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[Fishing Stories](#)

Fishing for funds, the hardest catch



Weekenders: many anglers go pier fishing on their holidays, contributing to the \$2.3 billion fishers spend each year.

Steve Cooper

December 16, 2009

A NEW report confirms recreational fishing is one of Victoria's most popular pastimes, worth more than \$2.3 billion to the state's economy.

According to the report, within 20 years more than one million anglers will spend in excess of \$1 billion a year on their pursuit.

The findings are the results of economic research by Ernst & Young that quantifies the net benefit and economic contribution of recreational fishing to Victoria.

Victoria's peak fishing body, [VRFish](#), commissioned the \$110,000 report that was paid for through the Victorian Recreational Fishing Licence fund.

VRFish chairman, Geoff Cramer, said: "With an estimated 721,000 Victorians participating in recreational fishing in 2008-9, this puts recreational fishing as one of Victoria's most popular pastimes.

"The report also highlighted that in the same year, the recreational fishing industry directly produced an estimated GSP (gross state product) of \$825 million and employed 5200 Victorians.

"But the most significant figure is that Victoria's recreational fishers' activity generated direct expenditure of \$2.3 billion for that year, which was in a time of unprecedented economic pressures."

In 1997, Victoria's Natural Resources and Environment Department commissioned the National Institute of Economic and Industry Research to undertake a study to establish the economic value of angling.

The report put the value to the state's economy at \$1.256 billion a year.

The study also revealed that more than 85 per cent of people included fishing as a reason for going on holiday.

At the time, the then Agriculture and Resources Minister Pat McNamara said it was the first time an economic study of angling had been undertaken with such scope.

"It (the report) reinforces the importance of our bays and shows the huge spin-offs from recreational fishing such as support services," he said.

The new report focused on three key questions:

- What are the characteristics and level of recreational fishing in Victoria?
- What is the net benefit of recreational fishing on the Victorian economy?
- What does recreational fishing and its associated activities contribute to Victoria's economy?

The report also brought focus on the significant regional component to the economic contribution of recreational fishing to Victoria:

- Melbourne-Port Phillip region \$228.8m.
- Gippsland region \$172.9m.
- North East region \$177.9m.
- North West region \$56.8m.
- South West region \$188.4m.

VRFish executive director Christopher Collins said the report was commissioned to champion a better deal for Victorian anglers.

"Recreational fishing is growing in line with the population; it is maintaining its popularity and is a growth industry," he said, adding that the government did not recognise recreational fishing as recreation.

"There is minimal funding compared with the money given to more obscure sports. Frisbee throwing has more chance of government funding than recreational fishing, which is essentially self-funded."

Mr Collins said the State Government put up \$13.5m at the last election but this was nowhere near the amount of taxable funding handed to other sports like soccer and golf.

He said the report was barely scratching the surface and more work was needed, but at least the study clearly showed Victoria's economic planners the significance of recreational fishers' contribution to the state's economy.

"What would happen, say, in the northwest of the state, if we bought water for recreational fishing instead of using it for some marginal agriculture practices? Wouldn't that be better for the Victorian economy?"

www.weeklytimesnow.com.au/article/2009/12/16/141571_fishing.html

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☰ Court story: Courtnews.co.nz | News from Christchurch courts

Friday, 8 January 2010 8:19 AM

Fishing boat confiscated, but out of reach

The crown now owns a Polish fishing trawler, which was last seen operating somewhere off the coast of Africa.

The owners of the 95m stern trawler Atria have withdrawn their application for relief of forfeiture and the valuable boat has now become New Zealand property.

It is long gone, and so are the three ex-crew members who skipped the country just before their sentencing on fish dumping convictions in March.

Judge Michael Crosbie considered the case at a session in the Christchurch District Court today where third parties who had a financial interest in the vessel were expected to oppose its forfeiture to the crown.

But the application has been withdrawn during months when the case was on hold waiting for this phase of the sentencing process to be completed, after the case was considered in the High Court.

The Atria is owned by Dalmar Fishing, a company that is run out of Poland although the vessel is registered in Malta.

The company had arranged to pay any fines imposed on the crewmen on fish-dumping charges, but by the time of the sentencing the vessel itself was already outside New Zealand waters.

It is not yet known what steps may now be taken to recover it. It is possible the Ministry of Foreign Affairs may make an approach through the Polish Government.

A long-running trial before Judge Crosbie in 2008 ended with guilty pleas before the start of the defence case early this year. He imposed fines totalling \$147,500 on the three crewmen.

They had been charged with fish dumping in the hoki grounds off the South Island's east coast. The practice involved dumping tonnes of inferior or spoiled fish caught by the trawler, and replacing it with fresh or higher quality catch, a practice which would have led to wasting fish and exceeding valuable quota.

Judge Crosbie ordered the forfeiture of the vessel in March but the seizure was put on hold for third parties to make their applications.

He today reserved his final decision about costs, but said it would be made by the end of the year.

The master of the vessel, Josef Eugeniusz Popowicz, admitted omitting to record fish return information, and two charges of dumping fish at sea. He was fined \$67,500.

The ship's factory manager Wlodzimierz Pierzchlinski, pleaded guilty to two fish dumping charges and was fined \$60,000.

Foreman Janusz Miroslaw Josefiak was fined \$20,000 on one fish dumping charge

<http://courtnews.co.nz/story.php?id=2425>

☰ West Coast Bioregion Fishery Re-Opened After Seasonal Closure

Friday, 8 January 2010 8:18 AM

At-risk fishery reopens in West Australian waters

CHALPAT SONTI

December 16, 2009

The amount of high-risk species being fished in WA waters declined substantially during a two-month closure of the fishery, the Government says.

Demersal, or bottom-dwelling, scalefish are able to be fished for again from today, following the re-opening of the West Coast Bioregion waters between Kalbarri and Augusta.

The waters were closed for fishing for popular species such as pink snapper, dhufish and baldchin groper in an effort to halt a decline in stocks.

Fisheries minister Norman Moore said progress had been made towards reducing the take of the species by 50 per cent.

"We will know more about the effectiveness of the strategy when arrangements are reviewed next year," he said.

It was estimated the number of recreational fishing boats in the waters reduced by between 40 per cent and 80 per cent during the ban, with just 10 infringement notices and six warnings issued.

"All but a few fishers... were observing the important sustainability rules and I am encouraged that recreational fishers appear to have heard the crucial message about protecting our important fish stocks," Mr Moore said.

New rules also apply with the re-opening of the fishery, though after protests from recreational anglers, they are not quite as tough as what the Government **initially proposed**.

www.watoday.com.au/wa-news/atrisk-fishery-reopens-in-west-australia...

☰ Murray cod numbers not recovering - ABC News (Australian Broadcasting Corporation)

Friday, 8 January 2010 8:18 AM

Murray cod numbers not recovering

Posted Wed Dec 16, 2009 12:01pm AEDT

The Recreational Fishing Advisory Council wants the South Australian Government to start breeding murray cod in hatcheries to boost its numbers in

the River Murray.

A year-long ban on fishing for cod is set to be extended.

The Primary Industries Department says ongoing drought means murray cod numbers are not recovering.

Council executive officer Trevor Watts says rather than a fishing ban, the Government should be breeding the fish as happens in other states.

"What you can have now is one guy fishing 10 feet apart can fish for cod on one side of the line and the South Australian counterpart can't take murray cod at all," he said.

Primary Industries executive director Martin Smallridge says restocking programs have not been the preferred option.

"That's mainly been about genetic and disease issues," he said.

"[Stocks are] pretty dire - the last successful reproductive event was probably back in the mid 90s.

"That's because of the low flows that've been for a prolonged period now so that's what leads us to the point of saying 'Yeah we do have to take this decision for the next 12 months'."

The idea of hatcheries has not been ruled out, as the public has three months to comment on possible alternatives to a longer ban.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/12/16/2773334.htm>

The Recreational Fishing Advisory Council wants the South Australian Government to start breeding murray cod in hatcheries to boost its numbers in the River Murray.

Bigeye tuna faces extinction as protection calls fail

Friday, 8 January 2010 8:16 AM

Bigeye tuna faces extinction as protection calls fail

TAMARA MCLEAN

December 16, 2009

AUCKLAND: Pacific tuna will be vulnerable to severe overfishing for at least another year after negotiations to protect one of the most threatened species failed.

The Asian fishing nations of South Korea, China, Taiwan and Japan blocked calls from small Pacific countries to cut bigeye tuna fishing on the high seas by 50 per cent.

Instead, nations meeting at the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission in Tahiti stuck with the 10 per cent reduction planned for 2010.

Greenpeace Australia described the decision as "criminal" and falling far short of scientific recommendations for sustainable fishing of bigeye, a much sought-after sashimi fish that is at risk of becoming the next bluefin.

"It is beyond belief that Japan, [South] Korea, China and Taiwan are unable to follow the advice given to them by their own scientists and continue to prioritise short-term economic gains over the need to ensure long-term sustainable supplies of tuna to their own consumers," said Lagi Toribau, Greenpeace Australia's Pacific oceans campaigner in Tahiti.

"This is an economic and social crime that is repeated in ocean after ocean, year after year, and which will soon lead to the disappearance of the world's favourite fish - tuna."

Over half of the world's tuna comes from the central Pacific.

Pacific countries under threat from climate change have been fighting to protect their stocks; tuna can provide a valuable economic resource to nations whose land is shrinking.

However, increasing numbers of tuna are falling prey to unsustainable fishing in unregulated zones that fall outside their own waters.

The Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission international talks make decisions on whether to fish in these huge areas of open sea.

Greenpeace applauded a commission decision last year to protect two large high-seas pockets from purse seine fishing that comes into effect next month. But the environmental group wants more protection for two other pockets to the east that it says are "extremely vulnerable" to illegal and over-fishing by Asian nations, particularly Taiwan.

"Asian distant water fishing nations have shown they have no intention of working with Pacific island countries to conserve tuna stocks and ensure that the development aspirations of the small island states are met," Mr Toribau said.

"The Pacific must now build on the solidarity they have shown in recent years to reject fishing by nations that are threatening Pacific resources, livelihoods and futures."

In August, the *Herald* reported that the commission's scientific committee had found last year's bigeye catch increased by 6 per cent from 2007 levels.

The increase was attributed to an 18 per cent jump in the price of bigeye tuna meat.

AAP

www.smh.com.au/environment/bigeye-tuna-faces-extinction-as-protecti...

Radio New Zealand News : Stories : 2009 : 12 : 16 : 15kg of paua siezed during fisheries raids

Friday, 8 January 2010 8:13 AM

Fishery officers seized 15kg of paua meat and two vehicles during a raid in Wanganui on Wednesday morning.

The operation was the culmination of a six-month investigation into illegal sales of paua and crayfish.

Plain clothes officers visited 15 restaurants and fish-and-chip shops, and found 10 were buying fish outside the Quota Management System.

Several private addresses, shops and restaurants were searched.

Five people are being interviewed and the Ministry of Fisheries says charges will be laid at a later date.

<http://www.radionz.co.nz/news/stories/2009/12/16/1245d9cc14be>

Floods produce bumper prawns for Christmas | Herald Sun

Friday, 8 January 2010 8:11 AM

Floods produce bumper prawns for Christmas

- **GIANT prawns more than three times their normal size are being caught off NSW, sparking hopes this will be a very merry Christmas for seafood lovers.**

Commercial fishermen believe heavy rain and flooding earlier this year from the Mid-North Coast to Queensland helped flush the school prawns into the ocean, where they grew beyond their normal limits.

Coffs Harbour Fishermen's Co-op seafood operations manager Shane Geary said the school prawns were the largest of their type seen for more than

40 years.

Some are equal to the size of a medium king prawn but because they are only "schoolies" they sell for about \$15 a kilo less.

"From a retail perspective it's been fantastic," Mr Geary said.

"We're just hoping that they'll stay around until next week."

The news is not so good for river fishermen for whom prawn sizes have been down on recent years.

Fishing co-ops along the state's coast said they will still be ready to handle the Christmas rush thanks to supplies from other parts of Australia.

The big question for most consumers is how much their annual seafood splurge will cost.

Mr Geary said it was impossible to pick prices leading up to Christmas because it fluctuated daily according to supply and demand.

"Obviously there is a lot more demand at Christmas but hopefully the supply will be up and prices will only go up marginally," he said.

Sydney Fish Market supply manager Gus Dannoun said supplies were looking "very good", with a good weather forecast bolstering hopes of a record year.

In the last-minute rush from December 23, the Fish Market expects to sell an average 1000 oysters, 90kg of snapper and 80kg of prawns a minute. More than 850 tonnes of seafood is expected to be sold in the 36 hours to 5pm on Christmas Eve.

"We don't often get four working days leading up to Christmas so we're expecting to see some frantic activity," Mr Dannoun said

www.heraldsun.com.au/news/national/floods-produce-bumper-prawns-for...

GIANT prawns more than three times their normal size are being caught off NSW, sparking hopes this will be a very merry Christmas for seafood lovers.

Huge November cray catch - Local News - News - General - Port Lincoln Times

Friday, 8 January 2010 8:11 AM

Huge November cray catch

SOPHIE WANDEL

15 Dec, 2009 12:30 AM

ROCK LOBSTER fishermen have enjoyed a fantastic November catch contrary to claims they were entering their most risky season ever.

The Primary Industries Department has tallied the November catch for the northern rock lobster zone and revealed it was 21.8 tonnes higher than what was caught in November last year.

The total tonnage caught for November this year was 51.3 tonnes compared to just 29.5 tonnes in 2008, which turned out to be the worst season on record.

Northern Zone Rocklobster Fisherman's Association president Steve Moriarty said the high November catch had given fishermen the confidence they needed after their quota was slashed in September.

"It's been a really big November, it's fantastic for them (the licence holders)," Mr Moriarty said.

"It shows a good recovery, the fish are back and lots of small fish have been seen out there."

Mr Moriarty said beach prices were very good at \$50 a kilogram and fishers remained optimistic for the season ahead.

"It's the best November I've seen in a long time, it shows that fishermen giving back quota over the years has paid off."

In September, the State Government slashed the northern rock lobster zone quota from 470 tonnes to 310 tonnes, coming off a season where fishers were 68 tonnes short of making their quota.

The story has been different in the South East of the State though with the October catch for the southern rock lobster zone revealing a slow start to the season.

In October last year, South East cray fishers landed more than 196 tonnes of fish while this year the figure was just over 170 tonnes.

www.portlincolntimes.com.au/news/local/news/general/huge-november-c...

ROCK LOBSTER fishermen have enjoyed a fantastic November catch contrary to claims they were entering their most risky season ever. The Primary Industries Department has tallied the November

Recreational fishing licence funds to help make more fish! - Local News - Sport - General - Bellingen Courier Sun

Friday, 8 January 2010 8:09 AM

Recreational fishing licence funds to help make more fish!

15 Dec, 2009 09:04 AM

Fish numbers across NSW are set to improve with the investment of almost \$550,000 in grants being allocated to recreational anglers, community groups, landholders and local Councils, NSW Primary Industries Minister Steve Whan said yesterday.

"This investment will allow for 26 on-ground fish habitat rehabilitation projects, with more than \$1.1 million committed as in-kind support from the successful applicants," Minister Whan said.

"The funding to restore and rehabilitate freshwater and saltwater fish habitats was provided through the Recreational Fishing Trusts from funds raised from the recreational fishing licence fee.

"This year's program was highly competitive with the Department receiving over 60 applications requesting a total of over \$1.6M of funding, many applications were of a high standard and were supported by local recreational anglers."

The 26 projects that were funded cover many popular fishing spots in NSW and include

- Saltmarsh and mangrove rehabilitation in a number of coastal estuaries
- Improving fish passage at six barriers, including Dargavilles Crossing on the Wallamba River, the last significant barrier in the Wallis Lake catchment and fishway construction on the Stewarts River in the Camden Haven catchment
- Enhancing the health of NSW waterways including the Tuross River on the South coast, the Namoi River near Pilliga and the Thredbo River near Jindabyne through weed removal, river bank stabilisation, revegetation with endemic species and fencing to exclude cattle.

Industry & Investment NSW (I&I NSW) Conservation Action Unit Manager Craig Copeland said the ongoing Habitat Action Grant Program was a great example of how anglers' money is being invested to support the improvement of fish populations.

"Rehabilitation of fish habitat will provide long-term benefits for native fish stocks which will provide a substantial benefit for anglers into the future, increasing opportunities for rural and regional communities to promote local tourism," Mr Copeland said.

"Recreational angling is the backbone of many local communities, stimulating the local economy and bringing jobs and investment. The ultimate outcome of these projects is more fish in our rivers and estuaries."

Funds raised through the sale of recreational fishing licences are placed into two trusts, one for saltwater and one for freshwater. Expenditure from both trusts is overseen by committees of anglers.

For a full list of projects under the Freshwater and Saltwater Habitat Action Program, go to:

<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/recreational/fees/aquatic-habitat-protection-and-rehabilitation>

www.bellingenCourier.com.au/news/local/sport/general/recreational-fishing

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☰ Scoop: "Every Fish Counts" this summer

Friday, 8 January 2010 8:08 AM

Every Fish Counts" this summer

Tuesday, 15 December 2009, 2:45 pm
Press Release: New Zealand Government

Hon Phil Heatley
Minister of Fisheries

15 December 2009 **Media Statement**
"Every Fish Counts" this summer

He kaitiaki tātou katoa

Four million guardians – this is the way we should be thinking about New Zealand's fisheries this summer.

Launching the Ministry of Fisheries' summer education campaign, Fisheries Minister Phil Heatley, an enthusiastic recreational fisher, encouraged fishers to think about their responsibilities for the ecosystem and future generations.

"It's a privilege for all of us to have access to one of the world's most abundant and well managed fisheries," Mr Heatley said. "With this privilege comes responsibility – know the rules, ask yourself whether you really need all those fish – and return fish to the water in a manner that will ensure their survival."

The new summer public awareness campaign builds on the success of the 2008 Ministry of Fisheries education programme, "Size does Matter".

"Size still matters – know the limits for the fish you're catching – and bag limits are there for a reason," Mr Heatley said. "This year's campaign is all about responsible fishing. Every fish that you choose not to take should be safely put back or tagged and released – this will have a big impact on the sustainability of the fishery."

Summer is the time when Fishery Officers see many New Zealanders in their aquatic environment. Fishery Officers and Honorary Fishery Officers are out and about throughout the country helping and supporting the 4 million guardians of our fisheries.

"I applaud the work of Ministry of Fisheries' staff at all our favourite fishing spots," Mr Heatley said. "This government is committed to supporting their efforts as we work together to sustain and enhance our fisheries and ecosystem."

Tips

The Ministry of Fisheries offers these tips to help you make the most of your aquatic experience this summer:

- Fish for a feed, not for the freezer
- Limit your catch - don't catch your limit.
- Place excess shellfish back into their environment
- Don't take paua with a sharp implement
- Handle fish with care - don't put your fingers in their eyes or gills, and if you're not keeping them return them as quickly as possible
- When it comes to hook sizes, bigger is better
- Make sure you can store fish - don't waste it

For the latest recreational rules, see <http://www.fish.govt.nz/en-nz/Recreational/default.htm>

For an image to support the message, see <http://www.fish.govt.nz/en-nz/Press/default.htm>

<http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/PA0912/S00245.htm>

Four million guardians – this is the way we should be thinking about New Zealand's fisheries this summer.

☰ Fishing industry heavyweights unite - Local News - News - General - Whyalla News

Friday, 8 January 2010 8:07 AM

Fishing industry heavyweights unite

KATE HAYWARD
 15 Dec, 2009 08:49 AM

South Australia's fishing and aquaculture industry heavyweights have united to oppose the proposed desalination plant at Point Lowly.

High-profile representatives from renowned seafood sectors combined to support the "Keep the Gulf Clean" campaign launch last Wednesday.

The Spencer Gulf and West Coast Prawn Fishermen's Association sent a clear message on the weight of the opposition to BHP locating a desalination plant at Point Lowly for its "good scientific reasons".

Prawn fisher of 27 years and association member Greg Palmer said discharging effluent into one of Australia's most sensitive marine ecologies with unique tidal movements would be "environmentally irresponsible".

"Given that no-one knows what the long term impact will be on a whole range of native marine species," Mr Palmer said.

The campaign launch coincided with the release of the first of the "Christmas catch" into shops.

Consumers were warned that constructing a desalination plant at Point Lowly could place the South Australian fishing industry at risk.

"The festive season is synonymous with the enjoyment of wonderful South Australian seafood, and we are determined to make sure that's something that can continue to be appreciated by generations to come," Mr Palmer said.

All fishing sectors were represented at the launch including prawn, tuna, mussel, sardine, abalone, kingfish, oyster and crab industries.

"To achieve such a unique gathering of industry heavyweights in the one place at the one time demonstrates just how concerned people are about this issue," Mr Palmer said.

A petition supported by a Facebook campaign will be distributed throughout the Spencer Gulf communities and Adelaide in conjunction with the campaign.

It calls for the State and Federal Governments to place a condition of approval on BHP's proposed expansion project - that it must relocate the desalination plant to ensure saline effluent is discharged into an oceanic, rather than a closed estuary, environment.

"We are not anti-development, but are caring and responsible custodians of the South Australian environment, and advocates for sustainable and responsible business practices," Mr Palmer said.

"We are supportive of the proposed Olympic Dam expansion and believe it is a positive project for South Australia, but it must not come at the cost of damaging the sensitive ecosystem and in turn one of the State's most economically valuable industries.

"The State Government, in its response to BHP's Draft EIS, indicated there were inadequate studies on the impact of locating a desalination plant at Point Lowly; we will continue to argue loudly that if there is any level of doubt then the Gulf and its abundance of native marine species should be protected."

www.whyllanewsonline.com.au/news/local/news/general/fishing-indust...

South Australia's fishing and aquaculture industry heavyweights have united to oppose the proposed desalination plant at Point Lowly.

 [Fishing industry heavyweights unite - Local News - News - General - Whyalla News](#) 08/01/10 8:07:12 AM

No protection for depleted Pacific tuna

Friday, 8 January 2010 8:04 AM

No protection for depleted Pacific tuna

TAMARA MCLEAN

December 15, 2009

AAP

Pacific tuna will be vulnerable to severe overfishing for another year after negotiations to protect one of the species most threatened failed.

Asian fishing nations Korea, China, Taiwan and Japan have blocked calls from small Pacific countries to cut bigeye tuna fishing on the high seas by 50 per cent.

Instead, those gathered at the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission meeting in Tahiti stuck with the 10 per cent reduction planned for 2010.

Greenpeace said this "criminal" result falls far short of scientific recommendations for sustainable fishing of bigeye, a sought-after sashimi fish that is at risk of becoming the next bluefin.

"It is beyond belief that Japan, Korea, China and Taiwan are unable to follow the advice given to them by their own scientists and continue to prioritise short term economic gains over the need to ensure long-term sustainable supplies of tuna to their own consumers," said Lagi Toribau, Greenpeace Australia Pacific oceans campaigner in Tahiti.

"This is an economic and social crime that is repeated in ocean after ocean, year after year, and which will soon lead to the disappearance of the world's favourite fish - tuna."

Over half of the world's tuna comes from the central Pacific region.

Pacific countries under threat from climate change have been fighting to protect their stocks but increasing numbers are falling prey to unsustainable fishing in unregulated zones that fall outside their own waters.

The Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) international talks make decisions on fishing in these huge areas of open sea.

Greenpeace applauded a 2008 commission decision to protect two large high seas pockets from purse seine fishing that comes into affect next month.

But the environmental group wants more protection for two other pockets to the east it says are "extremely vulnerable" to illegal and over-fishing by Asian nations, particularly Taiwan.

"Asian distant water fishing nations have shown that they have no intention of working with Pacific island countries to conserve tuna stocks and ensure that the development aspirations of the small island states are met," Mr Toribau said.

"The Pacific must now build on the solidarity they have shown in recent years to reject fishing by nations that are threatening Pacific resources, livelihoods and futures."

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news.smh.com.au/breaking-news-world/no-protection-for-depleted-paci...

Urchins invade without lobsters (Science Alert)

Wednesday, 6 January 2010 5:10 AM



News _____

Urchins invade without lobsters

Tuesday, 15 December 2009

[University of Tasmania](#)



Without lobsters to keep spiny sea urchin populations down, kelp beds are being overgrazed.

Image: iStockphoto

A new research paper shows that the removal of large lobsters from the environment has reduced the ability of kelp beds to respond to the onslaught of the spiny sea urchin in Tasmanian waters.

The paper, titled *Overfishing reduces resilience of kelp beds to climate-driven catastrophic phase shift* was recently published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* of the United States of America.

The authors of the paper are Dr Scott Ling, Professor Craig Johnson and Associate Professor Stewart Frusher of the

Tasmanian Aquaculture and Fisheries Institute (TAFI), and Ken Ridgway, CSIRO Marine and Atmospheric Science.

Dr Ling said that, in the ocean realm, climate change and overfishing pose two of the greatest challenges to the structure and functioning of marine ecosystems.

"In eastern Tasmania, temperate coastal waters are warming at approximately four times the global ocean warming average, representing the fastest rate of warming in the Southern Hemisphere," he said.

This has driven range extension of the ecologically important long-spined sea urchin (*Centrostephanus rodgersii*), which has started catastrophic overgrazing of productive Tasmanian kelp beds. This is leading to loss of biodiversity and important rocky reef ecosystem services.

Prof Johnson said coincident with the overgrazing is fishing of reef-based predators, including the spiny lobster (*Jasus edwardsii*).

"By conducting experiments inside and outside Marine Protected Areas we show that fishing, by removing large predatory lobsters, has reduced the resilience of kelp beds against the climate-driven threat of the sea urchin and increased risk of catastrophic shift to widespread sea urchin barrens," he said.

Urchin barrens are areas where sea urchins have destroyed kelp by overgrazing.

The work shows that other human-induced stressors – in this case fishing – can exacerbate responses of ecosystems to climate change and limit the capacity of marine systems to adapt to climate change.

Prof Johnson said actions to reduce the risk of catastrophic phase shift in ecosystems are urgent in the face of ongoing warming and unprecedented levels of predator removal from the world's oceans.

Director of TAFI, Professor Colin Buxton said that the Tasmanian rock lobster fishing industry and the Tasmanian Government's fisheries managers were working collaboratively with scientists to evaluate the effectiveness of several management options.

"Healthy productive ecosystems are core to providing sustainable exploitable marine resources and it is encouraging that we are all working together to mitigate against further ecosystem degradation".

Editor's Note: Original news release can be found [here](#).

<http://www.sciencealert.com.au/news/20091512-20412-2.html>

New research suggests that the overfishing of large lobsters has resulted in an onslaught of spiny sea urchins in Tasmanian waters.

☐ Small prawn mystery - 14/12/2009

Wednesday, 6 January 2010 5:09 AM

Small prawn mystery

Monday, 14/12/2009

It's been a disappointing start to the season for Clarence prawn trawlers this year.

The Clarence River has closed twice to trawling due to the small size of the prawns.

John Harrison from the Professional Fisherman's Association says it's a mystery why the prawns are still so small.

"We've got really warm water, ideal growing conditions with nutrient load within the river from the recent fresh that we had, so everything is pointing towards it being spot on, but they're just not growing," he says.

<http://www.abc.net.au/rural/news/content/200912/s2770889.htm>

Coverage of rural industries and issues.

☒ Prawn season all washed up | Northern Rivers News | Local News in Northern Rivers | Clarence Valley Daily Examiner

Wednesday, 6 January 2010 5:09 AM

Prawn season all washed up

Erin Brady | 15th December 2009

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Fishermen George Baker (45 years experience), Donald Johnson (32 years), Wayne Meyer (six years) and Bill Meyer (29 years) have never seen such as dismal prawn season.

CLARENCE River fishermen are claiming their worst prawn season in memory.

Since the season officially 'opened' on November 30, trawlermen have been lucky to pull in a few kilos of prawns in a morning, compared to the hundreds of kilos they have been used to in recent years.

On top of that, the size of the prawns have been too small.

Yesterday fishermen made the tough decision to voluntarily close the fishery for the fourth time this season, this time until January 4.

"This will be the worst Christmas prawn trawlers have ever had in the time I've been doing this," George Baker said.

Mr Baker has been a prawn trawlerman on the river and Lake Wooloweyah for 45 years and he's worried.

He said he's never known the river and estuaries to be so barren of school prawns, especially following the success of recent seasons.

"It's definitely come out of the blue," Mr Baker said.

Fellow trawlerman Donald Johnson, who has trawled the river since 1978, said all the signs had been in place for a bumper season.

There was a flood and fresh this year, followed by perfect growing conditions.

But for the first time, Mr Johnson said the signs have proved wrong and the fishermen were hurting.

"The prawns haven't changed size since August," he said.

"This is the prime time for our markets and there's nothing."

Mr Johnson said he had no choice but to ride it out financially, but it was going to be a pretty sad Christmas.

"I'll have to drink water instead of beer," he said.

But it's a different story for Clarence-based fishermen on the high seas.

Ocean trawlermen have been pulling in record-sized schoolies in recent weeks.

Mr Baker said the ocean trawlers had also caught school prawns right through winter – something he had never seen in his 45 years working the river.

He said the prawns being caught at sea had been flushed out in a fresh and should have come back up the river by now.

"But for some reason they didn't," he said.

"This has definitely got something to do with the floods in May."

Mr Baker and other members of the Clarence River Fishermen's Cooperative have called on the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) to urgently test the water and river mud to establish the problem.

"We'd like them to come up with the answers and tell us what's happening," Mr Baker said.

Mr Baker said he was concerned it could affect future prawn seasons.

"My worry is if the prawns don't grow to maturity, they won't spawn and that could affect next season," he said.

"That's why I'd like to see someone coming to do the tests now."

NSW DPI did not respond to questions from *The Daily Examiner*.

www.dailyexaminer.com.au/story/2009/12/15/prawn-season-all-washed-u...

CLARENCE River fishermen are claiming their worst prawn season in memory, but local ocean trawlers have been pulling in record catches.

Small prawns threaten Christmas plans - ABC News (Australian Broadcasting Corporation)

Wednesday, 6 January 2010 5:08 AM

Small prawns threaten Christmas plans

Posted Mon Dec 14, 2009 2:00pm AEDT

Updated Mon Dec 14, 2009 3:10pm AEDT



Prawns are a staple on the Christmas dinner table. (Flickr: Chewy Chua)

- [Map: Grafton 2460](#)

Christmas prawn supplies may be under threat.

Professional fishermen on the north coast of New South Wales say they are mystified why this season's prawns are not growing.

The Clarence River's usually big and bountiful crustaceans are woefully inadequate.

The industry had to temporarily close the river to trawling in the hope the prawns would grow.

Some are blaming the problem on the big May floods, which may have affected the weeds and seagrass that the prawns feed on.

John Harrison from the Professional Fishermans Association says it is a mystery.

"This time of the year, to quote one fisherman, the prawns should be jack the giant," he said.

"We've got really warm water, we've got ideal growing conditions with the nutrient load within the river from the recent fresh that we had so everything is pointing towards it being spot-on but they're just not growing."

The industry will reassess the prawn size today in the hope that the Christmas trawl can begin.

www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/12/14/2771078.htm?section=justin

Christmas prawn supplies may be under threat.

Crayfishermen suffer as prices plunge

Wednesday, 6 January 2010 5:01 AM

Crayfishermen suffer as prices plunge

JOSEPH SAPIENZA

December 14, 2009

Local crayfishermen are reeling from the current beach price of rock lobster, with fears it could fall below \$20 per kilogram before Christmas.

The fishery, which was once worth \$300 million to the WA economy, has been hit hard in recent times with strict catch restrictions in order to

preserve the dwindling stocks of juvenile lobsters - known as puerulus.

Now, the short-term future for fishermen - especially those in the C-Zone south of Jurien - has become even more bleak due to the sagging price of their stock almost three weeks in to the season.

At the start of the campaign, the beach price - which is the price processors pay fishermen for their catch - was \$30 per kilogram, but has since fallen to \$22.

There are now whispers among some that the price will fall to below \$20 before Christmas.

What is more is that catch rates have been very high to start the season, and many fear additional restrictions will be imposed by Fisheries Minister Norman Moore.

Along with these soaring catch figures, Western Rock Lobster Council board member James Paratore said the industry was now facing a costly "imminent crisis".

"The problem is that the beach price currently being paid - and which is continuing to slide - is nowhere near a break-even point for most boats," he told WAtoday.com.au.

"The Minister has been advised to implement management arrangements to ensure the sustainability of the rock lobster.

"He has acted and there is not too much we can do or say to change that.

"However, on the grounds of implementing a management arrangement that gives us the best economical return for our resource, the package has and will continue to fail."

Mr Paratore said many fishermen have arrived at their forecast income figures for the season based on an average beach price of about \$25 per kilogram.

"They have leased and made arrangements based on this figure," he said. "If the beach price does not achieve this price, there will be a whole lot more pain instilled on the industry, and many more forced out at fire sale prices."

Mr Paratore then took aim at the "volume-driven" processors who were contributing to their problems, but he would not elaborate.

He instead turned his focus towards Mr Moore, and urged him to implement a package that "does give us the best economical return for the limited resource".

"Limiting days and pots will not stop us landing product that is not fit for live - which is the best price - and it must be processed," he said.

"It is criminal."

A spokesman for Mr Moore said he had been advised through the Department of Fisheries and several fishing councils - which included the Western Rock Lobster Council and the WA Fishing Industry Council - that the nominated catch target was the ideal figure for providing a better economic return.

"(The Minister was advised that) the nominated catch target is currently the best way to balance the competing interests of fishermen making an economic return from the resource, providing them with some certainty in terms of planning their fishing activities and also protecting the long-term sustainability and viability of that same resource," he said.

The spokesman added the Minister had heard individual views at industry forums and through concerns lodged at his office, and although he "extensively considered" different arrangements and models, he decided the current package was the "most appropriate" in the interests of the entire industry.

But Mr Moore shied away from questions as to why prices were falling despite constant restrictions limiting supply of the stock.

"In cases like this there could be a significant number of factors influencing the beach price," the spokesman said.

"Obviously the exchange rate and the global financial crisis have had a negative impact. However, economics is a complex area of study and the Minister is not prepared to speculate further about why prices may be sliding."

The spokesman said the State Government was not responsible for the beach price and the current arrangement will be reviewed in January.

"If adjustments are required to catch target levels and other restrictions, the Minister will make such decisions accordingly," he said.

In response to claims about "product dumping" by processors, Mr Moore said such concerns should be reported to the Fisheries Department in the first instance, and then perhaps the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission.

The Minister also acknowledged "with interest" a recent survey carried out by the Western Rock Lobster Council that indicated majority support for moving management of the fishery to a quota system.

This season, which began on November 25 for the C-Zone - home to the bulk of the state's commercial crayfishermen - the total allowable catch for the entire fishery was limited to 5500 tonnes, with an upper limit of 6050 tonnes.

The Fisheries Department had put forward a sustainable catch limit of 6500 tonnes for the season, but Mr Moore set a target 1000 tonnes below the recommendation as a precautionary measure and "to spread the sustainable catch" over the coming three fishing seasons to "provide more certainty to the industry".

www.watoday.com.au/wa-news/crayfishermen-suffer-as-prices-plunge-20...

☰ Sixteen New Marine Protected Areas - David Llewellyn, MP - Tasmanian Government Media Releases

Wednesday, 6 January 2010 5:00 AM



David Llewellyn, MP
Minister for Primary Industries and Water

Monday, 14 December 2009

Sixteen New Marine Protected Areas

Tasmania has added to its system of marine protected areas (MPAs) with the creation of 16 new MPAs in south-east Tasmania. The 16 reserves extend over about 12,000ha and cover the range of marine ecosystems found in south-east Tasmania; including rocky reefs, inter-tidal sand flats, seagrass beds, kelp communities, mudflats and offshore reefs and islands.

David Llewellyn, Minister for Primary Industries and Water, said that marine protected areas are an important tool in maintaining ecological balance.

"We need to protect and preserve our marine environment," Mr Llewellyn said.

"These ecosystems support much of south-east Tasmania's unique marine life, including several threatened species."

Fishing will continue to be permitted in these new reserve areas. Rules and regulations relating to recreational fishing in Tasmania can be found in the *Recreational Sea*

Fishing Guide published by DPIPWE.

The new reserve areas are a result of the 2008 Resource Planning and Development Commission's (RPDC) Inquiry into the establishment of marine protected areas within the Bruny Bio-region.

The Inquiry was undertaken in accordance with the Tasmanian Marine Protected Areas Strategy, which aims to achieve a comprehensive, adequate and representative system of marine protected areas around the State.

Reserve Name	Area (ha)
Tinderbox Marine Nature Reserve	144.1
Ninepin Point Marine Nature Reserve	731.8
River Derwent Marine Conservation Area	1636
Port Cygnet Marine Conservation Area	103.1
South Arm Marine Conservation Area	772.4
Opossum Bay Marine Conservation Area	555.5
Monk Bay Marine Conservation Area	399.2
Cloudy Bay Marine Conservation Area	480.1
Central Channel Marine Conservation Area	3443
Simpsons Point Marine Conservation Area	573.9
Roberts Point Marine Conservation Area	138.6
Huon Estuary Marine Conservation Area	694.2
Hippolyte Rocks Marine Conservation Area	534.9
Sloping Island Marine Conservation Area	940.3
Blackman Rivulet Marine Conservation Area	263.1
Waterfall – Fortescue Marine Conservation Area	1230

Fourteen of the reserves have been established as conservation areas under the *Nature Conservation Act 2002*. This reserve class provides for the protection and maintenance of the natural and cultural values of the area and the sustainable use of natural resources. Fishing is permitted in these new conservation areas. Rules and regulations relating to recreational fishing in Tasmania can be found in the *Recreational Sea Fishing Guide* published by DPIPWE.

Two of the new reserve areas are extensions to the existing Tinderbox and Ninepin Point Marine Nature Reserves. These areas are reserved as nature reserves under the *Nature Conservation Act 2002* and the *Living Marine Resources Management Act 1995*. The 'no take' fishing restrictions that have applied to these reserves in the past will be extended to the new reserved areas.

For further information go to www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au

<http://www.media.tas.gov.au/release.php?id=28747>

■ Sixteen New Marine Protected Areas - David Llewellyn, MP - Tasmanian Government Media Releases

Monday, 28 December 2009 9:09 AM



David Llewellyn, MP
Minister for Primary Industries and Water

Monday, 14 December 2009

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For further information go to www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au

<http://www.media.tas.gov.au/release.php?id=28747>

☰ Push for anti-corruption commission in Victoria

Monday, 28 December 2009 8:55 AM

Push for anti-corruption commission in Victoria

Source: Stateline Victoria

Published: Friday, December 4, 2009 12:00 AEDT

Expires: Thursday, March 4, 2010 12:00 AEDT

Former secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Elizabeth Proust, has been nominated by the Victorian Premier to review the state's integrity bodies, amid increasing criticism of the Ombudsman and the reports he gives to Parliament.

JOSEPHINE CAFAGNA, PRESENTER: Elizabeth Proust has written to anti-corruption commissions around Australia as part of her government-commissioned review of Victoria's integrity bodies. Victoria and South Australia are the only two states that don't have anti-corruption commissions. Tasmania has just passed legislation setting up a crime commission in that state. The public is being invited to make written submissions to Elizabeth Proust, but no public hearings will be held. Her review comes amid growing criticism of Victoria's Ombudsman and the scathing reports he delivers to Parliament.

GEORGE BROUWER, VICTORIAN OMBUDSMAN (June, 2004): I'm not the kind of person who admits defeat. I shall do this job. I shall report publicly on everything I come across. If the community then judges it not satisfactory or it's incomplete or they would like something else, I'm perfectly relaxed about that.

JOSEPHINE CAFAGNA: As though predicting the storm is ahead, George Brouwer in 2004 knew he would face criticisms and hurdles in his job. Then he had the dual role of Head of the Office of Police Integrity and Ombudsman. Now he retains the one role of Ombudsman and his reports to parliament have begun legendary. From his investigation into the notorious Brimbank Council, his report on the conduct of Professor Thomas Kossmann at the Alfred Hospital, to his most recent scathing report into the Department of Human Services handling of child protection. Along the way, George Brouwer has upset a few people.

KAREN BATT, CPSU: What occurs is the equivalent of a Star chamber. You're called in, you're not allowed to tell anyone you're being called in, you're cross-examined, you're not allowed to have legal representation, you don't get copies of the transcripts, you don't get the tapes. All things that if it was occurring in a criminal proceeding, would actually ensure people that the person would be acquitted.

MICHAEL BRETT YOUNG, LAW INSTITUTE OF VICTORIA: We have an Ombudsman who will interview someone, take notes, undertake recorded information, but then tell them they're not entitled to tell anyone what's happened. We say they must have legal representation. To do otherwise is outrageous.

JANE STEPHENS, AMA VICTORIA: The Ombudsman had potentially breached the rights to natural justice of some of our doctors. We were concerned that we had reports from witnesses that they'd been intimidated when they fronted up to the Ombudsman, keen to do their job as a citizen, they then found themselves on the receiving end of some fairly hostile and aggressive questioning.

JOSEPHINE CAFAGNA: The AMA, the Law Institute and the CPSU are just three of an increasing number of bodies who have complained to the Government about the State Ombudsman. The Commonwealth Ombudsman says there's nothing new about that.

JOHN MCMILLAN, COMMONWEALTH OMBUDSMAN: There's always healthy debate surrounding the work of Ombudsman as to whether they've gone too far or exercised their powers too robustly or reached findings that are not adequately supported by the evidence presented to them. As to the specific issue about legal representation, the normal common law principles usually apply there, that is a person does not have an absolute right to legal representation in a government inquiry.

JOSEPHINE CAFAGNA: John Brumby has also come under pressure from within his own party, after parliamentary electorate staff who held a second job as local government councillors were forced to give up one of their jobs under conflict of interest legislation. That was introduced on the recommendation of the Ombudsman following his Brimbank Council investigation. The former head of Victoria's public service Elizabeth Proust is conducting a review of Victoria's anti-corruption bodies. Mr Brumby has suggested one change: that the Ombudsman could be suggested to parliamentary oversight.

JOHN BRUMBY, PREMIER (Nov, 24): The Auditor-General is an officer of the Parliament. So too is the Ombudsman an officer of the Parliament. And there may well be an argument for saying that the Parliament should exercise greater interest or greater oversight in relation to the work of the Ombudsman.

JOSEPHINE CAFAGNA: Stateline understands up until several weeks ago the Ombudsman's office was in discussion with Treasury and the Premier's department about conducting its own review of functions and funding. The Government wanted an internal steering committee to conduct such an inquiry and it even sent the Ombudsman its preferred terms of reference. Stateline believes they were rejected by the Ombudsman who wanted an outside body to conduct the inquiry with any findings to be reported to Parliament. Stateline also understands the Ombudsman may have been in the process of finding an interstate expert to conduct its inquiry when the Premier announced the widespread review of integrity bodies.

Opposition Leader Ted Baillieu raised the issue during parliamentary Question Time.

TED BAILLIEU, OPPOSITION LEADER: Is it not a fact that the Premier's review of Victoria's integrity and anti-corruption system is nothing more than an attempt to undermine and destroy the independence of the Office of the Ombudsman following a series of embarrassing Ombudsman's reports into corruption, incompetence and mismanagement in this government?

JOHN BRUMBY: There are two people undertaking this inquiry ... what the Leader of the Opposition is saying is that they are part of a fix which is going to produce a dodgy report. ... He should apologise to them for impugning their integrity.

JOHN MCMILLAN: It is a healthy process to have an office reviewed, and certainly if there is a debate occurring about whether there's been a wrongful exercise of power, then an independent review is a perfect opportunity for all sides of that debate to be aired.

Tags:

Available Formats

- [Windows Media \(Broadband\)](#)
- [Windows Media \(Dial-up\)](#)

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/video/2009/12/04/2762672.htm>

☰ No boat ramp fees at Victor Tuesday, 01 December 2009 SIR – Last week I visited

Monday, 7 December 2009 10:15 AM

No boat ramp fees at Victor



Tuesday, 01 December 2009

SIR – Last week I visited Victor Harbor for a holiday. I was amazed to find that the new boat launching facilities there do not incur a launching fee.

I am curious as a ratepayer and boat owner (both of which entitle me to pay tax or levies towards maintenance on boat launching facilities) to know how Victor Harbor has similar facilities to Stansbury, and yet get to launch for free.

Is it because they pay higher council rates? Or just have a more progressive council who encourage visitors and locals to use the facilities and therefore facilitate more trade and turnover for local businesses (bait, motel, hotels, caravan parks, et cetera)?

In the week I was there the ramp was used frequently, sometimes twice a day by the same boats to check cray pots.

Perhaps many people retire to Victor Harbor not just to enjoy the scenery and free boat launching, but the free crayfish.

Trevor Carter
Stansbury

www.ypct.com.au/index.php?...n=com_content&task=view&id=6319&Itemid=71

☐ Crayfish boat sinks in Port Lincoln marina

Monday, 7 December 2009 10:14 AM

Crayfish boat sinks in Port Lincoln marina

Article from: **The Advertiser**

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MICHAEL MILNES, POLICE REPORTER

December 01, 2009 07:37am



Diesel is leaking from a crayfishing boat which sank in the Port Lincoln marina earlier today. Picture: Ivon Perrin
EMERGENCY crews have contained a diesel spill from a fishing boat that has sunk in the Port Lincoln marina.

Metropolitan Fire Crews were called to the marina about 5.20am this morning after the owner of the "Success" found the 18m cray fishing boat had sunk.

MFS incident controller John Wise said there is about 1800 litres of diesel fuel on the boat.

"It is unknown how much has leaked at this stage, but it is not substantial, we do have booms around it (the boat).

"The port side of the vessel is about 2m under water and the starboard side is about 50cm above the water.

"This is going to be an operation that will last most of the day, until such time as we can level the boat and lift it with cranes or get air bags into it, then we can start pumping water out of it," he said.

www.news.com.au/adelaidenow/story/0,22606,26424555-2682,00.html?...rss

☒ New export plan angers Pt Lincoln mayor

Monday, 7 December 2009 9:50 AM

New export plan angers Pt Lincoln mayor

Posted Mon Nov 30, 2009 9:33am AEDT



New Port Lincoln mining export plan angers mayor (ABC News)

- **Video:** [Port Lincoln and the Centrex debate \(Stateline South Australia\)](#)
- **Map:** [Port Lincoln 5606](#)

Port Lincoln mayor Peter Davis has reacted angrily to a second proposal to export minerals through the SA port.

Centrex Metals already has South Australian Government approval for exports, which has caused an outcry from groups including the seafood industry because of environmental concerns.

Now another company, Lincoln Minerals, said it wants to use the port to export iron ore.

Mr Davis says it is a huge worry for the city's future and its clean, green image for fishing industry exports.

"This confirms my worst fears, this suggestion from Lincoln Minerals and they can't be blamed because Centrex has been approved, why shouldn't they?" he said.

"It simply compounds the inevitable consequences for Port Lincoln - mineral exports should not occur out of Port Lincoln full stop."

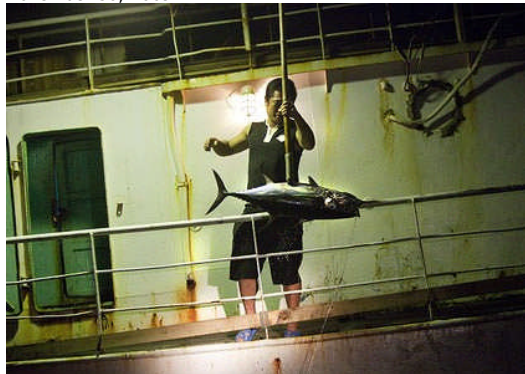
www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/30/2756938.htm?section=business

Fish fight crucial to survival of islanders

Monday, 7 December 2009 9:48 AM

Fish fight crucial to survival of islanders

November 30, 2009



Yes we can... a crew member on the Taiwanese long-liner Kai Jie 1 pulls in a tuna in the Pacific. Taiwan, which has the biggest tuna fleet on the high seas, is accused of overfishing. *Photo: Greenpeace*

Some Pacific nations need a future beyond climate change, and protecting their tuna may be the answer, writes Andrew Darby.

For island nations such as Kiribati, the Pacific Ocean, their enemy, is also their friend. The people are losing precious land to a rising sea level. But through the wide waters of the Kiribati exclusive economic zone swim the world's last great tuna shoals on long migrations across the central Pacific.

Sleek yellowfin and muscled bigeye, little skipjack and albacore in numbers so great there once seemed no limit.

If this great blue ocean has a heart, a place where people can grasp its dimension and riches, it should be Kiribati. The pinpoints of Kiribati's land amount to 810 square kilometres, or exactly Canberra's city area.

Yet the tropical exclusive economic zone is nearly half the size of mainland Australia.

As these people plan to live on less island, or even elsewhere, they cling to tuna for their economic future.

"It is very crucial for Kiribati to see ... the development of tuna resources is sustainable in the long term," its fisheries director, Kintoba Tearo, says.

The problem for Kiribati, and its Pacific neighbours, is holding on to this treasure. Too much tuna is falling prey to illegal or unsustainable fishing by fleets from distant lands, and sought-after species are being fished down to danger levels.

Among the distant fishing countries, Taiwan has been uncovered as a culprit in the pillage of the Pacific.

Its dynamic economy supports the biggest tuna fleet on the high seas. A recent Greenpeace investigation found many of its fishers used the grey side of the law and, dealing with a powerful industry, the government in Taipei has been unable to halt it.

When you buy a can of tuna in the supermarket, it is likely to come from waters such as those of Kiribati, caught by Taiwanese fishers, even if it is labelled "Product of Thailand" because it was canned there. The challenge of sustaining tuna is vital to small Pacific islands, but involves us all.

Already in our experience of overfishing, the stand-out lesson is the case of bluefin tuna. These fish used to be canned too when they were numerous - but that was decades ago. Now they are much more valuable as raw sashimi fish, and stocks of the two species, southern and northern bluefin, have plunged to small fractions of their original size.

In the southern hemisphere, the Australian Government and industry in 2006 uncovered an over-catch scandal in which, Canberra said, Japanese fishers over many years in effect stole fish calculated to be worth up to \$8 billion.

This year legal catches were slashed again, but still the Australian delegation leader, John Kalish, told the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna that the Government "remains deeply concerned about compliance with national allocations of SBT". The actual catch was still well above currently agreed limits, he said.

In the northern hemisphere, an attempt is being mounted to list bluefin under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species. Official quotas were halved this month, but they are systematically exceeded.

"Only a zero catch limit could have maximised the chances that Atlantic bluefin could recover to the point where the fishery could exist in the future," said Susan Lieberman, a deputy director of international policy for the Pew Foundation.

It is this kind of industrial-scale pressure that faces Pacific tuna species.

The western and central Pacific Ocean is the largest and most valuable tuna fishery in the world, a fishing bonanza providing more than half of the global supply of tuna, sold for more than \$US3 billion annually.

A record 2.4 million tonnes of tuna was counted out of the 16-nation fishery last year. A third more, 790,000 tonnes, may be taken illegally, according to a study led by David Agnew of Imperial College London.

As well as Taiwan, ships from Japan, the United States, Korea and the European Union fish these waters, their might embodied in the Spanish purse seiner Albatun Tres. Its giant nets can circle more than a kilometre of sea, and its holds freeze 3000 tonnes of fish.

Greenpeace found Albatun Tres fishing in Kiribati's exclusive economic zone last year. The €4.9 million (\$8 million) EU subsidy that helped to build

this ship is equal to 14 per cent of Kiribati's total government income.

Kiribati's quandary is that the \$A33 million in access fees foreign countries pay to fish in its waters now contribute about 40 per cent to the national budget. In a country where the gross domestic product per capita is a lowly 99th in the world at \$US6122 (\$6650), these fees take on even greater importance.

Taiwan pays fees to Kiribati, as it does to other Pacific island countries. But Greenpeace's investigation uncovered a candid admission by the Taiwan Fisheries Agency that "illegal overfishing is still common ... in addition to the illegal and overt catch of flag-of-convenience vessels".

This is an industry with close links to the government developed in the post-World War II years as the capitalist island defended itself against communist mainland China. The two became deeply intertwined, an investigation by Henry Chen, of Murdoch University, found.

Eventually the Taiwanese broke Japan's hold on Pacific tuna by using low-cost labour and flags of convenience to undercut prices. Their shipyards began to pump out "small" longliners, under 24 metres, and took on Third World sailors to man them in crowded conditions. A giant navy of 2800 tuna boats now scours the seas under Taiwanese control.

On Greenpeace patrols of the Pacific, its campaigners documented roaming Taiwanese fishers slipping in and out of legal fishing. They found them "accidentally" fishing in the wrong zone, and illegally transshipping catches at sea to avoid quota checks.

The Greenpeace investigation concluded that loopholes in control of Taiwanese nationals using other countries' flags of convenience, the sheer number of Taiwan's own fishing vessels and their bad record posed a continuous threat to the sustainability of Pacific fisheries. Attempts to stem the pressure are made through the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission based in Pohnpei, Micronesia. Commission countries have agreed to reduce some catches, limit the use of floating fish aggregating devices to attract tuna, and require fishers to carry electronic monitoring equipment and independent observers.

A Fiji-based fisheries consultant, Bob Gillett, does not believe in environmentalist alarm that there is a black tuna fleet of "roving pirates" in the central Pacific.

But he does think Pacific tuna suffer from under-reporting of catches, with as few as 5 per cent of fishing boats carrying an observer.

As we found with bluefin, under-reporting blinds fishery managers to the true state of a fish stock until it is too late.

There are some signs that countries such as Taiwan will come into line - or be brought there. It recently signed a "mutual examination" agreement with the Cook Islands, allowing inspection of Taiwanese fishing boats in the Cooks' waters.

And in Kiribati the High Court fined the Taiwanese owner and master of a Vanuatu-flagged longliner \$US1 million for fishing in its waters without a licence in August.

The operation that netted this prosecution, KuruKuru 2009, involved the use of aircraft including two RAAF P-3 Orions, and seven Pacific Class patrol boats, built by Australia and donated to island nations. It covered millions of square kilometres of fishing grounds.

The Forum Fisheries Agency, which co-ordinated the operation, said a reduction in the number of vessels that were seen illegally fishing was a sure sign policing was working.

So if Pacific tuna do not go the way of the bluefin, and are sustained, what then for the development of these small islands? How can they best reclaim the benefit of the bonanza fishery?

Increasing access fees is difficult, Mr Gillett believes.

"They don't want to bite the hand that feeds them," he said. Few countries now value-add by processing tuna on their own islands. Tuna are loaded from foreign fishing boats directly on to freezer ships headed to markets in Bangkok and Tokyo.

"It's kind of ironic," Mr Gillett said. "Kiribati is smack dab in the middle of the most productive tuna zone on earth.

"People have spent millions of dollars on trying to develop a processing industry there. But the net result after 30 years is that exports from Kiribati are zero."

Kiribati's national motto: Te Mauri, Te Raoi ao Te Tabamoa - Health, Peace and Prosperity - is a modest enough toast to life. But it seems to be slipping away.

Those in peril in the sea

BIGEYE A sought-after sashimi fish growing to 120 kilograms, bigeye threatens to become the next bluefin, having lost an estimated 87 per cent of its original adult biomass. Cuts are being sought in its catches.

YELLOWFIN There is a 50 per cent chance this fast-swimming tuna is being over-fished in the Pacific already, with current catches known to be about 450,000 tonnes.

SKIPJACK Fast-growing and short-lived, this is the basis of the global canned tuna industry. There is enough skipjack in the sea, it is believed, to support present annual catches of about 1.7 million tonnes.

ALBACORE Although substantially depleted, albacore is thought able to withstand current fishing levels.

Source: *Secretariat of the Pacific Community*

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www.smh.com.au/environment/fish-fight-crucial-to-survival-of-island...

Taiwan, Japan agree to on-board inspections of fishing boats Central News Agency

Monday, 7 December 2009 9:31 AM

Taiwan, Japan agree to on-board inspections of fishing boats

Central News Agency
2009-11-28 10:27 PM

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Taipei, Nov. 28 (CNA) Taiwan and Japan will begin allowing on-board inspections of each other's fishing boats in international waters from late December, according to the Fisheries Administration under the Cabinet-level Council of Agriculture (COA).

The Fisheries Administration said in a press release issued Friday that Japan has informed the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Convention (WCPFC) that it will exchange on-board inspections with Taiwan for fishing boats in the convention's waters from Dec. 25.

In addition, the administration said, New Zealand, the Cook Islands and the United States will also make similar agreements with Taiwan to conduct the practice on each others' fishing vessels in the high seas.

Citing WCPFC resolution 06-08, the administration said, Taiwanese tuna long lining fishing ships operating in the Western or Central Pacific must abide by the practice when required by qualified personnel from any of these convention countries or territories.

To fall in line with the on-board inspection measures aimed at better protecting tuna fish stocks in these waters, Taiwanese fishing boats must have their operating licenses and fish catch reports on hand, and swiftly report the inspections to Taiwan's Coast Guard Administration and fisheries radio stations that will be responsible for reporting the inspections to the Fisheries Administration, according to the statement.

To record their operations in detail, fishing boats must equip a vessel monitoring system (VMS) on board so as to determine the vessel's location in commercial fishing areas at any given time, and periodically send this information, usually by satellite, to a monitoring station ashore.

The measure also bans fishing ships from catching sharks, and it requires them to install relevant devices so as to prevent the catch of sea birds or sea turtles accidentally, it said.

Any fishing vessel will be listed as "illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) " and will face punishments that could include a revocation of its license, if it fails to cooperate in inspections with the on-board regulatory personnel or is found to have violated the convention's regulations, the Fisheries Administration stressed.

The annual fish catch in the Western and Central Pacific region totals 2.5 million metric tons, while the yield from illegal activities is estimated at around 850,000 metric tons a year.

The value of fishery production in the region amounts to US\$2 billion a year, but the island countries that issue fishing licenses earn no more than 6 percent of the profits, Greenpeace statistics showed.

The Western and Central Pacific ocean is now the source of more than half of the world's tuna catch after tuna stocks in other oceans had been exploited.

(By S. M. Yang and Flor Wang)

www.etaiwannews.com/etn/news_content.php?...taiwan&cate_rss=TAIWAN_eng

Historic boat relaunched

Monday, 7 December 2009 9:31 AM

Historic boat relaunched

Posted November 29, 2009 09:38:00
Updated November 29, 2009 10:55:00

Slideshow: Photo 1 of 2



The 1865 launch of the wooden boat 'Admiral', at Hobart's Domain slipway.

- **Video:** [TV Story of the re-launch of the historic boat, Admiral. \(ABC News\)](#)
- **Map:** [Hobart 7000](#)

A unique piece of Australia's maritime history is back on the water.

After a chequered past, the Admiral, which is believed to be the country's oldest commercial boat, has been re-launched at Huonville, in Tasmania's south.

More than 140 years ago, the nine-metre huon-pine, clinker-built boat was launched at the Domain slipyard on Hobart's waterfront.

In 1865 it was rowed by a team of eight 'watermen', ferrying passengers around the River Derwent, taking families on picnics and ferrying dignitaries on Regatta Day.

"The Governor of the day used to hire this as a barge, and Government house was newly built, so it's really interesting when you start thinking about what was happening when this boat was launched, there would have been convicts in this vessel," said Fiona Peate, one of the volunteer restorers.

The volunteers and spectators were on hand south of the city to admire the Admiral's restoration.

"I'm so old and so excited, I'm frightened I might drop dead," said Bern Cuthberston, the maritime historian behind the project.

It's been a long road to the Admiral's watery re-birth. The boat was lengthened and renamed 'Myra' for a time.

"She'd been a fishing boat for 70 years, 30 years as a ferry, then turned into a yacht, so she'd been badly abused," said Mr Cuthbertson.

"She'd had added six feet to the stern, and was five board higher."

Labour of love

After being found derelict in Northern NSW, it's been a painstaking three years to bring it back to its humble, original form.

"We had to replace the keel, because worms got into it," said Mr Cuthberston.

And the Admiral is looking much sleeker.

"For instance, when we bought her home she weighed two and a quarter tonnes, she's 900 kg now," he said.

None of the team of volunteers are shipwrights, they're nurses, IT specialists, clerks, and engineers.

Working from old photos, they've spent three years and about 6,000 hours restoring the Admiral.

Much of the existing boat was retained, including the original copper nails, about 80 per cent of today's boat is the original ferry.

The plan is to do a few small trips with paying passengers around southern Tasmania, then find a new home for the boat.

"We've done all the work, we've asked for nothing from anyone, we want a place to put it in Tasmania, on the waterfront forever," said Mr Cuthberston.

"If that fails, it'll go to the mainland, like everything else does."

Hobart's Lord Mayor, Rob Valentine is keen to see it safely on show.

"Where-ever it is finally positioned in Hobart it would be great for tourists to be able to see it, for the people of Hobart to be able to see it," he said.

"It's a touchstone to the past, and of course, we are a maritime city and it would be great to see it on display somewhere."

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/29/2756478.htm?site=hobart>

Green Label" for Ross Sea Toothfish Condemned

Sunday, 29 November 2009 6:08 PM

Green Label" for Ross Sea Toothfish Condemned

Sunday, 29 November 2009, 2:33 pm

Press Release: Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition

www.asoc.org

Scientists and Environmental Groups Condemn

Proposed MSC "Green Label" for Ross Sea Toothfish

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Washington, DC - November 27, 2009. Scientists and environmental groups this week criticized the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) for its proposed certification of Ross Sea Antarctic toothfish.

The certification is being recommended by UK-based Moody Marine, [i] the organization chosen by the Ross Sea fishers and accepted by the MSC. Its report ignores the written arguments of 40 marine scientists from seven nations who have worked in the Ross Sea for decades, [ii] as well as several ASOC member organizations. [iii]

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The Ross Sea Toothfish fishery is 'exploratory' under CCAMLR [iv] rules due to the lack of scientific data and a reliable stock assessment," said David Ainley, a marine scientist who has been studying the Ross Sea for 35 years for the US Antarctic program.

There is great uncertainty about the toothfish population and its biology. It is completely inappropriate for the MSC to consider certifying this fishery, said Dr. Sidney Holt, an independent expert on fish population dynamics.

Last year, an independent analysis of human impacts on the world's oceans published in the journal Science classified the Ross Sea as the least affected oceanic ecosystem remaining on Earth. [v] "Awarding Antarctic toothfish the MSC seal of approval will stimulate demand and dupe the public. The Ross Sea is a world treasure that must be protected," said Karli Thomas, Greenpeace oceans campaigner.

"Certification of the Ross Sea toothfish fishery ignores the very inexact science surrounding the fishery, including the age at which fish are fully mature and how often they breed. It flies in the face of public opinion and the wish to see one of the very few intact ocean ecosystems on Earth - the Ross Sea - fully protected as a marine reserve," said Jim Barnes, ASOC Executive Director. "Moody Marine's analysis is shocking. [vi]

Mr. Barnes said the groups are considering appealing the certification to Moody Marine. It must be filed by December 11 under MSC rules. Appeals require an organization to pay a substantial fee based on the size of its budget

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Grey nurse sharks close to extinction

Sunday, 29 November 2009 6:05 PM

Grey nurse sharks close to extinction

Posted Sat Nov 28, 2009 6:50pm AEDT

Updated Sat Nov 28, 2009 7:02pm AEDT



Accidental hooking threat: scientists remove a one-metre-long hook from a grey nurse shark's throat. (ABC: ABC)

A new survey of grey nurse sharks shows the species is still in severe danger of becoming extinct.

The study, commissioned by the Federal Government, found just over 1,000 of the sharks along the east coast of Australia.

That figure is significantly lower than the 5,000 needed to sustain the population.

Accidental hooking is one of the main threats to the survival of the species.

Nicky Hammond, the marine program manager for the National Parks Association of New South Wales, says the State Government must act now to protect key habitat sites.

"Here we've got a critically endangered species, we know what the key threat to their survival is, we know where they spend the majority of their time," she said.

"It's a relatively simple process to protect those sites from that key threat of fishing by creating marine sanctuaries and that way hopefully we can

actually save this shark from going extinct.

"Time and time again they continue to ignore putting in place the proper protection of marine sanctuaries in these areas and provide tokenistic protection instead.

"We're calling on the NSW Government, we're saying enough is enough, that we need to now get these sanctuaries in place before the shark goes extinct."

www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/28/2756308.htm?section=australia

□ Securing the future in a connected planet Thursday, 26 November 2009 By Dr Megan

Sunday, 29 November 2009 5:59 PM

Securing the future in a connected planet

Thursday, 26 November 2009

By Dr Megan Clark

For the first time in our history, science is making predictions of how our actions will affect the world 50 and 100 years from now.

In this future we face the reality that we are all connected. Our choices in one area, such as water, impact on other areas, such as food security.

Martin Luther King warned us that we are all joined through an "inescapable network of mutuality". We are now beginning to understand what he really meant. We all want a prosperous and healthy society, but we face significant challenges to securing our food, water and energy needs in a world of finite resources.

We have significant pressures on global systems – such as population growth, rapid urbanisation and climate change. These national and global challenges are connected. They cannot be dealt with in isolation.

Individuals, communities, industry and nations are seeking to understand this connectivity and the inevitable trade-offs necessary to achieve a sustainable society.

Science must change if we are to help inform governments, communities and industry how choices in one area impact on another area – particularly in a world where water, carbon and biodiversity will have prices and markets.

I am now nine months into my new role as Chief Executive of CSIRO and I would like to share my vision of what you can expect of your national science organisation.

Climate change

You have been saturated with the fact that over the past several decades our climate has been changing. You also know climate change is not new. So what is the essence of what is different this time? Simply the rate of change.

Atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations are now well outside the range experienced during recent ice ages. They are now at values not experienced for millions of years. They are increasing at a rate we have not seen before.

One of the best indicators of this rate of change is sea level. We have been measuring sea level since 1870 and it has been rising about 10 times faster than the average rate of rise over the previous 2000 years. Since 1993 the average rate of rise is almost double the 20th century average.

All nations are connected in this change. So are our latest measurements confirming this rate of change? Yes. Let me give you just two examples.

First, our observations of ocean temperature off eastern Tasmania over the past 60 years have revealed that winter water temperatures were 1.5°C above normal, due to strengthening of the southward-flowing East Australian Current. Sea urchins, normally found off eastern mainland Australia, are now happily colonising Tasmanian waters and millions of them are eating their way through extensive kelp forests and threatening the biodiversity and key abalone and rock lobster fisheries of the region.

The second example is rainfall. Our modelling is increasingly predicting reduced rainfall in south-eastern Australia, the main generating area for the River Murray. The predictions range from little change in the mean annual rainfall up to a decline of 15 per cent for each degree of global warming. Such a rainfall reduction could mean a more than 35 per cent reduction in run-off as the rain soaks into dry soils.

Run-off is what feeds our rivers. The Murray–Darling system has more than 50 per cent of all irrigated land in the country. It is linked to our food security.

All our communities need better predictions. We are making increasingly accurate and granular observations of what is happening.

We have 60 ocean probes, three ships taking continuous measurements, four seagliders, and satellites taking physical and biological measurements of our deep Southern Ocean. We have deployed a \$1 million measuring system south-west of Tasmania that will monitor the carbon cycle in the top 400 metres of the Southern Ocean.

With the Bureau of Meteorology, we track every single rain event over the Murray–Darling Basin and look at its intensity, how much water it has, how frequent these rain events are and measure the run-off. We are working to understand where the water is coming from and how much will flow because this information is critical to future decisions.

We are also contributing on a global scale. More than 100 of the Nobel Prize-winning Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) scientists are Australian, and more than 20 are from CSIRO. The work they and their international colleagues are doing measuring temperature, acidity and currents in places like the deep Southern Ocean is a vital part of the emerging global picture of climate change.

Food production

One area that we have to adapt to quickly is the production of food. In the next 50 years we will need to produce as much food as has been consumed over our entire human history.

Humans have met this challenge once before – from 1960 to 2000 world food production doubled through a combination of new technology and investment in agriculture. But this time two things are different.

First, we will need to achieve this where carbon and water have a price. We can no longer simply clear more forest and farm even more marginal land.

Second, this is happening at a time when we are seeing the greatest migration of our species to urban centres.

We will see profound shifts in the trade and transport of food. We are already seeing the impact on global, sea-borne trade of food. Cereal exports, the highest volume globally traded food commodity, have risen at a rate double that of population growth. Trade volumes of milk, meat and beans have risen at even faster rates.

Australia has a strong interest in global food security. We produce 93 per cent of all food consumed in Australia, one per cent of all food consumed in the world and three per cent of the global sea-borne trade. So right now we feed 60 million people.

Increase in global sea-borne trade of food presents an opportunity for Australia but Australian agriculture is also highly exposed to climate change – we have significant constraints on irrigation water availability. Our agriculture is also 16 per cent of our national greenhouse gas.

Our science has potential for Australia to produce an even greater proportion of the sea-borne trade. We are making wonderful and exciting scientific developments in new drought-tolerant crop varieties, high-yielding wheat, greater nitrogen-use efficiency and improved grain nutritional benefits.

CSIRO's role

Living in a world where carbon has a value and irrigation water is restricted means new choices and trade-offs.

At the start of the 21st century, it was clear that the Murray–Darling was in trouble. A whole-of-basin water assessment was required. CSIRO was given the challenge in November 2006 to lead the world's first rigorous assessment of the potential impacts of climate change on surface and groundwater availability across a major river basin.

It was the most comprehensive and technically challenging water-modelling project ever undertaken in Australia, and possibly the world. It provides governments, industry and communities with an unprecedented level of water information to guide their future planning and investment.

We are working with our research partners to extend this work to the river basins of northern Australia, south-west Western Australia and Tasmania. This means Australia will lead the world in building a national model of its water.

This is exactly what a national research organisation should do – bring together all the smartest research and researchers across the nation to catalyse a national response to some of the biggest challenges we face.

I believe we need to similarly take on the challenge of building a national picture of our carbon footprint and assessment of future energy options. The approach will require not only the best multi-disciplinary teams of scientists from CSIRO and our universities, but also our best economists from places like Treasury and the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics (ABARE), Federal and State policy makers, the community and industry.

This platform will be vital in supporting Australia's need for new national infrastructure suited to a new low-carbon economy.

The role of CSIRO is to provide the science and help catalyse the development of the 'integrated assessment' platform that will be needed for good decision-making. Such a comprehensive picture will allow us to achieve maximal emissions reduction while maintaining economic growth and prosperity.

As we adjust to a world where carbon has a value, adopting a low-carbon pathway will require Australia to look at its land and water resources in a fundamentally different way. We stand ready as an organisation to help Australia tackle these very difficult assessments.

We cannot secure Australia's future unless our science works on challenges that face all nations.

CSIRO aims to be one of the most respected R&D organisations in the world. Our strategy remains to focus on these major challenges that face humankind and our nation. We will do this through our 10 National Research Flagships.

We will continue to step up to the plate to work with universities and other research agencies and organisations like the Bureau of Meteorology to integrate our knowledge into comprehensive pictures of our national water resources, carbon footprint and our biodiversity.

We aim to make an impact in three areas: a sustainable environment (which I've discussed), the community and industry.

Our communities need help facing the challenges of the future. We will continue to develop foods that can improve health, provide nutrition advice to children and adults, and help make sense of how to make a difference in a carbon world.

Three targets

We will continue to bring a cross-disciplinary approach to tackle three of the largest health issues that face our nation – obesity, Alzheimer's disease and colorectal cancer.

Australians trust CSIRO to bring excellent science to help them with the challenges of today and tomorrow. But these challenges are not just of interest to governments and communities. We are seeing increased investment from our industry partners as well.

We will help Australian businesses access the breadth and depth of our organisation and our networks to be more competitive. We are helping CSL develop safe vaccines, BHP Billiton to better understand the performance of products in downstream processing, Telstra enable the house of the future and AGL build the power industry of the future.

To build whole new industries we will continue to build platform and breakthrough technologies such as wireless LAN, which is now in more than a billion wireless devices; next-generation space technology; polymers to build printable electronics and solar cells; and gene technology for new drugs, proteins and plants.

As an organisation with goals and values that go beyond our science, we know we will be successful when our people always go home safely at night and share a sense of discovery; our collaborators and partners realise lasting value from our science and describe working with us as a pleasure; and we remain a trusted adviser to the people of Australia.

We remain committed to the integrity of our science, which has been a foundation for CSIRO since our beginnings more than 80 years ago.

We live in a connected world. Science needs to work on challenges that face all nations to secure a future for humankind. Only then can we secure a future for Australia.

(This article is an edited version of a recent address to the National Press Club.)

Dr Megan Clark FTSE, Chief Executive, CSIRO, is a member of the St Vincent's Hospital Foundation Board, the Prime Minister's Science, Engineering and Innovation Council, and the Automotive Industry Innovation Council. She began her career as a mine geologist and subsequently worked in mineral exploration, mine geology, research and development management, venture capital and technical strategy areas with Western Mining Corporation for 15 years. More recently she was Vice-President Technology and Vice-President, Health, Safety, Environment, Community and Sustainability with BHP Billiton. Dr Clark served on the Expert Panel for the Review of the National Innovation System.

Editor's Note: An opinion provided by [ATSE Focus](#). Originally [published](#) in ATSE Focus's October Issue 158 - Research & Innovation: getting the best from both

<http://www.sciencealert.com.au/opinions/20092611-20306.html>

Full steam ahead for tuna hatchery

Sunday, 29 November 2009 5:57 PM

Full steam ahead for tuna hatchery

CHRISTOPHER COOTE

26 Nov, 2009 12:30 AM

CLEAN Seas has contractors working "flat to the board" to prepare its new southern bluefin tuna hatchery in time to have fingerlings ready to shift to sea cages early next year.

Five cranes were used to lift the roof of the new hatchery into place on Monday, which is expected to be finished by the middle of February next year.

The hatchery, which is larger than the existing tuna facility, is one of two being built at the moment.

Clean Seas is building a temporary facility as well in case the tuna broodstock produce fertilised eggs before the permanent hatchery is ready.

Company chairman Hagen Stehr, who will step down from the role at the annual general meeting next Monday, said the new hatchery is a lot larger than the existing facility, and it being built in such a way that it can be added on to as the company grows.

Adding to the urgent need for infrastructure is that Clean Seas also needs to spawn its yellowtail kingfish at the same time so those eggs can be used to feed the tuna as they grow into fingerlings, before they are put into sea cages.

"We're coming up to a very busy but exciting time for the company," Mr Stehr said.

"It is crucial we get this right so Australia can continue to supply tuna to the rest of the world."

A small number of surviving southern blufin tuna that were bred by Clean Seas earlier this year have been shifted to an onshore dam at the Arno Bay facility and have grown substantially

www.portlincolntimes.com.au/news/local/news/general/full-steam-ahlea...

Men cop \$820 rock lobster fine

Sunday, 29 November 2009 5:54 PM

Men cop \$820 rock lobster fine

SOPHIE WANDEL

26 Nov, 2009 12:30 AM

A BOAT carrying baited rock lobster pots was detected by Fisheries officers more than a week before the Northern Zone rock lobster season opened on November 1.

The men on board were issued with fines totalling \$820 and both pots were confiscated by officers aboard the Fisheries offshore patrol vessel, the Southern Ranger.

Offences included fishing out of season, operating unregistered pots and marine safety offences including operating a vessel while unlicensed, operating an unregistered vessel and failing to carry appropriate safety equipment.

Despite this, Fisheries officers have reported a relatively quiet opening to the recreational Northern Zone rock lobster season on Eyre Peninsula with extensive sea and land based patrols detecting only a small number of offences.

Officers monitoring pre-season rock lobster fishing around the Avoid Bay, Point Drummond and Halls Bay areas also reported a quiet opening with only a single vessel attempting to enter the water on the morning of November 1, prior to the noon opening.

In the Streaky Bay area, officers monitoring waters from Scaele Bay to Granites were unable to detect pots in the water prior to the season opening nor were any pots found near the traditional rock lobster hotspots of Evans and Goat Island near Ceduna.

Ceduna-based senior Fisheries officer Trevor Puckridge described the outcomes of the Streaky Bay and Ceduna operations as positive.

"In other years, information had been received from members of the public that suggested both locations were fished for rock lobster prior to the start of the season," he said.

"To patrol both areas and not locate a single pot is a great outcome."

Fisheries officer Greg Rowley, who recently transferred to Port Lincoln from the South East, described the season opening as pleasing, although was quick to point out that recreational rock lobster fishermen needed to familiarise themselves with the rules.

This followed a man being apprehended at Avoid Bay with a female carrying eggs in his possession. As a result the man was issued with a \$530 fine and the rock lobster returned to the water.

"In this day and age not knowing the rules is not a valid excuse," he said.

"Anyone intending to catch rock lobster should ensure they are thoroughly familiar with all the rules that apply.

"People caught breaking the rules will face fines and risk having their gear seized," Mr Rowley said.

Fisheries officers will continue to conduct operations over the coming months to catch offenders.

Anyone wanting to report potential illegal fishing activity can contact their local Fisheries officer or call FISHWATCH on 1800 065 522.

Callers can choose to remain anonymous.

www.portlincolntimes.com.au/news/local/news/general/men-cop-820-roc...

☐ Council to look at stocking Pat with fish

Sunday, 29 November 2009 5:53 PM

Council to look at stocking Pat with fish

Posted Wed Nov 25, 2009 12:22pm AEDT
Updated Wed Nov 25, 2009 12:20pm AEDT



Council to look at stocking Patawalonga with fish (Tony Rogers)

- **Audio:** [Tim Looker tells 891 ABC council at Glenelg will look at whether Patawalonga needs fish stocking. \(Local Radio\)](#)
- **Map:** [Glenelg 5045](#)

The council at Glenelg will look at a plan to stock the Patawalonga with fish as a way to encourage more anglers to the area.

Holdfast Bay councillor Tim Looker says the council has voted to investigate the feasibility.

He says the council is always keen to work out ways to attract more visitors to the Bay.

"The Western Australian fisheries have done quite a bit of work in restocking the Swan River estuary for recreational fishers - I thought 'We've got the Pat, what about a few bucketloads of little black bream in there and see if we could make that an attractive place?'"

Mr Looker says some fish get into the Patawalonga at present whenever the lock is opened for flushing.

He says he has spoken with SARDI [South Australian Research and Development Institute] experts about what may be possible.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/25/2752993.htm?site=news>

☐ Fishing industry gets \$2.6m boost

Sunday, 29 November 2009 5:52 PM

Fishing industry gets \$2.6m boost

12:24 AEST Wed Nov 25 2009
4 days 5 hours 28 minutes ago



The Rudd government is to provide \$2.6m to help to improve the fishing industry's practices.

The Rudd government is to provide \$2.6 million to help employ more people to improve the fishing industry's practices.

The funding would go towards employing more officers who would work under the existing SeaNet program which is used to provide advice to commercial fishers on improved fishing equipment, technology and methods.

"SeaNet officers help build on the work that fishers do every day in managing our fisheries resources sustainably," Agriculture Minister Tony Burke said in a statement.

SeaNet also works with the industry to reduce the impact of fishing on protected species by aiming to minimise bycatch - or excess marine life collected during commercial fishing which is not needed and does not make it to market.

The program has been operating for more than a decade, providing assistance to more than 7,000 fishers in 135 fisheries across Australia.

The funding will help go towards programs such as helping fishers stop the growth of marine organisms under fishing vessels

news.ninemsn.com.au/national/975788/fishing-industry-gets-2-6m-boost

☐ Massive icebergs floating towards coast of New Zealand

Sunday, 29 November 2009 5:52 PM

Massive icebergs floating towards coast of New Zealand

By **Dean Irvine**, CNN
November 25, 2009 -- Updated 1016 GMT (1816 HKT)



The icebergs off the New Zealand coast in 2006 (pictured) provided a mini-boom for tourism and helicopter companies.

STORY HIGHLIGHTS

- More than 100 icebergs from Antarctica heading towards New Zealand waters
- Biggest iceberg estimated to be 500 meters wide, 350 meters thick
- Current reports put icebergs around 200 miles from New Zealand's southern coast
- Last sighting of icebergs from New Zealand was 2006; only second time in 78 years

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Hong Kong, China (CNN) -- New Zealand is preparing for some rare spring visitors.

More than 100 icebergs that were first spotted off the coast of Macquarie Island, an Australian territory around 900 miles south east of Tasmania, are now thought to be only 200 miles away from New Zealand's south coast.

This is only the second time in 78 years that large Antarctic icebergs have been sighted so far north.

The previous occasion was in late 2006 when icebergs could be seen from the eastern coast of New Zealand's South Island, even from the hills around Christchurch.

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According to National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA), which is tracking the icebergs by satellite, the largest one is thought to be 500 meters wide, 50 meters tall and with a total thickness of 350 meters.

There are an estimated 100 main icebergs heading for New Zealand and possibly hundreds of smaller ones that form around them as they break up.

Only around 10 percent of an iceberg is visible above the water level, making them a hazard to shipping. In response Maritime New Zealand issued an alert to shipping in the area, which is home to many deep-sea fishing fleets as well as cruise ships and cargo freighters that port in Invercargill on the southern coast of New Zealand.

"While the size of the icebergs has attracted a lot of attention, it is not unusual for icebergs to be found in these waters," a spokesperson for Maritime New Zealand told CNN, who continued to say that alerts for smaller icebergs are not uncommon.

But a half-kilometer wide iceberg visible from New Zealand's coast would represent a very rare occurrence.

"An iceberg that size this far north is pretty significant," Philip Duncan, Head Weather Analyst of the New Zealand-based Weather Watch Center told CNN.

It is thought that the current flotilla of icebergs came off the Ross Ice shelf between 2000 and 2002, the same period that produced the 2006 icebergs.

The question now is what caused the huge fresh water icebergs to break off from an Antarctic Ice shelf and what has allowed them to travel so far north.

"A lot of people are saying it was due to a very cold snap a few years ago in Antarctica that caused more ice than usual and the outer regions of that ice snap off each summer," said Duncan.

"It's too hard to say whether it's global warming. We're really looking at an isolated incident. These things move very slowly and they take a long time to circle around the Antarctic. It takes a certain current and wind direction to bring them up to New Zealand.

"It may be we've just seen a particular weather pattern repeat itself over the past few years, which means we've seen icebergs [off the New Zealand coast] twice, or it may be something bigger. But I wouldn't put it down to global warming just yet," said Duncan.

The currents that have taken the icebergs so far north mean that their now doomed to melt in warmer waters. NIWA estimate that the bigger icebergs will last between six and eight weeks depending on where they go.

If the 2006 occurrence is any guide the icebergs could provide a mini boom for tourism in southern New Zealand.

Three years ago light aircraft companies provided viewing flights and helicopters businesses landed visitors on some of the larger icebergs. In a publicity stunt for a New Zealand wool company a prize sheep was shorn on one of the massive floating pieces of ice.

<http://edition.cnn.com/2009/TECH/science/11/25/iceberg.newzealand/>

Fishing body says no to closure

Sunday, 29 November 2009 5:51 PM

Fishing body says no to closure

CHRISTOPHER COOTE

26 Nov, 2009 12:30 AM

THE South Australian Recreational Fishing Council has written to State Environment Minister Jay Weatherill expressing its concerns over the potential closure of Long Beach at Coffin Bay.

SARFAC executive officer Trevor Watts said in his letter that his committee does not want further access to fishing spots taken away because a few people drive irresponsibly, and has asked for a public forum to be held over the closure.

"We don't support hoon driving, and for our part, throw them in jail, but don't penalise the rest of the community for the misdeeds of a few," he said.

www.portlincolntimes.com.au/news/local/news/general/fishing-body-sa...

Aboriginal rangers bust illegal fishing operation

Sunday, 29 November 2009 5:51 PM

Aboriginal rangers bust illegal fishing operation

CHRIS THOMSON

November 26, 2009



Rangers Leon Isaac, Terry McCarthy and Thomas Nickels destroy contents of an illegal fishing camp at Bedford Island.

Aboriginal rangers in the state's north have been recognised for uncovering and destroying an illegal fishing camp concealed on an island in the Buccaneer Archipelago.

The Kimberley Land Council's Mayala Rangers have received a regional Australian Biosecurity Award – the first ever won by a group in the remote WA region.

In September, the rangers were collecting samples and ant trapping for the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service on Bedford Island when they detected the illegal camp.

The full contents of the discovery were catalogued, photographed and then destroyed in a manner consistent with AQIS protocols.

Mayala Traditional Owner Sandy Isaac said large crates containing cooking gear and tarpaulins were hidden under a rocky ledge.

Matches and cutlery were buried in the sand.

The island is a known stop-off for reef raiders seeking the prized trochus shell.

"The illegal fisherman obviously knew what they were doing," Mr Isaac said.

"They would have had to know about the tides and what the weather was doing because they would have needed a good still tide to sneak across at night."

Mr Isaac said illegal fishers on the hunt for trochus shell, shark fin, dolphins and fish threatened marine species.

"They also knew where they were going," he said of the fishers.

"They would have visited the island before setting up camp because they knew it had freshwater and mangroves to hide the boats."

Mr Isaac said illegal fishing could destroy native flora and fauna through the introduction of diseases and pests found on the boat, in debris and molluscs attached to the boat's hull.

"These people have got no respect," he said.

Kimberley Land Council deputy director Nolan Hunter praised the Mayala Rangers for applying the skills they had learned in training to on-ground inspection work.

"The meticulous and thorough work of the Mayala Rangers led to the discovery of the illegal fishing camp," Mr Hunter said.

"Through a combination of traditional cultural knowledge and western science, the Mayala Rangers have been able to identify, protect, manage and look after their country.

"Our rangers are the eyes and ears for authorities, working on their country to provide a better future for their children."

www.watoday.com.au/wa-news/aboriginal-rangers-bust-illegal-fishing-...

☰ Melbourne channel deepening completion marked

Sunday, 29 November 2009 5:47 PM

Melbourne channel deepening completion marked

by [Rob McKay](#) — last modified Nov 26, 2009 12:54 PM

The Melbourne port channel-deepening project was hailed as a complete success yesterday on its official completion.



Project completion: Port of Melbourne chief Stephen Bradford

Related content

- [Channel clears way for next growth stage for Melbourne](#)
- [Major Melbourne channel-deepening ends](#)

Port of Melbourne Corporation chief executive Stephen Bradford said figures from this year's September quarter clearly indicated the need to deepen the shipping channels, with almost 54% of containerhips using the port unable to load to full capacity.

"The 14-metre allowable shipping depth will completely remove this serious constraint at the port," Mr Bradford said.

"This new depth marks the beginning of the Port of Melbourne's promise to ensure that Victoria's major sea highway to the world can meet our long-term trade demands.

"It will see Australia's largest container port remain a driving engine for trade, business and economic growth."

The end of the project was marked with Victorian ports minister Tim Pallas unveiling a 10-metre sculpture, a gift to the Port of Melbourne from Royal Boskalis Westminster, the project's Alliance partner, to be displayed at the Port Education Centre.

Work on the Channel Deepening Project to increase the allowable shipping depth in Port Phillip Bay from 11.6 metres to 14 metres began in February last year and included removal of almost 23m cubic metres of sand and clay from shipping channels.

"Completion of this nation-building project, well ahead of time and at least \$200m under budget, is more evidence that Victoria is the Australian leader in delivering large-scale infrastructure projects," Mr Pallas said.

"We never lost sight of the high regard Victorians have for Port Phillip Bay and we put in place the most stringent set of environmental controls ever applied to a dredging project in Australia.

"As a result, the Bay is in a healthy condition, water quality is good and there have been no significant effects on public amenity."

The declaration of a 14-metre draught was a major milestone for Melbourne, Victoria and the nation, according to the Victorian Employers' Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VECCI).

"This is a historic project in terms of its implications for Melbourne as a port city and signals to the rest of the world that Melbourne is open for business," VECCI chief executive Wayne Kayler-Thomson said.

"The Victorian Government and the Port of Melbourne Corporation deserve congratulations for completing the project ahead of time with no major environmental breaches.

"With the channel deepened, we are also now well-positioned as a state to take advantage of the recovery of world trade that will occur in coming years".

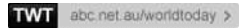
www.lloydlistdcn.com.au/archive/2009/november/26/melbourne-channel...

□ Fishermen to sue over Timor oil spill

Saturday, 28 November 2009 12:34 PM

Fishermen to sue over Timor oil spill

By Stephanie March for The World Today



Posted Tue Nov 24, 2009 6:09pm AEDT

Updated Tue Nov 24, 2009 6:17pm AEDT



At least 500 million litres of oil from the Montara oil field spilled into the Timor Sea over 10 weeks (PTTEP)

- **Audio:** [Indonesia troubled by oil on water \(The World Today\)](#)
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Hundreds of fishermen and seaweed farmers are seeking compensation from the Federal Government and a Thai operator after the Montara oil spill in the Timor Sea.

At least 500 million litres of oil from the Montara oil field spilled into the Timor Sea over 10 weeks from August this year, and more reports have emerged of decimated fish stocks.

Fishermen and seaweed farmers say the spill has cost them their only source of income and they are preparing a compensation claim against both the Government and the Thai operators of the rig.

While the Government maintains there is no evidence of damage to Indonesia's marine areas, the Indonesian Government has set up a team to calculate the losses incurred from the oil spill.

Reports of dead fish floating in waters off Kupang in Indonesia's east started to emerge in September, and environmental researcher David Jones spent the past six weeks taking water samples and speaking to fishermen in the area.

"They found dead fish in the area and as they started fishing they discovered their fish catch was off by 70 per cent or more," he said.

"So every time they went fishing, they were unable to produce any economic benefit and, in fact, they lost money every trip and so they eventually had to stop fishing."

Bob La Macchia manages one of the largest trawling operations in the area and is seeking compensation for lost income caused by the spill.

He says the claim from his company alone reaches into the millions.

"More than a million. I'm looking at 2-3 million," he said.

"It's got to be at least seven years, at least seven before we start seeing any product off these grounds."

Daily assessments

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority says it has been conducting daily fly-over assessments of the area since the leak started in August.

It maintains the type and amount of oil observed in Indonesian waters poses no significant threat to the marine environment.

But Mr Jones says the dispersant used by Australian authorities pushed the oil from the surface down onto the reef.

"Some of these guys, they fish and sometimes they dive down at night and they use a small spear gun and they shoot a few fish," he said.

"So ... it's only 15 metres deep, so they could see it on the reef even if it wasn't on the surface."

Moral obligation

Chairman of the West Timor Care Foundation, Ferdi Tanoni, is coordinating the compensation claim on behalf of the Kupang fishermen, and says the Australian Government has a moral obligation to help the fishermen.

"I can recall back in the Second World War, thousands and thousands of West Timorese and East Timorese got killed just to help with the Australian Army," he said.

Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade said in a statement it would act consistently with international law, but that it was not aware of any basis for a compensation claim.

A Federal Government inquiry into the disaster will hand down its findings in April.

But Mr Jones says that may be too late for the Indonesian fishermen.

"They fish until Christmas time and the first part of January, and then they have to make enough money to survive through the wet season," he said.

"And this year they are not going to have any way to survive because their boats are only designed for fishing in that area."

www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/24/2752314.htm?section=world

☰ Vic channel deepening project completed

Saturday, 28 November 2009 12:32 PM

Vic channel deepening project completed

November 25, 2009

AAP

A controversial project to deepen Melbourne's shipping channels has been completed ahead of schedule and \$200 million under budget.

The \$1 billion project, which started in February last year, dredged Port Phillip Bay to enable larger, fully-loaded ships to dock.

It increased the depth of the channel from 11.6 to 14 metres, removing 23 million cubic metres of sand and clay from shipping channels.

Protesters had tried unsuccessfully to scuttle the project, fearing it would ruin Port Philip Bay.

Victorian Ports Minister Tim Pallas unveiled on Wednesday a 10-metre sculpture at the Port of Melbourne to mark the completion.

"We never lost sight of the high regard Victorians have for Port Phillip and we put in place the most stringent set of environmental controls ever applied to a dredging project in Australia," Mr Pallas said in a statement.

"As a result, the bay is in a healthy condition, water quality is good and there have been no significant effects on public amenity."

The new 14-metre allowable depth comes into effect from midnight (AEDT) on Thursday.

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news.smh.com.au/breaking-news-national/vic-channel-deepening-projec...

☰ Coastal management decisions to be made in Coffs

Wednesday, 25 November 2009 10:05 AM

Coastal management decisions to be made in Coffs

Posted November 24, 2009 11:21:00

- [Map: Coffs Harbour 2450](#)

Executive decisions about New South Wales national parks and marine parks will be made in Coffs Harbour under a restructure of the service.

Voluntary redundancies are to be offered to senior management and administrative regions are to be merged.

Coastal decision making will be centralised and a position cut at Queanbeyan which currently covers the south coast from Wollongong to Eden.

National parks head Sally Barnes says it is good policy sense to manage the state's coastline with one executive director based at Coffs.

"We're bringing the coastal regions together under a director in Coffs Harbour," she said.

"That means we're going to look for policy approaches to things like sea level rise, climate change, marine parks."

"But along the coast we will have all of the regional managers in local communities working on local issues.

"Most of them will be the same people who are there now."

www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/24/2751771.htm?site=midnorthcoast

☰ Australia Highlights Indigenous Land Use Agreements Finalised

Wednesday, 25 November 2009 10:05 AM

Australia Highlights Indigenous Land Use Agreements Finalised

Source: [Government of Australia](#)

Posted on: 23rd November 2009

Indigenous land use agreements* that establish how the Kuuku Ya'u People, Queensland Government and Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority will work together to manage national parks and the marine park where native title exists have been finalised through registration with the National Native Title Tribunal.

The Kuuku Ya'u People's native title rights over 1980 sq km of land and sea on eastern Cape York Peninsula were legally recognised on 25 June 2009 in the first native title consent determination made over Queensland seas.

During negotiations between the Kuuku Ya'u People and parties to the native title claim that led to the consent determination, three ILUAs were developed to clarify how the rights of all parties would be carried out in the area.

The Kuuku Ya'u People, the Queensland Government and GBRMPA made an ILUA about managing and protecting the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. Another ILUA was developed between the Kuuku Ya'u People and the Queensland Government about the Forbes Islands National Park, Quoin Island National Park and Piper Islands National Park.

National Native Title Tribunal Member Graham Fletcher who mediated between the parties, said the recent registration of these ILUAs with the Tribunal, following the earlier registration of a third ILUA the Kuuku Ya'u People developed with the Cook Shire Council, finalised the agreements and made them legally binding.

SIEMENS



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"Under the ILUAs the parties will build on the relationships they developed during negotiations and work together to ensure these precious natural environments are well managed and protected," he said.

"Parties now have certainty that their rights will be protected into the future and clarity about how they can exercise their rights alongside those of other groups in the area."

*ILUAs are broad, flexible agreements about the use and management of land made between Indigenous groups and others under the Native Title Act.

Topics: [Australia](#), [Governance](#), [government](#), [Great Barrier Reef](#), [ILUA](#), [Indigenous Land Use Agreements](#), [Kuuku Ya'u People](#), [Marine Park Authority](#), [National Native Title Tribunal](#), [Queensland](#)

thegovmonitor.com/civil_society_and_democratic_renewal/australia-hi...

Big changes ahead for State reserves

Wednesday, 25 November 2009 10:04 AM

Big changes ahead for State reserves

Posted November 24, 2009 14:41:00

- [Map: Merimbula 2548](#)

Big changes are ahead for the management of far south coast national parks and marine reserves.

The State Government is offering voluntary redundancies to National Park and Wildlife Service senior executives and amalgamating regions.

Decision-making for the area from Wollongong to the Victorian border will be phased down at the Queanbeyan office and moved to Coffs Harbour on the State's north coast.

The Park Service's head, Sally Barnes, say it makes good policy sense to manage the State's coastline centrally, but maintains there will be little change at the Merimbula office.

"We're bringing the coastal regions together under a director in Coffs Harbour," she said.

"That means we're going to look for policy approaches to things like sea level rise, climate change, and marine parks."

www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/24/2752059.htm?site=southeastnsw

Icebergs Drifting Toward New Zealand Trigger Shipping Alert Share Business ExchangeTwitterFacebook|

Tuesday, 24 November 2009 6:23 PM

Icebergs Drifting Toward New Zealand Trigger Shipping Alert

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By Ed Johnson

Nov. 24 (Bloomberg) -- New Zealand authorities are warning ships to be on the look out for icebergs drifting north from Antarctica and say they could pose a hazard as they approach the coast of South Island.

[Maritime New Zealand](#) is issuing "coastal navigation warnings" to fishing boats, cruise ships and other vessels in the area, spokeswoman Sophie Hazelhurst said by telephone today.

Scientists are [tracking](#) at least 100 icebergs by satellite after tabular chunks were spotted floating past [Macquarie Island](#), the site of an Australian research station in the Southern Ocean, almost three weeks ago.

About four icebergs, between 100 meters and 250 meters in length, are now 250 kilometers (155 miles) southeast of South Island, Mike Williams, an oceanographer at New Zealand's [National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research](#), said in a telephone interview.

Scientists believe they are the remnants of an iceberg that split from the Ross Ice Shelf between 2000 and 2002.

"Is it another sign of global warming? I would sit on the fence on that," Williams said, adding ice shelves "calve off" icebergs about every 30 years and more time is needed to study the phenomenon. Several icebergs floated to New Zealand in 2006, he said.

To contact the reporter on this story: [Ed Johnson](#) in Sydney at ejohnson28@bloomberg.net.

Last Updated: November 23, 2009 21:36 EST

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601081&sid=akGEDS1On7oU>

Indonesia troubled by oil on water

Tuesday, 24 November 2009 6:21 PM

Indonesia troubled by oil on water

Stephanie March reported this story on [Tuesday, November 24, 2009 12:31:00](#)

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ELEANOR HALL: More reports have emerged of decimated fish stocks off the coast of Indonesia near the recent oil spill in the Timor Sea.

At least half a million litres of oil from the Montara oil field spilled into the Timor Sea over 10 weeks from August this year.

Hundreds of fishermen and seaweed farmers say this has cost them their only source of income and they say they are preparing a compensation claim against both the Australian Government and the Thai operators of the oil rig.

While the Australian Government maintains there is no evidence of damage to Indonesia's marine areas, Jakarta has now set up a team to investigate, as Stephanie March reports.

STEPHANIE MARCH: Reports of dead fish floating in waters off Kupang in Indonesia's east started to emerge in September.

Environmental researcher David Jones spent the past six weeks taking water samples and speaking to fishermen in the area.

DAVID JONES: They found dead fish in the area and as they started fishing they discovered that their fish catch was off by like 70 per cent or more so every time they went fishing, they were unable to produce any economic benefit and in fact they lost money every trip so they eventually they had to stop fishing.

STEPHANIE MARCH: Bob La Macchia manages one of the largest trawling operations in the area.

He is one dozens of operators seeking compensation for lost income he says has been caused by the spill.

He says the claim from his company alone reaches into the millions.

BOB LA MACCHIA: More than a million. I'm looking at two to three million. I mean it's got to be at least seven years, at least seven before we start

seeing any product off these grounds.

STEPHANIE MARCH: The Australian Maritime Safety Authority says it has been conducting daily fly-over assessments of the area since the leak started in August.

It maintains the type and amount of oil observed in Indonesian waters poses no significant threat to the marine environment.

But David Jones says the dispersant used by Australian authorities pushed the oil from the surface down onto the reef.

DAVID JONES: Some of these guys, they fish and sometimes they dive down at night and they use a small spear gun and they shoot a few fish. So they have actually, you know, it's only 15 metres deep so they could see it on the reef even if it wasn't on the surface.

STEPHANIE MARCH: The Indonesia Government has now set up a team to calculate the losses incurred from the oil spill.

Chairman of the West Timor Care Foundation Ferdi Tanoni is coordinating the compensation claim on behalf of the Kupang fishermen.

He says the Australian Government has a moral obligation to help the fishermen of West Timor.

FERDI TANONI: I can recall back in the Second World War thousands and thousands of West Timorese and East Timorese got killed just to help with the Australian Army.

STEPHANIE MARCH: Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade said in a statement it will act consistently with international law but that it is not aware of any basis for a compensation claim.


An Australian Government inquiry into the disaster will hand down its findings in April.

But Kupang-based environment researcher David Jones says that may be too late for the Indonesian fishermen.

DAVID JONES: They fish until like Christmas time and the first part of January and then they have to make enough money to survive through the wet season and this year they are not going to have any way to survive because their boats are only designed for fishing in that area.

ELEANOR HALL: That's environment researcher David Jones in that report by Stephanie March.

<http://www.abc.net.au/worldtoday/content/2009/s2751869.htm>

 Huge gill nets to be banned by New Zealand Published: 23 November, 2009

Tuesday, 24 November 2009 6:20 PM

Huge gill nets to be banned by New Zealand
Published: 23 November, 2009




GILL net fishing looks set to be banned by Australia and New Zealand, the latter one of the most important fishing countries in that region.

The move follows the discovery of huge nets which can be cut loose and left to keep catching fishing as they float, putting unsustainable pressure on South Pacific fish stocks. In one astonishing example, a gill net was found reported to be over 100 kilometres long and full of Antarctic tooth fish. Such nets, which are designed to target fish that live on the bottom of the seabed, are banned from European and north Atlantic waters.

New Zealand officials have been reportedly concerned about gillnets since two Spanish vessels were reported fishing with long, deep versions between Australia and New Zealand this year. The governments says that the nets, about 100km long, are quite indiscriminate in their catching techniques and are used to trap deep-sea sharks and other species. If they get lost - and they sometimes do - they just float about the high seas trapping fish as they go. The nets were cheap, so fishing boats could easily afford to cut them loose and leave them floating around snaring fish as they went, it was claimed.

The Antarctic discovery was revealed recently as representatives from Latin America, Asia, Europe and North America met in Auckland to negotiate the final stages of a fishing treaty to apply outside South Pacific countries' exclusive economic zones. New Zealand officials and environmental groups said a ban should be brought in soon.

www.fishupdate.com/news/fullstory.php/aid/13019/Huge_gill_nets_to_b...

 Former maritime leader Alliance Party spokesperson

Tuesday, 24 November 2009 6:19 PM

Former maritime leader Alliance Party spokesperson

Tuesday, 24 November 2009, 1:12 pm

Press Release: New Zealand Alliance Party

Former maritime leader becomes Alliance Party spokesperson

Alliance Party media release FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Tuesday 24 November 2009

The Alliance Party has announced its new spokesperson for employment relations, transport and fisheries as former waterfront and maritime leader Trevor Hanson.

Mr Hanson recently retired from his position as General Secretary of the Maritime Union of New Zealand, and previous to that General Secretary of the Waterfront Workers Union.

He says that working class people in New Zealand have been under attack and have seen their share of wealth shrink even though they were working harder and longer.

"Some of the issues that need immediate attention include casualization and unemployment which are causing serious problems for working people and their families."

Mr Hanson says he is also concerned about contracting out and wants to make sure all registered unions operate independently of employers, which he believes does not always happen despite this being the law.

He says it is vital there is a strong left-wing voice in New Zealand politics to promote a secure society which could only come about through policies that the Alliance was promoting.

Mr Hanson says the transport industry is heading in the wrong direction and there needs to be a stronger emphasis on shipping and rail, for environmental, economic and social reasons.

He says there is also a need to protect New Zealand's fishing stocks which had been damaged by overfishing, and to ensure use of unionized local labour in the fishing industry to create well paid local jobs.

"We need to get in their and start actively fighting for our rights, rather than allowing New Zealand to drift further down the path of unconstrained greed and social breakdown."

<http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/PO0911/S00256.htm>

Floods create prawn bonanza

Tuesday, 24 November 2009 8:16 AM

Floods create prawn bonanza

23 Nov, 2009 01:22 PM

THERE have been some positives to flow from the floods in the Gulf this year with a larger than normal catch of banana prawns recorded in North-West Queensland.

Researchers from the Tropical Rivers and Coastal Knowledge (TRACK) program have concluded the big rains pushed the prawns from their estuary nursery grounds out into the sea as the salinity levels dropped.

Researchers fought their way through crocodiles, extreme heat and biting insects to collect prawn samples in the Gulf of Carpentaria during the wet season.

TRACK researcher Assoc. Professor Michele Burford said the flooding had negative impacts on some primary industries, but meant the banana prawn fishery had a big year.

"Last summer we had a one in 50 year flood, which is at the extreme end of spectrum for understanding how river flows affect prawns," he said.

"If you start taking water out of rivers flowing into the Gulf there will be less flooding and as a result, less prawns available for fishers to harvest."

Researchers are now trying to find out how much the natural flooding of estuaries varies from year to year, and what this means for prawn production.

"We don't understand enough about the relationship between estuaries and freshwater flows," Assoc. Professor Burford said.

"But we do know that water running out to sea is not wasted."

She said if the northern rivers were dammed or had water taken out for irrigation, less fresh water would reach the estuaries and fishers wanted to know what this would do to their livelihoods.

Raptis and sons fishing company manager Michael O'Brien said the research was very valuable.

"We want a good knowledge database on how water flows affect banana prawns," he said.

"The northern prawn industry is recognised for its sustainable practice. We've spent a lot of money and gone through hardship to get it that way. Where we used to run 300 fishing boats, now we run only 50. It's not just about economic yield anymore—it's about maximum sustainability."

nqr.farmonline.com.au/news/state/agribusiness-and-general/general/f...

Fisheries authorities in Samoa seize export of sea cucumbers

Monday, 23 November 2009 4:43 PM

Fisheries authorities in Samoa seize export of sea cucumbers

Posted at 22:41 on 22 November, 2009 UTC

More than 20 sacks of illegally gathered dried sea cucumbers have been confiscated by the fisheries authorities in Samoa before they were exported to Hong Kong.

An Asian business man is being questioned by the authorities and charges will be laid after an ongoing investigation by the police and the Division of Fisheries of the Ministry of Agriculture.

A senior fishery officer says the government has reaffirmed the ban on exporting sea cucumbers imposed in 2007 because of concerns about over fishing.

The fishery division alleges the Asian businessman had

successfully contacted several villages for the purchase of sea cucumbers before the shipment was discovered

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<http://www.rnzi.com/pages/news.php?op=read&id=50465>

Weird beasts from the abyss - November 22, 2009

Monday, 23 November 2009 4:42 PM

Weird beasts from the abyss - November 22, 2009

Although the census on marine life isn't due to report properly until late next year, the scientists involved have decided to whet our appetites with details of deep sea 'jumbo dumbo' octopi, 'indescribable invertebrates', and worms that drill for oil nearly a kilometre below the surface.

In total, five deep-sea projects will have undertaken 210 expeditions when the census has been completed.

"There is both a great lack of information about the 'abyss' and substantial misinformation," says Robert Carney, of Louisiana State University. "Many species live there. However, the abyss has long been viewed as a desert. Worse, it was viewed as a wasteland where few to no environmental impacts could be of any concern."

Now that they have stared into the abyss, says Carney, the census scientists are concerned. Here are some of the critters they are concerned about.

Collected between 1,000 to 3,000 meters deep, was a very large example of a finned octopod, normally called a dumbo due to its endearing habit of swimming by flapping a pair of large fins that look like ears.

This jumbo example was nearly two metres long and 6 kg heavy, the largest ever collected. In total nine species were found on the mid-Atlantic ridge, including one new to science.

Later a huge catch of corals, sea cucumbers and sea urchins was pulled up from the ridge. Researchers described it as "indescribable". "It's hard to believe that such exuberance of life exists a kilometre deep into the ocean," says the census.

The team also pulled up a Neocyema, the strange orange thing pictured right, only the fifth example of this fish ever caught.

Perhaps the strangest find though was a Lamellibranchia tubeworm. When a robot arm lifted the worm clear of the sea floor, crude oil started leaking from the hole it had left behind. Apparently the worm had been feasting on the oil.

More photos below the fold...



The jumbo dumbo (Photo courtesy of Mike Vecchione)



Neocyema (Photo courtesy of David Shale)



Magnified copepod from the Atlantic (Photo courtesy Bünzow/Corgosinho)



New species of 'dumbo' (Photo courtesy of David Shale)



Sea cucumber, Enypniastes, (Photo courtesy of Larry Madin, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution)

blogs.nature.com/news/thegreatbeyond/2009/11/weird_beasts_from_the_...

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Thursday, 16 July 2009 12:00 AM



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