

Weaving the Strands

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

Charting the enhancement pathway *Top speakers for public seminar*

The Prime Minister's Science Advisor and the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment are among the speakers at this year's Hauraki Gulf Marine Park Seminar at Auckland Museum on Wednesday 22 August.

The theme reflects a new phase of work for the Forum. We have heard the messages from last year's *State of our Gulf* report and are looking for new policy and actions that can reverse deterioration trends and serve to protect and enhance the Gulf.

REMAK is shorthand for how we believe we can chart this enhancement pathway: regenerating areas, enhanced fisheries, mana whenua integration, active land management and knowledge utilisation.

Massey University Professor Marti Anderson appeared on the Kim Hill Show recently and will share similar statistical insights into how marine reserves can breathe life into the Gulf, while NIWA's Darren Parsons will show how the lost mussel beds of Tamaki Strait and the Firth of Thames may be restorable.

Enough is enough says Waikato University's Professor David Hamilton. He will explain how councils will be required to set limits for the pollutants entering our waterways. A new report from Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment Dr Jan Wright reveals just what makes up our farming and city discharges.



Sir Peter Gluckman.

Lawyer and Forum member Paul Majurey has overseen progress in settling historical Treaty of Waitangi claims in the region as chairman of the Tamaki and Hauraki Collectives. He will outline changing expectations for protection, management and use of environmental resources.

University of Auckland's Dr Rochelle Constantine and seabird aficionado Chris Gaskin will take time out from their field work to detail the latest research on our most threatened Gulf residents: the Bryde's whale, black petrel and New Zealand storm petrel.

Government fisheries scientist Dr Martin Cryer and John Holdsworth – advocate for Legasea, a new recreational fishing lobby group – have been set the



Dr Jan Wright.



Paul Majurey.



Prof Marti Anderson.



Chris Gaskin.

challenging question of whether fish stock levels in the Gulf are as good as they can get.

Our keynote speaker is the Prime Minister's Science Advisor Sir Peter Gluckman, on the importance of environmental quality in taking the New Zealand economy forward.

I look forward to seeing you there.

Registrations are now open via the Auckland Museum website (www.aucklandmuseum.com/default.asp?t=23&cid=&View=FullStory&eventsID=793) or by calling 09 306 7048.

Mayor John Tregidga,
Chair, Hauraki Gulf Forum



Leigh stocktake points to bright future.



Latest Bryde's whale fatality.



Black petrel future uncertain.

Whale watching

Following alarming new research on the behaviour and vulnerability of Bryde's whales in the Gulf – detailed on the cover of the last issue of *Weaving the Strands* – several meetings have been held with the users and management agencies of the Gulf.

The Hauraki Gulf Forum is working closely with the Environmental Defence Society and University of Auckland to ensure information about the issue of whale ship strike is fully considered by managers and shipping interests.

The opportunities for legislative and voluntary responses are being carefully looked at, says Forum Chairman John Tregidga. "Once this has happened, a follow up workshop will be convened to determine next steps in ensuring adequate protection for Bryde's whales."

The Gulf is home to about 50 of the shallow-diving Bryde's whales. Forty one are known to have been killed in the last 16 years. Of the 18 that have been examined 15 died because of ship strike.

An eye on black petrels

The Hauraki Gulf Forum is seeking more information about the interactions of black petrels and fishing vessels, following a briefing on the issue by researchers at a recent meeting.

Land-based research at black petrel breeding colonies – restricted to Great Barrier and Little Barrier Islands – indicates the species' population is declining at a rate of around 1.8 percent a year.

Initial research published by the Ministry of Fisheries in 2011 suggests 725 to 1524 black petrels could be being lost each year through fisheries by-catch, in a breeding population estimated between 1000-1500 pairs.

Forum Chairman John Tregidga has written to the Minister of Primary Industries, the Minister of Conservation and fishing industry leaders seeking advice on what measures are being used to avoid black petrels by the estimated 75 bottom long line fishing boats operating in Fisheries Management Area 1.

During the birds' October-June breeding season boats which set baits for snapper and bluenose will encounter petrels at night in their foraging areas around Great Barrier and Little Barrier islands.

"More research and urgent action is needed to ensure we don't run the risk of this iconic species becoming extinct," says Mayor Tregidga

Motu to return

The Crown initialled a deed of settlement to collectively settle the historical claims of 13 iwi and hapū over shared interests in the Auckland area, including maunga (volcanic cones) and motu (islands) on June 7.

The deed provides for the gifting and gift-back of four islands in the Hauraki Gulf – Rangitoto, Motutapu, Motuihe and Tiritiri Matangi – owned by the Crown, as set out in the terms of agreement signed by the parties in November last year.

Title to the islands will be vested in the Tāmaki Collective, which will then gift

them back to the Crown. The summit of Rangitoto and two small sites associated with historical waka mooring will be retained by the Tāmaki Collective.

The deed of settlement also provides for members of the collective to share a first-right-of-refusal on Crown land in the Tāmaki Makaurau area.

The deed will now be taken to the members of each signatory hapū and iwi for ratification, and will be given effect by legislation.

www.beehive.govt.nz/release/deed-settlement-initialled-t%C4%81maki-collective

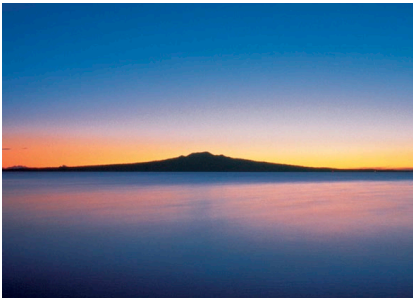
Happy birthday Leigh

Auckland University's Leigh Marine Laboratory celebrated a 50th anniversary this month with a seminar reviewing its contributions to knowledge over the period.

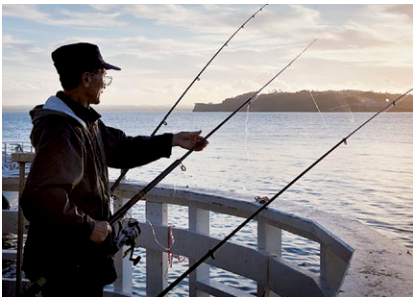
"It was an opportunity to reflect on the research and ideas that have originated here and have propagated and impacted research domains internationally," said Professor John Montgomery, Director of the laboratory.

Presentations covered a wide range of material: research on biodiversity; the biology of fish, lobsters, algae and plankton; aquaculture; and marine protected areas. Speakers and attendees included senior scientists from New Zealand and Australian universities, NIWA, the Australian Institute of Marine Science, and local government.

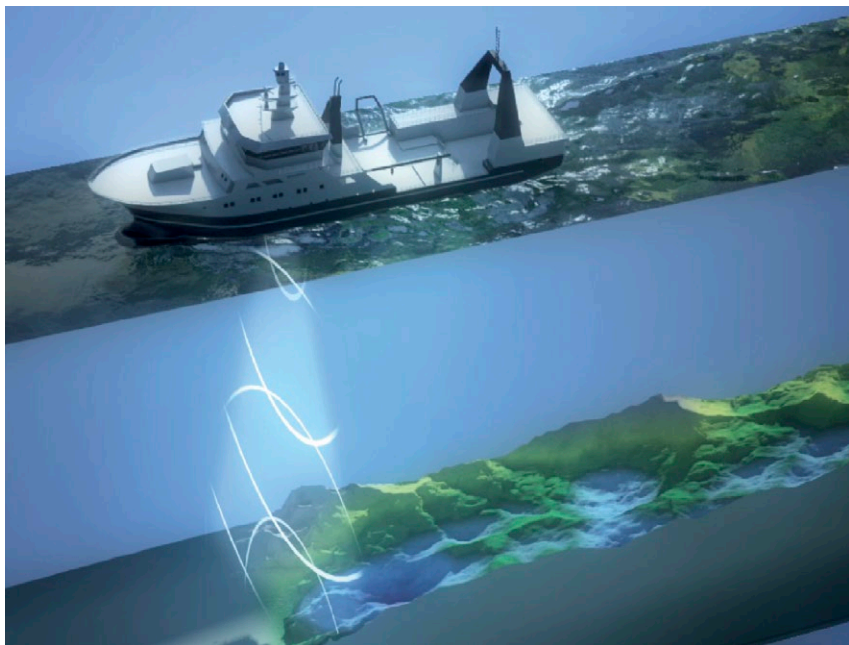
The laboratory has been through a major transformation in the past few years, driven by its vision to connect with communities of interest: visitors to the



Rangitoto in Tamaki collective settlement.



Planners look to hook up in marine space.



Ship surveys aid Gulf bathymetric map.



Kakapo back in Gulf.



More island whiteheads call mainland home.



Wade Doak's communication gifts recognised.

marine reserve, school students, Leigh locals, employers of graduates, marine scientists, the recently created Joint Graduate School with NIWA, and alumni.

The 50th anniversary seminar was also a chance to look to the future and the exciting opportunities our redevelopment provides in research, teaching and engagement, said Professor Montgomery.

Seminar contributions will be published as a special issue of the New Zealand Journal of Marine and Freshwater Research.

Collaboration closer

Waikato Regional Council signed off its 2012-2022 Long Term Plan in May, including an extra \$819,000 over three years for work focused on marine planning and environmental improvement programmes in the Hauraki Gulf.

Chairman Peter Buckley said it was a sound plan to advance the region's environmental and economic priorities. "We have contained costs while improving services to our communities across a range of activities such as water management, pest management, coastal area planning, civil defence and river catchment and drainage work."

Meanwhile, funding to "jointly prepare a multi-objective, multi-party marine spatial plan for the whole Hauraki Gulf area", identified within the Auckland Plan, has been confirmed as part of the Auckland Council's Long Term Plan due for adoption at the end of this month.

The Department of Conservation and Ministry of Primary Industries have also earmarked funds to pilot a collaborative planning approach designed to address long standing issues of environmental decline and competing resource use in the Hauraki Gulf.

Towards limits

The second report of the Land and Water Forum was presented to the Minister for the Environment and the Minister for Primary Industries in May.

It proposes a national framework within which regional councils will work with their communities and iwi to set freshwater objectives and develop limits for its use. A complementary report dealing with ways of managing within limits is expected shortly.

www.landandwater.org.nz

Underwater perspectives

A 20-metre-resolution digital elevation map of Hauraki Gulf bathymetry has been published by NIWA.

It provides insight into the shape of the ocean floor, and was generated from both multibeam and traditional bathymetric data, sourced from NIWA and Land Information New Zealand.

New imagery was generated by sending a fan of 500 simultaneous acoustic beams (or pings) from the research vessel Tangaroa. The shape and type of seafloor surface were then measured by the speed, angle and the way in which each ping returned.

NIWA geologist Dr Helen Neil said one of the most dramatic parts of the underwater landscape was the channels between islands, where squeezed corridors of water had scarred the sea bottom. The seafloor between Motuihe and Motutapu Islands had deep scour marks, pits of erosion and coarse, gravel-like sediment.

She said the maps would assist spatial planning and decision making to meet the demands for fishing and aquaculture, protection of biodiversity, the planning of cable routes for electricity and telecommunications, and recreation.

www.niwa.co.nz/our-science/oceans/bathymetry

Boom boom

Kakapo are back in the Gulf and the North Island for the first time in a decade, after eight of the rare birds were released on Hauturu/ Little Barrier Island in April.

The Department of Conservation moved the flightless and critically endangered native parrots from Codfish and Anchor Islands in Southland.

Four female and four male birds were taken by helicopter to Invercargill, where they boarded a commercial flight to Auckland. The final part of their journey was made by helicopter.

One female bird was treated at Auckland Zoo for an infection but joined the others 19 days later.

Kakapo programme manager Deidre Vercoe Scott said it was hoped the birds – all proven breeders – will feed their chicks on the island without assistance.

When checking on the birds after two months on the island they had dispersed widely and were in good health, Ms Vercoe Scott said. Two of the birds who had spent time on Hauturu 14 years ago had reclaimed their former home ranges.

"Little Barrier provides us with an important alternative breeding site," said Ms Vercoe Scott. The birds will stay on the island for between six and 10 years before a decision is made on whether to develop a full-time breeding colony.

www.beehive.govt.nz/release/minister-welcomes-flight-kakapo

Island exports

The 'species factory' that is Tiritiri Matangi exported again last month with a shipment of whiteheads (popokatea) to the Waitakere ranges.

Seventy of the songbirds were released in the Ark in the Park sanctuary after being captured in mist nets by supporters of both the island and mainland sanctuaries.

Ark in the Park has a long-term strategic plan with the Department of Conservation to enable whitehead top-ups for five to 10 years. One hundred and fifty five birds have been

previously released, in 2005, 2008 and 2011, and many of these birds have bred.

The tiny native birds became extinct in Auckland and Northland in the early 1900s. Māori folklore held the popokatea is a messenger between humans and the gods, and as such is very tapu.

The project is a partnership between Forest & Bird (Waitakere Branch) and the Auckland Council, supported by Te Kawerau a Maki iwi and by volunteers who put in close to 8000 hours a year.

www.arkinthepark.org.nz

Life passion recognised

After a lifetime promoting marine conservation, Northland environmentalist Wade Doak has been awarded a Queen's Service Medal in the Queen's Birthday and Diamond Jubilee Honours.

He was one of the first advocates for the protection of the marine environment in the 1960s, and is associated particularly with creation of the Poor Knights marine reserve.

He is also internationally recognised for his underwater photography and film-making, has published 17 books,

is a popular speaker and a regular visitor to schools.

The award citation notes 72-year-old Mr Doak is renowned for his advocacy on behalf of the marine environment and his ability to engage in effective dialogue with both allies and opponents.

Farming green

Waikato Regional Council presence at Fieldays 2012 in June focussed on ways farming and the environment can work together.

Chairman Peter Buckley said he was committed to protecting waterways and knew many fellow farmers working hard on the same front. "But we also know water quality is being significantly compromised. Fieldays is an important opportunity for the council to discuss with farmers their role in making changes to the way we collectively protect water resources in our region."

The council stand provided advice on "smart strategies for water, working the strips, farming to the land, and managing effluent and nutrients."

www.waikatoregion.govt.nz/Community/Whats-happening/Events/Fieldays/

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 Māori Affairs, elected representatives from Auckland Council (including the Great Barrier and Waiheke local boards), Waikato Regional Council, 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 Council
Ph 09 624 4749 tim.higham@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz www.haurakigulfforum.org.nz

Photo credits: UoA/Rochelle Constantine, Auckland Council, NIWA, Wade Doak, Ark in the Park/Andy Kirby, DoC/Deidre Vercoe Scott.