



pelagic update

News from MPI's highly migratory species team July 2017

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MORE INFORMATION

If you would like more information on any of the items in this newsletter, please contact Dominic Vallieres at dominic.vallieres@mpi.govt.nz or **04 819 4654**.

New southern bluefin tuna regulations

The 2017 southern bluefin tuna season is underway! Do you have your tags and form booklets?

2017 tags are hot pink! Make sure to throw out (or recycle) all 2016 tags and forms. Using old tags or forms will put you in breach of the catch documentation scheme (CDS) requirements and may result in your product being refused entry into export markets.

Please be aware that the new CDS Regulations came into effect on 27 April. You can view the Fisheries (Southern Bluefin Tuna Catch Documentation Scheme) Regulations 2017 [here](#).

If you need tags or forms – or if you know of any new vessels entering the fishery – please contact Amanda Richards, CDS Administrator: 04 894 5553, amanda.richards@mpi.govt.nz

Fisher and Licensed Fish Receiver (LFR) requirements under the new CDS Regulations have not changed from last year's CDS requirements, but please have a look through the Regulations to make sure you understand your responsibilities.



Hot pink southern bluefin tags for the 2017 calendar year. Photo: A Richards.



Southern Buller's albatross off Fiordland. Photo: R Wells.



Tori line backbone (blue non-rotating rope), "flash-tape" (as used in horticulture to scare birds), and orange streamer material. Photo: R Wells.



Tori line mounted on a "fit and proper" spool for safe storage and easy deployment. Photo: J Cleal.

Protected Species Liaison Officer Programme

Last year, following a few notable high seabird mortality incidents, the DOC Seabird Bycatch Reduction Liaison Officer Programme turned its focus to mitigating incidental seabird captures in the surface longline fishery.

The programme is funded and managed by DOC's Conservation Services Programme (CSP) and provides materials, risk plans, training and support to the fleet with Liaison Officers acting as the interface between the fleet, Fisheries Inshore New Zealand (FINZ), government and researchers.

Liaison Officers John Cleal and Gary Levy have been travelling the country to assess vessel operations and develop risk management plans tailored to each vessel. In just a short time, they have visited every vessel in the surface longline fleet twice, delivering over 30 kilometres of tori backbone and streamer materials!

John and Gary draw on first-hand experience, having developed safety and environmental risk plans for the surface longline fleet in the past.

The programme also introduced seabird trigger point reporting to the surface longline fleet. A trigger point is reached when a certain number of seabirds are caught, and the skipper must contact a Liaison Officer to get advice on what course to take to avoid further captures.

Progress reports on the programme are available on the [DOC website](#), and the project's specific scope and goals can be found in the [CSP Annual Plan](#).



The Future of our Fisheries is a major MPI programme to ensure the sustainability of New Zealand's fisheries. New systems and processes are going to provide MPI with more accurate and timely information about commercial fishing activity, and that information will help MPI make more informed fisheries management decisions.

The first stage of the programme is bringing in digital monitoring of commercial fishing, which will be required across the commercial fishing fleet. This involves geospatial position reporting (GPR), catch reporting via e-logbooks, and cameras to verify the information that is being reported.

Digital monitoring is a major step forward for the fishing industry, and will help assure New Zealanders, and consumers around the world, that our fisheries are being sustainably managed.

GPR and e-logbooks will be required on trawl vessels 28 metres and over from 1 October this year, and all other commercial operations from 1 April 2018.

Cameras will be phased in across the industry from 1 October 2018.

For more information go to mpi.govt.nz/futureofourfisheries

MSC certifications

Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification requires independent assessment of fisheries against internationally recognised standards of sustainable fishing. Over the past 18 months, New Zealand's albacore tuna troll fishery has been in assessment for re-certification, whilst Talley's skipjack tuna purse seine fishery has been in assessment for certification for the first time.

Re-certification of the albacore troll fishery until 2022 was announced in February this year! Meanwhile, the assessment process for skipjack continues.

In recent years, MSC certification has become a minimum requirement for access to premium markets for albacore. As this could someday occur with skipjack too, obtaining and maintaining this certification will assist the economic viability of these fisheries. MPI will continue to support industry during the assessments of these fisheries where required.



Pacific capacity development

Fiji

The Pacific capacity development team has had an extremely busy year, working with various fisheries administrations to build fisheries management capacity across the region.

The team hosted a small group of Fijian fisheries managers to undertake a study tour of New Zealand's approaches to customary fisheries management and monitoring, control, and surveillance. The group travelled to Nelson, Christchurch, and Dunedin, where they were faced with ever decreasing temperatures!

The group considered New Zealand's approach to fisheries management, particularly in terms of community-based management, and how Fiji could look to employ similar approaches in the future. The team learned about New Zealand's Honorary Fisheries Officer Network that has been in operation for over 50 years and applauded MPI on its level of organisation and support to this invaluable network. A highlight from this trip was the Fijians exposure to the Te Tau Ihu forum, which exhibited well informed and constructive co-management.

Cook Islands

The team recently worked with the Cook Island Ministry for Marine Resources

(MMR), assisting them to draft a Marine Sector Policy. This type of policy is a new approach for a government agency within the Cook Islands, and MMR has already had enquiries from other national agencies about their experience developing the policy.

The team also assisted MMR to shape its newly implemented QMS for its longline fleet. This is an ongoing piece of work on which the team will continue to provide assistance.

Solomon Islands

A collaborative fisheries management workshop was conducted with 19 staff from the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) in the Solomon Islands, helping staff understand the production of fisheries policy. This assistance will continue as MFMR evolves its policy and management positions for valuable fisheries within the Solomon Islands.

Regional work

The Pacific Community (SPC) and Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) supported the team to facilitate an engaging and effective workshop for fisheries management staff from the Cook Islands, Samoa, Tonga, and Tokelau to understand and develop fisheries policies and management plans specific to the current needs and priorities of their countries.

The team is continuing to develop great working relationships with Pacific fisheries agencies, both for coastal and offshore fisheries, and already has a busy next few months lined up, supporting existing activities and planning new development opportunities for Samoa and Tuvalu.



Fijian fisheries managers on a cold beach in Nelson. Photo: T Ferdinands.



Lars Olsen and Toni Ferdinands facilitating a workshop. Photo: T Ferdinands.