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## Poachers winning war

May 21 2009 at 08:35AM

By Melani Gosling and Craig McKune

Law enforcement officials are losing the war against better equipped perlemoen poachers who have high-speed boats that can quickly get from Hawston to Cape Point and even to Robben Island, say experts.

Mike Tannet, of Seawatch in the Overstrand, said poachers now had better boats than law enforcement officers and had money to bribe officials.

Seawatch had monitored the activities of about 100 boats suspected of poaching in the Overstrand region.

Tannet said Marine and Coastal Management (MCM) was "battling with resources" and had too few boats and too few people to man them when they got poaching tip-offs.

"Poaching gets worse with time.

"The longer you allow it to go on, the more power goes to the poachers.

"They get more money and can buy better boats and vehicles, and they have more money to bribe officials," Tannet said.

MCM has warned that, unless law enforcement is stepped up and the diving ban rigorously enforced, South Africa's stocks of abalone will be wiped out.

In a report on the Abalone Scientific Working Group set up to assess the abalone stocks, MCM said, if there was no immediate action, "the abalone resource will continue to decline at the current rate of poaching, making rebuilding of the resource impossible".

Poaching had increased rapidly in the 1990s and soon "spiralled out of control with the illegal catch far exceeding the commercial catch over the last 10 years".

Records since 1994 showed there had been "a more than threefold increase" in the confiscation of illegal hauls of abalone over the past six years. In 2006, more than 1 million abalone were confiscated.

Estimates are that last year about 2.7 million abalone - 863 tons - were stolen along the Overstrand between Rooi Els and Quoin Point, a headland about halfway between Gansbaai and Agulhas.

"The increase in confiscations indicates the large increase in illegal activity over time - even after policing efficiency is factored in.

The total amount poached far exceeds the amounts that are confiscated," the report said.

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To try to combat poaching, fines had been increased, two law enforcement vessels patrolled the area, the commercial abalone industry was closed in February, 2008, and a diving ban was imposed from Danger Point to Quoin Point, around Bird, Dyer and Robben islands and in parts of Table Mountain National Park.

However, the scientists found that "poaching is still continuing at a high rate, in particular in the key 'dive ban' areas" between Danger Point and Quoin Point.

Although there had been a slight decrease in poaching from 2007 to 2008, current levels were "still high and unsustainable".

But if poaching could be eliminated between Danger and Quoin points, the scientists said, abalone stocks "could increase quite rapidly".

This was not likely to happen in the areas where rock lobster had moved in.

Large-scale migration of West Coast rock lobster eastwards had altered the marine ecosystem as the lobster ate large numbers of baby abalone and sea urchins.

This hit the abalone population twice: the lobsters destroyed large numbers of young abalone and removed the spiny urchins which provided important protection for the young abalone which sheltered under them.

The report recommended that an abalone recovery task group be appointed to integrate research and management in monitoring abalone stocks.

Meanwhile, recent abalone busts close to Cape Town suggest poachers are moving further afield.

Six boats and more than 30 divers were caught poaching perlemoen at Buffels Bay in the Cape Point Nature Reserve last week.

In a dramatic arrest in which police shot out the motors of two of the boats and confiscated another, 33 men were arrested and police seized 2 139 perlemoen. MCM spokesperson Carol Moses said all the suspects were from Hawston. Arrests were made at Cape Point "on a daily basis".

Tannett said perlemoen were in a particularly bad state in the Betty's Bay area, prompting poachers to look further afield.

Scott Russell, of the SA Abalone Industry Association, said the Cape Point arrests were "a step in the right direction, but the bigger picture is that poaching remains out of control".

He said research by international NGO Traffic suggested two thirds of SA perlemoen exports in 2008 were poached. "This isn't the first, second or even 10th time for this type of large-scale poaching at Cape Point. It's happening all the time, just like at Robben Island, Dyer Island and in parts of the Eastern Cape."

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- This article was originally published on page 1 of [Cape Times](#) on May 21, 2009

[http://www.bclocalnews.com/richmond\\_southdelta/richmondreview/news/45780857.html](http://www.bclocalnews.com/richmond_southdelta/richmondreview/news/45780857.html)

## Significant abalone seizure results in \$35,000 fine

By Martin van den Hemel - Richmond Review

Published: May 21, 2009 3:00 PM

Updated: May 21, 2009 4:08 PM

A Richmond firm has been fined \$35,000 after pleading guilty Tuesday to a charge under the Species at Risk Act.

Momiji Seafood Packaging and Exporting Ltd. and employee Tat Chun Jacky Tsui were originally charged following an investigation by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans that uncovered roughly 2,000 northern abalone.

A fisheries officer conducting an inspection at Momoji's offices, located at 170-12855 Clarke Pl., near Cambie Road and Jacombs, discovered the threatened species in February of 2007.

Following a joint submission from the Crown and defence, on the eve of going to trial, a guilty plea was entered and Richmond provincial court Judge Jane McKinnon fined Momoji \$35,000.

The charge against Tsui was stayed, according to Ramona Roberts, a lawyer for the Public Prosecution Service who represented the Crown.

The abalone fishery has been closed since 1990 and it's an offence to be in possession of them.

Abalone is considered a gourmet delicacy and during the 1970s was harvested in great numbers.

The species live along the Pacific Coast, from as far south as Baja, California, to Alaska.

Roberts said the seizure was "significant" compared to previous seizures.

Last August, Wun T. Li was fined \$25,000 in Richmond provincial court after federal fisheries officers seized 118 northern abalone from a local warehouse.

—Martin van den Hemel

<http://www.fis.com/fis/worldnews/worldnews.asp?l=e&country=&special=&monthyear=&day=&id=32343&ndb=1&df=0>



Coldwater corals will be set to suffer greatly from ocean acidification. (Photo: NIWA)

## Ocean acidification dangers real: scientists



**NEW ZEALAND**

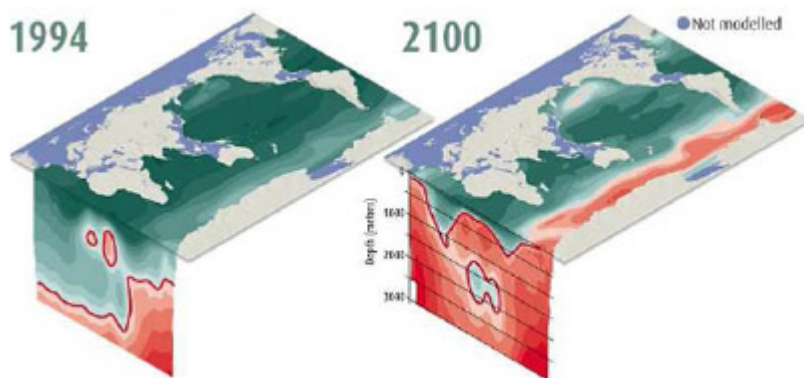
Thursday, May 14, 2009, 00:10 (GMT + 9)

Foveaux Strait's Bluff oyster fisheries, the Otago coastal algae, deep water corals, open ocean plankton, mussels and oysters are some of the New Zealand species that may be among the most affected by ocean acidification, warned a group of scientists.

The Royal Society of New Zealand (RSNZ), a national science academy, has issued a document to policy makers on the danger to coral reefs and fisheries resources around New Zealand and the rest of the globe caused by ocean acidification. RSNZ Professor and Vice President Keith Hunter headed the project.

The phenomenon of ocean acidification is produced when higher levels of carbon dioxide enter the atmosphere. When more carbon dioxide is available, more is absorbed by the oceans, which raises the waters' acidity. Oceans take in a third of our carbon dioxide emissions.

Although the effect of increased acidity on marine ecosystems is largely unpredictable and cannot yet be quantified, it is suspected that long-term repercussions to substantial ecosystems will be significant, the RSNZ stated. The consequences will be exacerbated by overfishing, pollution and global warming, the latter of which may actually gain strength from ocean acidification.



*Predicted changes in saturation state of aragonite, a form of calcium carbonate used by corals and other marine calcifiers. Red areas are under-saturated, favouring dissolution of carbonate shells. (Illustration: RSNZO)*

It is known that higher acidity harms corals, crustaceans and shellfish, as it precludes them from developing reefs and developing thick protective shells in that acidification is thought to weaken calcium carbonate shells.

Philip Boyd of the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA) said that kina, mussels and paua may be harmed by this phenomenon, NZPA reports.

Mussels, Pacific and Bluff oysters, paua and scallops constitute a NZD 300 million (USD 181 million) industry for New Zealand.

"We will see a significant 'tipping point' in terms of ocean chemistry by as early as 2030," he said. And referring to plankton, "We may see the shells of some of these 'calcifiers' dissolve."

Cold waters, including the poles, will feel it with the most fervour because colder water soaks up higher amounts of emissions. Antarctica's ecosystems are especially unprotected both because of temperature and because its corals grow at a slower pace.

All aquaculture, fishing and marine industries are expected to take a hit. The possibility of creating acidity-tolerant species has been suggested.

The RSNZ will be hosting a workshop in Wellington on 9 September to raise awareness within the government and private sector, discuss scientific and technical aspects and prioritise future research.

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[http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2009203872\\_apwatreasuredabalone.html](http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2009203872_apwatreasuredabalone.html)

# Abalone are treasured \_ nearly to extinction

The authorities popped him near the docks in Port Angeles.

By [CRAIG WELCH](#)

The Seattle Times

SEATTLE —

The authorities popped him near the docks in Port Angeles.

On a March afternoon in 1994, a sleek fishing boat - not-so-subtly named the Abalone Made - came ashore after puttering around Freshwater Bay. The waiting cops nabbed the captain and seized his contraband: 188 specimens of a rare Puget Sound mollusk, the pinto abalone, a strange, fist-sized snail stuffed in algae-encrusted shells.

The thief would confess he'd been stealing the tasty seafood delicacies by the tens of thousands - enough to pay off his 26-foot commercial diving boat and buy a new Jeep Cherokee. The real damage wouldn't be known until much later.

At the time, Puget Sound's lone abalone species was already hurtling toward extinction. More than with any other creature in these waters, illicit harvesting may have pushed it over the edge.

Today, so few of the shellfish remain that scientists with kitchen utensils and model-train glue are trying to mate survivors in a lab. They plan this summer to transplant the creatures' offspring in the Strait of Juan de Fuca and hope that will jump-start a population nearing collapse. Similar efforts are under way in British Columbia, but it's too soon to know if the attempts will succeed.

That researchers are trying to do so at all is a testament to how marine science is evolving. Invertebrates such as shellfish, sea urchins and cucumbers were once thought to be naturally resistant to overfishing. If fishermen took too many, regulators just shut down fishing, believing wild stocks would come back on their own.

But as populations of many marine creatures plummet across the globe, the fate of abalone - from South Africa to California and now Washington - shows how easy it is to misread the consequences of overfishing, and how complicated it can be to repair the damage.

Nature, and man, are too unpredictable.

Food and treasure

The creature looked like a simple gnarled stone - until it danced.

On a recent spring day in a Mukilteo marine laboratory, a single pinto abalone rose up on its milky foot, the shell resembling a mushroom cap, and swiveled to and fro like a child surveying a room. Then it pushed across a table toward the edge.

"Whoa there," said Josh Bouma, a shellfish biologist with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. He pried the animal loose with a spatula and dumped it in a basin bubbling with saltwater piped from Puget Sound.

Bouma and a University of Washington graduate student, Nathan Wight, plucked abalone from tanks, checked their sex, and pasted numbered tags on their shells in preparation for mating. AstroTurf rimmed the tanks so the animals wouldn't escape - a lesson scientists learned the hard way. "We've had males crawl out and into tanks with females," Wight said.

Abalone are ecosystem engineers and voracious grazers. They cruise at night, scraping algae off rocks with a scaly tongue and feeding on drifting kelp. They keep rocky patches clean for other creatures to colonize.

Their ability to wander is key to their survival.

The broadcast spawners mate by releasing sperm and eggs in the water, which mix and produce young only if parents are close together. So abalone travel, rarely more than a few dozen meters, congregating on outcroppings to spawn at low tides. There, people for centuries have collected them for food and treasure.

Connoisseurs pound the meat with mallets, boil it in soup with cabbage, stir-fry it with pepper and garlic or serve it as steak stuffed with prosciutto and pine nuts. The underside of an abalone's scraggly shell holds swirling iridescent patterns that change color with the light. Polished pieces of shell become saxophone keys, pocketknife handles and guitar inlays. Jewelers shape them into pendants for earrings, necklaces and bracelets.

Such popularity led to boom-and-bust commercial fishing in California for white, black, green and pink abalone. The same pattern followed along the Strait of Georgia, north of the San Juan Islands. Washington never allowed commercial fishing, but by the late 1980s sport fishermen saw fewer and fewer of the creatures. In 1994 the state halted abalone collecting for good.

In the 15 years since, pinto abalone populations at surveyed sites in Washington have declined more than 80 percent.

#### Worldwide problem

From Admiralty Inlet to the Pacific, abalone once were so common that San Juan residents called retreating currents "abalone tides." Today, the creatures probably number in the tens of thousands, perhaps even a few hundred thousand. That's a pittance after decades when sport fishermen - allowed to collect a handful of the creatures each - gathered a combined total of more than 40,000 a year.

To understand the decline, scientists tested water temperature and salt content, but found few clues. They knew the return of sea otters - furry abalone lovers - may have played a role near the coast.

But in and around Port Angeles and the San Juans, biologists tended to blame continued poaching. Certainly, history suggested as much.

The fisherman police caught in 1994 admitted regularly stealing clustering abalone when he dove legally for cucumbers and urchins. He sold the marine snails to local restaurants for \$5 to \$10 or less apiece. The restaurants resold them for as much as \$25. Some even found their way overseas.

Biologists calculated that this thief took as much by himself as all other recreational fishermen combined in some years. And no one believed he was the region's only poacher. "I still hear people whisper about knowing where they can find illegal abalone," said Joth Davis, a biologist with Taylor Shellfish.

Plus, smuggling threatens abalone around the world. Abalone theft by Chinese gangs in South Africa has sparked gunbattles in Johannesburg. British Columbia authorities employ shellfish-sniffing dogs on ferries and use a database of abalone DNA to track shellfish poached from their waters. Three years ago, one team of crooks was caught ferrying a pickup-load of 11,000 abalone stolen from Canada's northwest coast.

Abalone raised in Canadian shellfish farms feed on plants that leave their shells an odd color, so cops can cruise restaurants and quickly spot wild abalone. Smugglers still swipe hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of abalone each year from California, which holds the world's last remaining populations of red abalone, creatures that can grow to twice the size of pinto abalone.

#### What's happening?

But the more biologists dove along the Strait of Juan de Fuca, the more confused they grew. Thirty years ago, one-fifth of abalone were small. Today only 2 percent are. Average abalone shell sizes have grown larger. "We thought, 'Wouldn't poachers want the biggest ones?' " said Don Rothaus, a Fish and Wildlife biologist.

Then they hit upon an obvious answer: The creatures were getting old but not reproducing. The same peculiar biological tic that made abalone easy prey for thieves also, in the end, appeared to be their downfall.

Poachers weren't taking more because abalone no longer clustered in quantities big enough to make it worth their while.

So many abalone had been removed from Puget Sound that those remaining lived too far apart to congregate. They couldn't get close enough to mate.

New generation

Along Hood Canal at a new small shellfish nursery in Port Gamble, Kitsap County, Jason Suzuki lifted the lid on a narrow tub to show off his babies. Inside, dozens of colorful abalone the size of poker chips were strewn about like pebbles, munching on a cocktail of algae perfected by Suzuki.

"They're looking good," he said. "They look happy."

After scientists help adults spawn in Mukilteo, the offspring swim free for about two weeks. Then they are brought here, where Suzuki monitors their growth.

Some of the babies are tagged with a tiny numbered marker - the same kind scientists attach to honeybees to track their movements. Suzuki makes sure these young snails don't fall prey to disease or suffocate in their own feces.

In late summer, about 3,000 of them will travel by boat to the San Juan Islands, where biologists aboard the state dive boat Clamdestine will gently plant them in the seafloor.

Then they will wait and watch for the next abalone tide.

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Information from: The Seattle Times, <http://www.seattletimes.com>

<http://narooma.yourguide.com.au/news/local/news/general/fisheries-steps-up-abalone-operations-poacher-jailed/1511851.aspx?storypage=0>



## Fisheries steps up abalone operations, poacher jailed

STAN GORTON

13/05/2009 10:02:00 AM

A repeat abalone offender has been sentenced to two months imprisonment and fined \$2000 for illegal abalone fishing.

The man, aged 39 from Sydney was arrested by NSW Department of Primary Industries fisheries officers during a surveillance operation at Moon Bay, near Tathra, in May, 2008.

"This man is arguably one of Australia's most prolific abalone offenders," Minister for Primary Industries Ian Macdonald said today. He has only recently been released from nine months in prison in Victoria for abalone trafficking and is still under a five year good behaviour bond in NSW for matters involving abalone crime. The key message in this case is that NSW DPI fisheries officers target repeat offenders and if they continue to offend, they will be caught, again and again."

"When fisheries officers stopped the man, he was found to have 202 shucked blacklip abalone, valued at approximately \$3000 on the legitimate market," he said.

He was charged with having shucked abalone adjacent to waters, and exceeding the bag limit for abalone. The vehicle and a quantity of dive gear were also seized from the man.

The possession limit in waters open to the taking of abalone in NSW is two per person.

Report suspicious activity to Abalone Compliance Group on 02 6499 8000, your local DPI fisheries office or the Fishers' Watch Phone Line on 1800 043 536.

Road searches net illegal hauls

A 35-year-old male and a 34-year-old male, both from Albion Park were stopped by police at Cobargo at 2pm on Friday, May 8.

The men were charged with numerous offences after 162 illegally obtained abalone, drugs and drug paraphernalia and various traffic offences were located.

NSW Fisheries Officers seized the abalone, the diving equipment and the vehicle and will be charging the men with the fisheries offences. Both men are to appear at court at a later date.

Earlier in the week, at 12pm on Monday three Moruya men were arrested by Batemans Bay police after receiving information that the men were involved in illegal abalone poaching. Police stopped and searched their vehicle on the Princes Highway just north of Batemans Bay.

Several hundred illegally obtained abalone were located inside the vehicle. All three men were taken to Batemans Bay police station where NSW Fisheries Officers are conducting further enquiries and charges are likely to be laid over the illegal haul.

This follows a traffic stop the week before when Narooma police acting on information supplied by NSW Fisheries officers stopped a vehicle just south of Narooma.

The vehicle and its four male occupants from Batemans Bay and Moruya were suspected of carrying a large number of abalone, but none were found.

A Fisheries spokesperson said the cases were not connected and the department has ongoing operations targeting abalone syndicates on a regular basis.

<http://bushradionews.blogspot.com/2009/05/35-suspects-arrested-for-abalone.html>



## 35 suspects arrested for abalone poaching

*By Mandisi Tyulu*

*13 May 2009*

The members of Marine Coastal Management spotted 5 vessels under suspicious circumstances in the water at Buffelsbay situated in the Cape Nature Reserve.

The police were alerted, and the vessels were kept under close observation.

Superintendent Andre Traut says the vessels were approached by members of the police attached to the Diving Unit as well as Sea Borderline, after it became clear that divers were in the process of poaching abalone illegally in a restricted area.

“The crew of the suspicious vessels failed to adhere to instructions by authorities to surrender and became hostile, by ramming their vessels into those of SAPS.”

Three of the suspicious vessels managed to escape, but the crew members of two the vessels were apprehended, after police shot at the engines of the vessels to force it to stop, said Traut.

“A total of 33 male suspects were arrested, of whom some were still in the water.’ ‘They are being detained on charges of abalone poaching under the Marine Act.”

A total of 2139 abalone were confiscated with a market value to the tune of R 4 million. The two vessels, both in excess of 6 metres were seized, he said.

Traut says later in an unrelated case, members of Marine Coastal Management arrested a further two male suspects in the same vicinity, also for abalone poaching. They also are detained.

All suspects will make a court appearance in Simons Town Magistrate once they are charged.

<http://www.foodweek.com.au/main-features-page.aspx?articleType=ArticleView&articleId=3903>

## **AUS: Abalone trafficker jailed for second time**

By FoodWeek Online @ 3:47 PM

A repeat abalone trafficker will serve jail time after he was nabbed with an illegal haul worth \$3,000.

The Sydney man found to have 202 blacklip abalone when primary industries officers checked his catch at Moon Bay near Tathra on NSW's far south coast.

The 39-year-old was charged with exceeding the bag limit for abalone and had his vehicle and diving gear seized.

He had prior convictions for trafficking abalone in NSW and had spent nine months in jail in Victoria for abalone crimes, the NSW Department of Primary Industries said.

He was fined \$2,000 in Batemans Bay Local Court and sentenced to two months' jail.

Primary Industries Minister Ian Macdonald said authorities were cracking down on repeat offenders to protect marine areas.

"If they continue to offend, they will be caught again and again," he said in a statement.

AAP

<http://www.news.com.au/adelaidenow/story/0,27574,25438066-2682,00.html>



# Port Lincoln abalone divers owe lives to rescue beacon

Article from: **The Advertiser**

May 06, 2009 02:58pm

## **TWO Port Lincoln Abalone divers owe their lives to a new type of emergency beacon after boat was hit by a freak wave, police say.**

One of the men was diving in about 12m of water when the boat capsized near Flinders Reef, about 20km off Ceduna, about 6pm yesterday.

The men made it to the boat's life raft and activated their EPIRB.

The signal was picked up by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority in Canberra.

The authority dispatched a light plane and the Ceduna SES rescue boat Protector to search for the men.

The plane sighted flares and directed the rescue boat to the scene.

The pair were picked up by the rescue boat uninjured and taken to Thevenard.

Police Water Operation Senior Sergeant Bob McDonald said the EPIRB the men used was the latest digital unit.

"It probably saved their lives. It made them much easier and quicker to locate," he said.

The abalone vessel was towed to Thevenard by the rescue boat.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/05/06/2561914.htm?site=northandwest>

## **Stranded men rescued at sea**

Posted May 6, 2009 08:00:00

Emergency services in Ceduna say a rogue wave capsized an abalone boat on South Australia's west coast last night, leaving two men stranded in the cold for nearly three hours.

The 21-foot boat overturned at 5:30pm on Tuesday near Flinders Reef, about 20 kilometres off the coast.

The two men onboard used an emergency device to alert rescue crews via satellite.

Regional officer Peter Codgrington found the two men in a life raft tethered to the upturned boat after 8:00pm.

He says it took until after 2:00am to tow the freezing men and their heavy boat back to shore.

[http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set\\_id=1&click\\_id=15&art\\_id=vn20090430054405282C823478](http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=15&art_id=vn20090430054405282C823478)

# Tik: From Cape Town now PE

April 30 2009 at 08:12AM

By Rochelle de Kock

Use of the debilitating and deadly drug tik has spread from the Western Cape to Port Elizabeth, where it has "exploded".

"Tik has found its way to PE from Cape Town and we can no longer say it's coming because it's here - and it's growing. The scary thing is that people only seek help when the problem is at its worst," said Humewood Community Police Forum chairman John Preller.

"We're definitely seeing an upward trend. Numbers are increasing drastically, and the alarming thing is that it is younger people between the ages of 18 and 25."

With a crackdown on poaching in the Western Cape, crime barons in Cape Town are paying PE gang members with tik for poached perlemoen.

As a result, the number of tik addicts has more than doubled in PE in six months, according to the SA National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (Sanca).

Tik now accounts for 57 percent of patients at one of the city's biggest rehabilitation centres, Shepherd's Field, with experts saying it has become the drug of choice among the youth due to its availability and affordability.

Sanca information, training and education co-ordinator Zarina Ghulam said the deadly drug had infiltrated the northern areas specifically and that the number of users was growing rapidly.

"From July 2008 to December 2008 we've seen a huge jump of tik users coming to us for treatment. It went from 3,1 percent to 7,2 percent in those six months.

"Although we do not have the latest figures available for last couple of months, I can definitely say the numbers are growing rapidly.

"It's moving to Uitenhage," Ghulam added.

Shepherd's Field chief executive Gerrie Cronje said the number of tik users at their centre accounted for 57 percent of people admitted for substance abuse.

Although a number of these addicts came from Cape Town, the majority were from the Nelson Mandela Bay area.

Reinhardt Coetsei, director of Rei's Place House of Recovery in Greenbushes, said it was evident that tik was a fast-growing problem in the city.

"Although it hasn't hit PE as bad as Cape Town, it is definitely a major concern - and the problem is escalating."

Aaron Liddell, a recovering tik addict, said he was able to buy the drug at nearly every street corner.

- This article was originally published on page 6 of [Cape Times](#) on April 30, 2009

[http://www.marini.com/sports/ci\\_12265210](http://www.marini.com/sports/ci_12265210)

# Fish wrap: Assemblyman proposes tougher penalties for poachers

Nels Johnson

Posted: 04/30/2009 03:17:21 PM PDT

MARIN'S FISHING LEGISLATOR is cracking down on poachers.

Marin Assemblyman Jared Huffman, saying poachers pose a serious threat to California's wildlife, is sponsoring legislation to punish those who plunder the public's fish and game for profit.

Assembly Bill 708 increases poaching penalties and establishes minimum mandatory fines.

"We've got to crack down," Huffman said. "You've got people poaching salmon even though the fishery is closed," he said, adding that poaching of abalone, sturgeon, other fish and most species of game is out of control.

Current law imposes fines of up to \$30,000, or a year in jail, or both, for the unlawful take of fish and wildlife for commercial purposes. Abalone poachers face fines of from \$15,000 to \$40,000. For most other violations, fines range from \$1,000 to \$2,000, and six months in jail, or both. In most cases there is no minimum mandatory fine.

Huffman's bill would set fines for those who take or process three times the allowable limit of fish or wildlife, those who profit from poaching, and those who torture or mutilate fish or wildlife, at not less than \$5,000 or more than \$40,000, or a year in jail, or both. A second offense would mean fines of at least \$10,000 to \$50,000, or a year in jail, or both.

Huffman noted fine revenue is earmarked for funds supporting wardens as well as county prosecutors, providing fiscal incentives for local authorities to convict violators.

Huffman's bill sailed through the Assembly's

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Advertisement

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Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee, which he heads, and is expected to be blessed by other legislative panels in light of a broad coalition of support from fishermen, hunters, conservationists, environmental activists and politicians including San Francisco District Attorney Kamala Harris.

"Californians take their natural resources seriously, and they shouldn't tolerate anyone undermining protections for wildlife in this callous manner," Huffman said. "We've taken great care to draft legislation that offers strong deterrents for poaching without detracting from the enjoyment" of legitimate hunters and fishermen, he said.

Huffman's bill comes as poaching cases are on the rise in California, increasing 25 percent between 2005 in 2007 alone - and follows a number of poaching violators released by the courts with just a slap on the wrist. Cases last year include a Tuolumne man caught with 26 deer, and a Gilroy man arrested with 335 birds.

"Current fines and penalties have proved insufficient to serve as a deterrent," Huffman said, noting the Department of Fish and Game declared 2008 as "the year of the extreme poacher."

Hats off to Huffman for persuading Fish and Game officials to resume stocking trout in Bon Tempe and Lagunitas lakes. It remains unclear whether officials will make an end-of-season plant this month, or wait until next fall.

As for other fisheries, veterans are nailing bass in the lakes, Steve Dapiran of San Rafael hooked 12 and 14-pound halibut on live shiners at the Paradise Park pier, and skipper Ron Nass of San Rafael got a 50-inch sturgeon at the Pumphouse on Thursday.

Caught a big one lately? E-mail IJ reporter Nels Johnson at [ij.civiccenter@gmail.com](mailto:ij.civiccenter@gmail.com) or call 479-8042. Fish Wrap appears Fridays.

[http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set\\_id=1&click\\_id=15&art\\_id=vn20090407120313412C504283](http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=15&art_id=vn20090407120313412C504283)

## ANC man arrested in abalone bust

April 07 2009 at 02:19PM

By Lavern de Vries

An abalone haul of nearly 2 500kg has landed the ANC's Overberg region treasurer in hot water, leading to his arrest in Hermanus.

Simphiwe Kalolo was expected to appear in court today after he was arrested on Monday with thousands of kilograms of abalone in his possession.

Kalolo was spotted by members of the police's marine unit in the early hours of Sunday morning, said Hermanus station commissioner Senior Superintendent Pindelwa Mavakala. He tried to escape, but was finally pulled over in the Voëlklop area in Hermanus.

The estimated street value of the abalone is R329 000.

Overberg regional secretary Latola Hendricks on Monday confirmed that Kalolo was both an ANC member and the regional treasurer.

<http://www.voxy.co.nz/national/man-fined-5000-possession-275-paua/5/12806>

### Man Fined \$5000 For Possession Of 275 Paua



Voxy News Engine

Tuesday, 28 April, 2009 - 16:45

Wellington, April 28 NZPA - A Porirua man who had 275 paua in his freezers was fined \$5000 when he pleaded guilty to their possession in Porirua District Court today.

Judge Jan Kelly was told Joseph Thomas Tobin had the paua packed in four separate bags stored in two freezers at his home last December.

Fisheries officers, acting on information received, found the paua after executing a search warrant at Tobin's home.

Tobin claimed several friends and family had dived for the paua but refused to name them or provide details.

Under fishing regulations, a person cannot take paua on behalf of others and there is also a recreational limit of 10 paua per person.

If more than 10 paua were stored in a freezer, the onus was on the fisher to prove they were taken legally.

MFish district compliance manager Ross Thurston said he hoped the sentence would be a lesson to greedy amateurs that the full force of the fisheries law would be used for people who breached fisheries rules.

"There is a limit of 10 paua per gatherer per day that can be taken so that there is enough paua for everyone to catch a decent feed today, tomorrow and in the future," Mr Thurston said.

NZPA WGT mgr sl gt

<http://www.watoday.com.au/wa-news/exclusive-seafood-restaurant-caught-out-on-abalone-20090422-afbi.html>

## Exclusive seafood restaurant caught out on abalone

- **Chris Thomson**
- April 22, 2009

An exclusive seafood restaurant overlooking the Swan River has been fined \$10,500 for receiving 10 kilograms of black market Greenlip Abalone.

Crown prosecutor Daniel McDonnell today told Perth Magistrate Robert Black that on July 11 last year an employee of Shun Fung on the River Restaurant paid \$1300 cash for 10 kilograms of the luxury seafood in a clandestine transaction at Raphael Park in Victoria Park.

Located on the Barrack Street Jetty, Shun Fung is "renowned for its live seafood and fish display tanks, which showcase an array of live crustaceans and fish flown in from all over the country," according to the restaurant's [website](#).

"Guests can choose their own special lobster or crab and be assured they will be cooked to perfection by Shun Fung's team of master international chefs," the website says.

Mr McDonnell said that on August 31 last year Department of Fisheries investigators searched the restaurant and in its freezer found 10.7kg of the prized mollusc.

Restaurant director Liao Qiping was unable to provide the investigators with any receipt of purchase for the abalone, as required under WA fishing regulations.

Mr McDonnell said Ms Qiping had explained she was new to the business, inexperienced, and had simply followed the practices of the restaurant's original staff.

The regulations state that parties found with illicit abalone must be fined 10 times the seafood's worth.

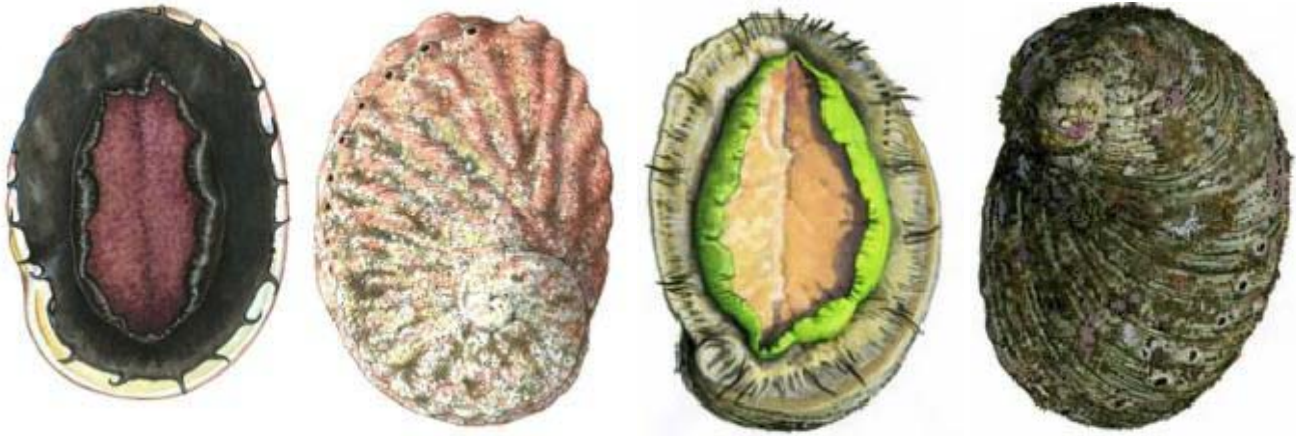
Magistrate Black accepted that the going market rate at the time was \$90 per kilogram, meaning that for the purposes of penalty the 10kg found at the restaurant was worth \$900.

Magistrate Black fined the restaurant \$9000 in accordance with the tenfold rule, a separate \$1500, and ordered the restaurant pay costs of \$371.70.

Two Department of Fisheries officers sat in the public gallery from 10am to 2.30pm today waiting for the case to come up.

Shun Fung on the River Restaurant did not appear in court to defend itself.

[http://www.dpiw.tas.gov.au/inter.nsf/Attachments/VWAS-7QGVD/\\$FILE/Abalone%20Biosecurity%20March%202009%20Newsletter.pdf](http://www.dpiw.tas.gov.au/inter.nsf/Attachments/VWAS-7QGVD/$FILE/Abalone%20Biosecurity%20March%202009%20Newsletter.pdf)



Dpt of Primary Industries and Water

## TASMANIAN ABALONE

## BIOSECURITY PROJECT

### UPDATE

19 March 2009

A framework of categories for both abalone seafood processors and marine farms has recently been introduced to industry as draft documents. The processor and marine farmings categories are synomymous, based around the following risks:

Introduction of the diease into the facility

Discharge of water from the facility

Movement of stock between facilities

Movement of equipment between facilities

Movement of personnel between facilities

Disposal of animal wastes

Quality and health surveillance of stock

The aim of the categories is to ensure compliance in the event of a disease outbreak and allow industry to invest in improving their biosecurity biosecurity as a risk a mangement strategy. Marine farms and processors around the state have been visited or contacted by the project officer to receive feedback and clarify any points on the documents. Once finalised, these documents will be released as part of the project outcomes. The learning outcomes from the AVG emergency September 2008 have now been integrated into a DPIW Emergency Response Plan. The document is being reviewed by the department and will be provided to the Project Reference Group later in the month. All restrictions from the emergency response realting to the taking of abalone have been lifted in Tasmania. Restrictions that applied before the emergecny response are still in place, i.e. taking of abalone from northern Bass Strait and King Island.

Please visit the website [www.dpiw.tas.gov.au/abalone](http://www.dpiw.tas.gov.au/abalone) for more information.

If you would like to find out more about the Tasmanian Abalone Biosecurity Project, be added or excluded from this list, please contact Judi Marshall at DPIW on [Judi.Marshall@dpiw.tas.gov.au](mailto:Judi.Marshall@dpiw.tas.gov.au) or (03) 6233 6888.

<http://www.weekendpost.co.za/article.aspx?id=410674>

**WeekendPost**  
—SHARING KNOWLEDGE · ADDING VALUE · BUILDING COMMUNITIES—

## Cycad bust led to conviction of perlemoen gang

2009/04/15

Guy Rogers ENVIRONMENT & TOURISM EDITOR

LAST week's tough judgment against three perlemoen poachers was precipitated by the arrest of a man with a bakkie full of cycads.

This has emerged in the wake of the perlemoen judgment in Port Elizabeth, which included a 2½-year prison sentence for repeat offender Ming Lei.

Buks Coetzee, senior state prosecutor in the director of public prosecutions office in Grahamstown, said the cycad suspect, Uitenhage resident Nicholaas Bonthuys, 42, was arrested near Uitenhage on the road to Graaff-Reinet on March 9. His bakkie was packed with 263 cycads.

He appeared in the Uitenhage magistrate's court and was granted R3500 bail. He is due to appear again on May 6.

Coetzee said the matter was being taken seriously.

"These are endangered plants and the number involved clearly indicates a commercial poaching enterprise. The culprits can't be allowed to damage the environment in this way."

Later the same day, police swooped on the farm Breedelaagte near Uitenhage and arrested three perlemoen poachers and confiscated R288000 worth of perlemoen and equipment being used to dry it.

Police are investigating a link between the two cases, because the cycad arrest led to the perlemoen bust, Coetzee said.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/04/14/2541974.htm>

## Three charged over abalone haul

Posted Tue Apr 14, 2009 8:14am AEST

- [Map: Fish Creek 3959](#)

Three South Gippsland residents have been arrested and charged after being caught with a large abalone haul at the weekend.

Fisheries Victoria officers detained two men and a woman at Fish Creek on Friday morning.

More than 230 black-lipped abalone, snorkelling gear and a car were seized.

All three have now been charged with taking and possessing a commercial quantity of abalone.

Fisheries Victoria's operations manager, Peter Courtney, says the abalone were taken from the Cape Liptrap area.

"It's an activity that because it can be so lucrative does attract a number of people into it," he said.

"It's just a matter of remaining vigilant and ensuring adherence with the Fisheries Act and regulations.

"The officers in question here did a good job and it was a good result."

Meanwhile, Fisheries Victoria has reduced its daily pipi bag limit at Venus Bay after a spike in harvesting of the species.

The possession and bag limit will reduce from five litres to two litres per person from the end of May.

Fisheries Victoria says pipis are used for bait and food and while stocks are widespread, they must be managed sustainably.

It is reminding anglers must have a fishing licence and must not use tools to collect pipis.

<http://www.thetimes.co.za/News/Article.aspx?id=978292>



## ANC suspends perlemoen official

Sapa

Published: Apr 09, 2009

Simphiwe Kalolo, the ANC councillor allegedly caught with more than 2,400 perlemoen in his car, was suspended by the party's Western Cape branch.

- [ANC official faces abalone charges](#)

"He will face a disciplinary process under the ANC constitution," said Western Cape MEC for economic development Garth Strachan.

Kalolo, who was the African National Congress's treasurer in the Overberg region and a senior municipal official, was arrested on Monday after police allegedly found the perlemoen in black plastic bags in his car.

The vehicle was emblazoned with ANC election stickers and a poster of Jacob Zuma.

He was granted bail of R10,000 by the Hermanus Magistrate's Court on Wednesday and the case was postponed to May 18.



## Greedy paua fishers exception in Hawke's Bay

Thursday, 9 April 2009, 10:42 am

Press Release: Ministry of Fisheries

Press release from Ministry of Fisheries for immediate release

9 April 2009

Greedy paua fishers the exception to Hawke's Bay summer

Honorary Fishery Officers seized several hundred paua in routine patrols of Central Hawke's Bay beaches last weekend.

The seizures included 177 paua at Mangakuri and a further 55 undersize paua at Blackhead Light. Napier Fishery Officers also apprehended another fisher last week with 80 paua. "This total disregard of fisheries rules and the depletion of paua stocks it causes will not be tolerated," said Napier District Compliance Manager Ray McKay. "Both groups will face prosecution for breaches of Fisheries legislation."

However, Mr McKay believed a good number of Hawke's Bay fishers had respected the rules this summer.

"The number of fishers caught flouting the rules this summer was down on previous years," he says. "But we are still concerned at the large quantities of paua, including undersized, that we have seized from some groups of fishers."

While recreational fishing will continue as long as favourable weather and sea conditions prevail, Easter Weekend traditionally marks the end of the summer recreational season in the Hawke's Bay area.

"Fishers can expect to see a visible presence of Fishery Officers patrolling local beaches over Easter," Mr McKay said. "We want everyone to enjoy their fishing this weekend, but those who are considering ignoring fishing rules for their own benefit should be aware that they will be caught and punished."

Mr McKay said the Easter patrols would also involve a number of Honorary Fishery Officers. "These people have given their time over the summer months on a voluntary basis, and have done an excellent job of protecting Hawke's Bay and Wairarapa fisheries," he said.

Fishers are reminded to check the fishing rules before they go out – either by visiting the Ministry of Fisheries' website: [fish.govt.nz](http://fish.govt.nz) or by calling their local Ministry of Fisheries' office.

If members of the public witness any suspicious or illegal fishing they should contact The Ministry of Fisheries on 0800 4 POACHER (0800 4 76224).



9 April 2009 - Black market paua dealer Saravuthy Mao was sentenced to 3 years imprisonment in the Wellington District Court today.

Mr Mao was the leader of a North Island black market paua ring. Earlier this week, the leader of another black market ring - Mr Su - was also sentenced in Wellington District Court.

Mr Mao was arrested by fishery officers on the 27th May 2008, after a 12-month undercover operation conducted by the Ministry of Fisheries. This - 'Operation PAID' - centred on an organised group of criminals who poached and smuggled paua from the Wellington coast. Operation PAID involved the purchase, by an undercover fishery officer, of stolen paua with a retail value of approximately \$1.3 million.

Fishery officers had worked extremely hard over the period of the operation and New Zealanders could be proud of their efforts, said Andrew Coleman the National Compliance Manager of the Ministry of Fisheries.

"The theft of this paua was a direct attack on the rights and natural heritage of all law abiding New Zealanders," he said. "It was a criminal enterprise motivated entirely by greed, targeting threatened paua stocks which are easily accessible. We know that paua is an important fishery to a wide cross-section of New Zealanders and we will continue to work very hard to protect it," he said.

"Mao's sentence and the terms of imprisonment handed down to eleven other offenders involved in Operation PAID so far sends the message that criminals like these are not tolerated by New Zealanders."

Mr Coleman stated that in the recent past the Ministry of Fisheries has been very successful in suppressing the poaching trade and in particular denying these criminals the opportunity to trade within New Zealand and also export illegal paua through traditional avenues such as tour groups, airport baggage and the post. "We have also apprehended and prosecuted a large number of offenders involved in this illegal business," he said.

Mr Coleman said fishery officers appreciate the public's help and support in cracking down on poaching. "A number of recent poaching investigations have been helped by tip-offs from the public; we really appreciate that people are watching out for this sort of thing," he said.

<http://www.capetimes.co.za/?fSectionId=275&fArticleId=vn20090408104018668C336105>

**CAPE TIMES**

## Marine poachers to get it from all sides

*8 April 2009, 17:23*

By Bronwynne Jooste

Key roleplayers in the maritime industry have begun fine-tuning a multipronged programme to clamp down on poaching on the Western Cape coastline.

On Tuesday Marine Coastal Management, the WWF Honda Marine Parks Programme, CapeNature and the non-government organisation Seawatch met to discuss strategies to clamp down on poachers.

They are in the process of developing a "full risk analysis" on tackling maritime concerns.

The WWF Honda Marine Parks Programme said some of the steps suggested included more attention being paid to the safety of officials, who should be equipped with pepper spray and spotlights. The number of people manning the boats would also be increased.

Marine and Coastal Management's Albie Modise agreed that the government would also intensify its efforts, including profiling key poachers and identifying target areas of focus on land and at sea.

Only 14 Marine and Coastal Management inspectors patrol the area between Gordon's Bay and Kleinmond.

The meeting comes as the use of hi-tech patrol boats begins making big advances in the battle against perlemoen poaching in the province.

Patrol vessels sponsored by the World Wild Fund for Nature (WWF) and Honda Marine, have facilitated busts since the vessels were launched six months ago. And there are already plans to deliver a fifth boat for use in KwaZulu Natal.

The first delivery of the initial four was at Robberg, near Plettenberg Bay, in October 2008.

The 6.5-metre semi-rigid patrol boats are fully equipped not only to address crime but also to conduct valuable scientific research.

Non-government organisations have repeatedly expressed concern about the speed of poachers' boats and how they have been able to outrun law enforcement officials. However, the new vessels have been specifically designed to chase down perpetrators at sea.

Other areas to receive boats are Goukamma in Knysna; the De Hoop Nature Reserve near Cape Agulhas; and Betty's Bay. The fifth boat will go to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park in Kwa-Zulu Natal in May.

Peter Chadwick, manager of the programme, said the vessels had been instrumental in two perlemoen busts in March alone.

A boat carrying alleged poachers was launched from Port Elizabeth and ran through to Plettenberg Bay.

CapeNature and SA National Parks conservation staff launched two vessels in pursuit. Despite having a 15-minute head start the poachers were caught.

In Betty's Bay, Cape Nature and Marine and Coastal Management staff nabbed poachers after receiving tip-offs from the community. Both cases are still under investigation.

Aside from the vessels the programme also assists in development plans for the various Marine Protected Areas.

Once delivered the boats are operated by the conservation authority in the area.

Chadwick said the new vessels were sending "a clear message that our marine protected areas are now being equipped with the most up-to-date equipment".

"There are now few vessels that will be able to outrun the new patrol vessels," he said, adding that the inflatables were locally designed, using the latest technologies in boat building to provide hardy vessels capable of handling all sea conditions.

The engines were the most fuel efficient and environmentally friendly on the market and "pack a powerful punch which will make poachers wake up and realise that they cannot get away easily".

Navigational and radar equipment completed the package.

- This article was originally published on page 6 of [The Cape Argus](#) on April 08, 2009

<http://www.weekendpost.co.za/article.aspx?id=408432>

**WeekendPost**  
—SHARING KNOWLEDGE ADDING VALUE BUILDING COMMUNITIES—

## Perlemoen on farm: three fined R40000

2009/04/08

THREE men convicted of processing 9306 perlemoen at a farm outside Uitenhage were each sentenced in the Port Elizabeth magistrate's court yesterday to a fine of R40000 or 12 months in prison.

Goubin Chen, 34, Ming Lei, 36, and December Skosana, 33, of Marabastad, Pretoria, were also sentenced to six months' imprisonment suspended for five years.

The 240kg of perlemoen found at the farm was valued at R288000.

The men were arrested on March 9 after police received a tip-off about illegal activities at Breelaagte farm just outside Uitenhage.

The owner, Gideon Barnard, denied any knowledge of the activities.

According to court documents, the farm was leased to Mhlonipheni Ndebele, of Boksburg, who denied any knowledge of signing the lease.

Under a plea bargain agreement, Chen, who is in the country illegally, will be deported after paying his fine.

On December 6, 2007, Lei was convicted of a similar offence in South Africa and was fined R51000 and deported to his home country.

However, he illegally returned to the country via Botswana.

The Asset Forfeiture Unit was granted a confiscation order of R288000 against the three men. The perlemoen will also be forfeited.

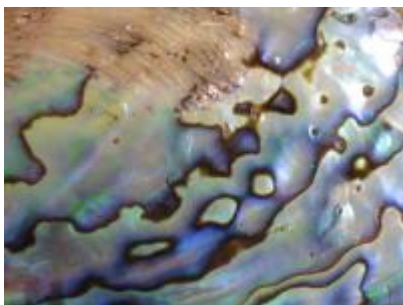
<http://www.voxy.co.nz/national/home-detention-man-who-ran-black-market-paua-ring/5/11696>

## Home Detention For Man Who Ran Black Market Paua Ring



Voxy News Engine

Tuesday, 7 April, 2009 - 19:14



Wellington, April 7 NZPA - A man at the centre of a black market paua ring was today sentenced to home detention and community service for buying illegally caught paua from Wellington divers and on-selling it in Auckland.

Wei Wen Raymond Su, who spoke limited English despite living in New Zealand for a decade, was aided by a Cantonese translator when he appeared in Wellington District Court on 12 charges of procuring, possessing and selling the paua.

Su was caught during an undercover Ministry of Fisheries and police operation called 'Operation Keeper', sparked after a group of divers were repeatedly handed infringements for catching undersized paua and paua over the daily catch limit of 10.

The divers had contacted Su, who ran a takeaway store in Wainuiomata, to sell their catch to him on several occasions in early March 2007.

On March 9, he loaded up his car and drove to Auckland, where he made three sales of paua, totalling up to 45 kilograms.

The eight-week surveillance operation culminated in raids on homes and businesses in Wainuiomata, the Hutt Valley, Miramar and Opotiki and 11 prosecutions.

A further 191 kilograms of paua was found at Su's premises during a search as part of the operation.

Crown lawyer Gemma Mallett asked Judge John Walker for a sentence of between 3-1/2 to 4-1/2 years to be handed down.

The sentence had to deter Su and others from depleting paua fisheries for commercial gain, she said.

Ms Mallett said Su was a one-man black market ring and should receive a heavier sentence than others involved.

Seven divers and four buyers had already been sentenced in connection with the operation.

Two divers were imprisoned, one for two years and 10 months, the other for 10 months, while another diver was sentenced to five months home detention.

Other divers were sentenced to community service, while the buyers were fined between \$500 and \$1500 each.

Su's partner, Sui Hang Chen, was still being sought in connection with the operation.

It was believed she had left the country shortly after the operation ended.

Judge Walker commended Su's early guilty pleas and lack of previous convictions.

He acknowledged Su's lack of understanding of English and the difficulties he would face if sentenced to home detention, but said it would be prejudicial to imprison him because of this.

Su was sentenced to seven months' home detention to be served in Hastings and 200 hours community service.

His two vehicles and other items were ordered forfeit to the Crown.

NZPA WGT ljm kk gt

<http://www.sowetan.co.za/News/Article.aspx?id=975601>



## Taiwan ship pays R1.5m shark fin fine

6 April 2009

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The skipper of a Taiwanese fishing vessel has paid a R1.5 million fine.

The Chien Jui No 102 was seized in Cape Town harbour two weeks ago, and law enforcement authorities confiscated more than 1.6 tons of dried shark fin and 5.1 tons of shark carcasses from it.

The fine was for contravening permit conditions for foreign vessels entering the South African exclusive economic zone, the Department of Environment Affairs said on Monday.

The number of fins did not match the number of shark bodies, and the discrepancy was beyond "tolerance" limits.

This was the highest fine ever imposed for such a transgression, the department said.

- Environmental officials also arrested a man early Monday morning near Hermanus after more than 5,000 perlemoen were found in the vehicle he was driving.

He is expected to appear in the Hermanus Magistrate's Court later this week. - Sapa



<http://www.gisborneherald.co.nz/Default.aspx?s=3&s1=2&id=10570>

## The Gisborne Herald

### 'Size matters' as shellfish laws enforced

Tuesday, 31 March 2009

By **Jessica Wauchop**

The number of people who continue to blatantly flaunt the law and remove undersized or excess shellfish was illustrated yesterday with seven people in court facing fishery charges.

Ignorance was not an excuse for taking undersized or excess paua, crayfish, kina or shellfish after a summer-long campaign by the Ministry of Fisheries emphasised that "size did matter", said Gisborne District compliance manager Tom Teneti.

The seven people in Gisborne District Court yesterday faced an array of charges.

These included the possession of undersized paua, removal of kina without lawful authority, possession of undersized rock lobster and possession of excess paua.

"Those people are effectively taking from the next generation," said Mr Teneti.

"From one year to the next, the numbers are still high. It is quite disappointing from one summer to another that people don't seem to be learning or accepting the information they do have access to.

"We have done as much as possible in terms of educating people . . . a large percentage of those apprehended have admitted to knowing the regulations.

"They are blatantly ignoring the law. They have no excuse for it, these regulations have been around for some time."

Fisheries workers have suspected in a lot of instances there was a dollar value driving the undersized or excess catch, said Mr Teneti.

"In most cases we can't prove it, but we do suspect."

On the black market people could get up to \$70 a kilogram of paua.

Mr Teneti said it was an attractive sum of money for many people, so he would not be surprised if some cases in Gisborne were along those lines, he said.

The number of people caught and charged was not unexpected, said Mr Teneti.

"We have got a resource that is quite accessible from the central city and it is predominately undersized.

"But the problem is the spawning period for paua is during the summer months and that would appear to be when gathering is also at its peak. The spawning doesn't match the taking.

"When people do take undersized paua it reduces the availability of paua that are of legal size and limits the ability of paua to spawn."

Regulations will continue to be enforced during the autumn and winter months so people would need to take paua and crayfish that are of size, he said.

"We have the information available and an open door policy at the office and we can talk everything through with anyone who wants to know more.

"But also there will be fisheries officers out there and if people are going to break the law, then we will catch them. Maybe not today, or tomorrow, but they can be certain we will catch them."

<http://www.voxy.co.nz/national/naturally-small-paua-taranaki-leads-mfish-propose-change-recreational-fishing-ru/5/10754>

## Naturally Small Paua In Taranaki Leads MFish To Propose A Change In The Recreational Fishing Rules

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Voxy News Engine

Monday, 23 March, 2009 - 13:36



23 March 2009 - The Ministry of Fisheries is seeking public feedback on a proposal to change the rules for recreational paua fishing in Taranaki after a study has shown that Taranaki paua are naturally smaller than most other parts of New Zealand.

The proposed new rules would reduce the recreational minimum legal size for paua from 125mm to 85mm in Taranaki.

A scientific study conducted by the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA) on the Taranaki paua fishery has shown that Taranaki paua are naturally small, only reaching a maximum size of about 90-100mm. The study also found that they become sexually mature at a much smaller size than other areas.

Currently, a national minimum legal size limit of 125mm in length applies to all recreational paua fisheries including Taranaki. This means that most paua in Taranaki never reach a legal size.

"This research shows that Taranaki paua are naturally smaller than in most other parts of the country and this means it may be appropriate to reduce the size limit for the region" said MFish Inshore Manager Dan Lees.

The proposals would set a new minimum legal size limit of 85mm for paua within the area between the Awakino River and the Wanganui River. This area includes most paua beds within the Taranaki region.

MFish is also seeking feedback from the community on whether to retain the 10 paua daily bag limit or decrease it to 5 paua per day.

"A lower daily bag limit would reduce the impact of fishing on the paua beds as people take up the opportunity to gather paua they could not previously catch" Dan said.

A smaller size limit in Taranaki could create some compliance problems for the paua fishery, both in Taranaki and in other nearby areas. To address these problems, MFish is proposing that amateur fishers who collect paua in Taranaki may only possess that smaller paua inside a defined area. The proposed 'area limitation on possession' rule would apply to the western area bounded by State Highways 3 and 4 (see map below). This area includes the majority of the Taranaki population that live near the coast.

The proposed changes affect the recreational fishery only. They will not affect the ability for Maori to continue to issue customary fishing authorisations for people to gather paua for hui and tangi.

Following public consultation the Minister of Fisheries will consider the proposals and make a decision on whether the changes should go ahead. The proposals would then need to be approved by Cabinet. If the changes are approved they would take effect on 1 October 2009.

MFish plans to commission a further study on the Taranaki paua fishery after 4-5 years to evaluate the impacts of recreational fishing. If necessary, additional changes to the amateur fishing rules, both in Taranaki and in other parts of New Zealand could be made at that time.