

PAUA INDUSTRY COUNCIL Ltd

DECEMBER 2010

Another Year Over...

In this final newsletter of 2010 we outline industry plans for the coming calendar year, the Year of the Rabbit in the Chinese calendar, though on the Chatham's and Stewart Island it might seem more like the year of the shark as you will read further on.

The Chinese New Year and Lantern Festivals fall on February 3 and February 17 respectively and most of you will have been fishing hard to meet the increased market demand which those celebrations underpin. International market demand for canned abalone seems to have taken a turn for the better at last and this has led to an increase in the beach price able to be offered by marketers, something most welcome in these times of economic gloom for many New Zealand exporters.

Upcoming plans include our national paua industry conference next Winter, likely to be held in either Christchurch or Queenstown during May, trialling of diver safety gear (including UBA) under

Special Permit in Pau 4 and stunted stock fishing in Pau 3 amongst other things.

We also update you on what work has been underway during the season and also give a general overview of issues of interest.

The year has been a difficult one for PIC with a steadily increasing workload. Projects such as the roll out of fine scale data logging systems, dealing with the implications of the Codex organisations demands around biotoxin issues and everything from Aquaculture Law reform to the proposed repeal of the 2004 Foreshore and Seabed Act, require a great deal of horsepower. We are grateful therefore for the support shown by all Pauamcs during the year, especially the effort put in by your Chairmen and executives. Thank you all for the enthusiasm and help.

Watching the Shark Watchers

Seeing a big old white pointer in alongside you in the water is probably not going to be the highlight of the average paua diver's day. However in some parts of the world, South Africa and Mexico for example, tourists pay good money to experience just that. Their particular taste of marine adventure tourism is of course made possible by sitting safely inside a metal cage with the sharks attracted to viewing range by a combination of burley scent trails, tow baits and reward feeding of the white sharks.

This particular form of tourist operation has attracted its share of controversy overseas where locals see a link between shark cage tourism and increased shark attacks on humans. In response South African and Australian State governments have moved to regulate and control such commercial activities. Unfortunately for our industry a number of shark cage tourist operators are now building up their businesses to cater to this market around Stewart Island and Chathams.

The fact that no regulations of any sort exist in New Zealand to control shark tourism is especially alarming and already signs of irresponsible and dangerous practice are apparent. Last year Pauamac5 wrote to the Conservation Minister asking for DOC to use its regulatory powers to control things. The response was a limp suggestion that paua divers get together with the shark tour promoters and sort it out. This has not proved possible and now Seafic is supporting a strong push to have a new set of regulations developed and written under the Wildlife Act, using parts of the Marine Mammals Protection Regulations 1992 as a template to protect both the sharks themselves and other users of the coast.

PIC will be supporting this push as a priority. In the meantime you should exercise extreme caution if such shark cage tourist operators are set up in the area you dive. It would also be helpful if you could lobby your local authority, MP or DOC to have shark watch tourism firmly regulated.

PAU4: Improving diver safety project

It is unfortunately a feature of our most productive QMA, Pau4, that increasing numbers of white pointer sharks and subsequent close calls means that locals fear further attacks may be inevitable.

To try and put in place some sort of counter measures Pauamac4 supported by PIC is investigating a number of initiatives either prevent or minimise the chance of injury or death from shark attack. PIC understand that MFish will approve the Pau4 Special Project to allow the trialling of various gear that could offer divers increased protection from Great White Sharks by mid December.

One of the tools that will be investigated will be the use of underwater breathing apparatus (UBA) and this will include

hookah and scuba. The ability to use UBA will minimise the need for divers to transit back and forth to the surface for a breath and so reduce the opportunity for shark attack at the most vulnerable time of the dive. Chathams divers have also found that the ability to take cover on the bottom is a big help when a shark encounter happens. Planned equipment to be trialled for safety also includes electronic "shark shields" and Australian designed dive sled / cages.

Providing the Special Permit is approved Pau4 are aiming to get this project underway in January 2011. Interestingly, some divers involved in the dive qualification course held as part of the build up to the UBA trials recently at the Waitangi wharf were buzzed by a 3m 'whitey'.

Data Loggers

Question – Why do we need to use data loggers? The main reason is so we can develop real time key performance indicators that allow us to monitor paua stocks at the scale of the sub-populations (i.e. reef or bed). A good example of a real time key performance indicator is the dashboard on your car. By looking at it you can gauge what's happening and get advanced warning of a potential problem. It doesn't cost you anything because the indicator system is built into the car. That 'dashboard' is exactly what we need for paua fisheries.

The current stock assessments don't do this as they are at a coarse 'whole of QMA' scale and are normally built on data that is months old.

We need the systems developed that allow us to monitor each paua reef in real time so we can see if something is going wrong and then do something about it and then monitor it to see if the changes we have implemented are improving the situation.

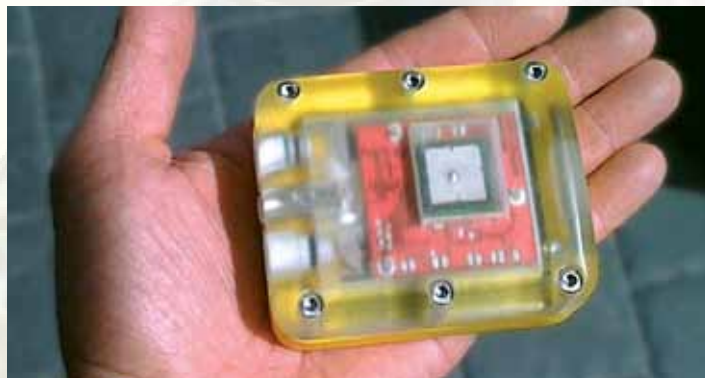
Data loggers are the best way to collect the base data because it's mostly automated and extremely cheap to record; it's at the right scale (we only fish where there are paua beds); its highly accurate and can't be 'tampered' with; and the data is digital, which means there are no manual entries so it is easy and cheap to send via the web and archive electronically etc.

Most PauaMacs purchased a small number of the Turtle units (to record Diver effort) late last year and now that the development of the Boat unit (to record each divers catch) has been completed PauaMacs are now ramping up the number of they own. At the start of the October season there were 76 Turtles and 45 Boat units spread around our PauaMacs and training days were held in each region.

The issue of data privacy has been raised by various harvesters so PIC has developed a policy document that explains how things will work. This document has been added as an appendix to each PauaMac's Annual Operating Plan.

The building of the secure database is completed and files from the data loggers can now be uploaded to it (and it's a very simple straight-forward process).

Like all state of the art, trial-blazing technology we expected some teething problems and there have been two problems since the data logger roll out.



1. The boat units have had to be recalled and the buttons replaced. Zebratech received these buttons in three batches but one batch contained faulty buttons (instead of being waterproof to 10 metres they leaked when a wet glove was used to push the button). Unfortunately it was impossible to identify which batch buttons were from, so Zebratech have had to replace all buttons on all units. If the buttons on your unit haven't been replaced, please return it to Zebratech as soon as possible. The company that manufactures these buttons are a reputable firm based in Canada and they also manufacture buttons for EPIRBS and the US Military. They aren't taking the faulty batch lightly but it will take a few more months to get the issue sorted out.

2. We have had a couple of instances where the Turtle unit leaked. The problem has been identified as slight shrinking of the urethane cases as it cured. It is easily rectified by tightening the six bolts that hold the units together. A message was sent to all PauaMacs but if you unit hasn't been tightened can you please do it as soon as possible. Don't over tighten them – for the right torque put the long arm of an Allen key into the bolt head and use the short arm to tighten the bolt.

We are selling the old GPS units (the off the shelf Garmin ForeTrex 100 units) so if anyone has any of these still sitting with their fishing gear can they please contact their local PIC director or email Jeremy Cooper.

Rounding of landed weights

Check the Explanatory Notes on the inside cover of your PCELR book and you will see a note about how to record weights. It states "...do not record fractions of a kilogram on a PCELR form. You must round down to the next lower whole kilogram."

MFish have reiterated that this is the law and it is how paua landing weights must be recorded on the PCELR & MHR forms.

This means when you receive the landing docket from the LFR you need to disregard the decimal place and any numbers that appear after it. For instance, if the landing docket says 223.95 kg you need to record 223 kg on your PCELR and on your MHR. The important point is the person supplying the ACE needs to do the same – they supply 223 kg to cover the ACE required for the landing. If the PCELR 'landing' figure and the ACE 'used' figures are different then it gets horribly confusing and harvesters will find they will run into difficulties with ACE top ups being required and probably deemed value invoices being generated. What the LFR records in their record keeping system is irrelevant as this has no bearing on the balancing of ACE and the creation of deemed value chargers.

If any Quota or ACE holders experience any further problems on this one could they please contact Jeremy or Storm.

Codex – Marine Biotoxins and You

Codex has been one of the bigger issues facing us for the last year and, while we hope the end is in sight for this one, it is worth a reminder of the background to assess what progress has been made on it.

In 2008 South Africa proposed a new world standard for 'Live Abalone and for Raw Fresh Chilled or Frozen Abalone, for Direct Consumption or for Further Processing' to Codex Alimentarius the World Health Organisation body responsible for food safety. This proposed standard included the following requirements for abalone being exported:

- Abalone harvesting areas or farms to be approved by the official agency.
- Limits for Marine Biotoxins – Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning (PSP), Saxitoxin Group, and where abalone is harvested from waters known or suspected to contain other toxins monitoring for the presence of these toxins.
- Microbiological monitoring programmes for growing/harvesting areas
- Microbiological limits for abalone for both E.coli and Salmonella

Similar compulsory programmes run for New Zealand bivalve shellfish industry costs them millions annually. It was estimated that if the same programmes were in place for paua it would cost the industry \$1.5 to \$2 million each year. This cost would be carried by paua quota owners and would be a severe financial burden. To fight this proposed Codex standard, Jim Sim (NZ Food Safety Authority) and Tony Craig (sponsored by AFL) attended the next Codex meeting (they are held 18 months apart) and helped to have the proposed standard rejected and forced a redrafting. This breathing space allowed for changes which worked in our favour.

The revised draft standard has essentially removed the need for on-going microbiological monitoring programmes for harvest areas. The marine biotoxin section has also been revised to allow for the official agency to determine the whether a risk exists in any geographical area under its control and if so put the necessary requirements in place.

Critically for us the official agency is now the New Zealand Food Safety Authority (NZFSA) which is now recognised as the authority competent to make decisions and whose findings will be accepted by the Codex organisation.

To build a base case PIC have contracted Brenda Hay who is a world recognised expert on bio toxins. This base case study has come at a cost and Pauamacs have been funding this (\$16,000 to date) even though none of them had budgeted for it. The biotoxin issue has been a classic blindsided event for the NZ paua industry.

The base case study has served to satisfy NZSFA that no significant problems exist but to be in the clear a risk assessment to determine the risk of marine biotoxins to abalone in the New Zealand context is still required.

Initial investigation predicted a cost to the paua industry of around \$275,000 (plus the cost of gathering the samples) for the Cawthron Institute (the only Southern Hemisphere research organisation able to do full biotoxin testing) to design and carry out the assessment. PIC considered this excessive and after enlisting Seafic help and commissioning a report on the current and historic evidence of biotoxin occurrence in NZ have entered into a collaborative approach with the Australian abalone industry, which faces a similar problem to us. The total cost of this is likely to be around A\$450,000, of which our share will be around NZ\$80,000 with NZFSA paying \$30,000 and the paua industry paying \$50,000 spread over two years.

Over the coming year the biotoxin programme will be carried out and some divers will be asked to assist with sample collection where algal bloom / biotoxin events occur.

We are confident that for the cost involved we will have a robust, internationally credible Risk Assessment to fight off the CODEX threat and that no on-going yearly monitoring will be required.

It has to be emphasised that this is a problem that we have to deal with, just ignoring it and hoping it will go away means that the World Health Organisation will simply impose its own set of export rules on us.

Any practical help you can offer when sampling needs to be done will be most appreciated.

Boat Major Trauma / Blood Loss First Aid Kits

As part of the Pau4 Diver Safety Gear project we have had St John develop a 'Major Trauma / Blood Loss' kit. This has been developed along the lines of what the SAS soldiers use in a combat situation and includes combat tourniquets, combat bandages and combat dressings etc. The idea is that this kit would only be used in the event of major trauma / blood loss characteristic of attacks by big sharks. It doesn't have the normal day-to-day stuff like sticky plasters and butterfly clips. The kit comes in a heavy duty waterproof Pelican case and costs \$512.38 (including GST) however the price drops to \$319.65 (including GST) if you want to replace the Pelican case with a back pack. If you want to order one of these first aid kits for your boat then please contact PIC as soon as possible.





Customary Harvest – Mātaihai

The granting of a number of mātaihai reserves by Fisheries Minister, Phil Heatley, over the last few months illustrates the approach to mātaihai applications.

Very early in his first term as Minister he made it clear that he was unenthusiastic about the free for all scramble that had characterised the previous Ministers attitude. Any mātaihai application which he was presented with which was seriously challenged by other stakeholders has quietly languished on the in-tray at MFish. Those where the applicant rununga or iwi were prepared to reach a reasonable compromise with other stakeholders, such as the inshore fishing industry groups, have progressed.

Those granted which are of interest to the paua industry are three small reserves around Titi Islands, Stewart Island, which came into effect in July and the recently granted Te Kaio (Banks Peninsula) and Moeraki (Otago) which come into effect on December 16. The latter two were negotiated between the PauaMac's involved and the applicant rununga, and compromise boundaries were identified. While neither compromise was ideal, they reduced the mātaihai area to a level that should minimise the impact on paua fish-stocks.

We would obviously prefer that there were no more mātaihai closures. If there are to be it is our contention that the Crown accepts some responsibility for the sustainability of paua fisheries by purchasing and retiring quota to mitigate displaced effort effects. However the political will is not there to do this so at this stage we need to work hard with rununga to achieve equitable compromise.

The likely order of further decisions is that advice papers are being finalised for:

- Kaihoka and Anatori (West Coast Pau7). We have some hope that at least one of these is contentious enough to be declined by the Minister or sent back for further negotiation.
- Bruce Bay, Mussel Point, Tauperikaka and Hunts Beach – these small applications in the southern west coast (Pau6) are also nearing completion, and are likely to have little effect on us.

Less advanced though likely to be looked at in 2011:

- Kairakau and Paoanui Point (Southern Hawes Bay) – large application of three areas has been reduced to two in response to submissions. The applicant has recently approached MFish with amended boundaries to the Kairakau application. MFish has mapped the revised boundaries and is seeking confirmation with the applicant. It is expected that commercial interests will be consulted on the revised boundaries.
- Pukaroro and Matakītiki a Kupe (Southern Wairarapa) – MFish has not heard from the applicant recently. MFish will seek clarity as to whether the applicant wants to proceed.
- Tory Channel – A highly contentious one which has been strongly objected to by several inshore groups. Submissions are now back with the applicant for consideration. We consider that in its current form the Minister would decline this application.
- D'Urville Island – (Marlborough Sounds) – the oldest application (Feb 2000). MFish understands that the applicant may be reconsidering this application and other areas.
- Otakou – (Otago Harbour) – all consultation complete. The application covers the entire harbour with six small excluded zones for fishing-related activity. Lots of issues for the clam fishery and also overlapping boundaries with other area controls (eg, ecological areas). MFish will address this application when it has the resources available.
- Waitutu (Fiordland) – another large old application. Te Runanga o Oraka Aparima has informed MFish that they wish to take over the application from Waitutu Incorporation and evaluate the application as part of a review of needs for the wider rohe.

MFish are unaware of any other mātaihai applications in the pipeline at this stage though they remain informed of on-going work by the Te Korowai group in Kaikoura to identify areas which might be able to be progressed if there is sufficient support. Pau3 representatives are putting in a great effort to ensure that paua industry interests are protected in the Te Korowai process. Keep up the good work Dave, Fred and Phil!

Welcome to the Paua Industry Council Ltd.

Feel free to look around the web-site for information about Paua and the Council.

Welcome to the website of the Paua Industry Council Ltd. We have prepared lots of information so that you can find what you are looking for quickly and easily. If you are looking for information about the council- who we are and what we do, please visit the [About Us](#) page.

If you are doing a school project on Paua or on the Paua industry, check out our [School Projects](#) page for some tips and links to information for you to download.



PICL is the national umbrella service agency for the 5 regional commercial stakeholder groups [Read More...](#)



Here at the PICL, we are involved in a number of projects. Compliance, rights protection, re-seeding coordination.... [Read more...](#)



Are you in the paua industry? Take a look at our [Fisheries Management Tools](#) page.

PIC and PauaMac website

We have agreed with SeaFIC to move our PIC web site so that it will now be hosted on their server system. This will allow us to be better linked with other happenings within the wider seafood industry plus it will allow scope for PauaMacs to set it their own site meaning easy access for all to newsletters, management stuff, archived news, weather sites, maps and so on.

Personnel changes at comms in seafic have slowed this changeover down somewhat, but we hope to see progress in the early new year.

PCELR form review

Always looking to improve things, PIC have initiated a review of the PCELR form. Ideas that have been put forward are:

1. The space for recording the vessel registration currently has only five places but most boats now have six digits.
2. Identify whether a boat boy was used.
3. We should change the 'diving conditions' to swell height and the visibility and enter a number on metres to indicate these.
4. If the regulations are changed some time in the future to allow the use of UBA in Pau4 we need to think how this will be handled on the PCELR.
5. The ID of the Turtle unit the diver recorded his effort on and the ID of the Boat unit the divers catch was recorded on.
6. Record any paua that are taken as recreational catch on the PCELR (other species would still need to be on recorded on a CERL)
7. Change the dive code to the divers SITO number.

If you have any other suggestions please pass these on to your PauaMacs PIC director.

Exploring management of stunted stocks in PAU 3

PICL are working with PauaMac3 to progress a project that is aimed at developing a way of identifying stunted stocks around Banks Peninsular.

The idea is to characterize any morphometric markers (i.e. difference in shell length vs shell height) that may exist between paua of similar age in stunted vs normal populations. If a morphometric marker can be found it would be used to identify paua that are mature (plus three years) but are below 125mm in length.

It's early days and has taken a couple of years but Dr Craig Mundy (head of abalone research in Tasmania) is overseeing the project. Once completed the project should be a way of fishing stunted stocks in a manner acceptable to MFish.

Catch Sampling – Shell Sampling Programme – The Red Bags

As part of its responsibilities under the Fisheries Act, MFish will from time to time check on the health of paua fisheries by means of the stock assessment process. Over time the stock assessment process has come to rely heavily on the population model developed by NIWA. This model in simple terms is a piece of software into which a number of data sets are fed. The model then uses these inputs to predict how a given population of paua is performing now, and its prospects for the future. Those of us who have suffered quota cuts have been on the receiving end of a pessimistic prediction by this model.

Anyone hoping to get some of that quota back will likely be relying on the model to supply the proof the Minister will require to back up any increase in TACC. Obviously the key to an accurate result from the model is the quality of the data inputs.

Amongst the critical data inputs is one called 'shell length frequency' which is a record of the average size of

random samples of shell taken from the commercial catch from each QMA.

Originally NIWA technicians would simply go to an LFR and manually measure the odd bag of shell at various LFRs with a set of callipers.

We thought the industry could do it better, so in 2006 we tendered for and won the MFish contract and we have just won it for another three years. Since 2006 we have lifted the number of shells measured from around 30,000 to just under 60,000. Additionally in most cases we are using extremely accurate digital measuring boards which have reduced the chance of errors because the transferring of data is automated. The data is collated by PIC, reviewed by the Shellfish Working Group then up loaded to the MFish market database and ultimately used in stock assessments and scientific research.

Probably the easiest way to understand the shell length frequency programme is that if over time the average length of

shell making up the commercial harvest is increasing or stable you have most probably have a healthy fishery. If the overall shell length is decreasing with time, then most probably you are very likely fishing the population down.

Obviously the more samples from as much of the fishing area as possible the better. This year we are targeting one sample (one bin with 100 paua in it) per tonne of catch. So around 1,000 samples across the country.

To do this we need you the harvester to participate. So please if you have a landing take the minute or so it takes to complete the red bag form and strap it to a bin... all the rest is done for you.

We have an incentive scheme running where harvesters contributing to the programme are given vouchers to Liquorland to purchase 'refreshments'. So if you haven't already done so, contact your chairman to get sample bags and do your bit.

Carry forward of ACE

PIC are working with MFish on the carry forward of ACE project originally asked for by Pauamac3. Most of the work is already completed on this and it is short listed for action in the upcoming years regulatory round.

At this stage we fully expect that it will go through OK triggering the "Order in Council" to remove paua from Schedule 5A from the Fisheries Act. This will mean that next season 10% of paua ACE can be carried over (to the following season).

Annual Operating Plans

All PauaMacs have updated their Annual Operating Plans (AOP's) and these are available from your local PauaMacs. AOP's spell out what management actions have been agreed to at your AGMs. These make life far easier for those of you that have contracts between the Quota owner, ACE holder and harvesters in that the contract just needs to refer to the AOP instead of attempting to duplicate all the detail. As an example borders for sub management areas, harvest caps on these areas, voluntary size limits for these areas, voluntary closed areas, voluntary reductions in catch etc. If you would electronic copies of your own are AOP or to see what other regions are up to, email Jeremy who has archived copies also.

That's all from the PICL team. As always if you want to bend someone's ear about your latest 'you beaut' idea for saving the fisheries or just want to gripe then give Storm or Jeremy a call. Though for gripes, Jeremy is probably best one to call first!

Safe and successful diving — have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



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