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Te Pānui Kaitiaki o Ata Whenua

Photo credit: Vincent Zintzen

In this issue we introduce one of our longest serving Guardians, Stewart Bull (Kāi Tahu, Kati Mamoe, and Waitaha), outline our next steps on fisheries sustainability within the Fiordland Marine Area, and highlight our advocacy work calling for more comprehensive management of *Undaria* in Te Puitaha/ Breaksea Sound. As always, we welcome your thoughts and feedback.



Ko Takitimu te Waka
Ko Tākitimu me Hananui ngā mauka
Ko Te Anau me Manapōuri ngā roto
Ko Waiau te awa
Ko Te Ara a Kewa te moana
Ko Rakiura te moutere rangatira
Ko Taukihepa moutere te Mahi kai ngā taonga Tītī
Ko Takutai o Te Tītī me Te Akau ngā Marae
Ko Kāi Tahu, Kati Mamoe Waitaha hoki ngā iwi
Ko Murihiku te Rohe
Ko Stewart Bull ahau

Who are the ‘Guardians’?

The Fiordland Marine Guardians are an advisory committee who work with government agencies and their Ministers on managing the Fiordland Marine Area.

In this issue we talk to Stewart Bull, one of our longest serving Guardians and representative for the mandated iwi kaitiaki of the Fiordland area.

Stewart has been part of the Guardian’s roopu since 1995. He is chair of Ōraka-Aparima Rūnaka and was their representative on the Board of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu and the Customary Fisheries Advisory Group. Stewart was appointed a tangata tiaki by the Minister of Fisheries, recognising his expertise in local customary fishing management and resource issues.

Kia ora, Stewart. Tell us about where you grew up and how this shaped your interest in the marine environment?

I’ve spent my whole life in Murihiku/Southland except for two years as a commercial scallop fisher in Port Phillip Bay and Bass Straight, Victoria, and a couple of years employed in Christchurch working in the construction industry.

As a teenager in the late 60s, I was employed in the crayfishing industry out of Riverton and fished as far north as Martins Bay. The boat was called the *T Maree*. The THC hotel in Milford was in full swing and Freshwater Basin, where the tourist boats are now, was full of fishing boats. The only building was the ‘Glass House’, which I think was where tourists bought their tickets and waited for a ride on the boat *Mitre Peak*.

I worked at Tiwai Point aluminium smelter as a rigger and Union rep, eventually installing the control panel for the pots. Then as a sandblaster and industrial spray painter around Murihiku. I also spent a couple of years employed as a roustabout on Penrod oil rig for Hunt Petroleum.

Eventually, I returned to fishing and remained in the industry for 16 years. I worked as a deckhand trawling for stargazers/flatfish, set netting for school shark, and crayfishing around Rakiura and Fiordland.

This was an interesting era in commercial fishing, as we were moving from open slather to the quota management system. People wanted to get their catch history ‘looking good’.

Overall, my mahi in fishing and mutton birding sparked an environmental interest in me. Sometimes I noticed things going on around me that didn’t seem right.

In June 2018, you were the recipient of the Queens Service Medal for services to Conservation and Māori. When did you start to become active in the business side of your hapū and iwi?

It was the early 90s, the same time I was fishing. I involved myself in Ngāi Tahu Iwi politics and helped the Aparima Māori Committee in Riverton. This mahi allowed me to step into (probe!) the resource management arena; I saw it as a huge opportunity to influence things for the better.

And that was where I found my niche. Involving myself with iwi affairs afforded me a privileged position in that I was included in the negotiations team of the mahi ngā kai (natural resources) component of the Ngāi Tahu Deed of Settlement. This included fisheries, the return of Titi Islands, taonga species, and much more.

I was supported and appointed to the board of Te Rūnanganui o Tahu Inc. and then the board of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu when we achieved settlement with the Crown for Treaty breaches.

Eighteen years serving on this iwi board was a huge learning curve in governance. At the same time, I had the honour of being the Chairman of Ōraka Aparima Rūnaka Inc. One of the four Papatipu Rūnaka in the rohe of Murihiku. It was the time of moulding and building a new structure for Ngāi Tahu Iwi; what a privilege to have been a participant in that development!

And were your roles within your hapū and iwi mostly focussed on environmental kaitiakitanga?

For as long as I have known, Ōraka Aparima Rūnaka Inc. has leaned into the field of environmental management.

A good number of people involved in setting up the new structure had a natural inclination for environmental kaitiakitanga and understood sustainable utilisation of natural resources. They were commercial

fishers, mutton birders, farmers, and mahi ngā kai practitioners and so on.

I held a shared responsibility for managing the Titi Islands, at a time when all these islands were managed under one committee. Post-settlement, the Beneficial Islands have been managed separately to the former Crown Islands, now the Rakiura Titi Islands.

The Titi Islands also gave Rakiura Māori early interactions with Lands and Surveys and the Wildlife Service who managed threatened species before the establishment of DOC. The invasion of these islands in the mid-60s by rats and the havoc that followed was certainly a wakeup call to everyone.

The rescue of Tieke (South Island Saddleback) from Taukihepa/Big South Cape was a big success story

from that period and formed a template to follow for the salvage and reintroduction of endangered species on island sanctuaries.

The Titi Islands are, once again, recognised as the 'jewels in the crown'; 70 per cent of these island sanctuaries have accomplished pest-free status. This success has allowed us to repopulate other Titi islands with endangered species and for these taonga to be reintroduced elsewhere.

What do you see as the biggest challenge currently facing the Fiordland Marine Area?

Undoubtedly, keeping Fiordland's marine ecosystem free of introduced pests.

And what is your favourite kai moana?

Cod heads; especially the eyes!



One of the many Te Pou o Rua Te Moko marine reserve markers throughout the Fiordland Marine Area. Carved by Southlander Bubba Thomson, Te Pou pou commemorate the stories of deities, explorers, whānau and whānui who have left their mark on the area, acknowledging the cultural significance of tāngata whenua in the area.

Guardians advocate for more comprehensive management of *Undaria* to stop the spread

The Fiordland Marine Guardians are advocating strongly for the Government to fund a more comprehensive programme to control this invasive species in the Fiordland Marine Area. It is crunch time!

The Government needs to decide if they are comfortable letting *Undaria* spread throughout the Fiordland Marine Area. *Undaria* will change the underwater world of this incredibly special place FOREVER. We have a solution that will create jobs for Fiordland (which is facing 30-40 per cent unemployment), support local businesses, AND deliver the best outcomes for Fiordland's biodiversity.

Read more in the August edition of the [Fishing Paper, July 18 edition of the Otago Daily Times, July 31 on Stuff.co.nz](#), and a special feature on [RNZ's Checkpoint](#) with Lisa Owen.



Mature *Undaria* plants smothering a rockwall community in Te Puaitaha / Breaksea Sound. Credit: L. Bennett-Jones.

Have you renewed your Clean Vessel Pass for 2020?

Applying for a Clean Vessel Pass is a simple process that can be completed online at www.es.govt.nz/fmpp or by calling Environment Southland on 0800 76 88 45 to receive a hard copy form.

Important!

If you are venturing into the fiords, check the latest rules regarding the invasive kelp *Undaria*. Under the Southland Regional Pest Management Plan 2019, it is prohibited to harbour *Undaria*, including having *Undaria* growing on a vessel's hull, within the Southland region.

Two exemption areas are where *Undaria* has already established. The exemption areas do not prevent vessels from entering, but do put in place the following requirements when leaving exemption areas:

- vessels must be free of *Undaria* when they leave the Southern *Undaria* Exemption Area and the Breaksea Sound *Undaria* Exemption Area
- all marine gear and equipment, including but not limited to lobster pots, mooring lines, and dive gear, must be free of *Undaria* when it leaves the Southern *Undaria* Exemption Area and the Breaksea Sound *Undaria* Exemption Area
- all onboard residual seawater collected in the Exemption Area must be treated or discarded within the Southern *Undaria* Exemption Area and the Breaksea Sound *Undaria* Exemption Area.

For more information visit www.es.govt.nz and search 'Undaria exemption areas'.

Kudos to the TamateaBLUE 2020 crew

The TamateaBLUE 2020 crew removed a further 3 tonnes of rubbish from the seafloor in Luncheon Cove, Tamatea/ Dusky Sound in June, including tyres, batteries, bottles, plastics, ropes, and floats. We are impressed by the collective action that goes into these underwater clean-ups: Seán Ellis and Maria Kuster, Courteney Bevan, Sam Wild, Chris Hansen (Pure Salt Charters), Pete Young (Guardian, skipper, fisherman), Ben Young (fisherman), Rob Wilson and Stuart Day (Ghost Diving), Jase Hancox (videography), Amber McMillan, Rob Horne and Aaron Loader (MAD volunteers), Renee Taylor and Amber Jones (SALT NZ), Ross McFaul and Hire Frankton Ltd for unloading the haul from *MV Flightless* and KIWI SKIPS for taking it from there.

TamateaBLUE 2021 is scheduled for 27–30 June 2021.



Blue Cod recreational rule changes

You'll be aware of the nationwide changes to recreational fishing rules for blue cod/rāwaru, including the introduction of the traffic light system. In Fiordland, the two main changes are a decrease in the daily bag limit in the outer coast to 10, and the requirement to land fish whole or gutted (this is a nationwide rule). Please note that in Fiordland the no accumulation rule applies (versus a 2-day accumulation rule in other regions).

There has been some confusion about transitioning through more restrictive fishing areas with catch onboard. We have clarified this with Fisheries NZ, who state: "*Fisheries (Amateur) Fishing Regulations 2013, Regs 147, 147A and 149 preserve the right for recreational fishers and commercial fishers to passage*

through the respective internal waters areas with a higher limit of blue cod catch aboard, as long as the fish in their possession was not taken within the respective internal waters in excess of the take limit. As there are also two marine reserves in Doubtful Sound/Patea and long standing Piopiotahi Marine Reserve covering the north side/ half of Milford Sound/Piopiotahi internal waters there is no issue preventing any fisher from possessing fish, rock lobster and shellfish, as long as no fishing takes place within the marine reserve."

For more detailed information, visit the Ministry for Primary Industries website: <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/travel-and-recreation/fishing/fishing-rules/fiordland-fishery-management-area/>.

A recap on our fisheries sustainability mahi in Fiordland

This year the Fiordland Marine Guardians have continued their work assessing the sustainability of key recreational fish stocks in the Fiordland Marine Area (FMA). In early March, we convened a focus group of recreational fishers to work with the Guardians, our associates from Fisheries New Zealand, and Randall Bess, advisor to Fish Mainland. Aided by a skilled facilitator, we worked together to identify issues and future risks and discuss possible solutions to give these fish stocks the protection they require over the next 20+ years.

Fiordland has always led the way with community-driven initiatives, and once again we are faced with an opportunity to tackle the thorny issue of fisheries sustainability before it is too late, and more drastic measures are required.

The Guardians are focused on the vision that was developed by the community back in the 1990s/early 2000s:

That the quality of Fiordland’s marine environment and fisheries, including the wider fishery experience, be maintained or improved for future generations to use and enjoy.



In August last year, we initiated a similar process with Fiordland amateur charter vessel operators (ACV). While the conversation is ongoing, ACV operators have demonstrated a clear willingness to adopt new tools and strategies for fishing within the FMA. Collectively they have shown great leadership including the establishment of a voluntary code of conduct and a commitment to the sustainable use of the more vulnerable fish species.



We are seeing remarkably similar outcomes starting to emerge from our collaboration with the recreational fishers that visit the FMA under their own steam.

“I found the workshop highly informative and found it encouraging that there are so many individuals that are willing to take action and to work with the Fiordland Marine Guardians to help find solutions that offer sustainability of the fishery in such a special area.”

– Ross McFaul, rec fisher.



In July, Stewart Bull (Guardian and Ōraka-Aparima Rūnaka chair) and Nigel Scott (Mahi ngā Kai advisor for Ngāi Tahu) held a hui with southern Papatipu Rūnaka where the outcomes of both workshops were discussed.

The next critical step is to garner a broader public perspective on key fisheries sustainability issues in Fiordland through an online survey which will be released in the coming months.

Working collaboratively with community sectors and Fisheries NZ, our intention is to develop solutions that will be readily adopted by the people who fish within the FMA.



Guardians' focus on Milford Sound/Piopiotahi

The Guardians convene annually in Fiordland to focus on strategy for the area, and this year the location was Milford Sound/Piopiotahi. This location was particularly appropriate given the dramatic changes to the amenities and level of activity caused by the devastating double whammy of the February floods and the COVID-19 pandemic. We are closely engaged with the Milford Opportunities Project and the revision of the Southland Regional Coastal Plan – this visit gave us excellent context for these processes that will shape the future of this special part of Aotearoa.

Recreational Fishing South Island NZ – Fish Mainland

Fish Mainland acknowledges recreational fishing is a valuable and integral component of South Island fisheries, as are commercial and Māori non-commercial customary fishing, and that a healthy marine environment is crucial to the wellbeing of all sectors and interests. Show your support by registering at www.fishmainland.nz and on Facebook www.facebook.com/FishMainland/.



Fish Mainland website is now live

Fish Mainland is a new organisation designed by a working group comprising South Islanders and Stewart Islanders to represent the 100,000+ fishers who fish in South Island marine waters.



Keeping in touch

As always, the Guardians will work hard to facilitate community-led, proactive approaches that are informed by the best scientific and anecdotal information available. We place a high value on the experiences and knowledge of the Fiordland community and encourage you to share your thoughts with us.

Our website www.fmg.org.nz is based on the content and layout of the User Guide: Beneath the Reflections and provides helpful and informative information for those wanting to get out on the water.

You can email us at info@fmg.org.nz

FMG-AGENCY MEETINGS 2020

NEXT MEETING

Thurs 12 Nov, Invercargill
– Environment Southland,
Council Chambers

Agenda items Thursday 22 Oct

Board reports Tuesday 27 Oct

For more information visit
www.fmg.org.nz

All welcome

Our quarterly FMG-agency meetings are open to the public and agenda items for discussion at these meetings can be brought to the Guardians. The agenda is set three weeks in advance of a meeting.

Te Pānui Kaitiaki o Ata Whenua is available online at www.fmg.org.nz or via email.

In the interest of sustainability we encourage people to opt for an electronic copy. Please email info@fmg.org.nz to update your contact details or to switch to electronic communication with the Guardians.



Thank you!

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