



<http://www.dailyexaminer.com.au/storydisplay.cfm?storyid=3774069>

The Daily Examiner

Yamba's fishing fleet sinking

May 29, 2008



FOR SALE: Andrew Hayward on his trawler.

ANDREW Hayward thought he'd be a fisherman all his life but five days ago he woke up and put a 'for sale' sign on his trawler.

After 13 years at the helm of Rhondae II, Andrew said he just couldn't make a living from prawns anymore.

"I'm supposed to put food on the table and pay the bills but I can't even do that now," Andrew said.

"I went out last night and wouldn't have covered my costs.

"I've had enough and don't want to be out there anymore.

"It's just getting too hard," he said.

His brother's trawler, El Sombrero, sits next to his at the Yamba boat harbour and has also been put on the market.

"My brother saw my sign (for sale) and said 'bugger it, I'll sell too'," Andrew said.

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No price has been set but Andrew said any offers would be considered and they might even give a discount if someone wanted to buy both boats.

El Sombrero and Rhondae II have plenty of on-board accommodation, great potential for a house boat, original parts, travel at a leisurely eight knots and have stories from years at sea ingrained in their decks.

Born and bred in Yamba, Andrew said he had lost his passion for a life on the sea.

"That went a few years ago," he said.

"There are only a handful people now who say they love it and the rest of us just do it because there's nothing else to do," he said.

Until they sell, Andrew and his brother will keep trawling for prawns in an attempt to make a living from the sea. To cut costs they have been taking one boat out and not travelling too far off shore, to limit fuel costs. Last week they went away for three nights and returned out of pocket by \$130 each.

"We were going backwards each night we were out there," Andrew said.

Costs that have been crippling trawlermen like Andrew include diesel at \$1.70 a litre, licenses, Maritime and Safe Food fees, insurance and maintenance of equipment.

"Nothing goes down. They all go up except the price for product," Andrew said.

"It goes down. If you were getting more for product you'd ride it out better."

Andrew said when he left school he thought he would always make a living from fishing but now he just wants out.

<http://www.thewest.com.au/default.aspx?MenuID=146&ContentID=75814>

Hunters blamed for whale shark losses



29th May 2008, 7:00 WST

Scientists fear Indonesian fishermen hunting whale sharks are responsible for a 40 per cent drop in numbers along the Ningaloo Reef in the past 10 years.

"They are after the fin for the shark fin soup trade, not because they contain a lot of the material used to make the soup, but so restaurants through southern China can advertise the fact that they've actually got shark fin," researcher Mark Meekan said. "The flesh of the animal is also cooked up to the consistency of tofu, in a dish called 'tofu fish', which is quite popular."

Researchers from the Australian Institute of Marine Science, who presented their findings at the second annual Ningaloo Research Symposium at Murdoch University, are also worried by a drop in the size of whale sharks along the reef. The average of 6m to 7m observed in the 1990s has dropped to about 3m to 4m.

"That is important because the sharks don't become sexually mature until about six to seven metres long. It's a real worry. The population is becoming more and more composed of juveniles," Dr Meekan said.

Deaths from ship strike could also contribute to the population decline. "Twenty-five per cent of the whale sharks at Ningaloo bear scars from ships," Dr Meekan said. "These animals spend a lot of time at the surface, they float around. A modern container vessel moves at 25 knots, so the ship would not even notice if it hit one."

Natural predation was not likely to account for the drop in the number of whale sharks at Ningaloo Reef.

At smaller sizes whale sharks might be pursued by killer whales, great white sharks or tiger sharks, but its thick skin makes it a difficult meal to catch.

The AIMS team used satellite tagging to track whale sharks for up to eight months after leaving Ningaloo Reef. Dr Meekan said it was alarming to find that some whale sharks travelled well into the waters of Indonesia and South-East Asia, where hunting was a real threat.

KATE TARALA

<http://www.times-age.co.nz/storyprint.cfm?storyID=3774046>

Wairarapa Times-Age

Fishing reserves proposal raises policing questions

29.05.2008

By Don Farmer

An attempt to set up two Mataitai, or customary fishing grounds, off the South Wairarapa coast has raised questions on who would police it and set catch limits.

South Wairarapa district councillors yesterday decided to put a submission to the Ministry of Fisheries on the Ngati Hinewaka proposal to establish a 3km Mataitai along the shoreline at Pukaroro and a 9km one slightly further south at Matakītiki a Kupe that would begin near Te Awaiti in the north, take in Rocky Point and end on the fringe of Palliser Bay in the vicinity of Mangatoetoe Stream.

As yet the council has not indicated support or opposition to the Mataitai applications but will formulate its submission "taking the advice of the Rural Services Committee".

The planned Mataitai reserves would extend 2km out to sea and would ban commercial fishermen from fishing inside the boundaries.

Recreational and customary fishing would be unaffected.

They are being touted by Ngati Hinewaka as a last-ditch effort to protect the inshore fishery that has been plundered to such an extent it is feared seafood resources are barely viable for customary fishing alone.

Two councillors who sat through a presentation on the proposal both questioned whether Ngati Hinewaka intended to arbitrarily impose catch limits.

Julie Riddell said most people agreed in principle with the Mataitai concept but much more in-depth consultation was needed so people got a real grasp of what was intended.

There did not seem to be any money available for monitoring what went on in the Mataitai areas and although recreational fishing would not be banned there was a suspicion Ngati Hinewaka would decide on how many fish or shellfish could be taken at any one time.

"You might be told you can only take one paua or one crayfish today."

Dianne Phelps said she believed there was general support for the proposal but "commercial fishermen at Ngawi might have a different opinion".

"We need to know how they are going to be policed, who is going to police them and who would be responsible for monitoring specie populations."

Mayor Adrienne Staples said councillors needed to know granting the Mataitai was "not our baby".

It was a matter of putting a submission in and allowing the Ministry of Fisheries to go through due process to determine whether Mataitai should be established.

In part, the Rural Services Committee has asked council to question whether fish stocks would be protected having smaller Mataitai areas, therefore reducing the impact on commercial fishermen.

Maori Standing Committee representative Sonny Te Maire said as far as he was aware there would be no change to recreational or customary fishing and that only commercial fishing would be affected by the Mataitai reserves.

He said it was a good idea to have a 2km out-to-sea restriction and said most of New Zealand's coastline had already been closed to inshore commercial fishing.

Wairarapa was the exception, he said.

Mr Te Maire said the depletion of the fishery had gathered speed in modern times.

In earlier times people had visited the coast and had only gathered what they could eat almost immediately as there were no freezers and suchlike for storing large quantities of seafood.

Information gathered for Ngati Hinewaka's Mataitai presentation shows Palliser Bay and the Wairarapa's east coast was among the richest marine habitats in the country at the time of white settlement.

Seafood was in "super abundance" but now the inshore fishery is barely viable for customary fishing and kina, paua, groper and crayfish had all declined in numbers and in size of fish gathered.

In 1992 Mita Carter petitioned to prohibit commercial fishing in several areas and, as a result, three years later customary fishing grounds, or Taiapure, had been gazetted at Te Humenga and Te Kopi.

As it happened Te Kopi Bay proved largely unsuitable for customary fishing as it was a dangerous and unstable beach, perpetually turbid and had little or no resident shellfish.

Ngati Hinewaka had consistently complained that commercial fishing was encroaching on their reserves but the Crown had failed to deliver any strategy to guarantee the recovery of the customary fishery from its "present deplorable state".

Customary fishing is about the gathering of food by whanau and hapu in rocky habitats close to the shoreline. It is "not about expensive equipment and boats obtaining food in dangerous areas offshore".

Ngati Hinewaka regards Matakītiki a Kupe as a special place replete with legends of Kupe and Pukaroro as a traditional canoe landing and fishing ground.

Before the Minister of Fisheries makes a decision on whether Mataitai should be allowed he has to follow a regime of extensive community consultation and submissions round.

Once made, his decision and details of any allowable Mataitai are gazetted and published.

<http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/PA0805/S00617.htm>

Dolphin plan fails to guarantee species' survival

Thursday, 29 May 2008, 3:26 pm

Press Release: Green Party

29 May 2008

Dolphin plan fails to guarantee species' survival

The Maui's and Hector's Threat Management Plan announced by the Minister of Fisheries today has failed to guarantee the survival of these endangered species, Green Party Conservation Spokesperson Metiria Turei says.

"For Maui's survival to be guaranteed there must not be even one death from human causes, yet the marine mammal sanctuary and set net bans do not extend through the whole dolphin range along the coast, nor out to the full 100m depth that Maui's frequent.

"Far from being 'carefully designed to achieve the best possible outcome for the dolphins', the plan stops well short of providing the necessary protection for these gravely threatened dolphins by accommodating for economic interests in the dolphin habitat.

"'Striking a balance' between the dolphins and set-net fishing is not acceptable when the populations are so critically low," Mrs Turei says.

"The public has been quite clear that the dolphins' long term survival must take precedence over short term fishing industry interests, with 83 percent supporting a set-net ban in a recent poll.

"The tireless work of conservation groups and regular pressure from the Green Party has at the very least seen the Minister accept parts of the best option presented in the draft management plan. However, we have always made it clear that even that option fails to guarantee the survival of the species.

"We welcome the government in large part standing up to the fishing industry and taking a step forward on behalf of the dolphins, but their proposed measures are too little, far too late, and fall short of guaranteeing the dolphins' long-term survival.

"It remains to be seen if these half-pie measures are enough to avoid criticism at the International Whaling Commission meeting in two weeks' time, but it seems clear that pressure from thousands of New Zealanders, international conservation groups and the Green Party have had an impact on improving today's Management Plan."

ENDS

http://www.upi.com/NewsTrack/Top_News/2008/05/28/massive_lobster_poaching_haul_seized/1903/



Massive lobster poaching haul seized

Published: May 28, 2008 at 8:22 AM

WEDGEPORT, Nova Scotia, May 28 (UPI) -- Canadian fisheries officials arrested three men in southwestern Nova Scotia after seizing 5,300 undersized lobsters from a fishing boat.

Department of Fisheries and Oceans Field Supervisor Dan Fleck told the Globe and Mail newspaper by telephone from Wedgeport the seizure was the largest he has ever seen.

"We're still sort of awestruck," Fleck said. "This is money-driven. This is disregard for the resource and for their fellow citizens."

He said the men charged had valid lobster permits and therefore had to know size limits and quotas for the season, which ends in a few days.

It was the men's own behavior that caught them up, he said. DFO received tips lately of strange activities at odd hours and Fleck said a surveillance program was set up in recent weeks that included aircraft.

The arrests and seizure of the boat were made when it docked late Monday night.

"We were waiting for them," Fleck said to the Globe and Mail, adding most of the lobsters were released back into the sea.

http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/food/364756_bottomfeeder28.html

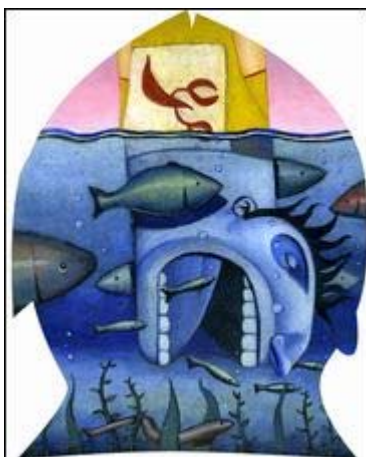
Seafood activists urge us to dine well -- and low on the food chain

By REBEKAH DENN
P-I FOOD WRITER

Instead of salmon or swordfish, consider sardines.

Rather than monkfish, eat mussels.

Go with oysters in place of orange roughy.



David Badders / P-I

Canadian author Taras Grescoe calls it "bottomfeeding" -- eating at the lower end of the food chain -- and it's the environmental and ethical path he discovered after three years of research into the modern seafood industry. He found that "big-ticket predators" such as tuna and swordfish are more likely to be overfished -- and more likely to concentrate toxins in their bodies.

On the other hand, smaller and younger creatures often are neglected in modern American diets, though they are "often the tastiest and healthiest choices of all," he said in a recent interview to discuss his new book, "Bottomfeeder" (Bloomsbury USA, \$24.99).

Sardines and anchovies, for instance, are abundant, and they're full of healthful omega-3 fatty acids, low in mercury and high in flavor. Mussels and oysters are farmed without chemicals, they clean the oceans and reduce the size of dead zones. Herring is sustainably fished, high in omega-3s and low in

toxins.

It's a good approach to eating seafood, though sometimes a challenging one, said Ken Peterson, a spokesman for the Monterey Bay Aquarium, whose national Seafood Watch program helps consumers figure out which fish to eat.

Indeed, on a stroll last week through Pike Place Market, Seattle's temple of fresh seafood, not a single fresh sardine could be found. (They're stocked erratically, in part because they don't sell well, fishmongers said.) But there was plenty of orange roughy, a fish that does not start reproducing until it is decades old, and that is harvested with deep-seabottom trawlers in a way Grescoe compared to "burning down the Amazon so we could catch the fleeing parrots and macaws in butterfly nets."

But even on Cannery Row in Monterey, it's sometimes hard to persuade consumers to eat fresh sardines.

"They're more flavorful fish. They're stronger tasting," said the aquarium's Peterson. "It's kind of (a matter of) getting people's palates adjusted to that."

Grescoe says we should give such fish a chance. He finds the flavor delicious, and he says it's not as if people haven't changed their mindsets about fish before. They didn't always consider "steak-like seafood at the center of the plate" as the way to eat. As well, Peterson said, calamari "was once something you didn't see out(side) of the Greek or Italian communities, and now you can find them all over the place."

Growing up in British Columbia, Grescoe recalled that his mother would pay \$20 for a fillet of wild salmon.

"That was a lot of money back then. ... It was valued back then," he said. "I remember it being a treat. But ever since the farmed industry came in, we've come to see salmon as sort of this choice we expect on in-flight meals, a choice with beef and chicken."

Beyond encouraging us to become "bottomfeeders," Grescoe's message is for consumers to know more about what they eat. When it comes to shrimp, for instance, the wild-caught spot prawns seasonally available in the Northwest are a great choice, though the price makes them more of a treat than a dietary staple. Conversely, a look at inexpensive, imported farmed shrimp is one of the more harrowing sections of Grescoe's book, which showcases an overseas visit to a farm where "naturally raised" shrimp swim in a pond bleached with chemicals alongside dying stalks of rice.

"The simple fact is, if you are eating cheap shrimp today, it almost certainly comes from a turbid, pesticide- and antibiotic-filled, virus-ridden pond in ... one of the world's poorest countries," Grescoe said.

Consumers are growing more accustomed to asking questions about land-grown foods, such as if there are antibiotics in meat or pesticides on vegetables, but seafood hasn't gotten the same attention.

"To a certain extent, seafood's gotten on the radar around issues like mercury in tuna and some of the other big predators," Peterson acknowledged. "But beyond that it gets a little fuzzier. 'Farmed salmon must be good' is sort of the intuitive reaction (and) 'because it's farmed you're not catching wild fish!' Yet it's on our red list."

Grescoe generally recommends against farmed salmon for "spreading sea lice to wild stocks, contaminating coastal environments, and consuming stocks of wild fish in the form of feed." In research that brings muckraking books such as "Fast Food Nation" to mind, he described farmed salmon fed on a protein diet that included chicken feathers and manure, their nets treated with "an anti-fouling paint originally formulated to make the hulls of boats so poisonous even barnacles would not stick to them."

"I thought the process of researching this book would sort of steer me to an empty plate in the end -- or turn me into a vegan," Grescoe said.

But the news wasn't all bad. He found the Filet-o-Fish at McDonald's was made from sustainable pollock approved by the non-profit Marine Stewardship Council, which he calls "the single most credible independent certifier of fisheries in the world."

In the end, Grescoe felt surprisingly hopeful. Choices remain for seafood that is both health-conscious and environmentally sound, he said. He eats more seafood now than ever -- just different kinds than he once did.

He also found some inspiration. In Japan and in England, for instance, even major supermarkets provide detailed labeling information on seafood to help consumers make the best choices. In their absence here, we can at least try to gain the same information.

Start, he said, with: "Where is this from? Which ocean? Is it farmed or is it wild?"

"Then," he said, "we have to start asking more specific questions. You're going to feel picky and like a nuisance at first, but they're going to have to start answering those questions."

ROASTED SQUID WITH BREAD CRUMBS AND OREGANO

SERVES 4

- 1 1/4 lb fresh cleaned squid
- Salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/2 cup fresh bread crumbs
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh oregano
- Aioli (recipe follows)

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Rinse squid and cut into 1/4-inch rings. Season the rings with salt, pepper and 2 tablespoons of olive oil.

Toss bread crumbs with the remaining 1 tablespoon of olive oil and toast in the preheated oven until golden, stirring them after 5 minutes to help them brown evenly. Toss with the chopped oregano while still warm and reserve.

Turn oven up to 500 degrees. Lay the seasoned squid on a baking sheet with sides (squid gives off liquid as it cooks). Bake for 5 minutes, until the squid is nicely roasted and lightly browned. Remove the baking sheet from the oven and pour off the liquid.

To serve, arrange squid on a platter and sprinkle with the bread crumbs. Thin the aioli a bit with water and drizzle over the top.

AIOLI (GARLIC MAYONNAISE)

- 3 cloves garlic, peeled (more or less according to taste) Salt 1 egg yolk, lightly beaten 3/4 cup pure olive oil 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil (extra-virgin oil adds flavor but can be overpowering by itself)

Mash garlic to a smooth paste in a mortar with a pinch of salt. Remove 1/3 of the paste and set aside. To the rest of the garlic add 1 teaspoon water, 1/4 teaspoon salt, and the egg yolk, stirring well. Combine the two types of olive oil. Slowly whisk in the olive oil, a few drops at a time. As the mixture starts to thicken, begin adding the oil in a slow, steady stream. If the aioli becomes too thick, thin it with a bit of water and continue. After all the oil has been mixed in, taste for salt and garlic and adjust accordingly.

Refrigerate until needed. Aioli should be used the day it is made, preferably within a few hours; otherwise the fresh garlic flavor dissipates and becomes unpleasant. *Recipes from Alice Waters, in "One Fish, Two Fish, Crawfish, Bluefish: The Smithsonian Sustainable Seafood Cookbook"*

SARDINE 'TONNATO' SPREAD

MAKES 1 CUP (use like tuna salad)

- 2 3/4-ounce cans brisling sardines packed in olive oil, drained
- 1/4 cup mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

- 2 teaspoons drained bottled capers, chopped
- 1 teaspoon finely grated fresh lemon zest
- 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon salt

- Mash together all ingredients in a bowl with a fork until combined well.

From *Gourmet* magazine via Epicurious.com

EATING SEAFOOD SAFELY AND ETHICALLY

- Taras Grescoe's "absolutely, always" eat list includes: Arctic char, Pacific halibut, herring, mackerel, oysters, mussels, pollack, sablefish, sardines, squid and rainbow trout. Encourage fishmongers and restaurants to give these fish a try -- and support them by buying the fish when they do.
- Grescoe's "no, never" eat list includes: bluefin tuna, Atlantic cod (Pacific cod is in his "it depends" category), Atlantic halibut, Chilean sea bass, grouper, monkfish, orange roughy, shark, dogfish, skate, Atlantic sole and tilefish. Generally, avoid long-lived predator fish that tend to have the highest levels of mercury.
- Grescoe suggests avoiding farmed shrimp, farmed salmon and other species fattened on animal protein. Instead, try domestic tilapia, carp and catfish, which generally are fed vegetable protein.
- Buy seafood certified by the non-profit Marine Stewardship Council. A list of its certified products and where to find them is online at eng.msc.org. The long list includes the Trident brand "ultimate fish stick" carried by Safeway; Chicken of the Sea brand canned pink Alaskan salmon; Costco's Kirkland brand Wild Alaskan smoked salmon; and Wal-Mart's Three Star smoked wild Alaskan salmon.
- The Monterey Bay Aquarium runs a "Seafood Watch" program that features a regularly updated free pocket card showing which species are the best choices to eat and which to avoid. The information also can be downloaded to a PDA. It's online at seafoodguide.org.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2008/05/28/2258555.htm?site=darwin>

Record prawn hauls, but no prices to remain high

A Darwin fish market operator says prawn prices at local shops will not be cheap even though Territory trawlers have returned with a record harvest.

Despite trawlers returning with 150 tonnes hauls, fisherman say they can not sell to traditional overseas markets because of the high Australian dollar, so the prawns will go to the local market.

But Ziko Ilic says while locals will get the best seafood around, rising fuel prices mean it will not be cheap.

"The price is going up daily and we should be flexible and understanding to know that fuel is a main source of energy and that's why products like vegetable and fruit and meat and seafood are going to rise dramatically."

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/stuff/4563021a4560.html>



Fish poachers may feel a bit hormonal

Wednesday, 28 May 2008

Thieves who poached fish from a Northland research centre may have bitten off more than they can chew, as some have been dosed with hormones as part of a sex reversal study.

Scientists from the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (Niwa) aquaculture centre at Ruakaka, south of Whangarei, have warned against eating the fish, The Northern Advocate said yesterday.

Hormones including oestrogen and other veterinary medicines have been injected into the kingfish, while an 8kg hapuku dosed with chlorine, formalin and peroxide is also missing from the centre's quarantine and disease investigation unit.

Niwa regional manager Michael Stobart said it was difficult to say what would happen if the fish were eaten, "but eating too much kingfish treated for sex reversal is the most scary aspect of it".

"We don't give the fish large doses, but the medicines we give them render them unfit for human consumption."

Thieves came over a two metre barbed-wire topped fence on Friday.

Mr Stobart said people had tried to enter the facility in the past, but this was believed to be the first time fish had been stolen.

- NZPA

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/stuff/4563613a7693.html>



Fishers appeal mussel initiative

BY HELEN MURDOCH - The Press | Thursday, 29 May 2008

Nelson commercial fishermen are challenging the approval of more than 1000ha of mussel farms across prime fishing grounds.

An industry group says it will file court proceedings against the Tasman District Council and the Ministry of Fisheries this week.

The commercial fishermen say the mussel farms, in Tasman Bay and Golden Bay, will significantly affect fishing operations, fish stocks and the environment.

Both recent not-notified farm approvals cover space that had been approved for spat catching.

The council recently approved the the Ring Road Consortium's progressive development of mussel farms covering 323ha in Golden Bay and 270ha in Tasman Bay.

Last month, the ministry approved Tasman Bay Mussels' application to farm over 479ha about 6km offshore from Motueka.

The ministry last year declined the same application because of concerns over the impact on snapper trawling. It said it did an about-face after the company provided new evidence, including affidavits from commercial fishermen.

Nelson commercial fishermen said that if the council or ministry did not believe there was a need to consider effects when a change of activity occurred, then aquaculture legislation needed to be amended.

"The Government has failed both the fishing industry and aquaculture interests in requiring expensive court fights, rather than clarifying the issue," they said.

The council-approved farms were over some of the best fishing grounds in the bays, including an area in southern Golden Bay from which most of the 2007 scallop harvest was dredged, they said.

Challenger FinFisheries Management Company chief executive Carol Scott said the lack of notification gave fishermen no understanding of the potential impact of the marine farms on the fishing environment, or fish stock development.

Some of the approved areas were adjacent to important scallop sites and juvenile snapper sites which had been closed by fishermen to help restore stocks.

"The top of the South Island encompasses some fairly enclosed bays and we have to be very careful in our planning so we do not create impacts.

The non-notified approvals would set a national precedent which would allow for aquaculture areas to change activity without any consideration of effects on fishing, or fish stocks, she said.

http://www.livenews.com.au/Articles/2008/05/26/Gangs_selling_illegal_seafood_to_pubs_and_fish_shops_



Gangs selling illegal seafood to pubs and fish shops

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26/05/2008 8:00:00 AM.

Australian pubs and fish and chip shops are the recipients of illicit seafood, being sold by organised crime gangs.

Fairfax newspapers report the gangs are targeting New South Wales's national parks to catch species such as oysters, eels and prawns, sometimes under the guise of indigenous hunting.

Fairfax reports an Australian Institute of Criminology study says organised groups, including bikie gangs are responsible, with oyster theft so well organised that thieves are using lifting equipment on vehicles to steal whole racks from farms.

The report says there's an extensive illicit Australian market for these and other species, such as mud crabs and barramundi, including clubs, restaurants, hotels and fish and chip shops.



<http://portlincoln.yourguide.com.au/news/local/news/general/diesel-rises-hurting-fishers/777691.aspx>



Diesel rises hurting fishers

27/05/2008 2:41:00 PM

RISING diesel prices are reducing profits in the fishing industry and if prices continue to hike, boats may be forced out of business.

Fuel costs have essentially tripled for the Great Australian Bight (GAB) trawl fishery - a well-managed Commonwealth fishery with sustainable stock.

GAB Industry Association executive officer Jeff Moore has recently found for the average vessel, annual fuel costs have gone from about \$300,000 to \$350,000 in January, 2004 to about \$900,000 on May 16 this year.

"And prices have gone up since then," he said.

"There's absolutely no doubt the price of fuel is having a huge impact on profitability particularly in the last 12 months and even more in the last month.

"What's happened in that time is that the prices of fish have increased, but nowhere near make up for the fuel rises, particularly in recent times."

Australian Southern Bluefin Tuna Industry Association chief executive officer Brian Jeffriess said being in an international marketplace, the industry did not set prices, so it was left to take up the extra cost.

"Aquaculture is more fortunate than wild fishing as it's more of a fixed position, closer to the shore, but it's still a major issue," he said.

"The price rise has been so sudden and substantial a lot of people think it's permanent - it is going to put people out of business."

Spencer Gulf and West Coast Prawn Association executive officer Karen Hollamby said the prawn fishers were feeling the pinch of higher diesel prices.

"Prawn fishermen are receiving approximately the same price for prawns now as they were 10 years ago, although operational costs are going up," she said.

The fishing industry nationally is looking at what it can do and there's no easy solution.

Mr Moore said if the government extended its fuel tax rebate it would "be helpful, but such a move is not likely to solve the problem, which is impacting fisheries Australia-wide, in the long term".

"Some of the national solutions may include additional fleet rationalisation, innovative marketing, further research and adoption of more efficient technologies and/or market higher market prices."

Mr Jeffriess said in the 1990s there was an oil price shock, so then and now, the industry had looked at how to deal with the problem of high fuel prices.

This involved using fuel-efficient engines and careful fishing techniques, which were still being looked at.

<http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,23774714-5005200,00.html>

World over a barrel

Cameron Stewart | *May 29, 2008*

FISHERMEN and truckies across Europe are leading the revolt.



Employees of Pakistan Hydro Electric shout slogans during a protest against inflation and rising oil prices. Picture: AFP

In Asia people are taking to the streets and in the US the issue has become so contentious that it is dominating the presidential campaign.

In Australia it seems we can talk of nothing else as record global oil prices of more than \$US130 (\$135.75) a barrel help push the cost of petrol here to almost \$1.60 a litre.

Soaring fuel prices across the globe are triggering waves of protests not seen since the dark days of the OPEC oil crisis of the 1970s.

These protests are no longer isolated events. They are taking place in every continent and across a vast range of community groups and industries.

Car makers, airlines, fishermen, truckies, small businesspeople and ordinary consumers of every hue have been caught in the dragnet of high fuel prices, posing a clear and present danger to the electoral prospects of governments across Europe and Asia.

In France, polls show that people are so alarmed by soaring fuel prices that they consider it to be one of the most serious national challenges. Rising fuel costs have also driven the country's normally placid fishing industry to a state of near revolt.

French riot police were yesterday called in to clear blockading fishermen from an oil depot at Fos-sur-Mer near Marseilles. Off the north coast of France, fishing fleets blockaded ports and cross-Channel ferries in protest over fuel prices.

Angry fishermen are not confined to France: Italian, Greek and Portuguese fishermen are also considering strike action later this week.

Under growing pressure, French President Nicolas Sarkozy has called for a controversial Europe-wide cut in oil taxes to help consumers. French consumers pay about 19.6 per cent value added tax on the price of fuel.

"I want to ask the question to our European partners: if oil continues to increase, should we not suspend the VAT taxation on the price of oil?" Sarkozy asks.

His call has surprised the European Union given that any such move would need the approval of all 27 member states. It is unlikely he would receive it, as EU finance ministers pledged in 2005 not to cut taxes on fuel in response to rising energy prices, and have since reaffirmed the stance.

European ministers have appealed for direct EU economic aid to help those hardest hit in the fishing industry. But how much assistance should be given and to whom, given that high fuel prices affect almost everyone to some degree?

In Britain it was truck drivers who captured national attention by driving a convoy with horns blaring through central London.

Their protest compounds pressure on British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, who faces growing calls from MPs in his ruling Labour Party to abandon a planned hike in road tax. Some say he should ditch plans to raise a road tax on older, more polluting vehicles, because it would hit the poorest drivers hardest.

The truckies handed in a petition at Downing Street demanding a rebate in fuel tax and warning jobs would be lost and family businesses would collapse unless urgent action was taken.

It says much about the mood in Britain that the truckies were greeted with spontaneous applause from motorists, who are also angry about recent sharp rises in petrol to about pound stg. 1.14 (\$2.35) a litre.

In a letter to Brown the truckies said: "We are not faceless multinational companies, we are small and medium family companies built up over generations with hard work and determination.

"Our colleagues are being driven to despair and bankruptcy on a daily basis."

The timing of the protests is damaging to the Prime Minister, coming only weeks after Labour suffered its worst local election defeat on record.

In neighbouring Wales, about 100 truck drivers staged a similar protest in the capital, Cardiff. In Spain, truck drivers stood alongside striking fishermen to voice their anger.

But the anger in Europe over rising fuel prices is uneven. In Germany, the level of passion seen in France is not yet evident and only a relatively small proportion of voters considers fuel prices a major political issue. Manfred Gullner, head of opinion polling institute Forsa, told The Wall Street Journal that this was partly because of fatalism, but also because of the big role green issues play in German politics and society. "The environmental awareness has become so entrenched here that people think it's better to reduce fuel consumption" than to protest, Asmus Kurig, a schoolteacher from Karlsruhe in southern Germany was quoted as saying.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel has rejected calls by Opposition politicians to cut fuel taxes, but her cabinet has postponed a planned overhaul of the annual car tax that would have hit owners of older cars.

In Asia rising fuel prices are also provoking public anger. Students and fishermen in Indonesia have blocked roads and clashed with police after fuel prices soared by more than a quarter last weekend and authorities cut subsidies that were costing the state budget billions of dollars.

Indonesia, the region's top importer of diesel and gasoline, raised fuel prices by an average 28.7 per cent on Saturday as President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono attempted to limit damage to the budget from soaring world oil prices.

Critics fear the move will drive more Indonesians into poverty, placing unsustainable pressure on poor families, on top of the recent spike in food prices.

Hundreds of angry students and fishermen set up a roadblock on a highway out of Surabaya, the country's second largest city, and hijacked a private fuel truck carrying kerosene. In Jakarta, police and students were reportedly engaged on Monday in a stand-off outside the Christian University of Indonesia, where protesters had pelted police with firebombs. In southern Sumatra island, angry students tried unsuccessfully to break police barricades and storm the convoy of Vice-President Jusuf Kalla as he arrived at a meeting at Lampung.

In Malaysia, the Government has tried to defend its heavy subsidies by banning drivers of foreign-registered vehicles from buying petrol near its borders with Thailand and Singapore, where fuel can cost twice the price.

Many Asian nations shield their people from rising fuel prices by providing subsidies or controlling prices. The unsustainable cost of fuel subsidies has forced Taiwan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh to either raise regulated fuel prices or pledge that they will.

In Taiwan, new President Ma Ying-jeou will end six months of gasoline and diesel price controls this week, sparking a 13 per cent rise in fuel prices.

Sri Lanka has raised kerosene, petrol and diesel prices by between 14 and 47 per cent, while the state-run Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation has proposed a 37 per cent to 80 per cent hike in fuel prices.

In Pakistan petroleum prices have jumped four times since March, prompting the Government formed after an election in February to promise relief from soaring oil and food prices for the poor in its June 7 budget.

Analysts say China would have to double fuel prices to fully pass on costs to consumers, while India would have to increase them by 50 to 60 per cent. But on the eve of the Olympics, China can't risk the protests and social unrest faced by its neighbours and is unlikely to pass on fuel price rises to the population.

"The Chinese Government has lots of cash to keep fuel prices low and still maintain economic growth, unlike in Indonesia, where they simply don't have enough to invest in infrastructure to bring people out of poverty," says Simon Littlewood, president of consultancy Asia Now in Singapore.

In Australia fuel prices have also dominated politics as increasing tensions over soaring fuel costs exploded in parliament and on the airwaves. Prime Minister Kevin Rudd has pledged to introduce a national fuel price monitoring system despite the consumer watchdog and his own Resources Minister Martin Ferguson warning it could lead to higher prices. The \$28.2 million FuelWatch scheme is based on the West Australian model and requires service stations to nominate prices 24 hours in advance. Rudd insists the scheme will reduce fuel prices by 1.9c a litre.

But the Coalition has rubbished the scheme, saying Rudd should reduce fuel excise by 5c a litre, at a budgetary cost of \$1.8 billion.

In the US record fuel prices have elbowed their way into the centre of the presidential campaign, with Democratic contender Hillary Clinton and Republican nominee John McCain calling for a petrol-tax holiday over the summer to ease the burden on mororists.

Lawmakers have also proposed revoking billions in tax breaks to oil companies and introducing a 25 per cent tax on their windfall profits. The higher fuel prices appear to be causing many Americans to reassess their budgets and review their love affair with large, four-wheel-drive SUVs in favour of smaller cars. "We

saw a real change in the industry demand for pick-up trucks and SUVs in the first two weeks of May," Ford chief executive Alan Mulally said last week. "It seemed to us that we reached a tipping point where customers began shifting away from these vehicles at an accelerated rate."

Tancred Lidderdale, an analyst with the Energy Information Agency says: "We are seeing somewhat of a response as we saw in 1978-79 when motorists first started going to the smaller cars."

As petrol prices rise more Americans are taking public transport, with US mass transit use reaching its highest level in half a century in 2007, according to the American Public Transportation Association.

The world crisis is also fuelling fresh debate on alternative sources of energy. French Prime Minister Francois Fillon says the country has to boost its nuclear power program to address the problem. "We are dealing with a long-term increase of the price of oil," he argues.

On Monday, the Czech, Slovak and Lithuanian premiers advanced a similar argument at the Nuclear Energy Forum in Prague.

The problem is that for non-nuclear countries such as Australia there is no short-term relief in sight. This means that the protests now spanning the globe may be just a portent of what is to come.

Cameron Stewart is The Australian's associate editor.

<http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/SC0805/S00065.htm>



Action on marine pest find in Lyttelton Port

Wednesday, 28 May 2008, 11:33 am

Press Release: Biosecurity NZ

28 May 2008

MAF Biosecurity New Zealand acts on marine pest find in Lyttelton Port

MAF Biosecurity New Zealand (MAFBNZ) is responding to the detection of a new and unwanted marine species in Lyttelton Port.

The newly identified species, the Mediterranean fanworm (*Sabella spallanzanii*), was found as part of MAFBNZ's routine targeted surveillance programme. This programme, undertaken at a number of ports and marinas where vessels enter New Zealand, is designed to detect certain introduced pest organisms at an early stage in order to allow a greater chance of eradication or effective management.

Response Manager, Senior Marine Advisor Dr Peter Stratford says the fanworm is one of the species MAFBNZ looks out for, due to its potential to spread and impact on other marine species. The Mediterranean fanworm poses no risk to human health.

Dr Stratford says the detection of a single mature individual fanworm is the first report of this species in New Zealand.

“At this point in time, it is too early to know the scale of what we are dealing with in Lyttelton, and indeed the course of action to be taken. At the time the sample was taken, visibility was low in the harbour and the divers undertaking the work were not able to gain a clear picture of the spread of any species present.

“The next step for us is to establish how widespread the fanworm is, and determine any potential impacts on New Zealand’s marine environment.”

Dr Stratford says work is underway developing a survey that will determine the size of the population in the area and inform decisions on the type of management that may be required to limit its spread or impact.

ENDS

Further information on the fanworm is available at: <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/pest-and-disease-response/pests-and-diseases-watchlist/mediterranean-fanworm>

<http://tvnz.co.nz/view/page/536641/1802861>

tvnz.co.nz

MAF discovers fanworm in NZ waters

May 28, 2008 11:40 AM

A Mediterranean pest has been discovered in the Port of Lyttelton.

A single mature specimen of the Mediterranean fanworm or *sabella spallanzanii* was found during a routine search by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry's biosecurity team.

Marine advisor Dr Peter Stratford says the fanworm is one of the many pests they search for, and while it poses no threat to humans, it can spread and impact on other marine life.

He says it is the first time the fanworm has been discovered in New Zealand waters.

Stratford says at the time of the discovery visibility was low in the harbour so they are unsure of the size of the outbreak.

A full survey will be undertaken before a decision is made on how best to manage and limit its spread.

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/stuff/waikatotimes/4562826a6579.html>


Waikato Times
www.waikatotimes.co.nz

Biosecurity cuts lashed

• **Hamilton ecologist Nigel McCarter says the regional council's plan to slash biosecurity funding in the draft annual plan is "short-sighted".**

Speaking on his submission to Environment Waikato's 2008-09 draft annual plan, Mr McCarter who unsuccessfully stood as an Environment Waikato candidate last year said it appeared biosecurity was being sacrificed for increases in other areas.

"River and catchment and transport represent the two largest single expenditure items 44 per cent of expenditure.

"The draft proposal increases expenditure in both. River and catchment services increased \$808,000 (4.4 per cent) to \$18,985,000, and transport increased by \$1,957,000 or 10 per cent to \$21,134,000.

"The increase for both outcomes is \$2.8 million. You paid for that by slashing biosecurity by \$1.4 million or 46 per cent ... (this) is short-sighted."

Mr McCarter said overall pest control was essential for the health and general economic benefit of the region. He said the present levels of pest control and management were minimal throughout the region and any further reduction would cause significant harm.

None of the three options proposed in the draft plan for biosecurity were acceptable, he said.

"If anything there should be an increase in biosecurity funding by reallocating the proportion of the targeted rates from the outcomes."

His concerns were echoed by other submitters as submission hearings on the annual plan began in Hamilton this week.

Thames hydrologist and farmer Gary Blake said not maintaining the biosecurity programme at the current level would cause problems later on.

The Waitomo District Council, in its submission by Mayor Mark Ammon, said it believed any reduction in pest control would have adverse effects on biodiversity and would prove costly to rectify.

The two other subjects which dominated the hearings were concern at the proposed rates increase and the future direction of Hamilton bus services.

Mischele Rhodes from Hamilton Citizens and Ratepayers Association labelled the proposed annual rates increase approximately 6.8 per cent for 2008-09 "obscene".

With rising fuel costs, several speakers said buses were going to become increasingly important but felt that there had to be a rethink on services as many were under-utilised.

Hamilton buses were mentioned in 619 submissions, or 72 per cent, out of the 806 total submissions on the annual plan, while there were 255 submissions (31 per cent of the total) commenting on pest control spending options.

A revised version of the plan is due to be adopted on June 26.

http://thainews.prd.go.th/newsenglish/previewnews2.php?news_id=120&news_headline=Fuel%20price%20rises%20force%20Krabi%20fishermen%20out%20of%20career%20and%20high%20seafood%20prices.



Mini VDO: Fuel price rises force Krabi fishermen out of career and high seafood prices.



Andaman News NBT (VHF dial) at 8.30am & local Cable TV channel 1 + maybe FM90.5 Radio Thailand 6pm, broadcast to Phang Nga, Krabi & Phuket provinces, & possibly FM108 Mazz Radio 7.30pm in Phuket, Wednesday 28 May 2008 & <http://thainews.prd.go.th/newsenglish/> Contact AndamanNews@yahoo.com

The increasing fuel prices have forced a large number of workers in the commercial fishing industry or local fishermen to cease their operations, and that includes those in Krabi. According to the president of the Krabi Fisheries Association, Manit Damkul, only six commercial fishing vessels out of 110 are still in function while around 1,000 local fishing boats out of 3,800 have stopped going out. He pointed out that this results in higher costs of seafood to feed local consumption and the tourist market. He said he himself is considered lucky to turn to the hotel business, while some turn to invest in palm or rubber plantations, while many of them lost careers and income. Manit also revealed that he still has dried squid worth around 10 million baht in his warehouse, but produce from Vietnam also comes in to share the market. Another commercial fishing operator said he just invested in a new vessel at the beginning of the year, but now ceased the operation as he cannot shoulder the cost and this led to over 100 people unemployed.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2008/05/27/2256961.htm?site=idx-nt>



Prawn trawlers return with record catch

Posted May 27, 2008 13:22:00

Updated May 27, 2008 13:39:00

- [Map: Darwin 0800](#)

Northern Territory prawn trawler operators are celebrating one of their most successful seasons in years.

Austral Fisheries' Stephen Valentine has told the ABC's Country Hour heavy rainfall has meant great catches of banana prawns over the past six weeks.

The season was extended for a month and will finish up at the end of next week.

Mr Valentine says it brings some relief to the industry as fuel prices continues to soar, and the rising Australian dollar does little for export prices.

"We have never actually had boats catch this many prawns ever. We've got some boats that are sitting well over the 100 tonne mark and in a very, very good year, if we had boats that got even close to the 100 tonnes of banana prawns, we were very happy."

<http://thenorthernlight.canadaeast.com/front/article/307010>

High fuel costs, low buyer prices challenge local lobster fishermen

Published Tuesday May 27th, 2008

A1

By James Mallory
Northern Light Staff

The lobster catches in the Chaleur region have been decent this season but increasing fuel costs and lower buyer prices are making it tough for fishermen to make a living.

"Catches have been sustainable around 300 pounds a day, some 400 pounds a day...and it's probably a 10 per cent improvement from last year," said Michel Richard, New Brunswick eastern shore representative for the Maritime Fishermen's Union which based in Shediac. "But the issue is lobster price...and everybody is feeling the pinch from the raise in fuel."

He said any extra money made from catches is being offset by expenses low prices for their product.

"Some fishermen that have to go out and shift their traps, we're talking around \$200 a day in fuel," said Mr. Richard, noting that most boats require the more expensive diesel fuel.

"Right now, they're just squeaking by."

Calls to a number of local lobster fishermen for comment were not returned at press time but Michel Therien, communications manager for the Department of Fisheries and Oceans in Moncton, said he knows fishermen are frustrated by lower than expected prices from buyers.

"This year's fishermen have said they were offered anywhere between \$4, \$4.50 and \$5 a pound...It varies from area to area but we do know that the fishermen did complain this year that the prices were low and they were expecting more," said he said, noting that the price is \$8 to \$10 once it reaches the consumer.

Area 23, which covers the Bay of Chaleur to Escuminac, has roughly 700 commercial licensed fishermen. Category A fishermen use the maximum number of traps while Category B licenses are for fishermen using 30 to 35 per cent of

commercial traps. Mr. Therien said it's an open season for fishing lobster which means fishermen can catch as much as they want, depending on how much they want to invest.

"It depends on the fishermen. You have to consider the amount of money they spend to upkeep their vessels, fuels and the salary they pay their fishermen...They need to catch some good lobsters to make their payments, pay their men and make a small profit."

However, there are restrictions as to what type of lobsters a fisherman can catch, according to Mr. Therien.

"We have modified the Area 23 into three sub sectors. We have Sector 23A, which is the Bay of Chaleur, Sector 23B and 23C...For 23A in 2008, the minimum (lobster) size went to 70 to 71 millimetre. They have to fish or catch lobster over 71 millimeter. They may catch larger ones but females 115 to 129 millimeters are prohibited."

Mr. Therien said it's impossible to know at this point how many lobsters have been caught in local waters.

"They come at dock side and sell to the buyer. The buyer need to fill a purchase slip but because it is calculated using purchase slips...the information (on catches) comes later on."

The eight-week local season began on May 2

<http://www.news.com.au/story/0,23599,23759816-29277,00.html>



Organised crime 'behind illegal fishing'

By James Grubel

May 26, 2008 04:01pm

Article from: Reuters

ORGANISED crime groups around the world and even motorcycle gangs are becoming involved in illegal fishing, lured mainly by demand from China for prized fish species, a study by Australian crime experts said.

The groups from China, Australia, Russia, Canada, South Africa, New Zealand and Japan have all been linked to illegal fishing, with fish stocks either sold illegally or used to launder money, the Australian Institute of Criminology said.

The institute's report on illegal fishing called for greater international co-operation to fight the black market, and said criminal groups targeted prized species in demand in Asia, such as abalone, shark fins and beche-de-mer, or sea cucumber.

"It is clear that overseas illicit markets in seafood products such as abalone, beche-de-mer and shark fin are flourishing, due in part to a steadily increasing demand from mainland China," the institute said.

The Australian-Government funded institute said profits from illegal fishing could be high, with the rich in China willing to pay up to \$5000 for meals with top quality abalone, and with demand for shark fin growing an estimated five per cent a year.

It said in New Zealand, several coastal abalone fishing areas have been closed, with the official catch of 1057 tonnes a year estimated to be matched by 1000 of poached abalone.

The report said as crime groups increased their interest in illegal fishing, there was evidence of growing co-operation between crime groups and motorcycle gangs in different countries.

It said the illegal fish trade could be used to pay off other criminal activities, such as drugs and arms sales, people smuggling and sex slavery.

"A wide range of criminal activities may be associated with the illegal trade, including the concealment of financial transactions and profits," the report said.

"These crimes include violence, corruption, fraud and money laundering, with the transfer of the proceeds of crime across networks and national borders."

It said Australian abalone, shark fin and seahorses were attractive to international poachers, while abalone, lobster, mud crabs, snapper and reef fish were vulnerable to poaching for the domestic market.

Australia's exclusive fishing zone covers 11 million square kilometres (4.2 million square miles), with the commercial fishing harvest worth about \$2.3bn a year, with about \$1.85bn worth of seafood exports.