

THE WHEELHOUSE PROJECT

At our AGM last month, Area 2 shareholders supported the continuation of The Wheelhouse project. The Wheelhouse project focuses on how, when and where fishing for various species has changed over the years. It is particularly important for us to undertake this work as CPUEs (the main tool for managing our fisheries), are mostly dismissed as unreliable. Somehow, we need to improve their credibility. We believe that changes in gear and practices along with economic pressures have been strong influences in what is happening in Area 2s mixed fisheries yet typically, fishermen's information and explanations are dismissed as anecdotal. We believe fishermen's perspectives ought to be a key component of helping interpret or even being incorporated in CPUE analyses especially in complicated mixed fisheries.

Mixed fisheries are well known to run into problems when relying on CPUE to describe abundance. For our fishermen, having to avoid Gemfish, Trevally and Snapper whilst still catch Gurnard and Tarakihi is extremely difficult at times and every effort is made to avoid these species. However, success in avoiding particular species is inevitably interpreted as an indication they were not there to begin with! The challenges of somehow incorporating fishermen's realities into CPUE analysis will be with us for sometimes yet. In the near future, Wheelhouse intends to contribute to the debate by describing what gear changes have been made and why over the years.

Pat Reid, CEO Area 2 Inshore Finfish.



Southern Bluefin Tuna Tags

FINZ attended the MPI HMS meeting in Tauranga this week where they provided feedback on a number of issues.

They noted it was time for all those targeting SBT to get their orders in for tags for the new calendar year and to be mindful about the number of tags needed.

Forms and more information can be obtained from dominic.vallieres@mpi.govt.nz or read the Changes to Administration letter from MPI [here](#). It was advised that you order enough based on your plans and hopes for the season but keep an eye on it and if fishing is better than expected as we all hope it is, order more early on, not at the last minute.

MPI also advised not to over order as that leaves it short for those in need later.

The really good news is that more tags will be needed next year. MPI will shortly release an IPP proposing an in-season increase of 69 tonne in the TACC of SBT. Note that MPI reminded all that as TACs (and therefore TACCs) are agreed at a country level in 3 yearly buckets (with a fresh 3 year period commencing next year), any under-catch from this year will not be able to be carried forward into the next year. The IPP will also set out an expected further increase in national allocation (and also TACC) for the next year. FINZ will work with quota owners and fishers on a combined response to the IPP.

Southern Seabirds Net Capture Workshop

Trawls and setnets both pose a risk to seabirds depending on time, place and fishery.

Last week [Southern Seabird Solutions](#) held a meeting in Christchurch of team members, technical experts, gear manufacturers and fishermen to grapple with ways to alter these gears to reduce risk to seabirds. Deepwater trawling catches a large variety of seabirds in their nets at times and setnet are implicated in capture of some key species such as penguins but also other birds (see the [MPI NPOA-Seabirds](#)). Australian expertise was brought in to share their experience and skills.

Several ideas were considered worth further development, some old ideas for a fresh look and some novel new ideas.

Having a wide range of skills (from vessel to lab) meant that we were able to discuss both ends of the spectrum and test ideas for all the things that matter: possible efficacy, cost, operational fit, safety, possible effect on catch, cost etc. This didn't mean we didn't conjure up some pretty "out there" concepts but these were whittled down in the prioritising process.

Information from the workshop will be available soon.

**We welcome to our
newest members!**

Whanganui Iwi
Fisheries Ltd