



Hauraki Gulf Forum  
Tikapa Moana  
Te Moananui a Toi

# Weaving the Strands

Promoting and facilitating integrated management around the Hauraki Gulf – Tikapa Moana, Te Moananui a Toi.

## Time for a check up

The Hauraki Gulf Forum has just completed its three yearly assessment of the state of the Hauraki Gulf/Tikapa Moana as required under the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park Act and it shows we are at a crossroads.

There is a significant gap between the state we desire and its current condition. We've defined a response framework to close that gap but the real work is yet to happen.

State of our Gulf 2014 shows that fish stocks are generally lower than where we would want them. There's signs the Firth of Thames is starting to wheeze under nitrogen loads, our estuaries and harbours are tending to get muddier, and we've found some nasty new marine pests are making their way around the Gulf. We haven't yet done enough to safeguard our endemic black petrels and resident Bryde's whales.

But there are some hopeful signs too. The report documents growing awareness and commitment in the farming, fishing and marine sectors. Tangata whenua are asserting their kaitiaki role through new partnership arrangements, restoration plans and ownership interests. And these conversations are being brought together in the Sea Change -Tai Timu Tai Pari marine spatial planning process, now at its half way stage.

The State of our Gulf 2014 report and its implications will be explored at the 2014 Hauraki Gulf Marine Park seminar on 20 October at Auckland Museum.



We've assembled a top line up of thinkers and speakers around the theme On the Horizon, including chef and restaurateur Al Brown, architect Nat Cheshire, film maker Steve Hathaway and Sir Charles Fleming Award winning scientist Dr Mike Joy.

State of our Gulf 2014 lead author Dr Shane Kelly and independent chair of the Sea Change – Tai Timu Tai Pari Stakeholder Working Group Nick Main will explain their work.

Recent seminars have attracted full houses, so early bookings through Auckland Museum are advised.

The last quarter has seen the passing of the Ngā Mana Whenua o Tāmaki Makaurau Collective Redress Act.

Congratulations to all involved in this five year settlement process.

The opening of a specially carved waharoa, or customary gateway, alongside a new wharf on Rangitoto, provided an occasion to celebrate this important milestone last month.

For more about the many exciting things that have been happening around our Gulf this quarter, read on...



Mayor John Tregidga,  
Chair, Hauraki Gulf Forum



Carved waharoa on Rangitoto.



Mussels reseeded into Gulf.



Bryde's whale death near Pakiri.

## Collective Redress Act

The Ngā Mana Whenua o Tāmaki Makaurau Collective Redress Act entered into force on 1 August, completing five years of collective tribal endeavour.

The act recognises the historical claims of 13 iwi and hapū over their shared customary and mana whenua interests in the Auckland region, including 14 of the region's tūpuna maunga (volcanic cones), and motu (islands). It recognises that the maunga and motu are taonga. Iwi and hapū have always maintained a unique relationship with these taonga and honour their intergenerational role as kaitiaki.

The redress includes:

Vesting of certain volcanic cones in the iwi and hapū of Ngā Mana Whenua o Tāmaki Makaurau (Tāmaki Collective) and a co-governance partnership with the Auckland Council over those maunga

A long-term (172 year) right of first refusal over certain land held by the Crown in Tāmaki Makaurau

The vesting and re-vesting of certain motu (islands), vesting of certain Rangitoto Island properties and the recording of iwi and hapū interests, and the start of the Tāmaki Makaurau Motu Plan by the Department of Conservation.

Among several name changes and recognition of original Māori names, the official name Hauraki Gulf/Tikapa Moana takes effect.

[www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2014/0052/latest/DLM5322326.html](http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2014/0052/latest/DLM5322326.html)

## Magic carpets

Efforts to revive the Gulf's lost mussel beds were given a significant boost in September. Around three and a half million live adult mussels were deposited in a restoration area the size of eight rugby fields off eastern Waiheke Island.

The Revive our Gulf community trust established initial beds last December and monitoring by University of Auckland scientists has shown successful establishment and the presence of juvenile mussels.

The 63 tonnes of sub-market size mussels increase the restoration area ten-fold and were donated by North Island Mussels Ltd.

Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei has also introduced mussels as part of its restoration programmes to restore the mauri (life force) of Ōkahu Bay.

Because of their filtering power mussels can act as bio-remediators to remove sediments and contaminants from surrounding stormwater and marina infrastructure.

[www.reviveourgulf.org.nz](http://www.reviveourgulf.org.nz)  
[www.scoop.co.nz/stories/AK1408/S00392/okahu-bay-mussel-reef-restoration-project-commences.htm](http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/AK1408/S00392/okahu-bay-mussel-reef-restoration-project-commences.htm)

## Whale strike

Another Bryde's whale has been found dead, killed by ship strike. The 15.3 metre male was discovered near Pakiri Beach earlier this month, and a necropsy by University of Auckland and Auckland Zoo staff revealed trauma consistent with being hit by a large vessel.

The Ports of Auckland developed a transit protocol for commercial shipping in September 2013 to reduce threats to the less than 200 Bryde's whales that reside in or visit the Gulf.

The protocol urges ship masters to plan passage through the Gulf at a safe speed of 10 knots, as well as keeping watch and reporting sightings. There have now been 44 recorded fatalities of Bryde's whales in the greater Hauraki Gulf since 1989. Ninety percent of whale carcasses examined show the cause of death was ship strike.

The Hauraki Gulf Forum is working with the shipping industry and other parties to build awareness of, and compliance with, the protocol.

## Rat free anniversary

The 50th anniversary of the first eradication of predators from a Gulf island was marked in September.

In 1964 the late Don Merton and fellow conservationists declared Maria Island in the Noises group free of troublesome Norway rats.

Since then many successful eradications have resulted in 10 percent of New Zealand's islands having mammalian predator-free status.

At a symposium to mark the half-century University of Auckland scientist Dr James Russell noted the biggest challenges lay ahead, with large inhabited islands like Great Barrier.

[www.scoop.co.nz/stories/ED1409/S00043/rats-no-longer-rule.htm](http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/ED1409/S00043/rats-no-longer-rule.htm)



Rat eradication 50th anniversary.



Gulf-based cruise ship Ipipiri.



Steve and Riley Hathaway.



Wetland within Flat Bush special housing area.



Cushion forming flowering plant *Scleranthus biflorus*.



Tarahiki island.

## New conservation park

Conservation Minister Dr Nick Smith announced the new Aotea Conservation Park on Great Barrier Island in July.

Totalling 12,109 hectares in 18 different blocks the park will become the department's largest in the Auckland region. Possum-free Great Barrier is a stronghold for kaka, pateke (brown teal), puweto (spotless crane) and matata (fernbird), very rare frogs, native paua slugs and niho taniwha (chevron skink).

Dr Smith said the new park will bring significant conservation, recreational and tourism benefits to Auckland, but recent extensive storm damage meant a priority was \$2.5 million in repairs of tracks, bridges, huts, signage, campgrounds and offices.

[www.national.org.nz/news/news/media-releases/detail/2014/07/20/new-aotea-conservation-park-approved](http://www.national.org.nz/news/news/media-releases/detail/2014/07/20/new-aotea-conservation-park-approved)

## Pacific links

Conservation International, an international environmental NGO with marine projects in the Pacific, has opened a new office at the University of Auckland. The August opening event doubled as a welcome for Professor Simon Thrush as the new Director of the university's Institute of Marine Sciences. Professor Thrush said Conservation International's presence would complement research undertaken from the Leigh Marine Laboratory and broadened opportunities for students.

[www.auckland.ac.nz/en/about/news-events-and-notice/news/news-2014/07/new-collaboration-between-uoa-and-conservation-international.html](http://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/about/news-events-and-notice/news/news-2014/07/new-collaboration-between-uoa-and-conservation-international.html)

## What's next?

The Hauraki Gulf/Tikapa Moana will feature in new initiatives by film maker Steve Hathaway and his 13 year old daughter Riley. The first 10 episodes of Young Ocean Explorers, eight of them filmed in the Hauraki Gulf, have been a hit on popular children's TV show What Now. They are being turned into a DVD and book for distribution to every school in New Zealand, and a second series is planned. The new initiatives will be funded following a successful campaign on the kickstarter fundraising web site.

[www.kickstarter.com/projects/1062176248/young-ocean-explorers-book-and-dvd-into-every-school](http://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1062176248/young-ocean-explorers-book-and-dvd-into-every-school)

## Local cruise ship

The Hauraki Gulf has its own cruise ship. The 44.5metre Ipipiri, operated by Hauraki Blue Cruises, began plying the Auckland Harbour and Hauraki Gulf/Tikapa Moana this month.

The luxury catamaran offers 30 ocean view cabins, an 80-seat restaurant and bar, and access to kayaking, snorkelling and swimming.

InterCity Group CEO John Thorburn says, "It is the ultimate floating venue to showcase the sights of the Hauraki Gulf for locals and visitors." Auckland Tourism, Events and Economic Development (ATEED) Tourism Manager Jason Hill said the new ship "was a significant offering in Auckland's growing tourism market and a welcome new venue for weddings, receptions, conferences and corporate events."

[www.haurakibluecruises.co.nz](http://www.haurakibluecruises.co.nz)

## Marine pollution update

The government announced amended regulations to reduce marine pollution in March. Changes will prohibit all forms of garbage (with the exception of food waste), incinerator ash, cargo residues and cleaning substances from being discharged from ships into the coastal marine area.

<http://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/amended-regulations-reduce-marine-pollution>

## Smart development

Auckland Council and its contractors have shown environmental quality and new housing can go hand in hand.

An exemplar wetland has been created to provide water quality treatment and 10 year flood protection in the special housing area at Flat Bush at the head of the Tamaki Estuary. Originally grazing land, the wetland will improve the quality of the reticulated storm water by removing coarse contaminants and keeping water cool before it flows into an adjoining stream. "It shows what can be done when an organisation and its project partners put the environment first, even when the pressure is on," says John Dunshea, Auckland Council City Transformation Project Manager.

Future plans include creating a walking and cycling track, enhancement of old kahikatea trees and a fish ladder. The project has involved iwi, private landowners, Watercare and Auckland Transport, design teams Tonkin & Taylor and HEB Construction.

[www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/EN/planspolicies/projects/CouncilProjects/Pages/flatbush.aspx](http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/EN/planspolicies/projects/CouncilProjects/Pages/flatbush.aspx)

## Botanical finds

Botanical surveys have recently been completed on some of the lesser known islands of the Gulf.

Auckland Museum's Curator of Botany Ewen Cameron and members of the Auckland Botanical Society focused on the chain of mainly privately owned islands east and southeast of Waiheke Island: Tarahiki, Pakatoa, Rotoroa, Ruthe Islet, Ponui, Pakihi, and Karamarama.

Interesting finds included coastal mahoe, milk tree and the cushion forming *Scleranthus biflorus*. Native species on the islands ranged from 29 to 66 percent of the totals recorded.

[www.aucklandmuseum.com/collections-and-library/research-centre/research-projects/botanical-survey-of-the-hauraki-gulf-islands](http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/collections-and-library/research-centre/research-projects/botanical-survey-of-the-hauraki-gulf-islands)

## Rangitoto gateway

A celebration was held on Rangitoto Island in August to open a new wharf and carved waharoa or customary gateway.

The new wharf will service the 100,000 people who visit the island each year and cater for future growth, including walkers of the multi-day Rangitoto-Motutapu Haerenga walk, part of the Department of Conservation's Manaaki Trails.

[www.doc.govt.nz/about-doc/news/media-releases/2014/new-wharf-opens-on-rangitoto-island/](http://www.doc.govt.nz/about-doc/news/media-releases/2014/new-wharf-opens-on-rangitoto-island/)

*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.*

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Photo credits: Auckland Council, Department of Conservation, Richard Robinson, Shane Kelly, Hauraki Blue Cruises, Ewen Cameron.

## Living legacy

Tributes flowed to one of the pioneers of the marine park with the death in July of former Auckland Commissioner of Crown Lands Darcy O'Brien, aged 96.

Mr O'Brien made at least 40 separate property purchases creating over 5000ha of conservation estate in Northland and Auckland, more than anyone else in New Zealand. Nikki Kaye, Auckland Central MP, described him as "an amazing man whose legacy would live in the historic areas, parks, islands and coastline he preserved."

[www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=1&objectid=10856392](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10856392)

## Beach quality improves

Auckland's beaches had an improved bill of health last summer, according to a report this month from Auckland Council's Safeswim beach water quality monitoring programme. The programme monitors water quality at 69 sites, taking samples once a week. According to the report, 92 per cent of 1401 water samples taken at Auckland's beaches between November and March met health guidelines.

[www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/EN/environmentwaste/researchmonitoring/beach\\_water\\_quality\\_safeswim/pages/home.aspx](http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/EN/environmentwaste/researchmonitoring/beach_water_quality_safeswim/pages/home.aspx)

## Sustainable Seas

The Sustainable Seas Ko Nga Moana Whakauka National Science Challenge was launched in September. Science and Innovation Minister Steven Joyce said the \$31.3 million, five year project would enable development of an ecosystem-based management approach to inform enhanced use of marine resources and good environmental stewardship. It would also help meet the aspirations and rights of New Zealand's multi-cultural society, including Maori.

[www.niwa.co.nz/news/national-science-challenge-launched-today](http://www.niwa.co.nz/news/national-science-challenge-launched-today)

## Unwelcome jewels

Storms in July washed up scores of plastic beads on Takapuna Beach, likely to have come from the sunken MV Rena near Tauranga. Maritime New Zealand confirmed the 5mm beads, commonly used in plastics manufacturing, were among the 1368 containers on the 37,000 tonne Rena, which ran aground in 2011. The "bejewelled look" of the kelp on the high tide mark prompted concerned residents to initiate community clean up activities.

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/auckland/local-news/north-shore-times/10345841/Renas-mess-comes-ashore-in-Auckland>



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