

Chairmans Conference Welcome

Ladies and Gentlemen, distinguished guests, welcome to the 2005 Paua Industry Conference. A conference which once again combines the wild catching sector with the tame farming sector.

The wild sector has come a very long way in the past two years and you can all give yourselves a big pat on the back for that.

I'd like to single out a few key people who got us here today.

Daryl Sykes, he's not here today but he will be here tomorrow. Daryl gave us a brilliant presentation in Queenstown 2 years ago. That was the catalyst for change, not to say that he is entirely altruistic as it's very much in the rock lobster industries interest to have strong CSO's alongside, but Daryl's ground work and untiring support and vision was invaluable.

Also at Queenstown Tom McClurg made an impassioned speech to support the then CEO of the Paua Management Company and for industry to pull together. The industry did that and did give Jeremy Cooper their support but on a new foundation.

That foundation was constructed with generous support from many industry sectors but in particular from TOKM and Ocean Ranch who supported the road show that sold the PIC concept to the regions and laid the foundations with the formation of the PAUAMAC's.

Then it was up to the elected PIC Directors to pick the model up and make it work. They have done that in an exemplary fashion. You will meet them all today.

Without everyone's support (and I know this is an over used clique), we simply would not be here today and our industry would be in a whole heap of strife.

That's not to say that we are home and hosed – we are not. But we now have the structure, the unity, the will, the cooperation from outside agencies and the horse power to get to where we want to be.

So where is that? Where do we want to be? What is the vision?

Well what about a TACC back around 1250 tonnes?

How about catch rates of 60 kilos an hour?

How about a community that welcomes us to the beach with a friendly wave like this instead of the other wave?

How about a community that jealously guards our shared and abundant resource from fish thieves!

My hope is that by the end of the next two days you will have stopped thinking that I've gone stark raving mad and instead will clearly see that this type of vision is achievable.

Over the next 2 days, with your active participation and by adopting the right tools and attitudes we can map out the path to get us there.

So - please take advantage of the wide variety of conference delegates we have here. If you cannot find someone interesting and useful to talk to you have come to the wrong conference. The feng shui conference was last week.

We have in particular, excellent representation from MFish. I urge you to utilise tea and lunch breaks to talk to them. Their en mass presence and seniority of delegates is testament to both a new era of collaborative fisheries management and recognition that we are now a unified industry willing and able to meet our obligations and challenges that will accompany change towards co-management.

On the compliance front we have both the new and past national compliance managers here being Steve Stuart and Dave Wood, as well as the local district compliance manager that many of you will know, John Slaughter. They are here in part to learn how our industry is moving rapidly towards responsible stewardship of the paua resource and as such we will deserve and require less of their attention than in the past. They are also here to build bridges and relationships to maximise the effectiveness of the compliance unit so their newly found spare attention can be focused firmly and relentlessly on fish thieves. So please put past inadequacies (on both sides) aside and engage with them constructively. Both Dave Wood and I, through our involvement in the joint compliance working group have come to recognise that we want the same thing. Where we started out bristling at and talking across each other we are now talking the same language. That is remarkable progress and the compliance managers are here to continue that progress. Make use of them and the many other delegates we have here over the next two days.

Thank you

Ed Arron
Chairman Paua Industry Council Ltd.