



# Friday update



## Captain's Blog

January 27, 2017

### Trump-style alternative facts adopted by anti-fishing lobby

The post-truth Trump phenomenon is spreading to New Zealand.

Over the summer break untruths about the alleged poor state of this country's fish stocks were published as if they were gospel.

The fact [New Zealand has been rated among the world's top five best managed fisheries](#) was conveniently ignored.

So why do people cherry pick facts when it comes to science?

A study by US researchers, presented last week at the Society for Personality and Social Psychology annual convention in San Antonio, Texas, found people treat facts as more relevant when they support their own opinions.

Simply focussing on the evidence and data is not enough to change someone's mind.

People think more like lawyers than scientists when it comes to facts, which means they cherry pick those that back up what they already believe to be true, according to one of the study's researchers, Troy Campbell from the University of Oregon.

"We find that people will take a flight from facts to protect all kinds of belief, including their religious belief, their political beliefs and even simply personal beliefs," he said.

The researchers have coined the term "anti-enlightenment movement" for those who reject scientific consensus.

## In the Media

### Proposed new salmon farm locations revealed

**Radio New Zealand (27 January)** The Ministry for Primary Industries have picked new spots within the Marlborough Sounds to move 6 King Salmon farms. The proposed sites are in deeper water with stronger currents giving them better environmental and economic outcomes, MPI said.

King Salmon supported the move and said even though it would cost more than \$40 million, the new sites could more than triple production and provide 300 more jobs.

Five of the six proposed relocation sites put forward for consideration are in Pelorus Sound, with one in Tory Channel. The Marlborough District Council has been involved in developing the proposal.

[Read more](#)

[MPI press release](#)

[Marlborough District Council press release](#)

### NZ scientists bound for Auckland Islands for annual bird and sea lion count

**New Zealand Herald (17 January)** Scientists headed to the Auckland Islands last week for an annual survey of white-capped albatross and New Zealand sea lion numbers.

The Auckland Islands, located in the Southern Ocean, 465km south of Bluff, are the breeding grounds for both species.

Thus, Forest & Bird, quoting unnamed "marine scientists" and "best available science" continues to insist it knows more about sustainable fishing than all the fisheries scientists and all those who make their living from the sea.

Massey University academic Dr Mike Joy, who has done good work in highlighting water quality issues, let himself down in an article published by Fairfax where he gave weight to F&B's so-called best fish guide.

The New Zealand Herald allowed Seafood NZ to put the record straight this week in both its [opinion pages](#) and [Bite food magazine](#).

Writer Gerard Hindmarsh was at it too. In a nostalgic article on Stuff on the history of the wild, remote Whanganui (Westhaven) Inlet on the coast to the west of Golden Bay, he cited rich fishing in the past by his family in the vast inlet and lamented what had been lost. "Reliable estimates put most of our fish species at around five percent of original biomass," he claimed.

What reliable estimates?

That statement is complete and utter rubbish, a beacon for the anti-enlightenment, post-truth brigade.

My family, too, is familiar with Whanganui Inlet.

We fished it in the late 1960s and 70s but it was never the angling El Dorado some would have it.

We did catch a whopper snapper once that was feeding around a power pole in the shallows at the head of the inlet. But despite trudging miles to the entrance, or surf casting the flats as the tide moved in, we rarely caught more than the occasional dogfish and kahawai, sting rays and a lot of stinging sand courtesy of the predominant shrieking westerlies.

The weather was so much better then, of course, the summers were longer and everyone caught mountains of fish every time they went out.

That's the popular narrative anyway. I happened to be at Whanganui when visiting Golden Bay last month and stopped to talk to recreational fishers in two boats who had an impressive haul of groper, big blue cod and crays.

Admittedly, they had gone out through the entrance into the Tasman Sea but said this was a standard catch.

And the snapper fishing in the Tasman region this summer has been "red hot", one of the best seasons in recent memory.

That is according to the February edition of New Zealand Fishing News, the recreational fishers' bible.

Another inconvenient truth for some is that annual reviews of New Zealand fish stocks assessed by Ministry for Primary Industries scientists show [96.8 percent](#)

The white-capped albatross survey, for the first time, was completed by helicopter and was a collaboration between DoC, MPI, Seafood New Zealand and Deepwater Group.

"The survey allows us to create valuable datasets that give consistent information on breeding patterns and adult populations," said Richard Wells of Deepwater Group.

[Read more](#)

[Read Seafood New Zealand's press release](#)

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**Public input called for on plans to extend Kaikoura shellfish ban**  
**Dominion Post (20 January)** The Ministry for Primary Industries is asking for input as they consider extending the shellfish ban along the Kaikoura coastline.

MPI have proposed to extend the ban for another nine months, through to November 20.

PauaMAC 3 chairman Jason Ruawai said the ban extension would be "very positive" as it would allow time for more research.

"The last thing you want is to reduce the biomass before that period because then you're giving it less chance of replenishment."

Extending the ban would allow industry to complete further study and better understand the earthquakes long term affects on juvenile and adult biomass.

[Read more](#)



**Shellfish farming research team visits Marlborough Sounds**

**Stuff (23 January)** Aquaculture exports could increase by \$300 million a year according to a team of world leading scientists and engineers.

The team are in the Marlborough Sounds applying their expertise to the challenge of making open ocean shellfish farming

of our catch is from stocks that are sustainable.

Way back in 2003, Damien O'Connor, then a minister in the Clark Government, addressed an international conference on the governance and management of deepsea fisheries in Wellington. He challenged environmental NGOs to maintain their credibility by using accurate information and giving credit where it was due. He cited consumer choice cards that urged consumers to avoid products from so-called unsustainable fisheries.

"Classifying all products from a particular species as bad or unsustainable simply is not good enough. It is misleading.

"Environmental NGOs can work against industries and government to raise awareness of issues and they can work with industries and government to develop solutions.

"Unfortunately, some NGOs over-use the first, oppositional mode of operation. The result is that they are seen less as fair critics of a decision than as reliable pessimists. Far better, surely, to deploy the twin tools of credit where it is due and criticism where it is deserved."

Damien O'Connor's challenge of 14 years ago is still as valid today.



## Seafood industry welcomes Government ban on microbeads

Seafood New Zealand has welcomed the announcement that the Government will ban the use of microbead in make-up and other beauty products, citing their impact on oceans and marine life.

Environment Minister Nick Smith's announcement of a ban on microbeads is good news and one the industry is fully behind, Seafood New Zealand Chief Executive Tim Pankhurst said.

[Read more](#)

viable.

Cawthron Institute project leader Kevin Heasman said there is a real opportunity to more than double New Zealand's aquaculture production.

"It is the first research project of its type in the world to look at developing new shellfish technology suited to the high energy offshore environment," Heasman said.

[Read more](#)

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## Lobster in high demand for Chinese New Year

**The Southland Times (January 24)** With Chinese New Year celebrations beginning this weekend, Southland rock lobster fishers have been preparing for one of the busiest times of the year.

Whilst the weather had made it difficult for vessels to get on the water, demand was high, particularly for smaller sized lobster which are expected to fetch \$100kg.

About 100 tonnes of the delicacy is expected to be exported from the region. CRA8 Fisheries Te Anau owner Mike Schuck said January and February was "certainly the highest demand all year." "They're catching a lot of fish," he said.

[Read more](#)

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## \$250 for 4 pictures

Bolster Design is looking for two Maori people in Wellington or the lower North Island region who work in the seafood industry and are under the age of 25. They want to take pictures at work and are offering \$250.

The pictures will be published on Careers NZ's website.

To find out more or to sign up, call Jodi Wickstead on 021 1772 161 or email her at [jodi@bolster.co.nz](mailto:jodi@bolster.co.nz)

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## Consultations

There are a variety of consultations occurring with MPI currently. These include:

- Proposed changes for the sustainability measures for 3 rock lobster fisheries: CRA3 (Gisborne), CRA4 (Hawkes Bay/Wellington) and CRA7 (Otago).
- Proposed changes for the sustainability measures for two southern blue whiting stocks

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## New Zealand fishery named in global top five

New Zealand has been rated among the world's best five managed fisheries. In the survey of 28 countries, which included the 20 countries that landed the most fish, a strong correlation was found between the state of the country's fish stocks and the quality of its fisheries management.

The research by Michael Melnychuck, a research scientist at the School of Aquatic and Fishery Sciences at the University of Washington, and three co-authors was published by Washington's National Academy of Sciences.

Seafood New Zealand Chief Executive, Tim Pankhurst, said the study was pleasing but not surprising.

[Read more](#)

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(SBW1 and SBWBP)

- Extension of the Kaikoura shellfish ban through to November 20, 2017.
- Increasing the minimum commercial blue cod pot mesh size in the BCO5 area (Southland including Fiordland, and Stewart, Campbell and Antipodes islands).
- Patuharakeke Te Iwi Trust Board have requested a two-year temporary closure at Mair Bank and Marsden Bank (Marsden Point) to the take of all shellfish.
- Relocation of six salmon farms in the Marlborough Sounds.

To make a submission on these issues or to find out more information, [click here](#).

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