

<http://www.news-mail.com.au/localnews/storydisplay.cfm?storyid=3763282&thesection=localnews&thesubsection=&thesecondsubsection=>

Bundaberg and Region
NewsMail

Fisherman 'strangled' by the law

11.02.2008

By Larine Statham

STRUGGLING to keep food on the table for his family, Graham Stevenson describes his current predicament as "a death of a thousand cuts".

"I just don't know how many cuts I've got to go," Mr Stevenson said.

Like so many other commercial fishermen, Mr Stevenson believes unreasonable restrictions and laws are making the industry untenable.

Having been fishing for 34 years, Mr Stevenson will face court in coming weeks accused of possessing an undersize fish.

"I've been pulled up and checked hundreds of times over the years and never faced fines before," he said.

"I have an impeccable record, but the restrictions are getting so tight they are strangling the industry.

"I've lost two days of work due to the court case because it keeps getting adjourned.

"But I'll fight it all the way."

With a number of his fellow commercial fishermen due to face court over illegal bi-catches, Mr Stevenson said spotted mackerel bi-catch limits had seen some boats lose 40% of their income.

"You have to keep working the same hours and every bill is the same, but your income is 40% less," he said.

"I agree we should only be catching at a sustainable level, but we are not reaching anywhere near the allowed 140 tonnes per season."

Mr Stevenson said demand from the public had also created problems.

"Spotted mackerel are a premier table fish," he said.

"Seafood is promoted as a premium health food and there is a huge demand here from the Australian public, not the export market.

"And yet so many people, especially sport fishermen, want to see net fishing banned."

Mr Stevenson said it was getting harder to stay in the trade due to drought and easterly winds.

"We are all going broke and yet there is no government assistance to help us out," he said. "There is no aid for fishermen."

Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries (DPI&F) fisheries resource manager Mark Lightowler said the industry could expect further incidental by-catch restrictions due to shark fisheries collapsing in recent times.

"Most commercial fishermen take some portion of shark," Mr Lightowler said.

"It usually makes up about 10% of their income.

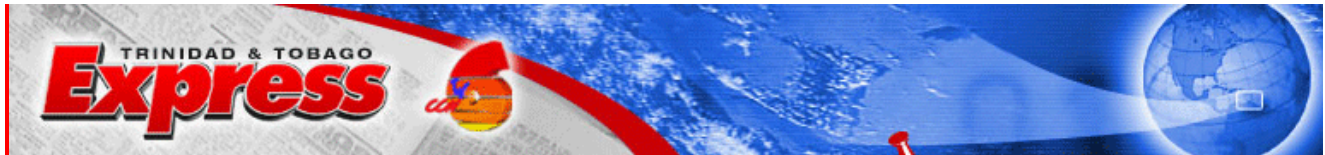
"Most of the damage is being done overseas by people after shark fin.

"But with about 50 species of shark in Australian waters, some of the species survival is of concern.

"We are proposing to restrict the number of fishers and monitor shark numbers.

"We are looking to implement new legislation and a management plan for the inshore fin fish fishery, but the proposals are not set in stone."

http://www.trinidadexpress.com/index.pl/article_business?id=161276702



Dolphin meat big seller

'Not against the law'

Carolyn Kissoon South Bureau

Tuesday, February 12th 2008

Within recent months, dolphin meat has become a big seller at fish markets.

Consumers have been paying up to \$20 a pound for the meat and many fishermen admitted yesterday that they were having a hard time getting enough to supply the growing demand.

But following publication of a picture in the Express last Saturday, of a vendor with a huge blue dolphin at the Chaguanas market, there has been outrage from animal lovers and conservationists not only in Trinidad but several other countries (See opposite page)

Their grouse: the dolphin is an endangered and protected species and its hunting is outlawed by many nations.

Alicia Charles, communications specialist at the Environmental Management Authority, said yesterday that they have been bombarded with calls from concerned people about hunting the mammals.

"People have been calling saying they are concerned about this and something needed to be done about it," she said.

Charles said all questions were being referred to the Institute of Marine Affairs.

However, an official at the Wildlife Section of the Ministry of Public Utilities and the Environment said under the Fisheries Act of Trinidad, dolphins were not a protected species. He said it was not against the law for fishermen to trap dolphins and sell their meat.

"We feel dolphins should be protected because they are so intelligent and close to humans, but under the Fisheries Act they are not protected," he said. President of the San Fernando Fishing Co-operative Society, Salim Gool, said fishermen were not doing anything wrong by selling dolphin meat.

"No one ever had a problem with us selling the dolphins. There are different types of dolphins and I do not think this one is

protected," he said.

Gool added that because of the polluted waters in the Gulf of Paria, fishermen were not catching fish and had no choice but to capture dolphins.

"We are only catching oil. No fishes are coming so when we get a dolphin we have to sell it," he said.

An official at National Fisheries Company said they have never processed dolphins. He said the company processes a fish called Mahi Mahi, which is also called dolphin. "It is nothing like the mammal. It is a flat yellow and green fish," he said. Dolphin hunting has been a matter of concern among conservation groups across the globe.

For years, organisations in Japan have been clamouring against their government for issuing licences to hunt dolphins.

In the United States, authorities are keeping a close watch over fishermen who capture dolphins while trawling for tuna. The US government has established regulations so that tuna caught without killing dolphins could be labelled as "dolphin safe". It also took action by creating a boycott on all fishing countries that have a high mortality rate on dolphins. This action has resulted in many countries losing millions of dollars in export revenue.

<http://www.news.com.au/adelaidenow/story/0,22606,23198281-2682,00.html>

CHRISTOPHER RUSSELL BUSINESS EDITOR

February 12, 2008 09:40pm



Australian Bight Abalone CEO Andrew Ferguson with green lipped abalone. Picture: CHRIS MANGAN

AN ABALONE farm off the state's West Coast is the first aquaculture project in Australia - and possibly the world - to achieve an official carbon-neutral rating, an environmental auditor says.

Australian Bight Abalone engaged the auditing company to analyse its operations, centred around Elliston, and bought carbon credits to offset emissions.

"Obtaining carbon neutral accreditation was a natural progression for us," Australian Bight Abalone chief executive Andrew Ferguson said.

"It neatly complements the already ethical nature of investments within the ABA Group."

The audit was conducted by Balance Carbon, which determined it was unique.

"It's definitely the first in Australia," Balance Carbon managing director Tim Moore said. "There's no global register for this sort of thing but as far as our media scans go we can't find any other aquaculture company in the world that's done this."

Dr Moore, who arranged the carbon offsets using the New South Wales greenhouse gas abatement scheme, said being carbon neutral would be a great help to marketing the product internationally. ABA is harvesting its first crop of the shellfish and aims to raise \$35 to \$50 million by June for its next project.

It has ambitious plans to spend \$250 million over the next six years and wants to be the biggest offshore abalone farmer in the world. It wants to double its workforce by next year.

<http://www.theage.com.au/news/national/first-dredge-results-out-on-friday/2008/02/11/1202578694338.html>



First dredge results out on Friday

Clay Lucas
February 12, 2008

THE Port of Melbourne Corporation will release the first results of water quality testing in Port Phillip Bay on Friday, one week after its \$1 billion channel deepening project began.

The effects on the bay's water quality after the first days of dredging had all been within environmental limits set by the Brumby and Rudd governments, Port chief executive Stephen Bradford said yesterday.

His reassurance came after Mornington Peninsula residents complained that clouds of sand and silt stirred up by the Queen of the Netherlands, which began dredging last Friday, had spread from McCrae to Blairgowrie.

Angler Pat Mihailidis, who was fishing on Rosebud pier on the weekend, said the bay's waters had turned murky.

His usual catch of 30 fish had been reduced to just one, he told *The Age*.

A 2005 trial dredge of the channel carried out by the Queen of the Netherlands had caused fish to "disappear", Mr Mihailidis said.

Since then, fish such as garfish, trevally and salmon had only just returned, he said.

Yesterday morning the Port said that the results of water testing done by the Port over the past three days would not be released until June.

But, after what *The Age* believes was behind-the-scenes pressure from the State Government and the Office of the Environmental Monitor that the Port be more transparent, a spokesman said late yesterday results of water testing would be released on Friday.

By yesterday, 250,000 cubic metres of sand and silt had been removed from an eight-kilometre stretch of Port Phillip Bay's southern shipping channel.

Two fixed buoys in the south channel are monitoring the impact on water quality.

The Australian Conservation Foundation has reviewed the project's environmental management plan and rated it "completely inadequate", saying it fails all international best-practice models. (Its scorecards can be seen at www.acfonline.org.au/baydredging.)

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/story/54722>

Marina claims

By Hamish Heard

12th February 2008 11:06:01 AM

No consultation a sign of arrogance, Page 4.

THE State Government has backed plans to tear down Ferguson St Pier and replace it with a massive marina to serve a Williamstown developer and two yacht clubs, according to documents seen by Star.

A proposal compiled by Nelson Place Marina Pty Ltd claims Parks Victoria has given the project “priority status” and is prepared to prop it up to the tune of up to \$4 million.

Star last year revealed that the company planned to build a large marina that would service two local yacht clubs and provide berths for a private development at the Knights Slipway site.

The plans, including the demolition of the five-year-old, publicly owned Ferguson St Pier, have outraged local community groups.

NPM directors, Williamstown’s Terry and Scott O’Hare and Anglesea millionaire Murray Nugent, briefed Royal Victorian Motor Yacht Club and Hobsons Bay Yacht Club members about the proposal last week.

The claims of government support and glowing praise for the project from a consultant employed by Parks Victoria to assess marina developments in Port Phillip have sparked fears that the project is a done deal.

But Parks Victoria’s city and bays regional manager Stuart Ord rejected the company’s claims that the project had “priority status” or that money had been promised.

“To say it has priority status ... I wouldn’t agree with that statement,” Mr Ord said.

“There has been no commitment from Parks Victoria or the State Government regarding funding for this proposal.”

Mr Ord’s account was at odds with sections of the company’s proposal leaked to Star last week.

“We know that the State Government is looking at this project with a view towards providing some assistance which may be in kind, ie: dredging, jetty relocation, attenuator, boardwalk, or in cash with a potential value of \$4 million,” the document states.

But Mr Ord did admit Parks Victoria would consider supporting plans to demolish Ferguson St Pier, despite the fact it was only five years old and cost taxpayers \$1.2 million.

“It would depend on the benefits. Obviously we don’t like to see things that are reasonably fresh pulled down, but it just depends on what’s actually being proposed,” he said.

Mr Ord said the proposal was “in line generally with what Parks Victoria is wishing for with the development of recreational boating in Port Phillip”.

He said the final proposal would be considered based on how it fitted in with a boating fairways plan being conducted by the consultancy firm GHD.

The NPM document seen by Star states the company is also using GHD consultants in the development of its plans.

Williamstown North Ward councillor Peter Hemphill questioned whether a conflict of interest could arise because the two organisations were using the same consultants on projects that were linked.

“If they’re (GHD) employed by Parks Victoria to do the fairways plan and also by a private developer with his sights on the same piece of water, I’d have to question whether there is some serious conflict of interest at play,” Cr Hemphill said.

He also questioned the actions of Scott Eccleston, from the consulting firm Leisurecorp, who sang the project’s praises at last week’s briefing session.

“At no stage did (Mr Eccleston) say he was the State Government’s marina projects consultant,” Cr Hemphill said.

Leisurecorp’s website states that the company has won the contract to prepare “status reports on current and proposed marine developments” for Parks Victoria.

“According to NPM documents it would appear that this proposal to pull down Ferguson St Pier already has government backing,” Cr Hemphill said.

Mr Ord denied suggestions that NPM using consultants retained by Parks Victoria to look into marina developments was inappropriate.

“Any of the players on Williamstown Harbour can use any consultant they like,” Mr Ord said.

http://www.theherald.co.za/herald/news/n01_12022008.htm



Crime wave puts marine sanctuary in jeopardy

Guy Rogers ENVIRONMENT & TOURISM EDITOR

A SPATE of crime has left the future of Port Elizabeth’s much-loved seabird rescue group, Samrec, in jeopardy, with school children and students pulling out of trips to the eco-education facility at Cape Recife after several recent attacks.

Yesterday, Collegiate Junior School cancelled a visit to the SA Marine Rehabilitation and Education Centre due to safety concerns.

The centre, in a picturesque municipal nature reserve, attracts thousands of children to its eco-education programme each year.

But several attacks in the past few months have prompted some education institutions to ban further visits to the centre, despite the introduction of police guards.

Collegiate teacher and community service co-ordinator Heather Moulton said yesterday: "We understood there was going to be a police guard with us and another guard for our cars, but there have been a couple of incidents and we didn't want to take the risk with a group of young girls.

"Our feeling was that even having to have armed police with the girls was not ideal. It is very sad because we have used Samrec many times and they are fantastic."

The school's decision comes days after Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University zoology students Marie Botha and Adrian Evans were confronted on the Cape Recife rocks by a six-man gang wielding knives last Thursday. They were marched along the beach, tied up with cable-ties, thrown into the bush and told they would be killed if the bank card access details supplied by them were wrong. They eventually freed themselves and found help, but money had already been withdrawn from their accounts.

They are receiving trauma counselling, and zoology department head Professor Tris Wooldridge has declared the area out of bounds for his students "until suitable security arrangements are made".

Last month, former municipal environment unit chief Dr Paul Martin and a group of eight UK tourists were accosted and robbed and, last year, anglers reported that their vehicles were frequently broken into at Cape Recife's two car parks.

Humewood police station community liaison officer Inspector Patrick Williams said he was convinced a single gang was behind the recent attacks and that they would soon be caught. In the meanwhile, he and his unit were going the extra mile to ensure the safety of visitors. He said besides their support of Samrec's work, under the supervision of Humewood station commissioner Director Ronald Koll, the police had rolled out a "24/7" programme to monitor the area, involving various police units and the municipality's safety and security team.

"We will not tolerate criminals dictating our movements to us and taking away our freedom to explore this beautiful place, which is part of our heritage."

Meanwhile, Samrec has vowed to continue its work in the reserve.

Samrec co-founder Libby Sharwood said yesterday the spot was too important to Samrec's work and the people of Port Elizabeth to give up.

"We have to stay and show we are serious. We have to do something pro-active to get over this crime problem. Samrec hopes to start building its long-awaited state-of-the art R8,1-million seabird rehabilitation facility at the entrance to the reserve next month. The centre is to be built with funding received from Lotto.

<http://www.newswire.ca/en/releases/archive/February2008/12/c9317.html>



Canadian Aquaculture Industry Remains Committed to Protecting Wild Salmon Stocks and the Environment

OTTAWA, Feb. 12 /CNW/ - A new study published in the Public Library of Science Journal that correlates the decline of wild salmonids on both coasts of Canada to the incidence of salmon farming takes a very narrow perspective on a complex issue.

"There are many threats and challenges facing the survival of wild salmon, such as urbanization, forestry, agriculture, mining, transportation and climate change," says Ruth Salmon, Executive Director of the Canadian Aquaculture Industry Alliance (CAIA). "To bring it down to one issue, such as salmon aquaculture, is far too simplistic."

While this study cites salmon farming as a significant cause for concern to wild stocks, there are many other studies that support a different view. For example, recent findings of the BC Pacific Salmon Forum's 2007 research program show adult pink salmon returns to the Broughton Archipelago in 2007 were similar or slightly improved relative to 2005, showing salmon aquaculture and the wild fishery can co-exist harmoniously.

And according to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans website, there is little evidence to support the suggestion that the presence of salmon farms increases the risk of disease in wild stocks.

This is, in part, due to the fact that all aquaculture operations in Canada must meet rigorous federal, provincial and international environmental standards. In fact Canada has established some of the most stringent environmental standards of all aquaculture-producing countries. These standards, based on the best available scientific research, are in place to minimize and manage any potential risks associated with aquaculture operations.

"The Canadian aquaculture industry does not take the issue of declining wild salmon stocks lightly. We recognize the concerns of interactions with wild fish populations and work with government, scientists, and others to actively address them." said Ruth Salmon. "Both wild and farmed salmon share the same environment - so it is in everyone's best interest to collaborate on preserving the health of our marine resource. In fact, the aquaculture industry has become a partner in many conservation and protection programs. Farmers in New Brunswick work directly with groups such as the Atlantic Salmon Federation to promote the conservation of wild salmon stocks in the Bay of Fundy. And in BC, the industry has been working in partnership with the Pacific Salmon Forum to address potential wild/farmed fish interactions."

The Canadian aquaculture industry has consistently demonstrated its commitment to protecting wild stocks and the environment. It's time to stop the accusations and begin recognizing the importance of enhancing wild salmon stocks and supporting a sustainable salmon farming industry.

The Canadian Aquaculture Industry Alliance (CAIA) is a national industry association headquartered in Ottawa. It represents the interests of Canadian aquaculture operators, feed companies and suppliers as well as provincial finfish and shellfish aquaculture associations. CAIA is dedicated to promoting a responsible and healthy Canadian aquaculture industry that follows sound environmental practices and showcasing the health benefits of a wide variety of nutritious seafood products.

For further information: Ruth Salmon, Executive Director, Canadian Aquaculture Industry Alliance, BC Phone: (250) 951-9866, Cell Phone: (250) 701-1431

<http://www.news.com.au/heraldsun/story/0,21985,23204631-661,00.html>

Dive operators to sue over Port Phillip Bay dredging

Article from: **Herald Sun**

Peter Mickelborough

February 13, 2008 12:00am

DIVE operators are set to sue the Port of Melbourne Corporation for losses caused by the \$1 billion Port Phillip Bay dredging.

The move follows the PoMC's rejection of calls for compensation at a meeting with diving companies yesterday.

Jason Salter, managing director of the state's largest diving company, Dive Victoria, said he now had no choice but to sue.

"The Port of Melbourne acknowledged there will be losses but wasn't prepared to talk about protecting the industry or doing anything to compensate us for our loss," Mr Salter said.

"I don't want to go broke and then have to sue after the fact.

"I don't want to have to sack all my (more than 60) employees and destroy everything we've built up just to get paid what's rightfully ours."

Without help, Mr Salter said most operators in the \$45-million-a-year industry would go broke.

He said dredging off Rosebud had already scared away customers and reduced visibility off Portsea and Queenscliff from an average 10-15m to as little as 1.6m.

Mr Salter said dredging would prevent diving in the Pt Lonsdale Marine Park area, where the company conducted 70-80 per cent of its dives, from April to March next year.

Economic modelling in 2006 for the project's Supplementary Environmental Effects Statement put potential losses to operators at \$4.1 million.

Mr Salter put the cost much higher.

PoMC executive general manager Nick Easy ruled out special compensation arrangements.

"Industries that believe they may be affected by the project have avenues through the legal system if they wish to take that course and they are aware of that," Mr Easy said.

Clean sand dredged off Rosebud has been dumped about 3.5km off the coast of Mt Martha.

The dredging progress will be reviewed tomorrow.

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/story/54723>

Dredger digs in to bay

12th February 2008 11:06:01 AM

DREDGING work for the controversial channel deepening project began on Friday amid a flotilla of protestors on surfboards.

Water Police boats were not enough to stop some of the 50 protestors paddling through an exclusion zone set up to protect the dredging ship Queen of the Netherlands as it began channel deepening.

Some of the surfers reportedly touched the giant ship.

Dredging works were allowed to proceed after a Federal Court judge ordered the Port of Melbourne Corporation and the anti-deepening group Blue Wedges Coalition into mediation.

Blue Wedges spokesman John Willis said the group had celebrated a minor victory after the Port agreed not to dredge at the mouth of the Yarra River or at Port Phillip Heads until after a February 20 court hearing.

The Queen of the Netherlands instead headed for the South Channel and has been operating between Mount

Martha and Rye.

“It’s a temporary reprieve and it was the commercially responsible thing to do given that the Port of Melbourne Corporation hadn’t even waited for the inquiry process to finish before ordering the dredging ships to arrive,” Mr Willis said.

The corporation had been wearing losses of \$250,000 a day between the vessel’s arrival two weeks ago and the start of dredging.

Mr Willis labelled the move to bring the Queen of the Netherlands to Port Phillip before Federal Environment Minister Peter Garrett had given the project final approvals as “disgraceful bullying”.

“It’s called holding a gun at our heads and holding a gun at the purse of Victorians,” he said.

Blue Wedges is preparing to go to the Federal Court on 20 February to argue that Mr Garrett had failed to consider the social costs of dredging.

“In his statement it was interesting that the environment minister came up with economic reasons for the dredging and failed to mention the recreational impacts for bird watchers, fishermen, divers and beachgoers,” Mr Willis said.

“This guy (Mr Garrett) is elected to stand up for the environment but, by his own admission, he’s standing up for the economy.”

Mr Willis claimed the economic argument didn’t stack up.

“It’s a \$1 billion outlay for a return of \$1.8 billion over 28 years, or 22 depending on which report you look at,” he said.

“You don’t need to be an economic analyst to see that’s a negative return when you factor in inflation and the fact that it’s about quarter of what the average superannuation fund returns.”

He claimed the project was about Melbourne’s ports retaining credibility with multi-national shipping companies until the State Government could cook up a longer-term plan.

But the port corporation chief, Stephen Bradford, said the project was vital for business and job growth in the state.

“The Port of Melbourne is a lynchpin for economic wellbeing in Victoria and channel deepening is essential to the state,” Mr Bradford said.

“It will safeguard Victorian jobs now and in the future and, importantly, will drive business confidence in Victoria.”

http://www.goldcoast.com.au/article/2008/02/11/7630_gold-coast-top-story.html



Bodyboarders tagged by bull shark

11Feb08

Two bodyboarders had some unwelcome company during a Saturday morning surf when a two-metre bull shark trailed the pair.

Kyal Thornton and Trent Blakemore paddled out about 5.30am to catch a few waves on their boards, nicknamed 'shark biscuits'. They were alone at a break off Marina Mirage at The Spit.

Mr Thornton saw a 'disturbing' shape following his friend, who was wearing yellow flippers.

"A fin came up directly behind him in the same path. I was hoping it was a dolphin at first," he said. "But it was moving pretty quickly and it was moving in a side-to-side motion."

The 31-year-old yelled to his friend to swim as fast as he could when he realised he was being chased by a shark.

"I didn't know what the shark was until I got home and looked on the computer," he said.

The keen Runaway Bay bodyboarder said he had little sleep on Saturday night after he discovered it was a bull shark.

Mr Thornton said a pod of three dolphins swimming about 10m from them had probably scared the shark away.

Mr Blakemore said when he heard Mr Thornton yelling to him, he thought it was a joke.

"I had a little giggle. I stopped and looked around and saw some dolphins. I said 'they're just dolphins' and kept paddling," he said.

"I only saw the dolphins. I didn't even see the shark."

The 29-year-old from Western Australia said the encounter had not stopped them from enjoying a few waves.

"It had got to the stage where the surf was too good so I wanted to stay out," he said. "I was a little bit freaked out but it didn't touch me so I wasn't that bad."

The pair stayed out in the water for about an hour and several other surfers joined them.

"I was crapping myself the whole time but I wasn't leaving him (Trent) out there on his own," said Mr Thornton.

<http://www.growfish.com.au/content.asp?ContentId=10913>

Marine industry faces crisis

Average reader rating: 0

Source: *Financial Express*

World News 10/02/2008 16:33:54

Marine industry faces crisis

Seafood industry is facing a crisis due to the disappearance of operating margins and the sector needs an urgent infusion of funds to stave off closures and lay-off, says A J Tharakan, vice-chairman of Marine Exports Development Authority of India.

He was speaking at the inauguration of the India International Seafood Show-08 here on Friday.

Tharakan pointed out that the industry was facing a crisis and called on the Union government to increase the DEPB (duty entitled passbook) rates to 15% from the present 8%.

He warned that the nation could witness drastic reduction in aquaculture production unless the industry got immediate support.

"One must, today, be a very brave entrepreneur to be in the seafood business. Operating margins have disappeared and from fisherman to aquaculture, farmer to processor, all are battling negative cash flows," he said. "Farm-level price of Black Tiger in India is the lowest ever and farmers are averse to seeding their farms," he added. India must quickly switch on to the cheaper vannamei species to survive, as it is equally tasty and attractive, Tharakan said.

He called on the government body, National Fisheries Development Board (NDFB), to get its act together and formulate measures to save millions of people, who are dependent on this sector. Rights for cage fisheries in inland water bodies, rejuvenation of coastal fisheries, permission for vanammei species and further exploitation of tuna resources could be the solution to the crisis-stricken sector, he said.

Tharakan also called for a consolidation in the industry, similar to the Iceland model, to achieve global scale. "Without consolidation, Indian seafood industry will remain a marginal business incapable of effectively competing globally and creating a recognised international brand," he said.

<http://www.news.com.au/heraldsun/story/0,21985,23191145-2862,00.html>

Toxic plume fears in Port Phillip bay

Article from: **Herald Sun**

Sarah Wotherspoon

February 11, 2008 12:00am

PORT Phillip Bay was still a clear blue yesterday but bayside residents say it's only a matter of time before dredging changes that.

The Queen of the Netherlands has been working around the clock since Friday morning, dredging an 8km section of the south channel near Rye.

But the controversial \$1 billion channel deepening project has angered bayside residents who said yesterday they feared what would happen to the bay.

Dromana mother-of-three Natalie Jory-Ryan said she could see the dredger from her house.

She said while there had been no visible signs of silt close to shore, she was wary of letting her children swim in the bay.

"I worry as a parent with my kids swimming in there with the toxic waste that will eventually be dredged up," she said.

"I know when they did the trial dredge at Safety Beach we saw a lot of dead sea life. There was heaps as far as the eye could see."

Dromana resident and keen fisherman Peter Yerolemis said it would only be a matter of time before silt washed up on shore.

"The wind is blowing the wrong way for that today but wait until it changes," he said.

Rosebud angler Pat Mihailidis said he usually caught up to 30 fish but yesterday he got one.

"I was here at 4 o'clock this morning and there was a layer of foam on the water," he said. "The dredging is going to destroy the fishing in the bay."

Dredging in the south channel will continue until February 20 when the Port of Melbourne Corporation returns to the Federal Court to fight to begin dredging in the mouth of the Yarra and the Heads.

Fairfax Digital

<http://business.theage.com.au/victorian-companies-prepare-for-tougher-times/20080210-1rd1.html>

Victorian companies prepare for tougher times



The Queen of the Netherlands dredging the south channel off Rosebud yesterday. Delays will further damage business confidence, VECCI says. Photo: *Simon Schluter*

- **Leon Gettler**
- February 11, 2008

WITH markets volatile, a higher Australian dollar, interest rate pressure and the lingering effects of the drought, Victorian businesses are battenning down the hatches for a tough 12 months.

The latest Visa-Victorian Employers' Chamber of Commerce and Industry survey shows that businesses are expecting weaker trading conditions over the next three months.

General business conditions are expected to decline and sales and profitability growth are expected to be weaker during that period.

Growth in selling prices is expected to remain moderate.

VECCI's business sentiment index for the Australian economy weakened during the December quarter with fewer respondents expecting stronger economic growth over the next 12 months. Only 17% of survey respondents expected stronger economic growth, down from 26% in the previous quarter. But 29% expected a weakening while 54% expected no change.

Business confidence in the Victorian economy also moderated, slipping from 20% in the previous quarter to 15%.

VECCI chief executive Wayne Kayler-Thomson said the survey was sending a signal to governments they needed to put in place measures to keep businesses going.

That included the contentious channel deepening project.

"The further reduction in overall business confidence is a warning bell to state and federal governments that business needs the right economic climate to continue to invest," Mr Kayler-Thomson said.

"Attention needs to be paid to measures that encourage investment and productivity growth, such as lower taxes and charges, cuts in red tape, a realistic industrial relations framework and improved infrastructure.

"Delays in vital capacity-building and inflation-busting projects such as the Port Phillip Bay channel deepening project will only serve to damage business confidence further."

<http://www.vecci.org.au>

<http://www.news.com.au/couriermail/story/0,23739,23186002-3102,00.html>

Sharks are child's play

Article from: **SundayMail**

By **Paul Weston**

February 10, 2008 12:00am

WELCOME to shark school, where students can sink their teeth into a bold new challenge: learning how to conquer their fears.

Children as young as 10 are taught a greater respect for ocean predators by swimming with dozens of them in a new attraction at Sea World's Shark Bay on the Gold Coast.





The sharks, including a hammerhead, white and black tips, leopards, a grey carpet shark – and the worryingly named nervous shark – are well-fed and present no danger to visitors, according to marine experts at Sea World.

Still, most of the young snorkelers who enter the shark pool do so with considerable apprehension.

Not to mention their parents, who get to watch the whole underwater encounter through viewing windows.

Commercial diver Nick Anson said the program would help shape how future generations viewed these great survivors of the sea.

"To my generation and generations of the past, when people say the word 'shark', they think of (the 1975 horror movie) *Jaws*, Mr Anson said.

He said children not exposed to Hollywood's negative treatment of sharks arrived at the interactive exhibit with a "clean slate".

Ten-year-old Tayla-Shae Gibson, from Waikuku Beach in New Zealand, might have been too young to see *Jaws*, but she was still nervous.

"I prefer horses, rabbits, cats – animals with fur," she said, as a reef shark nibbled at her flipper as she prepared to enter the pool.

She resurfaced more than an hour later with a smile and told her mother, Sonja: "I'm not as scared as before. I love that shark that ran into me."

Her 14-year-old brother Calib, a big fan of *National Geographic* television documentaries, spent much of his time in the pool following the resident two-year-old hammerhead, Sledge.

"I followed it from one side of the pool to the other," he said. "It was awesome. I just loved it."

Mr Anson said Sledge would one day grow to 4m and be moved to a neighbouring tank for the extra space.

"At this stage he's quite harmless," Mr Anson said. "He will continue to be as an adult, if well fed."

Visitors must be aged 10 and over to snorkel and cost is \$65 per person.

Starting today, The Sunday Mail and The Courier-Mail are giving readers the chance to get their hands on the Ultimate Wildlife Film Collection.

Collect the token from Page 2 of today's paper to claim a copy of the Ultimate Shark DVD from your newsagent. Then collect the remaining 14 DVDs, and collector case, for \$2 each with the tokens in your paper each day.

Tomorrow's DVD is *Emperors of the Ice*, which explores the wilderness of Antarctica.

<http://www.abc.net.au/rural/news/content/2007/s2156791.htm>

Lobster exports affected by icy Chinese New Year

Thursday, 07/02/2008

Severe winter storms in China are slowing Tasmanian lobster exports at one of the most lucrative times in the year.

It's Chinese New Year, the holiday period when lobsters traditionally demand a premium price.

But Rodney Treløgen, from the Tasmanian Rock Lobster Fisherman's Association, says the two-week cold snap has made transporting fish difficult.

"In some instances I've spoken to processors that have still got fish in their tanks that they had hoped to get into China in time for the holiday season and they're still holding those fish", he says.

"So it will have had an impact, but hopefully it won't be too severe".

<http://www.canada.com/vancouversun/news/business/story.html?id=f313fe5a-952b-49ca-8445-e0f1ca92d2c5>

Government-funded group switches sides on risks of fish farms

Pacific Salmon Forum now agrees sea lice are killing salmon

Scott Simpson, Vancouver Sun

Published: Saturday, February 09, 2008

In a major blow to British Columbia's salmon farming industry, a government-funded research group says it now accepts a recent scientific study that warns of mass extinctions of wild pink salmon on the central coast due to salmon farming.

In an uncirculated "communique" obtained on Friday by The Vancouver Sun, the Pacific Salmon Forum has acknowledged that sea lice infestations contributed to plummeting pink salmon populations in the Broughton Archipelago from 2001-2005 -- as noted in a recent article in *Science*, a leading international research journal.

The article by Martin Krkosek, co-researcher Alexandra Morton and others, drew international attention. It warned that wild pink salmon could be extinct within four years on the B.C. central coast due to sea lice infestations arising from salmon farms in that area.

The article was condemned by B.C. salmon farmers who said it was motivated by opposition to the industry rather than pure scientific research.

Initially, the forum also criticized the article -- suggesting it was overstating the gravity of the situation -- and announced in a news release on December 18 that it was inviting the authors for a meeting at forum headquarters in Nanaimo to discuss its findings.

That meeting took place Thursday and has apparently prompted the forum's science advisory committee to soften its stance.

A forum communique dated Feb. 7 and passed along to the Sun on Friday by Watershed Watch Salmon Society expresses "general agreement" that future pink salmon extinctions will depend on "future management regimes."

In other words, Watershed Watch executive director Craig Orr noted in a telephone interview on Friday, it's up to government fisheries managers to decide the extent of the impact on wild salmon.

"That is really crucial for sure. It means, what the hell are we going to do?" Orr said.

Watershed Watch has been recommending the province compel salmon farmers to fallow, or leave vacant, any farm sites that lie along migratory routes for wild juvenile pink salmon emerging into the Broughton from their natal streams in the spring.

Last year, a provincial legislature committee studying fish farming also recommended the industry switch from open-net sea pens to closed-containment pens that would prevent lice infestations at farms from spreading to wild fish migrating in the vicinity.

Both recommendations have been ignored by the province.

"We've been asking for a fallow route. We've been asking for closed-containment [sea pens]. We've been asking for [Broughton salmon farmers] Marine Harvest to reduce their lice loads. Their vets fight us all the time on that," Orr said.

"Does this mean the forum is throwing down the gauntlet to government to come up with an action plan? I don't know."

Morton said Thursday's discussion among the forum's science committee and the article's authors was intense and seemed to reflect a pro-salmon farm bias on the part of the forum's representatives.

"It was supposed to be just a look at the science. They were very reluctant to admit there were no flaws they could find with the paper," Morton said in a telephone interview.

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No pirate ship for me

A notorious illegal fishing ship meets its end

Posted by [Andrew Sharpless](#) at 11:22 AM on 08 Feb 2008

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Here's one for the dustbin of history: This week, Australian authorities confirmed that one of the world's most infamous pirate fishing vessels was scrapped in a shipyard in India in December.

The *Viarsa 1* was first spied [illegally catching Patagonian toothfish](#) (better known in restaurants as Chilean sea bass) in Australian waters in 2003. The [resulting pursuit](#) (scroll down for daily updates) by patrol vessels lasted 21 days and crossed 3900 nautical miles, inspiring *Wall Street Journal* reporter G. Bruce Knecht's acclaimed book, "[Hooked: Pirates, Poaching and the Perfect Fish.](#)"

Many ships that participate in [illegal, unreported and unregulated \(IUU\) fishing](#) in the Southern Ocean are owned by Spanish companies, including *Viarsa 1*, and fly under flags of convenience. The owner of *Viarsa 1*, Vidal Armadores S.A., still owns several pirate ships. Just last summer, a ship associated with the company, *Magnus*, was apprehended while using illegal fishing gear in South Africa. The ship was sailing under the name *Ina Maka* with a North Korean flag.

It may go without saying that Vidal Armadores S.A. has received support in the form of subsidies from the Spanish government.

There is at least one way to clamp down on IUU fishing: stop allowing ships to fly flags of convenience. In addition, ships that have been caught pirating should not be allowed to obtain special fishing permits. Currently, the European Union is considering such a measure.

<http://www.ens-newswire.com/ens/nov2003/2003-11-24-03.asp>

France, Australia Join Forces Against Toothfish Pirates

CANBERRA, Australia, November 24, 2003 (ENS) - In the choppy, freezing waters of the Southern Ocean around Antarctica fishing vessels seek the lucrative Patagonian toothfish, seen on restaurant menus as Chilean or Antarctic sea bass. For each of the legal fishing boats there are several pirate vessels, but the net is tightening around illegal fishers.

Today, Australia and France signed a maritime cooperation agreement that opens the way for tougher action against illegal fishing operations in the Southern Ocean.

The treaty establishes a formal framework for cooperative surveillance and research activity by France and Australia in their respective territorial seas and exclusive economic zones in the Southern Ocean.

Australia and France said today that the two governments "share a common desire to protect the valuable fish resources found in our neighboring exclusive economic zones in the Southern Ocean, and the unique marine environment of those waters."

The treaty provides for cooperative surveillance activity, and will ensure that both Australia and France have a more complete picture of activities in our respective remote waters.

The Uruguay flagged fishing vessel *Viarsa 1* flees an Australian patrol boat in hot pursuit through the Southern Ocean. August 2003. (Photo courtesy Australian Customs)

Under the treaty, France and Australia have agreed to exchange information on the location, movements and licensing of fishing vessels and will work more closely together to fight illegal fishing.

Over the past decade, illegal fishing in the Southern Ocean has increased, and toothfish have been targeted by foreign fishing vessels in Australia's Exclusive Economic Zone around Heard Island and the McDonald Islands.

France's Crozet Islands and Kerguelen Islands also have been hit hard by illegal fishing vessels. France has imposed high bonds and fines for illegal fishing and has sunk convicted pirate fishing vessels abandoned in La Reunion by their crews and owners.

The waters around Kerguelen Island border the Australian EEZ, both of which make up the Kerguelen plateau, a known hot spot for pirate fishing.

The signing of this treaty follows the apprehension of the suspected illegal fishing vessel Viarsa 1 in August, and demonstrates the seriousness with which Australia and other countries view the threat of illegal fishing.

A 21 day, 3,900 nautical mile chase - the longest in Australia's maritime history - ended August 27 when Australian, UK, and South African official vessels surrounded the Viarsa 1 some 2,000 nautical miles southwest of Cape Town, South Africa. The Uruguay flagged Viarsa was inside the Australian Fishing Zone near Heard Island and McDonald Islands, allegedly fishing for toothfish.

The newly signed treaty between Australia and France also shows "the high level of cooperation between countries on illegal fishing issues, and sends a strong message to illegal fishing operators who seek to plunder the world's oceans, completely disregarding the long term damage they cause for the sake of a short term profit," Australian Fisheries Minister Senator Ian Macdonald said today.

Australian Fisheries Minister Senator Ian Macdonald (Photo courtesy Office of the Minister)

Both France and Australia are among the 24 member nations of the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), which manages the toothfish fishery.

CCAMLR requires all vessels hunting for Patagonian toothfish to be fitted with a satellite system. When fish is sold, the importing country can check the satellite records of the fish boat and find out where it has been fishing.

Boats that have no satellite system cannot sell fish, and if a vessel without a license to fish the Antarctic waters is detected in the area it will be caught by the authorities.

In addition, new measures were put in place to attack illegal fishing in the Southern Ocean earlier this month following a two week CAMLR meeting in Hobart, Australia.

Senator Ian Macdonald said that he was delighted with the steps taken by the 24 CCAMLR member nations. "Australia's action in pursuing the Viarsa 1 has hardened world opinion against illegal operators, and has led to significant new initiatives that will put illegal operations under substantial pressure," he said.

CCAMLR member nations agreed to adopt, on a trial basis, Australia's proposal for a Centralized Vessel Monitoring System to be managed by CCAMLR, and funding was approved for the system.

Seven countries, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Ukraine, USA, Uruguay and Argentina, have agreed to participate in the trial of the new arrangement.

"Other member nations will be looking at joining the scheme with the European Union specifically indicating that it would be consulting with its member countries to agree to involvement," said Macdonald.

Member nations also agreed to continue the trial Electronic Catch Documentation Scheme with technical and administration complications to be resolved during the trial period. This scheme requires that each master or authorized representative of its flag vessels complete a toothfish catch document for each catch landed or transhipped.

CCAMLR also adopted a blacklist of boats that are known to be engaged in illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

"All 24 member nations have agreed that they will not deal in Patagonian toothfish caught by any of the boats listed on the blacklist," said Macdonald, who added, "Japan, a major buyer of legally caught Patagonian toothfish, has specifically indicated that it will not accept toothfish from any boat on the blacklist."

The Russian pirate fishing vessel "Lena" was apprehended by Australian authorities in the Australian EEZ around Heard & McDonald Islands on the Kerguelen Plateau in March 2002. It was subsequently scuttled. (Photo courtesy COLTO)

The Russian delegation, however, refused to accept that any Russian flagged boats would be included on the blacklist.

"Russian flagged boats, like the "Lena," already arrested and found guilty by Australian courts, were not allowed to be included, and the Russians also refused to allow the "Volga" to be named even though the boat had been arrested by the Australian Navy almost two years ago," Macdonald said.

Macdonald praised the Uruguayan delegation for its assistance and support, which builds upon "the cooperation established between Australia and Uruguay at the time of the Viarsa chase."

"I'm confident that the CCAMLR nations will build upon this very positive start, and I look forward to working cooperatively to rid the planet of the criminal gangs that put personal profit before the future of our marine ecosystems, and the sovereignty of nations of the world," Macdonald said.

Scientists estimate that at the current rate of fishing, the toothfish fishery will collapse within a very few years. Many thousands of vulnerable and endangered seabirds, mainly albatross and petrels, are dying on hooks intended to catch toothfish.

Greenpeace, which has been campaigning for toothfish protection, warns that the catch documentation, satellite observer and blacklist methods adopted by CCAMLR will not be effective in safeguarding the vulnerable fish.

Greenpeace and the Coalition of Legal Toothfish Operators both have lists of pirate toothfish vessels, but the illegal fishing has not stopped.

Greenpeace is urging CCAMLR to declare and enforce a moratorium on fishing for toothfish. The moratorium should stay in place until the IUU fishery has been driven out, the remaining toothfish stocks assessed for their ecological ability to support a commercial fishery, and regulations are in place to adequately manage "resumed" fisheries, the environmental organization says.

This moratorium needs to be supported by a trade ban in toothfish, that would require toothfish to be listed for protection on Appendix 1 of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, which permits no international trade.

Antarctic fish are particularly vulnerable to overfishing because most species take a long time to become sexually mature and are long lived. Toothfish can live as long as 50 years and do not breed until they are at least 10 years old. They live in deep waters on sea mounts and continental shelves around most sub-Antarctic islands.

Toothfish is highly valued in restaurants in Japan and the United States which are the largest consumer markets for the delicacy, followed by Canada and the European Union.