



### **Presidents Report 2011**

Last year I wrote that New Zealand Sport Fishing was at a turning point of either embracing change for the benefit of fishing or, if it chose, it could continue on in its present format.

At our Hokianga AGM nearly 2 years ago, your Management Committee was tasked with producing a strategic plan. This was an extensive / very comprehensive review. The principle direction was agreed at last year's AGM.

NZSF's ability to progress and achieve the strategy was dependent on securing professional services of a General Manager and achieving financial milestones to continue to support that role. Unfortunately I have to report that we were ultimately unable to finalise a contract with Bill Ross and the financial milestones were not achieved. New Zealand Sport Fishing remains unchanged as an organisation.

This year has been difficult to say the least and this is reflected in our financial report. For those, including myself, that thought that SPARC might be a source of support and funding, the reality was cold and stark. Mark Hemingway and myself travelled to Wellington and met with the SPARC representatives. We were greeted with folded arms and a very short meeting ensued. "There is no money. It is allocated to other sports. ...And we won't be taking it off them to allocate it to fishing".

What is now patently evident is that working from a base of a handful of volunteers from the management committee, NZSF will very much have to take small and considered steps to ultimately implement the original strategy.

There was a request from Zone 1 for "the strategic plan to be synthesised". In cutting our cloth to suit, I believe that this will need to be very focused and suggest:

1. Governance, management capability and financial resourcing
2. Implement an effective structured communications strategy
3. Fisheries management and advocacy
4. Development of the member benefits package.

#### **Constitution.**

The starting point for the strategy is the foundation of the organisation, the Constitution. As directed at the last AGM, extensive work has been completed on a revised constitution which has been circulated. This will be presented by Len Clapham and discussed at the

AGM. I'd like to take the opportunity to thank Len Clapham and Kevin Healy for sharing their time and expertise on organisational governance that has been given on a pro-bono basis. It has been extremely useful to have their independent, frank and unbiased insight into our present and possible future structure.

### Going Forward

The proposed strategic plan remains a logical change to the way New Zealand Sport Fishing would operate for the benefit of the sport / recreation of "Fishing".

The key decision / direction that needs to be confirmed is; Do the clubs of New Zealand Sport Fishing, wish to take the lead, and transform your Council to potentially represent anybody that fishes and chooses to join? Or, do you wish to continue to be just a Council of Clubs.

For the sake of clarity, I'll bullet point some facts:

- New Zealand Sport Fishing has succeeded in growing beyond the capability and resources of the few volunteers that actively contribute.
- While supported in principle by the Clubs, which is essential and fully appreciated, the handful of volunteers that are "the Council" have now tried to do too much.
- Support in principle does not extend to provide the necessary sports administration management skills, and shoulders to the wheel where the rubber meets the road.
- The Current Regional structure is a recognised strength of the organisation. Some are working well and some aren't. If it isn't working, the responsibility for a solution to this is in you, the delegate's hands.
- Unfortunately since the advent of regions, which have meant less frequent full Council meetings there has been a tendency at Zone Regional level to abdicate rubber meeting the road work upwards. This has to cease.
- Until the organisation is operating on a professional basis, I don't believe that it is appropriate to see "The Council should.... Or the Management Committee should..." in the zone minutes. If anything new is to be done there are only the delegates / you / your zone delegate that can do it. There is nobody else in the beyond...only other zones with their own ideas and desires just like you. You are the Council.
- The angler numbers of NZSF clubs has been largely static over the past 10 years with some clubs coming and going. We are now at 62 Clubs with Wellington Surfcasting and Angling Club, Matarangi Boat and Fishing Club, Maraetai Beach Boating Club, Whakatakataka Bay (OBC) Sport Fishing Club now joining, and with further information requested from a Foxton Club to join.
- Despite Fishing having one of the highest rates of participation and being one of the most popular outdoor activities for Kiwi's, the administration and promotion of Fishing, has fallen far behind almost every other major sport in terms of professionalism and organisational capacity and capability.
- To grow / progress NZSF will need to be operated on a professional basis
- While we have stumbled at the first hurdle, this does not mean that the plan is flawed...just poorly executed.
- Most other sports are a testament to the fact that what is proposed can be achieved.

- At best NZSF member clubs only attract 5% of the fishing public. There is a lot bigger slice of the pie out there that could be marketed to and provide NZSF with valuable mandate and support
- A strong national organisation has to be good for all clubs and participants of the sport.

### Hiwi the Kiwi Goes Fishing

I'd like to thank the principal sponsors of the Hiwi the Kiwi Goes Fishing project, being Firmans Marine, Yamaha NZ, DMW Trailers, Furuno, Hutchwilco, Kilwell, Black Magic Fishing Tackle, Big Fish Bait and Tackle Company, New Zealand Fishing News, The Hutchwilco NZ Boat Show, Davey Painters, the NZ Marine Research Foundation and The Guardians of the Sea Charitable Trust.

Of course there is also a big thanks to the cornerstones of the project, Mr & Mrs Minstrel who continue their extremely successful and popular circuit of primary schools.

I'd also like to thank Evan Mackay and all of the clubs who contributed and supported the programme. Viv and Wayne Bicknell and Shelley from B-Line Scaffolding again stepped up hugely in administering the boat draw.

A special mention needs to be made of the commitment of Grant Dixon especially and his team at New Zealand Fishing News (Sam and Mark) who have been there from the outset to support this project both in principle, through the magazine, and out in the field doing the yards fundraising.

Deryk will report on the project in more detail later. From my discussions with clubs, a substantial majority support the continuation of the project however, the delivery of the program on NZSF's part did not run smoothly this year. In recognising the limitations of volunteers and the limited tangible level of support from the clubs, I feel that it would be remiss to proceed further without the program being operated by professionals rather than volunteers.

The level of support by the industry / sponsors has been fantastic, and NZSF would best repay their support with a professional approach when the program is revisited.

### Hutchwilco New Zealand Boat Show

New Zealand Sport Fishing again participated with a stand at the Hutchwilco New Zealand Boat Show held in Auckland. The stand continued to be an excellent showcase for NZSF and was invaluable in supporting the Hiwi the Kiwi Boat Draw.

Thanks to the Management Committee and small number of now regulars from zone 2 who volunteered and assisted with the stand. I'd also like to thank to thank Leanne Tasman Jones, who organised and delivered the stand in conjunction with DeCoro Fishing Tackle.

Future participation and ability to leverage from the value of the availability of the stand will be dependent on available resourcing and for the stand to support its cost. Auckland region

- Zone 2 have expressed an interest in continuing with the stand. It will be up to the delegates and clubs of the zone to make this happen.

### Fisheries Management

The Fisheries management committees report will be tabled by Peter Campbell in due course. I'd like to thank Peter, the Marks and John Chibnall for their ongoing contributions and of course our fisheries contractors, Trish Rea, John Holdsworth and Barry Torkington. Their professionalism and extensive work is as always appreciated, as are the substantial donations from the Guardians of the Sea Charitable Trust.

As always, Scott Macindoe never sits still in his relentless pursuit of resourcing fisheries management and advocacy. Recently he has launched a new website, [www.legasea.co.nz](http://www.legasea.co.nz) to provide an avenue for raising funds that will fully support NZSF's fisheries management objectives. Thanks Scott for your continued commitment and contribution.

Following last year's discussion on overarching bodies and representation / mandate, it was subsequently interesting to see the launch of a drive for a statutory body. It has been interesting to watch that lobby now move away from promoting stewardship fees / licensing for the time being.

I'd observe that the only need for something statutory is to make it compulsory. The only necessity for compulsory is because the proposers of statutory have been unsuccessful developing a value proposal voluntarily.

- It is suggested that the root of the problem lies in poor governance. Neither a voluntary, nor a statutory body, guarantee good governance.
- New Zealand Sport Fishing remains comfortable with its own mandate and ability to participate in fisheries management processes.
- While it might suit other peoples / organisations purposes for there to be an overarching / statutory body, this is seen as a path to the disenfranchisement of the current mandate of NZSF.

### Fishing

Nationals This year saw the best ever participation in the nationals competition with 1492 anglers nationwide competing. The weather was on the whole kind and there were several world and national record claim fish captured. Ultra Light tackle exponent, Eryn Jacobsen and her expert team on the John Batterton skippered Hookin Bull lodged 2 world record claims with a 181.8kg blue marlin on 6kg line and then a 119.2kg stripie on 4kg line. Todd Evers aboard Saltshaker lodged a world record claim for his 136.2kg bigeye tuna on 15kg line.

Top Fish 72 year old Mick Elwood's Blue Marlin at 393.8kg fish taken after a marathon 6 hour battle on 37kg line was a deserving winner of this year's "Old Man and the Sea" trophy. The Lord Norrie Gold Cup for best striped marlin of the season went to Richard

Alexander with a late season fatty taken just outside of the Manukau Bar weighing 197kg on 24kg line.

Yellowfin Horror The horror story of the season though is Yellowfin Tuna....Aside from a monster 80.1Kg Yellowfin taken by David Falconer (on an eggbeater loaded with braid – the miracles of modern technology!) there have only been a handful of football sized fish taken....The Nationals saw no Yellowfin landed, neither did the Whakatane Tuna Tournament for the second year running...

### Thanks

In closing, I'd again like to thank the Management Committee and Roz for their support over what has been the most difficult year of my tenure. I'd also like to thank those sponsors, other volunteers and contractors who have, and continue to assist New Zealand Sport Fishing.

I'd like to especially thank Mark Connor, the incoming President, for all of his work over the past couple of years. He has very much done yards and been a great support in the vice president role. He will have my full support going forward.

As for my own personal crusade of a youth fishing program / national competition, I appreciate the support in principle that I have received for this from the Clubs however, for the moment I accept that this will have to wait until we are better resourced.

As I look back over the past 4 years, (and my history as a rock fisherman!!) I am comfortable that I have challenged the organisations culture and some entrenched attitudes, which I hope will ultimately drive change and lead to an enduring organisation for the future.

I'd like to thank you all for the opportunity and honour that it has been to lead New Zealand Sport Fishing over the past 4 years and in stepping down I wish the Council all the best for the future.

Regards and Best Wishes

Richard Baker  
President  
New Zealand Sport Fishing Council Inc