



Weaving the Strands

Promoting and facilitating integrated management around the Hauraki Gulf – Tikapa Moana

A new term

The Hauraki Gulf Forum reconvenes for the first time this month following the local body elections last October and the formation of the new Auckland Council.

There are a number of new faces around the table, charged with the promotion of integrated management and the protection and enhancement of the Hauraki Gulf.

What this role means was articulated by Dr Graeme Campbell, one of the architects of the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park Act 2000, in a presentation to a workshop of the Forum last month.

“The Forum is not a management agency but a collective of managers who can be spurred into action by the Forum. It is a place for big strategic debates and for long-term (intergenerational) thinking about the future of the Gulf, its islands and catchments.”

Dr Campbell suggested that during the term of the new Forum those debates might include:

- The inter-regional debate: A place for Auckland and Waikato to talk
- The fisheries debate. Conservation vs recreation vs commercial fishing priorities in the Hauraki Gulf
- The aquaculture debate and the allocation of seabed space
- Understanding the effects of Treaty Settlements on management regimes and



- decision-making in the Gulf. Anticipating new post-settlement structures
- Rural land use and stormwater discharges. The long term implications for water quality, ecosystem health
 - Urbanisation around the Gulf
 - Terrestrial habitat conservation on private and public land
 - The inclusion of council coastal reserves in the Park
 - Transport in the Gulf
 - Management of recreational boating

In welcoming Forum members to their role Auckland Mayor Len Brown described the Forum’s work in championing the Gulf as “vital and important, and you have my backing 100 percent.”

Meetings of the Hauraki Gulf Forum are held quarterly and are open to the public. Meeting agendas and minutes are available from:

www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/EN/AboutCouncil/meetings_agendas/committees/Pages/haurakigulfforum.aspx



DUAL participants on Motutapu



Mature crayfish at Tawharanui



Moehau maunga

Towards treaty settlements

A framework agreement between the Crown and Hauraki iwi was signed in October enabling negotiations towards comprehensive settlements of collective and individual iwi historical Treaty of Waitangi claims in the Hauraki/Coromandel region later this year.

The agreement includes offers of redress to the collective of Hauraki iwi, including the right to purchase the Crown's interests in a number of forests and a right of first refusal over core Crown properties if they become surplus. The agreement also acknowledges the cultural importance of Tikapa Moana (the Hauraki Gulf), Te Tai Tamahine (east coast of the Coromandel Peninsula), Te Aroha and Moehau maunga and the Waihou and Piako rivers.

www.haurakicollective.maori.nz

Progress is also being made on negotiations to settle claims in the wider Auckland region between the Crown and 12 iwi within the Tamaki collective, under the terms of a framework agreement signed in February 2010.

Meanwhile, Ngati Manuhiri is currently seeking ratification of an Agreement in Principle for a treaty settlement from its beneficiaries. This settlement would see Hauturu, Little Barrier Island, transferred to the iwi, then gifted back to the Crown with its nature reserve status retained.

It would be vested in the name of

Rahui Te Kiri who, with her husband, Tenetahi Pouhuehue Te Heru, was forcibly removed from the island in 1896 after it was compulsorily acquired by the Crown and deemed a reserve a year earlier. A 1.2ha area would be kept in the tribe's ownership.

Tawharanui marine reserve

The Hauraki Gulf Marine Park is set to get its sixth marine reserve with the creation of a 400 ha reserve at Tawharanui.

Formerly a no take fishing zone adjoining Tawharanui Regional Park, the new status will create greater clarity and consistency of regulations.

Former ARC Chairman Mike Lee, who has advocated for the marine reserve since 1994, says increased marine protection on this popular stretch of coast will enhance the area's natural and scientific values.

"It may have taken 16 years, but this has been a cause worth fighting for," says Mike Lee, now an Auckland Councillor.

"The Tawharanui Marine Reserve will be unique in that it will create an undersea sanctuary next to a mainland open sanctuary and alongside a popular surf beach. Our special thanks to Conservation Minister Kate Wilkinson for supporting this and to Minister of Fisheries Phil Heatley."

Surveying, marking and drafting an Order in Council to formalise the creation of the new marine reserve is being undertaken by the DoC.

Aquaculture reforms

Upcoming changes to aquaculture legislation will have implications for the Gulf.

The draft aquaculture plan change prepared by Environment Waikato during 2009, to provide for the introduction of a limited amount of fish farming in the Wilsons Bay Zone, has been adopted by government and included in Aquaculture Legislation Bill No.3.

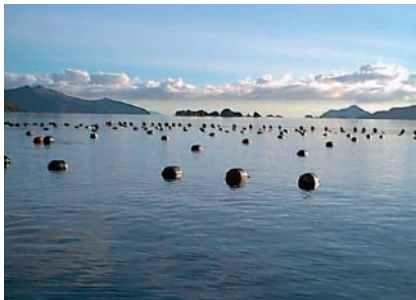
The Bill also inserts new rules into the coastal plan to allow applications for small extensions (1 to 2 hectares) to about 44 pre-RMA mussel farms outside the Wilsons Bay Zone.

In addition to these changes, the removal of the aquaculture management area requirement from the law means marine farming will be managed like other activities under the Resource Management Act.

Applications for inter-tidal oyster farms could be lodged anywhere in the Waikato region except the Ramsar site in the Firth of Thames. In Auckland region, aquaculture applications could be lodged anywhere except in Coastal Protection Areas or Cultural Heritage sites. However, a gazetted moratorium on marine farming applications still applies over much of the Auckland area of the Gulf, within which only "spat catching" applications could be lodged.

The new law is expected to take effect on 1 July 2011.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Fisheries is proposing to create a new marine



Aquaculture set to expand



Motuora putaweta



Te Muri Regional Park

farming zone near Coromandel Harbour, primarily for fish farming. The zone would be 300 hectares in size (3 kilometres long and 1 kilometre wide) and cater for between 4000 and 8000 tonnes of fish farming. A Ministerial Advisory Panel was appointed to hear submissions and report back to the Minister.

www.fish.govt.nz/en-nz/Aquaculture+Reform/default.htm

www.fish.govt.nz/en-nz/Consultations/Marine+Farming+Zone+in+the+Coromandel/default.htm

Busy summer on Motutapu

The Motutapu Restoration Trust is set to double its forest planting on the island from four to eight hectares a year following sponsorship by the Air New Zealand Environment Trust to upgrade and expand the trust's island nursery.

In February the island hosted a Live at the Islands music concert and, in March, the DUAL Motutapu-Rangitoto Traverse attracted 1700 runners and mountain bikers. Proceeds from both events benefited conservation efforts.

Meanwhile, the country's largest off-grid solar power system – covering the roofs of the old WWII barracks at the Motutapu Outdoor Education Camp – was turned on in November.

The system will provide 70 percent of the power used by the education camp, Department of Conservation, Motutapu Farm and trust facilities on the island.

www.motutapu.org.nz

A price on clean beaches?

Water clarity, underfoot conditions on beaches and ecological health are a few of the things people value most about the coast.

A study commissioned by the Auckland Regional Council and undertaken by Cawthron Institute is helping put a price on improving stormwater infrastructure to deliver changes in water quality and beach condition in upper harbour areas of the Auckland region.

Cawthron estimates that improving the health of Auckland's beaches would be valued by the community at about \$1 billion over a 20 year time frame. Since improvements to estuaries would flow on to other harbour beach areas in the long term, the total value to the community would be much higher.

The study adds an ecological dimension to traditional cost benefit analysis and Auckland Council managers are considering how the results might be applied to policy making.

<http://tiny.cc/kx007>

Wetapunga return

Giant weta – wetapunga – have received a helping hand back to Motuora Island.

Twenty-five of the world's heaviest insects – originally from Hauturu-Little Barrier Island then bred in captivity at Butterfly Creek near Auckland airport – were released on the island last September.

Motuora's original weta population was wiped out through loss of habitat and introduction of exotic pests. The pioneering project to breed rather than translocate the weta was led by the Motuora Restoration Society, a community group managing the island jointly with the Department of Conservation. The release is one of four planned for the island.

DOC scientific adviser Chris Green says this is part of the weta recovery group's plan to establish several populations around the gulf to ensure the survival of the species.

www.motuora.org.nz

Te Muri Regional Park

A 407 ha farm block bordering Mahurangi Regional Park was purchased by the Auckland Regional Council and added to the regional parks network in September.

Auckland councillor Sandra Coney said this was a critical purchase to protect the landscape of the Puhoi River, Wenderholm Regional Park and the wider area.

"The purchase protects the wonderful vista of the estuary and of Wenderholm. The whole stretch of coast from Mahurangi to Waiwera is now protected in a natural state for all time. Plus Te Muri is stunning land in its own right," she says, with "very old landmark puriri and other trees and as you descend to the beach, the view takes your breath away."



Rotoroa Island



Hauraki Gulf Marine Park visual identity



Auckland Plan

Rotoroa Island open

Rotoroa Island, a former Salvation Army drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre, opened to the public after 100 years in February, thanks to a \$30 million gift from philanthropists.

The 82ha island, east of Waiheke, has been restored and turned into a conservation, heritage and arts destination.

About 20,000 pine trees have been felled and chipped and replaced with more than 400,000 native plants, sourced and propagated from local seed. Walking tracks link beaches and picnic areas. Some accommodation and life-style blocks on long term lease arrangements are planned, to create income for the Salvation Army.

The heritage of the island has been captured through the retention of the jail, chapel, schoolhouse and cemetery and development of a new exhibition centre.

Ferries travel four times weekly from downtown Auckland to the island.

www.rotoroa.org.nz

New identity

Communicating the special values of the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park has been made easier with the launch last month of a striking new identity for the park.

The identity made its first appearance on the Wildlife of the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park poster series published in the New Zealand Herald, as part of a summer publicity campaign for the park.

The graphic design symbolises the integration and coming together of people and places of the Gulf around a shared purpose and vision.

www.haurakigulfmarinepark.co.nz

Auckland unleashed

The Auckland Council has released a discussion document to guide the drafting of the first Auckland Plan, aimed at creating the world's most liveable city.

In a speech in March Auckland Mayor Len Brown said his vision of an eco city was at the top of the priority list.

"We should emphasise the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park within this vision: Imagine more and bigger islands added to the list of predator free places.

Motutapu Island Retoration Trust has been able to restore a homestead, plant half a million trees, create a multisports race, host a music concert, explore opportunities for education and a demonstration farm, and I suspect this is just the beginning.

Kiwi watching on Motuihe, waka trails and kayaker campsites around our regional parks and conservation islands, more marine reserves, more fish in the sea...

Consider the knock on effects of greater abundance and diversity for the tourism and the marine industry, waterfront development, ferry routes, linkage with the Coromandel peninsula.

Consider how they might position Auckland become a world class destination, rather than a gateway."

Under consultation

The Auckland Plan	Auckland Council	www.theaucklandplan.govt.nz
Local board agreements and local board plans	Auckland Council local boards	www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/EN/AboutCouncil/HaveYourSay/Pages/Home.aspx

The Hauraki Gulf Forum is a statutory body charged with the promotion and facilitation of integrated management and the protection and enhancement of the Hauraki Gulf. The Forum has representation on behalf of the Ministers of Conservation, Fisheries and Maori Affairs, elected representatives from Auckland Council (including the Great Barrier and Waiheke local boards), Environment Waikato, and the Waikato, Hauraki, Thames Coromandel and Matamata Piako district councils, plus six representatives of the tangata whenua of the Hauraki Gulf and its islands.

Contact: Tim Higham, Hauraki Gulf Forum Manager, Auckland Regional Council
Ph 09 624 4749 tim.higham@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz www.haurakigulfforum.org.nz

Photo credits: Auckland Council, DoC, Niels Schipper