

**Report:** Hui with Ngāti Hei, Scott Simpson (MP), NZSFC and LegaSea.

**Date & time:** 6 May 2023, 0930-1230 hrs.

**Venue:** Ko Te Ra Matiti Marae, Wharekaho, Whitianga, Coromandel.

**Attendees:** Scott Macindoe (LegaSea), Scott Simpson (National MP), Warren Maher (Tairua-Pauanui SFC/NZSFC), Trish Rea and Dirk Sieling (NZSFC/LegaSea), Gordon McIvor (Mercury Bay GFC), Joe Davis (Ngāti Hei), 11 Ngāti Hei Trustees/representatives.

**Apologies:** Lennie Williams (Te Mata, Thames), Sam Woolford (LegaSea).

**Purpose:** To meet with Ngāti Hei trustees and Scott Simpson to discuss local fisheries management and marine protection issues. Also, to reassure the Ngāti Hei Trustees that we are well intentioned and willing to work together to find workable solutions to mutual problems.

### **Discussion**

A concern for Ngāti Hei is the influx of visiting recreational fishers to the area, the number of fish taken, and their inability to monitor or control harvest levels. Licensing of recreational fishers was raised as a means of limiting access to the Ngāti Hei rohe, to just local fishers. Also, as a way to monitor recreational harvest. Scallop enhancement was important to Ngāti Hei. The Ahu Moana application by Ngāti Hei for the Alderman Islands/Ahu Ruamaahua was a stepping stone to better protect their rohe.

We discussed existing management at the Quota Management Area level and how that does not provide for local needs. There is potential to apply Māori customary area management tools, as has occurred in the Bay of Islands Te Puna Mātaitai. Success in the Bay of Islands was an outcome of the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council and LegaSea building relationships with Ngāpuhi, hapū and whānau over many years. The Council and LegaSea were keen to help the Ngāti Hei Trustees explore the potential for implementing customary tools around their rohe.

The closure of the scallop fishery to protect scallops and the marine environment was due to Ngāti Hei's foresight and willingness to commit to restoring abundance in the Hauraki Gulf. This effort was much appreciated and widely celebrated. Further discussions with all previous partners will be required to ensure a successful survey of Opito Bay scallops in 2024.

Scott Simpson was committed to serving the Coromandel community. He understands the challenges of local depletion of fish and scallops. Scott supports more discussion on what tools can be applied to better protect and enhance Ngāti Hei's access to local fisheries.

Rescue Fish was presented as a solution to localised depletion, to remove bottom trawling from inshore waters, encourage regional development of whānau fishing enterprises, and to engage with the community. Local input into managing regional fish stocks and all fishing activity was preferable to licensing recreational fishers.

The meeting closed on a positive note. The NZSFC and LegaSea will continue striving to have trawling banned from inshore waters and were available to work with Ngāti Hei on finding resolution to their local depletion issues.

The Ngāti Hei ringa wera, kitchen help, produced a generous and delicious kai which was appreciated by all.