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<http://www.northernadvocate.co.nz/localnews/storydisplay.cfm?storyid=3793553&thesection=localnews&thesubsection=&thesecondsubsection=>



Toheroa are protected. Picture/Northern Advocate

Accused tried to eat evidence, says ministry

10.01.2009

by Imran Ali

One of three Northland men allegedly caught red-handed with protected toheroa tried to eat his illegal harvest in an effort to evade arrest, the Ministry of Fisheries says.

The three men also allegedly tried to drive away from the officers with 48 toheroa, but were blocked by Dargaville Detective Shawn House.

Mr House arrested the trio and charges were later laid at Dargaville Police Station.

All three, aged between 20 and 45, are from Mangakahia and have been charged with obstructing fisheries officers and assaulting them, as well as offences under the Fisheries Act.

Toheroa has been a prohibited shellfish since 1981.

Northland Fisheries boss Darren Edwards said honorary fisheries officers attempted to speak with the three men while carrying out routine patrols on Ripiro Beach on Christmas Eve.

He said the men allegedly became abusive and refused to comply with directions of the officers.

"An attempt was made to count the toheroa contained in a bucket, but one from the group kicked the bucket from a fisheries

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officer's hand and pushed him in the chest whilst continuing to abuse him," Mr Edwards said.

"At this time, a second fisheries officer attempted to look inside the group's vehicle but was also abused and pushed away from the vehicle."

Mr Edwards said the Fisheries Act charges laid against the men attracted fines of up to \$250,000.

He said fisheries officers made sure fishermen abided by regulations to ensure there was seafood for everyone now and in future.

The three men were released on bail to appear in the Dargaville District Court on January 16.

Mr Edwards said fisheries officers also arrested 10 divers on Ahipara Beach with 153 paua, all of which were undersized and returned to the ocean, during the holidays.

During a two-day operation last week, 36 divers were arrested in Kaitaia with a total of 323 paua, 198 of them undersized.

The daily limit for paua is 10 per diver with a minimum size of 125mm.

He said 31 people would receive infringement notices as a result of the breaches.

<http://redcliffe-and-bayside-herald.whereilive.com.au/news/story/fishermen-at-odds-over-new-bag-limits/>

Fishermen at odds over new bag limits

13 Jan 09 @ 09:20am by Bernadette Dias



Not enough ... new regulations do not go far enough, according to Bill Turner.

REDCLIFFE:

RECREATIONAL and commercial fishers have squared off, taking opposing views on the State Government's new bag and size limits for various species of seafood.

Changes to the Inshore Fin Fish Fishery to be introduced from March 1, place size and bag limits on recreational anglers while no such limits apply to commercial fishers using nets.

Primary Industries and Fisheries Minister Tim Mulherin said commercial fishers would be restricted by the number of net fishing days they were allowed to work.

He said recreational fishers wanted a total allowable catch limit placed on major species taken commercially. However, this was not practical given the multi-species nature of fishing and the monitoring required for such a scheme.

Mr Mulherin said the new rules were aimed at ensuring the State's fisheries remained sustainable as the population increased.

The bag limit for some common species will change from no limit to five for flathead, 30 for whiting, and 30 for bream.

Sunfish North Moreton chairman Bill Turner said the new limits discriminated against recreational,

professional anglers and club fishers and would have little effect on the sustainability of fish stocks. "The plan is no more than a political farce and doesn't go far enough in caring about the sustainability of our fish stocks because there's very little restriction on commercial fishing," he said. "A person who wants to go fishing for whiting on Margate Beach can catch 30 whiting, take the bag limit, and go home.

"He then leaves the rest for the net fishers and there's no limit for the net fishers."

Mr Turner said he would like to see net fishing banned at in-shore and land-based locations.

However, Queensland Seafood Industry Association president Neil Green said he was happy with the changes in the plan which would see fish stocks maintained at acceptable levels.

He said catch levels had remained steady for 20 years which proved that the state's 2,500 commercial fishers were helping to keep fish stocks at sustainable levels while serving the needs of the public.

"You have to keep in mind that 90 percent of people buy their fish, five percent don't eat fish, and only five per cent catch their own," Mr Green said.

"So we are serving 90 percent of people."

He said although commercial fishers did not have to conform to bag limits, they were restricted by the number of fishing days they were allowed on the water.

<http://www.news.com.au/couriermail/story/0,23739,24904272-3102,00.html>

Two-headed fish larvae blamed on farm chemicals in Noosa River

Article from: **Courier Mail**

Brian Williams and Sophie Elsworth

January 12, 2009 11:00pm



SOMETHING fishy ... breeder Gwen Gilson believes farmers are to blame for disfigured larvae found in the Noosa River. Picture: Graeme Parkes

CHEMICAL contamination from farm runoff has been blamed after millions of fish larvae in the Noosa River were found to have grown two heads.

The disfigured larvae are thought to have been affected by one of two popular farm chemicals, either the insecticide endosulphan or the [fungicide carbendazim](#).

Former NSW fisheries scientist and aquaculture veterinarian Matt Landos yesterday called on the Federal Government to ban the chemicals and urgently find replacements.

Dr Landos said about 90 per cent of larvae spawned at the Sunland Fish Hatchery from bass taken from the river were deformed and all died within 48 hours.

"It certainly looks like the fish have been exposed to something in the river," Dr Landos said.

"I wouldn't like to be having kids and living next to a place that uses these chemicals and I wouldn't like to be drinking tank water where they are in use."

Hatchery owner Gwen Gilson blames chemicals used by macadamia farmers near her [Boreen Point](#) business for the deformities.

"Some embryos split into two heads, some had two equal heads and a small tail and some had one big long head and a small tail coming out of the head," she said.

Farmers nearby declined to comment.

Dr Landos said the chemicals were potentially human carcinogens and could have entered the river through any number of sources such as spraying or run-off even though there was no evidence of improper use.

Carbendazim had a history of causing embryonic defects and had been banned in the US, while endosulphan was banned in New Zealand.

"These chemicals mess up cell development," he said. "There's no other plausible explanation for what's going on."

[Biosecurity Queensland](#) chief Ron Glanville said an investigation into the claims started two years ago.

No evidence of chemicals used on an adjoining property were found in water, fish, fish eggs, chooks and horse samples.

"These things are notoriously hard to track down," he said.

Dr Landos and Dr Glanville said there was no danger for people either swimming or eating fish from the Noosa River because if chemicals were in the water, levels would likely be exceedingly low.

The Federal Environment Department has been asked to investigate.

<http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/business/story/0,28124,24900967-5018055,00.html>

Tuna fetches six figures

Yumiko Ono | *January 12, 2009*

Article from: [The Wall Street Journal](#)

The Tokyo restaurant world was shocked this week when a 128kg Japanese bluefin tuna fetched 9.63 million yen (\$153,000) - the highest price paid for a bluefin tuna in eight years.



Kyubey, a posh Ginza sushi place, sold single slivers of the prized bluefin for \$32. Pic: Hotel New Otani

Two restaurants with distinctly different styles bid jointly at Tokyo's first fish auction of the year, splitting both the cost and the fish. To see what they got for their money, I sampled the tuna at both places during the three days it was available.

Half the trophy tuna went to [Kyubey](#), a posh sushi bar in Tokyo's glitzy [Ginza](#) district that serves 40 kinds of fish and counts Sony chief executive Howard Stringer and Steven Spielberg as clients. The service and the food is so personalised here that the chef asks whether you want your Post-It-size slice of abalone raw or steamed, brushed with soy sauce or salt. On my recent visit, a single sliver of the prized bluefin cost \$US22 (\$32). It also was offered as an item in the 10-piece, \$US60 lunch set, which is what I ordered. The pinkish-brown *chutoro*, or medium-fatty tuna, I ate at the black-lacquer sushi counter was so smooth that the whole thing melted away in seconds, making me wish for a second piece.

The tuna's other half went to [Itamae Sushi](#), a Tokyo outpost of a casual, Hong-Kong restaurant chain that has been expanding recently. The restaurant, packed on a recent afternoon with blue-suited office workers wolfing down \$11 lunch specials, had posters plastered all over the place to tout its achievement: "We bid successfully - for a whopping 9.6 million yen!"

Itamae Sushi didn't even pretend to be making money on the bluefin. It stuffed the fish into its voluminous tuna lunch set, which includes *chutoro*, chopped tuna, soy sauce-soaked tuna and tuna maki rolls - 10 pieces for \$US32, offered to the first 20 customers of the day until the restaurant ran out on Wednesday.

On the day I visited, the lunch set sold out promptly. I managed to sample a piece of *chutoro* from the restaurant's last remaining block of bluefin and found it tasted clean and smooth. It wasn't as firmly pressed onto the rice as at Kyubey, though, and it flapped around when I picked it up.

How two such disparate establishments came to share one extremely expensive fish says as much about the no-holds-barred competition among Japan's 32,000 sushi restaurants as about the Japanese passion for eating first foods of the season and of the year, which they believe are "auspicious," bringing good luck.

Japan's foodies have long been obsessed with everything from the first bamboo shoots in the spring to matsutake mushrooms in the fall. Food snobs spend a fortune for first-of-season foods that will plunge in price in a matter of days or weeks - and often taste better at the height of the season. Just this week, a 10-ounce box of the first crop of Japanese greenhouse cherries sold for \$US380.

Miki Hizume, a 44-year-old Tokyo housewife, went straight to Itamae Sushi with her husband the day after the bluefin auction, which was the first of the year and an important occasion because it came so soon after the festive New Year's celebrations. Ms Hizume said the bluefin sashimi was so fresh she could feel the

smell rush up to her nose as she popped the first piece in her mouth. "I feel so lucky to be able to taste it," she said.

High bidding for Japanese bluefin has set off media feeding frenzies in recent years. In 2001, a Tokyo restaurant paid a record \$US219,755 for a 202-kilogram bluefin. That was an eye-popping \$US1088 per kilogram - even more than the \$US819 per kilogram paid earlier this month. Last year, a Hong Kong entrepreneur named Ricky Cheng plunked down \$US66,035 for the most-expensive tuna at the year's first auction, becoming the first foreigner ever to buy the top tuna. Mr Cheng, best known for his ramen noodle restaurants and the budding Itamae Sushi chain, became an instant media star.

Yosuke Imada, Kyubey's second-generation owner, watched with unease as Mr Cheng was referred to as "Sushi King" in the Japanese press, when it was establishments like Kyubey that regularly purchase top-quality fish. Traditionally, the 63-year-old Mr Imada says, he has frowned upon buying at the first auction because the fish command a high premium that doesn't always match the quality. But this year, he couldn't sit still. "I said, 'Hey, wait a minute. Why is Hong Kong getting it all?' I had my pride."

As they learned of each other's interest in the first auction, Kyubey and Itamae Sushi decided to strike a deal to bid for the fish together and split the cost if they won. While the price was extra high this year because of bad weather and a poor catch, both restaurants say they would have gone even higher. One technicality: Kyubey secured the half of the fish that was facing up when it was caught, which is considered of higher quality than the side facing down.

So was it worth it? To my disappointment, both Kyubey's Mr Imada and Katsura Nakamura, head of Itamae Sushi's Japanese operation, say their bluefin's quality wasn't the best they've seen. At 128 kilograms, it wasn't as fatty as bluefin in the preferred 200-kilogram category. The fish was caught on December 29, and while taste improves with several days' aging, the expiration date was approaching.

Mr Imada says even selling at \$22 a slice, the tuna won't make Kyubey any money. His half of the fish will yield only about 3000 slices, and including labor costs, he says he won't come out ahead. Still, he appreciates all the attention he got at a time when the economy is rapidly deteriorating and corporate entertainment is poised to take a big hit. "I'm going to do it again next year," he says.

On my visit to Itamae Sushi, Mr Nakamura offered me a slice of a different bluefin tuna, one that had been caught just two days earlier. He said even though its cost was a fifth of the first-of-the-year tuna, this one was of higher quality. Indeed, the fresher fish did have a brighter red colour, and the fat burst in my mouth. "This drives me crazy," Mr. Nakamura says, but adds it was a marketing effort that would be worth repeating next year.

—Miho Inada and Juliet Ye contributed to this story.

<http://kempsey.yourguide.com.au/news/local/news/general/hundreds-turn-out-to-oppose-fishing-bans/1403170.aspx>



Hundreds turn out to oppose fishing bans

9/01/2009 8:50:00 AM

MORE than 500 people attended a public meeting hosted by ECOfishers at the South West Rocks Country Club on Wednesday night.

The meeting was held to raise public awareness about a proposal by environmental lobby group the National Parks Association (NPA), to restrict recreational fishing along the Mid North Coast.

ECOfishers is a pro-fishing organisation that advocates environmentally sustainable fishing practices.

Their CEO Ken Thurlow told the audience there were many flaws in the NPA report, 'The Torn Blue Fringe'.

"All existing NSW marine parks are expensive environmental duds," he said.

"They are based on shonky science, rubbery data and green myths. Government marine parks are simply unjustified, unscientific and unnecessary fisheries closures."

The economic impact a fishing ban would have on the local economy was a major focus of the meeting.

"Fishing families avoid coastal resorts with marine parks like the plague," Mr Thurlow said.

"They simply take their dollars elsewhere."

The meeting was attended by representatives of the Kempsey council including mayor John Bowell, deputy mayor Dean Saul and councillor Alan Snowsill.

Cr Saul said the Kempsey Shire was committed to supporting responsible recreational fishing.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/01/09/2462704.htm>

Illegal fishing boat bound for Darwin

Posted Fri Jan 9, 2009 5:40pm AEDT



Customs alleged the boat was carrying about two tonnes of tuna, 30 kilograms of shark fin and 10 kilograms of shark fillet. (User submitted: Michael Neist, file photo)

The Australian Customs say the apprehended crew of an alleged foreign fishing boat found off the Western Australian coast is expected to arrive in Darwin this Sunday.

Customs say a navy patrol picked-up the 12 member crew on an Indonesian fishing boat about 320 nautical miles north-west of Broome on Wednesday.

It's alleged the boat was carrying about two tonnes of tuna, 30 kilograms of shark fin and 10 kilograms of shark fillet.

The Australian Fisheries Management Authority is conducting investigations.

http://www.themercury.com.au/article/2009/01/10/49085_tasmania-news.html

Ploy to make fish cuddly

ANNE MATHER

January 10, 2009 12:00am

WOULD you like your "sea kitten" battered or crumbed?

The group People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals wants to rename fish "sea kittens" to help persuade people to stop eating them.

PETA also wants the term "fishing" rephrased as "sea-kitten hunting".

The international group has launched the campaign to make fish seem cute and appealing, in the hope of restricting fishing. But Tasmanian fish retailers, industry groups and recreational anglers yesterday were dubious about the campaign's effectiveness.

RECFISHTAS secretary Michael Holmes said he supported efforts to advance animal rights but the "sea kittens" push was "bizarre".

He said all living creatures should be treated with respect but people had to eat something.

Retailer Linda Wisby, of Fishway Seafoods, said she doubted the campaign would work.

"It's absolutely ridiculous," Mrs Wisby said.

"I don't think anybody would take it seriously."

Local fish sold in Tasmania were generally caught on hooks, which made them "more ethical" than those caught by grab-all net fishing, she said. Tasmanian Salmonid Growers Association executive officer Pheroze Jungalwalla said PETA should be treated with caution.

He said the organisation was "conspicuous by its absence" from the World Wildlife Fund's Salmon Aquaculture Dialogue, international talks between the salmon industry and environmental groups.

"We are not impressed (with PETA), but we take them seriously because they are so extreme," he said.

PETA's website is appealing for people to think about fish in the same way they would other cuddlier creatures.

"Sea kittens are smart, interesting animals with their own unique personalities just like the dogs and cats that we share our homes with," the site says.

The site says "sea kittens" can "talk" to each other through squeaks, enjoy affection and petting, are intelligent and have long memories.

PETA says the problem with fish is their image -- "people don't seem to like fish . . . they're slithery and slimey".

PETA also says it is going to take over publicity for fish and it will start by "retiring the old name for good".

"When your name can also be used as a verb that means driving a hook through your head, it's time for a serious image makeover. And who could possibly want to put a hook through a sea kitten?" it says.

<http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,24885893-5006786,00.html>

Tiny town well prepared for big wet

Asa Wahlquist | *January 08, 2009*

Article from: [The Australian](#)

WHEN the big wet hits Queensland's outback, it's important that the local pub remains dry and well stocked.

So things are relatively relaxed in the tiny town of Urandangi, in western Queensland, which has been cut off by the flooding Georgina River.

Residents of the hamlet, population 50, expect to remain isolated for the next three weeks.

But Pam Forster, owner of the local hotel, the Urandangi Bush Resort, said everyone was prepared for a long wait. "I have got plenty of food in stock here," Ms Forster said. "There's a few things I will run out of, but we will manage on other things."

She said the pub was safe and dry. "It (the floodwater) would have to come up another good metre to come in the pub."

The floodwater is the highest it has been for more than a decade. "In places you can't touch the ground with the oar," Ms Forster said.

Jeff Perkins from the Brisbane office of the Bureau of Meteorology said the Georgina River at Urandangi was at its highest since the record was set in 1997. Heavy rain was forecast over the area for at least the next four days.

Mr Perkins said the Georgina River could flood as far as Eyre Creek, in the southwest corner of Queensland, and the Diamantina River could get down to Birdsville.

But it was too early to speculate on whether the waters would reach Lake Eyre, in South Australia.

Rick Britton, the Mayor of Boulia Shire, said most properties had been destocked and that the region, which in good times could carry 186,000 head of cattle, was down to 10,000 head.

He said the rain had lifted everyone's spirits, and locals were looking forward to the big floods that came down the rivers, through the channel country.

"She is god's country," Mr Britton said. "An inch of rain (25mm) on this country here, you get a response. "I have lived here all my life and it still amazes me what it can do for you."

Further north, the Gregory, Nicholson and Leichhardt rivers are flooding into the Gulf of Carpentaria, promising a bumper year for banana prawns, and at least two years of good numbers of barramundi and mudcrabs.

The recent rains would flush nutrients that sustained the prawns, fish and crabs into the ocean. The river water also carried young male barramundi that had been in billabongs.

The fish become female when they are larger, but only if they are living in the ocean.

<http://www.abc.net.au/rural/news/content/200901/s2461389.htm>

Caution urged on further marine parks

Thursday, 08/01/2009

The New South Wales Opposition says the State Government must observe a moratorium on the creation of all new marine parks along its coast.

The conservation group National Parks Association (NPA) released a report last month recommending five new parks, giving a further 130,000 hectares of the coast sanctuary protection.

The Shadow Minister for Industry Duncan Gay fears the move will lead to cheap imports of seafood from Asia and says proper scientific research and audits need to be done.

"But at the moment we're making decisions based on politics rather than based on science which doesn't help the environment nor does it help the people in recreational fishing or the fishing industry," he says.

"My concern is that if we put too many parks in place we put pressure on the non park areas and we could have a counter effect."

"What we all want to do is to save the environment and have the right decision."

Fishermen will meet at South West Rocks on the state's mid-north coast today to discuss and voice their concerns over the NPA's 'Torn Blue Fringe Report'.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/01/08/2461765.htm>

Spotlight on Tas marine research

Posted Thu Jan 8, 2009 3:11pm AEDT

The work of Tasmanian scientists is being showcased at an international conference in Hobart on marine animals.

The University of Tasmania is hosting the conference which is held every three years for scientists around the world to share their discoveries.

Hobart's Dr Scott Ling is presenting his work trying to wipe out the Northern Pacific Sea Star.

The introduced pest has devastated Tasmania's shell fish industry.

The work involves targeting reproductive hotspots to limit the spread of the pest.

Dr Craig Johnson, another Hobart scientist, is explaining his new work in the fight against the Long Spined Sea Urchin.

It involves fitting electronic transmitters to the backs of giant rock lobsters, which feed off the urchins.

The transmitters have provided unprecedented information into the pest and their predator.

The conference continues tomorrow.

<http://www.borderwatch.com.au/archives/2152>

The Border Watch

PM called to act on Chinese fishing threat

Posted on January 8, 2009, 6:06pm and updated on January 16, 2009 at 11:48 am , 83 views

The South East's multi-million-dollar seafood export industry risks having many thousands of dollars of live product seized at Chinese customs, following new health regulations "coming out of the blue".

The situation was described as a potentially serious by Member for Barker Patrick Secker yesterday, who called for urgent action from the Federal Government.

"Prime Minister Kevin Rudd should pick up the phone to China and use his Mandarin to resolve the problem and give exporters a three-month buffer," Mr Secker said.

"I am concerned shipments of rock lobster from the South East already on its way to China may be turned back, which would be a dead loss for exporters."

Mr Secker said the South East was the largest producer of southern rock lobster in Australia and thousands of dollars of the live products was under threat from the shock new rules swept in last week.

"It is pretty unfair on exporters because of the abruptness of the new rules," he said.

He said the southern rock lobster market in China was worth more than \$74m each year, with millions of dollars of lobster coming from South East waters.

It is understood the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service has written to all regional exporters, warning their live product could be seized at customs in China if they did not provide new health certificates.

The new rules do not affect the region's huge rock lobster Hong Kong market, but it is understood the region's exporters send significant amounts of lobster into Shanghai.

The Border Watch contacted a number of rock lobster exporters in the South East, but none were willing to talk to media about the Chinese threat.

It is understood one shipment of rock lobster into China could be worth more than \$50,000, depending on the size of the export consignment.

According to media reports, one exporter of king crabs at Portland could be forced to give away more than 1.5 tonnes of the export delicacy because of the Chinese situation.

Meanwhile, Department of Trade and Economic Development South East export officer Bruce Rodda told The Border Watch the new regulations were a threat to exporters if they could not provide the correct documentation.

"These regulations came out of the blue," said Mr Rodda, who claimed he had received phone calls from regional exporters concerned about the situation.

He said the Australian Government was trying to strike a deal with China to give regional exporters a buffer period to comply with the new standards.

Mr Rodda said Canada had already struck a deal with the Chinese Government.

"If exporters' health certificates aren't in complete order, the Chinese will not release live product," said Mr Rodda, who warned this could result in thousands of dollars of live export being stranded or seized by Chinese officials.

He said regional exporters were only notified of the changes on Christmas Eve.

It is understood the new health regulations are similar to what is required to export into the European Union. Seafood must be caught in wild fisheries or registered breeding farms, free of sedative drugs and parasitic diseases.

http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10551033

Poison levels high in Bay of Plenty, Coromandel shellfish

4:00AM Friday Jan 09, 2009

A toxic shellfish warning remains in place for much of the Bay of Plenty and the Coromandel.

Public medical officer of health Dr Phil Shoemack said levels of paralytic shellfish poison were particularly high along the eastern coastline and people were urged to avoid all bivalve shellfish until further notice.

Mussels, pipi, tuatua, cockles, oysters, scallops, catseyes and kina (sea urchins) are all covered by the warning. Paua, crayfish and crabs can still be taken but, as always, the gut should be removed before cooking.

Results received on Wednesday confirmed people should continue to avoid collecting or eating shellfish from the wider Coromandel and Bay of Plenty coastline, from Tairua (including Tairua Harbour) south, including Whiritoa, Whangamata, Onemana and east along the Bay of Plenty coastline (including Tauranga and Ohiwa Harbours) to the mouth of the Motu River in the eastern Bay of Plenty.

Off-limits are all inshore islands within the warning area, including Matakana, Motiti and Whale Islands.

If eaten, the toxin can cause numbness and tingling, difficulty swallowing or breathing, dizziness and double vision. In severe cases it can cause paralysis or respiratory failure within 12 hours.

Information will be posted on www.nzfsa.govt.nz.

- BAY OF PLENTY TIMES

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/southlandtimes/4813079a6568.html>



Flounder fishermen seek reduced mataitai

By EVAN HARDING - The Southland Times | Friday, 09 January 2009

Commercial flounder fishermen had concerns with a proposal to make Oreti Beach, near Invercargill, a traditional fishing ground, or mataitai reserve, a Maori spokesman said.

Te Runaka o Waihopai spokesman Michael Skerrett said two commercial flounder fishermen wanted the mataitai's proposed half-mile no-commercial fishing zone from the Oreti Beach shore to be halved.

"They are talking about coming in quarter of a mile, which to me is getting pretty close, but anyway, we will talk our way through it," Mr Skerrett said.

The half-mile limit was suggested by the runaka because it was already in place for commercial shellfish collecting in the area, he said.

Mr Skerrett said a flounder fisherman had told him Oreti Beach was sheltered from strong northwesterly winds in the spring so was ideal place for floundering, which was why they wanted to come in closer than proposed.

The Fisheries Ministry was consulting with the commercial fishermen about their concerns.

Once the issue had been worked through the ministry would write a report on the proposed mataitai and put it before the Fisheries Minister, who would make a decision on the proposal, Mr Skerrett said.

He was confident it would go ahead.

Mr Skerrett said last year the mataitai was necessary to protect the area's toheroa. There were no plans to limit public access or recreation fishing at the beach, he said.

The ministry did not return calls.

A flounder fisherman spoken to said he wasn't worried about Oreti Beach, while others could not be contacted for comment yesterday.

<http://www.watoday.com.au/wa-news/illegal-shark-fin-fishers-arrested-off-wa-coast-20090109-7d5d.html>



Illegal shark fin fishers arrested off WA coast

- January 9, 2009

A foreign fishing vessel which allegedly had 30kg of shark fin on board has been picked up in Australian waters.

Customs said the Indonesian vessel was apprehended in the Australian Fishing Zone off the West Australian coast on Wednesday.

It was also allegedly carrying two tonnes of tuna and 10kg of shark fillet.

The 12 crew members will be transported to Darwin for further investigation.

The State Government is reportedly considering tougher penalties to stamp out illegal fishing activities, after finding numerous sharks with their fins cut off south of Broome.

AAP

http://www.boston.com/news/local/massachusetts/articles/2009/01/03/police_see_something_fishy_in_12_price_meals/?p1=Well_MostPop_Emailed4



Police see something fishy in 1/2 price meals

Pub in Oxford allegedly sold condemned lobsters

By Megan Woolhouse
Globe Staff / January 3, 2009

There are many places to fish for lobster in Massachusetts, but Interstate 395 is not one of them.

Just ask Arnold A. Villatico, police say.

The owner of Periwinkles & Giorgios Italian Pub and Restaurant in Oxford faces criminal charges of larceny over \$250, conspiracy, and unlicensed possession of shellfish after dozens of condemned crustaceans from an overturned truck allegedly appeared on customers' dinner plates. Town manager Joseph M. Zeneski said Villatico must appear before the Board of Health Monday.

"The Board of Health wants to make it clear to him that this was a violation of public trust," Zeneski said this week, adding that "this whole thing has been a comedy, an absolute comedy."

The story is about more than contraband seafood. It is a tale of lobsters on a death-defying journey, one marred by tragedy and for some, redemption. First, thousands of lobsters onboard the overturned truck narrowly missed becoming road kill. And then, those that did not become two-for-one boiled lobster specials were rescued by state environmental police, who returned them to the sea.

Their journey began on July 27, when a tractor trailer carrying 11,000 pounds of fresh lobster from Canada crashed on I-395 in Webster. The wreck tore the refrigerated container carrying the lobsters and spewed 150 gallons of diesel fuel across the load and roadway, which was closed for 12 hours.

A Webster health inspector declared the toppled load unsalvageable. And although local health inspectors are required by the state to witness the destruction of condemned food, that never happened.

Then a lobster fest revved up in Oxford.

Villatico began selling lobsters from a refrigerated truck behind his restaurant, Zeneski said, and the restaurant reportedly offered \$19.99 lobster specials. Police found crates of lobster inside the restaurant and plucked lobsters from boiling pots as evidence, the Worcester Telegram & Gazette reported.

"He had a sign out, two for one," Zeneski said in an interview.

Villatico, who lives in Webster, declined to comment on the allegations. He and Robert J. Moscoffian, owner of Moscoffian Towing in Oxford, have pleaded not guilty in Dudley District Court to larceny and other charges. The Worcester newspaper also reported that both men said they had planned to donate the lobsters to a veterans' shelter, although shelter officials said they had no knowledge of such a plan.

There were no reports of illness associated with the lobsters, and Villatico's restaurant remains open. Suzanne Condon, state director of environmental health, said lobsters' exposure to summer sun, heat, and fuel can lead to many health risks. State health officials advised the Oxford Board of Health in a Nov. 17 letter to penalize Villatico by suspending or revoking his restaurant license because of the "serious nature of these violations."

"There's all sorts of things that can get in a food product once it's released," Condon said. "You have to err on the side of public health."

And as for the surviving lobsters? State environmental police viewed them not as a delicacy or a threat, but as an animal far from home. Approximately 2,070 surviving lobsters were loaded and transported to Boston. Then officers hauled them onto a boat and released them just outside Boston Harbor, a half mile east of the North Channel buoy.

And to ensure a happy ending, officials said they unbanded their claws first. ■

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/01/05/2459199.htm>

DPP considering charges against Indonesian crews

Posted Mon Jan 5, 2009 11:32am AEDT

The Commonwealth Department of Public Prosecutions will decide if charges should be laid against the Indonesian crew of fishing boats caught in Australian waters off the Northern Territory coast last month.

Customs allege two boats were found north-west of Darwin on Christmas Eve loaded with about 600 kilograms of trepang and more than 400 kilograms of fish.

The 11 crew of the two boats were taken into custody and their boats seized.

The Australian Fisheries Management Authority says it's passed the investigation brief onto the Commonwealth DPP to assess if there's enough evidence to prosecute the crew members.

<http://www.thewest.com.au/default.aspx?MenuID=77&ContentID=116178>

Jail illegal fishers: Labor, greens

6th January 2009, 6:00 WST

The State Government should impose tougher penalties, including jail, for illegal fishing to better protect precious marine stocks, the Opposition and conservation groups said yesterday.

It followed the release of pictures last week of the remains of sharks dumped illegally at a North-West beach and authorities warning of a growing black market for popular finfish, such as dhufish, as stocks become scarcer.



BLOG: Will jail stop illegal fishers?

Shadow fisheries minister Jon Ford said WA laws gave fisheries officers strong powers to investigate illegal fishing and black market sales but the penalties for organised and repeat offenders needed to be tougher.

While jail terms were possible under the Act, only fines applied for taking or selling protected fish.

"There needs to be jail sentences," Mr Ford said. "As the world's fishery gets tighter and stocks collapse, fish get more vulnerable so you have to raise the bar to get preventative action in."

"You don't have to be a sophisticated operation to wipe out a whole species, especially with susceptible animals such as abalone."

"We are not talking about people who take them accidentally, we are talking about those who actually target these (protected) species for profit. It is a big cost to the community and the environment."

Wilderness Society marine coordinator Jill StJohn said penalties for serious crimes under the Fish Resources Management Act should include jail terms.

"WA's clean healthy seafood is worth a lot of money and is continually increasing in value as the world's fish stocks decline even further," Dr StJohn said.

"Penalties should reflect the value of our seafood and the importance of maintaining healthy fish stocks and healthy marine ecosystems in WA."

Fisheries Minister Norman Moore said the Government was looking at a report from a committee set up by Mr Ford, the previous minister, which recommended harsher penalties.

"Although it is too early at this stage to talk about specifics, this Government is predisposed to implementing tougher penalties for criminal activities, including illegal fishing and black market operations," Mr Moore said.

JODIE THOMSON

<http://www.radionz.co.nz/news/stories/2009/01/07/124597b21926>

Debate over crayfish quotas

Updated at 10:04pm on 7 January 2009

The Recreational Fishing Council says proposed cuts in commercial crayfish quotas do not go far enough and drastic action is needed.

A working party of industry representatives found crayfish numbers are not sustainable and are likely to drop further if current catch levels continue.

The group recommended a reduction of up to 19% in the quota for rock lobster fisheries in Gisborne, Wellington, Hawkes Bay, Otago and Southland for the coming quota year, which begins in April.

However, Recreational Fishing Council past president Keith Ingram says quotas need to be cut by between 30% and 50%.

The Ministry of Fisheries is holding public consultation on the proposals. Submissions close in a month.

<http://www.news.com.au/perthnow/story/0,21598,24878866-5017007,00.html>



Fisheries probe black market shark fin trade

Article from: AAP

January 06, 2009 10:00am

THE West Australian government is considering tougher penalties in a bid to curb illegal and black market fishing.

This comes after numerous sharks were discovered with their fins cut off in the area near 80 Mile Beach, south of Broome, in March last year, a Department of Fisheries investigation found.

Charges have been laid against at least one person and will be heard in the Broome Magistrates Court next month.

“The harvesting of big numbers of sharks is a cause for concern and the photographic evidence I have seen relating to the alleged slaughter is disturbing,” Fisheries Minister Norman Moore said.

“The government is assessing work done by a committee established by the previous fisheries minister which reviewed the (Fisheries Resource Management Act) FRMA.

“The committee's report recommends that consideration be given to implementing harsher penalties under the Act.

“The government is predisposed to implementing tougher penalties for criminal activities, including illegal fishing and black market operations.”

The Department of Fisheries has declined to comment.

<http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,24881996-5006790,00.html>

Defiant Tiwis move to control fishing grounds

Patricia Karvelas, Political correspondent | *January 07, 2009*

Article from: [The Australian](#)

TIWI Islanders have begun seizing control of fishing grounds off northeast Arnhem Land in defiance of the Northern Territory Government, in a move that could set limits for amateur and professional fishermen, as well as for boating.

In the wake of the High Court last year giving traditional owners rights over Blue Mud Bay, the Tiwi Land Council will advertise today for submissions on how the area should be managed, including the allocation of licences.

The move comes despite the Territory Government's insistence last year that it should control licence allocation.

The council has written to Indigenous Affairs Minister Jenny Macklin, saying it will not wait for the Territory Government to manage the process, but will take control itself.

The council is seeking submissions from commercial and recreational interests, with a deadline of February 28.

The High Court last July swept away the common law right to fish in the Territory's inter-tidal zone and granted traditional owners the right to exclude others from tidal waters within Blue Mud Bay.

Judge Michael Kirby said Kevin Rudd's apology to the Stolen Generations was relevant to his decision.

In its letter to Ms Macklin, the land council says "landowners themselves must develop their own management plans for these extended water areas now legally attached to their land".

Tiwi Land Council chairman Robert Tipungwuti said the Tiwi had a Natural Resource Management Plan in place since 2003, which would now be extended to cover coastal waters in line with the High Court ruling. Mr Tipungwuti said the council was particularly interested in comment from organisations representing amateur and professional fishermen, the trailer boat and sailing clubs and the Territory Government.

"We have a good relationship with most of these organisations already," Mr Tipungwuti said.

Land council executive manager Andrew Tipungwuti said his organisation had had enough of how the Territory Government managed their land.

"We want to manage it better than the Territory Government has managed it," he said. "We will seek public comment to make sure that all parties are all happy with the decision that we make.

"Now it states that we own it, and as far as we're concerned, we'll manage it. If you are in our waters without permission you are trespassing and you will be prosecuted."

Mr Tipungwuti said that before July -- when the current licences would expire -- the land council would establish a good and fair regime for using the waters.

Territory Chief Minister Paul Henderson on September 17 tabled a ministerial statement in the Legislative Assembly, setting out a "practical plan" for the management of the fisheries.

Mr Henderson's plan comprised a list of seven guiding principles: fisheries sustainability, optimum commercial fishing, continuing recreational fishing (including by tourists), indigenous involvement in fishing, a one-stop shop regulatory framework and maximised economic development.

Government officials told the land council that no extra funds would be provided to achieve any assessments of either "sustainability", "compliance" or their management.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/01/06/2460183.htm?site=northwest>

Locals rejoice as north-west Qld drenched

Posted January 6, 2009 15:35:00

Updated January 6, 2009 15:41:00



In the first five days of 2009, north-west Queensland has received almost as much rain as it did for the whole of last year. (Penny Timms, ABC News Qld)

- [Audio: Outback towns in Queensland's north west are still cut off by floodwaters \(AM\)](#)

Outback towns in Queensland's north-west remain cut off by floodwaters but that is not raising too many complaints from the locals.

After years of drought they see the inundation as a return to the summer wet season and its benefits.

In the first five days of 2009, north-west Queensland has received almost as much rain as it did for the whole of last year.

The falls have eased dramatically and the floodwaters that inundated the region are now starting to recede.

But Mount Isa, Cloncurry, Julia Creek and Burketown are still cut off and at McKinlay the pub best known for its role in the Crocodile Dundee movies is still hosting about 100 stranded travellers.

Walkabout Creek hotelier Paul Collins says he has been run off his feet.

"Oh, we've always got plenty of beer. You always have to expect a wet season, even though we haven't had one for three years. But there's always plenty of stock here," he said.

After years of drought, many are seeing the floods as a return to the normal wet season.

A spokesman for Emergency Management Queensland, Elliot Dunn, says locals are very happy.

"This should happen every year. I think we haven't seen it now for two or three years but it is normal rain for here."

Even though the floodwaters are now dropping, it is expected major roads and rail lines will remain closed for the next day or two.

But Mr Dunn says food and medical supplies are holding up.

"At this stage we still look like we can get some supplies into Mount Isa over the next 24 or 36 hours," he said.

"Many people at Burketown will be affected. There's 200 or 300 up there that won't be able to get out for another couple of weeks at least.

So far there has been few reports of stock losses. Most graziers are rejoicing at the sight of overflowing dams, after watching cattle die in recent years of starvation and thirst.

The Queensland Seafood Industry Association is also rejoicing, saying the fishing industry has been revived.

"That sort of rain and runoff and nutrients going out into the oceans is just going to mean a lot of increase in catches, which is great news," Neil Green, of the Queensland Seafood Industry Association, said.

"What we can't forget here is that a drought in the land is a drought on the sea and to have this turned around, it just means so much for the fishing industry of Queensland."

Mr Green is predicting good catches of banana prawns, barramundi and king salmon by March.

"I would forecast that they're going to be fairly cheap and very affordable, so I think consumers will benefit from this rain as well because while stocks are up, prices will be down," he said.

Adapted from a report by Nicole Butler for AM on January 6.

<http://tandlnews.com.au/2009/01/06/article/JPSROUYBQY.html>

PORT PHILLIP BAY CHANNEL DEEPENING EXPEDITED

Port of Melbourne Corporation (PoMC) has secured the services of an additional vessel for the [Channel Deepening Project](#), with the aim now to complete major dredging works in Port Phillip Bay earlier than scheduled next year.

The Trailing Suction Hopper Dredge (TSHD) Prins der Nederlanden (Prins) will arrive in Melbourne in February to commence work in the south of the bay, bringing forward the completion for major dredging activity within the bay to 31 August 2009.

Mr Stephen Bradford, CEO of PoMC, said: "Finishing major dredging works before spring is a positive outcome. It ensures any potential disruption to recreational vessels and bay users will be eliminated in the busy spring and peak 2009/2010 summer season."

The Prins is owned by the project's international dredging Alliance partner, Royal Boskalis Westminster, and will be involved primarily with dredging clean sand in South Channel, where a significant proportion of the project's remaining dredging work is to occur.

The Prins is 156 metres long and has a hold capacity of 16,000 cubic metres, making it smaller than the project's main TSHD, Queen of the Netherlands, which is now in Singapore for vessel lengthening. This work is scheduled for completion in March and will add about 50 metres to its original 173 metre hull.

The project's other main dredge vessel, Cornelis Zanen (CoZa), returned from Singapore on 15 December where it underwent routine maintenance. The CoZa has resumed dredging in the northern part of the bay.

Mr Bradford said the decision to employ the Prins would bolster the efficiency of the project, and bring forward the completion time of the major bay dredging by some months. The project is now 50% completed, being in advance of the original schedule and under budget.

The introduction of the Prins is within budget and follows detailed scientific analysis that indicates there will be no increased environmental risk to the bay.

Mr Bradford said all works would continue to be conducted within the confines of the project's Environmental Management Plan (EMP) and turbidity monitoring programs to ensure ongoing compliance with environmental limits.

While major dredging activity involving TSHD as part of the project is scheduled to be completed by 31 August, remaining work on navigational aids, minor dredging operations in and around the Yarra River and berth pockets with smaller dredging vessels, (the Goomai and Storcken), and service protection works, is still scheduled for completion by 31 December 2009.

<http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/AK0901/S00032.htm>

Scallops More Dangerous Than Sharks for Divers

Wednesday, 7 January 2009, 2:01 pm

Press Release: New Zealand Underwater Association

Scallops More Dangerous Than Sharks for Divers

Water Safety New Zealand and New Zealand Underwater collect data relating to diving incidents. At this time of year the number of divers who get into difficulties while collecting scallops is far greater than any incidents relating to sharks.

The privilege of being able to dive down and gather scallops is a summertime pleasure for many kiwis. New Zealand Underwater is urging all divers to dive safely and remember the basic rules this summer so that everyone returns to enjoy the shellfish delicacy at the end of the day, says communications manager Peter Crabb.

Swimming around in limited visibility searching for the scallops in a current, at depth, with the increased pressure puts a strain on anyone, particularly those who may be unfit, getting older or find that their wetsuits have "shrunk" over winter, says Crabb.

The other risks associated with scallop gathering seem obvious but we need to repeat the same messages each year for new divers and because of the seasonal nature of the activity. Bringing a heavy catch-bag to the surface can pose a risk when divers use their inflation jackets as lifting devices which can lead to injury when divers come to the surface too quickly.

To avoid being run over in open-bay situations, divers surfacing and their skippers need to be mindful of other boats and those using dredges. Divers should take note of currents and tidal streams and use experienced skippers who understand the nature of diving and how to keep an eye out for divers. These simple precautions will help divers avoid long exhausting surface swims or separation from their buddies or the boat, says Crabb.

While it is recommended that divers all carry a surface signaling device, it is mandatory for all skippers and divers to display The "Code A" blue and white dive flag during diving activities from boats. The flag is saying that "all other users must either stay away 200 metres or reduce their speed to 5 knots or less", says Crabb.

Crabb adds, that for diving there are some diver "black spots" and from the incident data we know it is most imperative that all divers have their life support equipment regularly serviced by a trained professional, have professional instruction, dive with a buddy, plan all dives, monitor air supply and slowly ascend from every dive.

Diving requires special training and equipment. For these reasons we urge divers who have completed training and haven't been in the water for a while to take a refresher course, says Crabb.

ENDS

<http://stgeorge.yourguide.com.au/news/local/sport/general/marine-park-is-a-fishy-idea/1394079.aspx>

Marine park is a fishy idea

1/01/2009 4:00:00 AM

I FIND it unbelievable that there is a solid push by the Greens and others to implement a marine park from Port Stephens, in the north, to Batemans Bay, in the south, and, in doing so, lock out recreational fishermen.

This means there will be few places for us anglers to fish within three miles of the coastline from Byron Bay, Coffs Harbour, Port Stephens to Narooma.

There has never been any scientific study prior to any of the existing marine parks as to whether they will have any effect on fish stocks. As a professional charter captain and a fisherman of 50 years, I know that it won't.

Fish such as bream, blackfish, mullet, salmon, long tail tuna, tailor and snapper are all travelling or migratory species and do not live in any area for long.

We work under strict bag limits enforced by Fisheries and, according to Professor Kearny, one of Australia's foremost and most respected marine scientists: "Recreational fishos are being hoodwinked by these marine parks and the lack of research."

It is up to every recreational fisherman to think very clearly about what is happening and write to their local MPs and ministers involved.

If these marine parks are brought in by an easily-led NSW Labor government, hanging their hat on Green preferences, they will certainly suffer lack of support by the recreational angler at the next elections.

The attempted locking out of recreational anglers in marine parks (and there are two million of us) will backfire on them. We are not criminals, we are fishermen and we have the right when we buy our fishing licenses and tackle and pay our taxes each year to go fishing where and when we like, within the laws of the state.

America has just passed legislation that ``every USA recreational fisherman shall have the right to fish in any Marine Park in America." That's how it should be for us.

I had to say my bit about one of the biggest issues that recreational anglers face. Together we must band and fight.

We have caught some great catches of kingfish over the past few trips, averaging around 8 kilograms and mostly off Coogee, at our favourite spot called ``Hunter's Hill" (nicknamed after the Hunter lads' time spent there over the past 25 years).

Out wider, things are still tough but there is hope that this will change in the next week or so.

Marlin and mahis are being caught a little further north and this water will arrive off Sydney soon. Have a safe and fishy Christmas.

Captain Ross and Glenn Hunter's Boats Broadbill and Billfisher are available for charter: 95342378 or gamefishingcharters.com.au

<http://www.borderwatch.com.au/archives/2093>

The Border Watch

Organised crime targets lobster fishery

Posted on January 1, 2009, 2:02pm and updated on January 5, 2009 at 2:47 pm , 78 views

Authorities fear organised crime gangs who have been pilfering high-valued abalone in South Australia may start to target rock lobster in the South East, following prices soaring this season to unprecedented levels.

This follows a new report by the Australian Institute of Criminology which says there has been a growth in organised crime groups stealing abalone and rock lobster across Australia, including South Australia.

It is understood criminals have been stealing abalone from South East waters over the past five to 10 years, and organised crime has already been detected in the region's lucrative lobster industry.

The abalone and rock lobster industry in the South East is worth more than \$80m per year and is considered to be one of the best fisheries in the world.

Rock lobster at Port MacDonnell - the largest rock lobster port in the southern Australia - fetched more than \$100 per kilogram earlier this season.

PIRSA Fisheries Services general manager Martin Smallridge told The Border Watch yesterday the report highlighted that organised crime was now targeting high-valued seafood and the issue needed attention.

He conceded organised crime had been detected in South East waters over the past decade.

"It is something we need to keep on top of because it has the potential to impact on stocks," said Mr Smallridge, who explained abalone could fetch market prices of more than \$150 per kilogram.

While explaining the problem was not "rampant", he conceded the high-value seafood products were becoming more attractive to organised crime syndicates.

"It is not like selling drugs, it is legal market ... it is a very high-value product which is relatively easy to shift," Mr Smallridge said.

"We are not talking about mum, dad and the kids fishing at the end of the jetty."

He said the South East could attract organised crime groups because lobster was relatively easy to catch.

But Mr Smallridge said fisheries were generally well policed and authorities had strong partnerships with the commercial sector which looked out for suspicious activity in their area.

Meanwhile, the report - commissioned by the Federal Government - revealed widespread concern among fisheries officers that the regulatory environment was not adequate to deal with organised crime activity.

The report also claimed there has been a growth in organised crime groups and abalone, rock lobster and shark were perceived as the most "vulnerable" to organised crime.

"In South Australia, stakeholders referred to family-run abalone reef pickers, who conceal abalone in their clothes," the report says.

According to the report, fishing-related activity used various strategies to avoid detection which included: concealing fish in boats, knowledge of fisheries' officers movements and equipment, operating in concert with others and documentation fraud.