

In terms of the group as a whole he said that it had been important to maintain a trusting environment in which views are freely expressed and opinions respected. Members have had to commit to staying at the table till each issue was sorted. They have also had to learn how to deal appropriately with confidential information. The group has had to develop its own culture and protocols and these have included elements such as karakia. Good time management has been vital both for members and the group as a whole.

In Hauraki the use of “round tables” allowed more people to be involved and solutions developed to particular issues: water quality, fish and fish stocks, biodiversity and biosecurity, aquaculture, infrastructure, accessible Gulf, matauranga Maori.

He said that a big support team was required and that the following elements were used: involving people, listening posts, newsletters, website, Hauraki hundreds, surveys, technical support, mana whenua engagement, and a plan writing team.





Steve Urlich, Sean Handley, and Chris Cornelisen

Three scientists outlined their work and understanding of the Marlborough marine environment.

Steve Urlich of the Marlborough District Council said that the area comprises a whopping 725,000 hectares and over 1800 km of coastline. It contains a diverse arrange of inter-tidal and sub-tidal habitats from the high-energy bays of the East Coast, estuaries such as the Wairau Lagoons and Havelock, sheltered embayments like Port Underwood and within the two Sounds, rocky reefs around the outer coast and Sounds, and the open water of Cook Strait, the outer Sounds and Tasman Bay.

He said “The marine environment is subject to a number of selection pressures or what we scientists term “stressors”. Fish farming, mussel farming, sedimentation from land - use, outfall pipes, commercial and recreational fishing are chronic stressors, in that they occur relatively persistently or frequently although their impact in time and space varies. There are also acute stressors, which can cause mortality to species and damage to an ecosystem such as oil spills, channel dredging and the unauthorised discharge of toxic contaminants. These are the subject of ad hoc investigations should these events arise. Council’s monitoring programme is focused on understanding the underlying dynamics and condition of different parts of the coastal environment. This enables us to build baselines from which to better understand the effects of some these chronic stressors”.

Sean Handley described the work of NIWA, including his own work, on what has happened to the sea floor communities. He has concluded that “Significant changes appear to have occurred to the benthos of Pelorus Sound, including; loss of extensive intertidal and subtidal green-lipped mussel reefs, loss of biogenic habitats, and contingent changes to sediment structure. Factors most likely to have driven these changes are; over-fishing of shellfish stocks (dredging and hand-picking), contact fishing methods (shellfish dredging and finfish trawling), increased sedimentation from changing land-use over time, and ongoing aquaculture and forestry developments.”

Chris Cornelisen provided background on the work of the Cawthron Institute and its history. He said their work in the region primarily focuses on interactions between aquaculture and the environment. The aquaculture industry leads to environmental effects but also depends on high water quality. Shellfish and finfish farms have different effects on the environment. One involves culture of filter feeders that deplete phytoplankton, while the other involves addition of feed and associated nutrients. He said the coastal marine area of the Marlborough region is exposed to the same pressures common to other regions of the world. Key potential threats include pollution, resource exploitation, loss of coastal habitats and longer-term processes associated with climate change and ocean acidification. He said that many different activities on land and in the sea affect the Marlborough marine environment and their effects needed to be considered in the context of ocean processes, longer time frames and how these express as synergistic and cumulative effects.



Spotlight on Raymond Smith



Born and bred in Picton with a family base in Anamahanga/Port Gore, Raymond attended Picton School, and Queen Charlotte College, and graduated Te Kaihanga Maori trade training in Christchurch. Raymond worked locally for 20 years for the Parks Board (before DOC was created), the freezing works and elsewhere, alongside raising his extensive family (at 51 Raymond is a Great Grandfather and is actively involved in bringing up his mokopuna).

In response to the changes he viewed during those years, Raymond completed an Iwi Environmental Management Bachelor's Degree and has subsequently worked for his iwi Te Runanga o Ngati Kuia for more than 15 years, with Treaty settlements, RMA and in an advisory role to Marlborough District Council, and Ministry of Fisheries, and now Ministry for Primary Industries.

"I see Ngati Kuia as one of the few links to the past of this area – right back beyond the people who were here (Top of the South) when Captain Cook and Abel Tasman arrived. I bring a cultural component to the Trust but understand iwi have their own individual mana - we're working with each other to engage with the Marlborough Marine Futures process. One of my main interests is ensuring iwi are recognized for their rights and interests in the area, for their historical associations and that these values are protected into the future. We don't want to be left out – we don't want others to do the talking for us. We get to participate, our views are heard, considered and given regard. We're part of the community - long term players and stayers in this community."

"I have concerns for the management of Marlborough and the marine environment. I work with other iwi, Councils, DOC, Ministry for the Environment, individual people and in an advisory role for Council and fisheries. Working like this, you get to see the stuff that others don't - the good work these organizations do, and also where the gaps are. I think the main gap is the lack of integration between all the agencies and all the things happening in the region. I'm lucky enough to have an eye across the board on customary, recreational, commercial fisheries, land use, generational changes and cultural oversight. I bring a perspective from all those places. Collective management can make a difference – the collaborative process, with the right objective makes sense to me."

"I've seen a lot of change in my time. How the cultures exist and interact has changed - it was pretty hard as a kid – we've been in the midst of changing world views. We weren't brought up so much under the influence of kaitiakitanga – we were resource users and we were good at it. I've seen fisheries stocks decline and habitat destruction – that was what we all did, that was the way of 'growth'. We were all part of the problem – we had a limit, it was 'fill up the bin'."

"In more recent decades, the cultural ethic of kaitiakitanga is being reinforced. Doing an Environmental Management Degree has given me some good tools to make or encourage change and to support others – a strong driver for me was to see another world view and to encourage kaitiakitanga in this generation."

"I believe that when people are educated on issues, things will change, things will get better. If it is our obligation as kaitiaki to educate, we'll do it. For instance, people can't say "we didn't understand habitat destruction"; or fail to understand the results of bad fishing practice, we can understand the impacts of cutting down our forests and the importance of replanting; of how valuable the estuaries are, and so on. I think we have the tools to bring better visions into being. We honour the interactive nature of life – something always relies on that thing you've just taken out."

"We remember the past, we do things for the present and future. It would be great to be an old kaumatua and see - wow – there is an abundant over supply that we can enjoy in a traditional way with sustainability at the heart of everything we do. We believe in conservation for utilization - as far as the Marlborough marine environment goes, it has never been as intensely utilized as it is now – if we don't step up for those kinds of areas, who will?"