

### **2800 Submissions Received on Marine Protection Proposals**

Thanks to each and every one of you who provided a submission. We have received a total of approximately 2800 submissions. Forum Chair, Maree Baker- Galloway says she was very pleased at the number of responses, and wasn't surprised at the high level of engagement which the consultation process has generated given the importance of the topic.

“The south-east coast is integral to so many people's lives on a day to day basis, and for others supports important values they want to see protected. I'm encouraged that so many members of the public have been motivated to have their say.”

We did receive some late submissions which have been approved by the Forum as they were deemed to not be holding up the submission's analyst process in any way. No further late submissions will be accepted.

The Forum are currently working through the submissions received. Also an independent analyst has been engaged to provide a summary of submissions which will be given to the Forum. The feedback and information provided in the submissions will be considered in the Forum's next round of deliberations and will be influential in shaping the Forum's final recommendations to government.

Any recommendations that the government accept will then be required to go through the relevant statutory process before implementation, such as under the Fisheries Act and Marine Reserves Act for example, or through the creation of special legislation.

### **Forum Welcomes Steve Bennett as New Recreational Fisher Representative.**

New Forum member Steve Bennett, was welcomed in January, at the Forum's first meeting for 2017. Steve Bennett's ministerial appointment was announced in mid - December last year. He fills the vacant position left by Mr Nelson Cross.

Steve Bennett is the current secretary of the Green Island Fishing Club as well as a trustee and current chair of the Dunedin Community Salmon Trust. He has worked for the Department of Internal Affairs for 26 years as a Community Development Advisor working with local government, iwi and community groups in policy and project management roles.

Steve Bennett says he's looking forward to being involved in the Forum's process.

“I've been a keen recreational fisher, diver and white baiter in the Otago area for the last 50 years, and I am passionate about protecting the marine environment for use by future generations. I am looking forward to the opportunity to contribute to and progress the important work of the Forum.”

Forum Chair, Maree Baker-Galloway says

“I am very pleased to welcome Steve as a new member of the Forum and as our second member formally representing recreational fishing interests. I look forward to his contribution and working with him.”



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**South-East Marine Protection Forum  
PO Box 5244 Dunedin  
0800 687 729**