MARINE FARMING ASSOCIATION
To Promote & Nurture Sustainable Marine Farming

FEBRUARY 2022 NEWSLETTER

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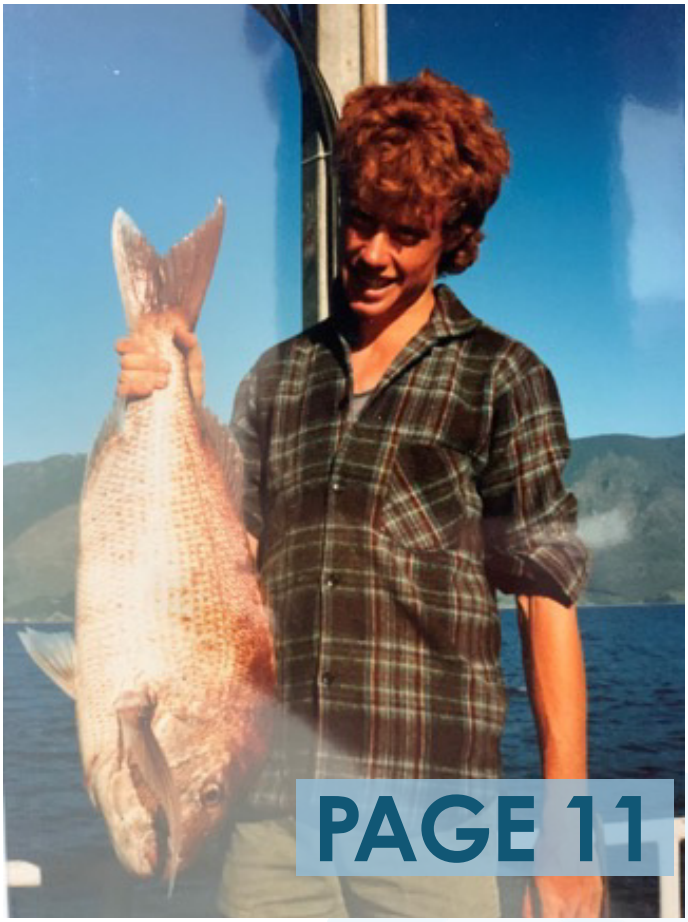

IMPORTANT DATES

AQNZ Board Meeting
23rd March 2022

MFA ECSC Meeting
25th March 2022

MFA Board Meeting
7th April 2022

Last day to submit Q2 light audits
30th April 2022

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e info@marinefarming.co.nz | w www.marinefarming.co.nz

President's Comment

The New Year started off with a hiss and a roar - we certainly had some great weather. I hope everyone enjoyed a much-deserved break. I managed to get down to the family bach for a week and enjoyed lots of fishing! I did notice the massive increase in recreational vessels out in the Sounds this year and had my fair share of encounters with the affectionately termed 'loopies', who clearly weren't familiar with the navigation rules.

February has thrown us a couple of curve balls. We've had unusually stormy weather for what is supposed to be the middle of summer and seen record rainfall causing disruptions to both roading infrastructure and the harvesting process.

On top of that, we are about to experience the many challenges associated with widespread community transmission of Omicron.

Fortunately, as a food business, we are able to continue operating and have been classified as a Critical Service. I encourage you, if you haven't already, to register your business here https://www.business.govt.nz/covid-19/close-contact-exemption-scheme/. This is a critical step to ensure that your staff can continue working, even if they are identified as a close contact.

Looking at the modeler's predictions, the worst of it should be over in 3-4 months. I hope this is the case as we're all keen to move on with life.

Unfortunately, this year's Havelock Mussel Festival has become a victim of Covid-19. The MFA continues to support the festival through this time, and I encourage all sponsors to do the same, so we can look forward to a great festival in 2023.

With regard to MEP, we are making headway, despite the process moving slower than we would have liked. Through working together with members and AQNZ, we have put a compelling case to the Panel for consideration. This collaborative approach is so important when dealing with a process that has so many moving parts.

It has been two and a half years since we last levied members, and we will be asking for your support again in March. It is imperative that we remain engaged in the Plan Change process to ensure that the regulatory settings aren't at odds with the ongoing viability of the industry.

The King Shag project is in its final year, with the remaining GPS trackers set to be deployed in early March. This time we're looking to track birds from The Trios, Haystack, Port Gore and Duffers Reef. The results of this round of tracking and the final report will be published later this year. The project

has been a real success, not only for the industry, but also for the wider scientific community and environmental interests. For us, the documented positive interactions between King Shag and mussel farms is a real good news story.

This is also the final year for the Mussel Bed Restoration Project. This has been another success and the highlight for me has been the collaboration within industry, with vessel resources, seed supply and staff time all provided for the project. The outcomes of this research form part of the blueprint for seabed restoration here in NZ and around the world. See Emilee's article for more information.

I look forward to the remainder of summer, the continuation of some good weather and a few more fishing days, hopefully with a few less 'loopies.'

Jono

MFA Newsletter Stories

If you have a story that you would like to see published in our newsletter, please forward it to info@marinefarming.co.nz for consideration.

Our newsletter comes out every two months – February, April, June, August, October, and December.

Environment Update

Happy New Year from the MFA Environment Committee!!

While January usually kicks off slowly as people head back to work in a staggered manner, we did have a busy December.

December used to be when we held our Big Day Out event but these days December is our Big Month Out.

While the industry is constantly out cleaning beaches year round, in December, we have a particular focus on having as many beaches as we can sparkly clean for the pending holiday makers.

The summary for December is as follows:

Number of cleans	64
Total people hours	363
Total boat hours	105
Marine Farm debris collected	197 kg
Other debris collected	421 kg
Floats collected	171

A huge congratulations goes out to the newest members of the MFA

Certification programme:

Keep up the great work!

MARLBOROUGH OYSTERS

NEW ZEALAND KING SALMON

The MFA Environment Committee will kick off 2022 with their first meeting in March.

Until then we have put the challenge out to all the organizations who sit on our Enviro committee to focus on float loss.

- Can they reduce the number of floats being stored on the water on farms, without having a huge impact on operations?
- Best practice ideas for tying and maintaining the bundles that are out on the water and for the floats holding up the farms.

We look forward to hearing from everyone, what they have tried, what works, what doesn't work and what we should do more of.

The best part of our Enviro committee is 14 companies coming together to share their on-water experience for the improvement of all.

2022 FESTIVAL - CANCELLED

We were putting the finishing touches on this year's festival, when we had to make the devastating call on the 12th of February to cancel the upcoming festival, scheduled to take place in 4 weeks.

True to form we waited, hoping the situation would get better, but unfortunately luck was not our side, unlike the last two festivals.

Due to the ongoing situation with Covid-19 within our community and no direction as to when the Traffic Light Settings were looking to change, we had no other option but to cancel this year's festival. Needless to say, it didn't make the decision any easier.

All ticket holders were notified that their tickets would roll over to the following year or they could request a refund prior to the 31st of March, through our ticketing provider.

Whilst this year's festival date will come and go with no seafood celebration, we encourage you to still get out there and enjoy the delicious Kai Moana that we produce in our region.

We are looking forward to the 2023 festival, when we can once again enjoy our local seafood and a great community day together!

2023 DATE - SATURDAY 11TH MARCH, HAVELOCK DOMAIN

WHAT TO EXPECT IN 2023!

We are excited to be able to confirm that **Kiwi Legends Jordan Luck Band** and **Celebrity Chef Simon Gault** will be joining us for the 2023 festival on Saturday the 11th of March, with more entertainment to be announced.

We are proud to be partnering with local Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology (NMIT) for the first **2023 NMIT Festival Chef** cooking competition. This community cooking competition is open to all ages and all abilities, with the focus being on creating a Kai Moana dish highlighting NZ King Salmon and/or NZ Greenshell Mussels.

The 2023 festival wouldn't be complete without the MFA Industry Tent, NIWA Kids Zone, public mussel opening competitions and the famous intercompany mussel opening competition including the Guinness World Record attempt.

2022 FESTIVAL SPONSORS

We wanted to say a big thank you to our sponsors for the ongoing support, without whom the festival would not be possible.

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Mussel Restoration

Project for the Marlborough Sounds – February 2022

One-year for mussels restored onto recycled mussel shell

Around 80% of mussels have survived for a year after being restored onto areas of muddy seabed in Pelorus Sound that were firstly covered in mussel shell from Sanford's processing factory. Interestingly, similar high survival was found for mussels placed directly onto muddy seafloor without the shell that were nearby.

In January 2021 around 20 tonnes of adult mussels we experimentally deployed at two locations in Pelorus Sound with different types of seabed. Kenepuru Entrance is very muddy, and Fairy Bay has sandy mud. The sites also differed in the abundance of predatory eleven-armed starfish, which prey on mussels, with the Fairy Bay location having more than double the amount of starfish than Kenepuru Entrance.

This recycled shell experiment has confirmed that mussels can survive in deeper areas of Pelorus Sound (12 metres deep) and that the use of recycled shell does not appear to influence survival of mussels in these environments after one year. The higher presence of starfish predators outside Kenepuru Sound matches the results of our first mussel restoration experiment. This may help to explain why historically the inner Pelorus, especially Kenepuru Sound, had the largest wild mussel populations.

The next steps for this experiment are to continue to analyse the data collected over the year on mussel condition, growth, and mussel bed areas and densities. This information will give us a further understanding of the use of recycled mussel shell for restoration and allow us to make recommendations for future restoration efforts.

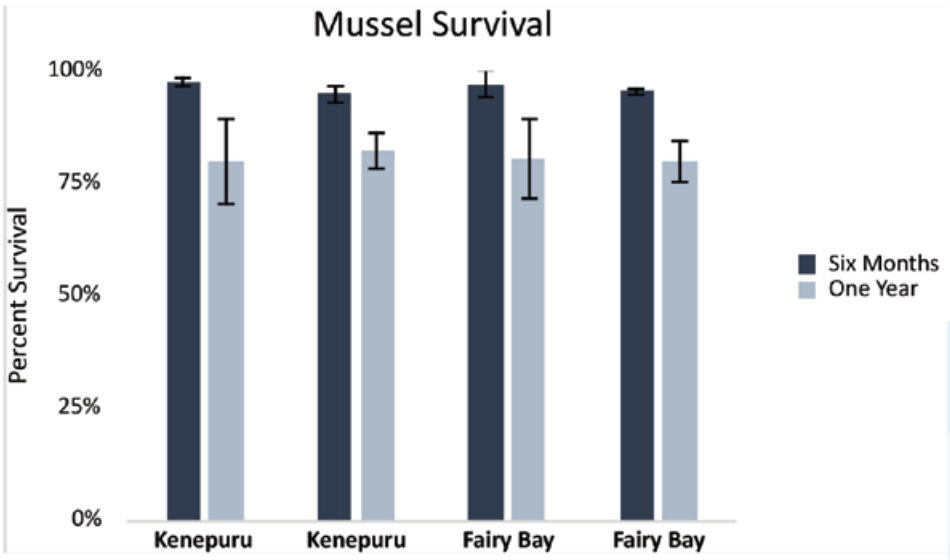


Figure 1: Mussel survival after six months and one year on the seabed on either recycled shell or mud at two locations.

As always, if you have any questions or comments on this project, please feel free to reach out to Emilee Benjamin via email at

egol669@aucklanduni.ac.nz.

Figure 2: Mussels on recycled shell at Fairy Bay with lots of algal growth.

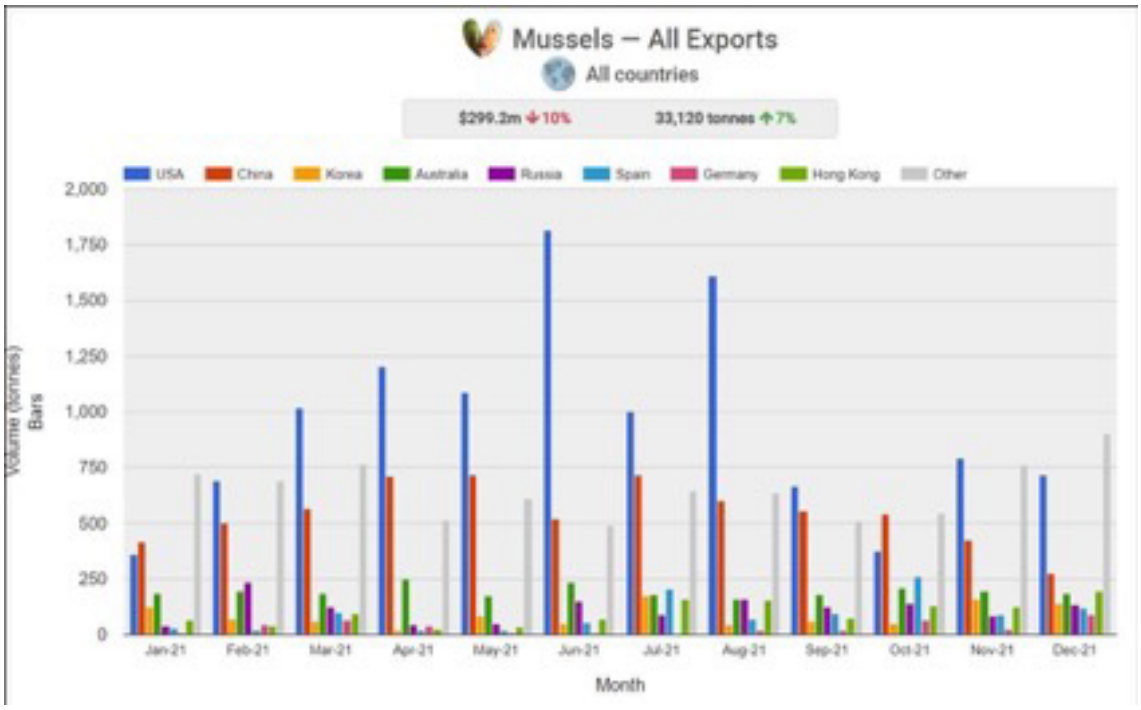
Figure 3: A nudibranch that was spotted near our restored mussel beds at Kenepuru Entrance.

Figure 4: A seahorse that was wrapped around a mussel in a mussel bed at Kenepuru Entrance.

AQNZ Statistics

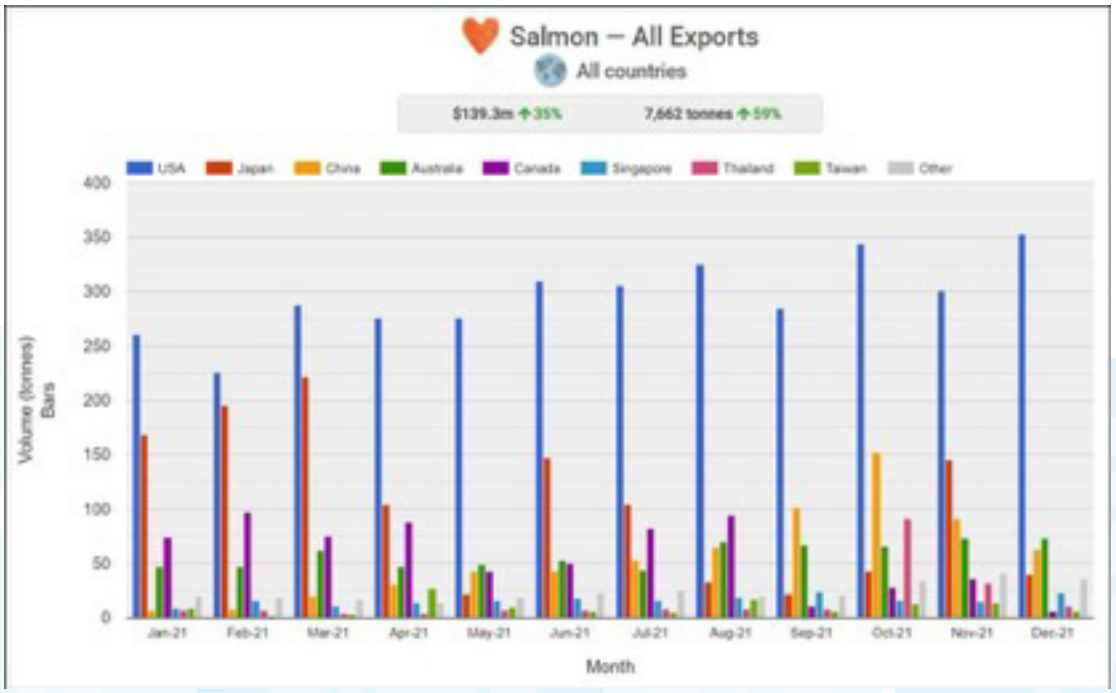
Mussel Exports

Value of total mussel exports for 2021, compared to 2020, was down 10% to $299.2m with volume up 7% to 33,120 MT (as per graph below).



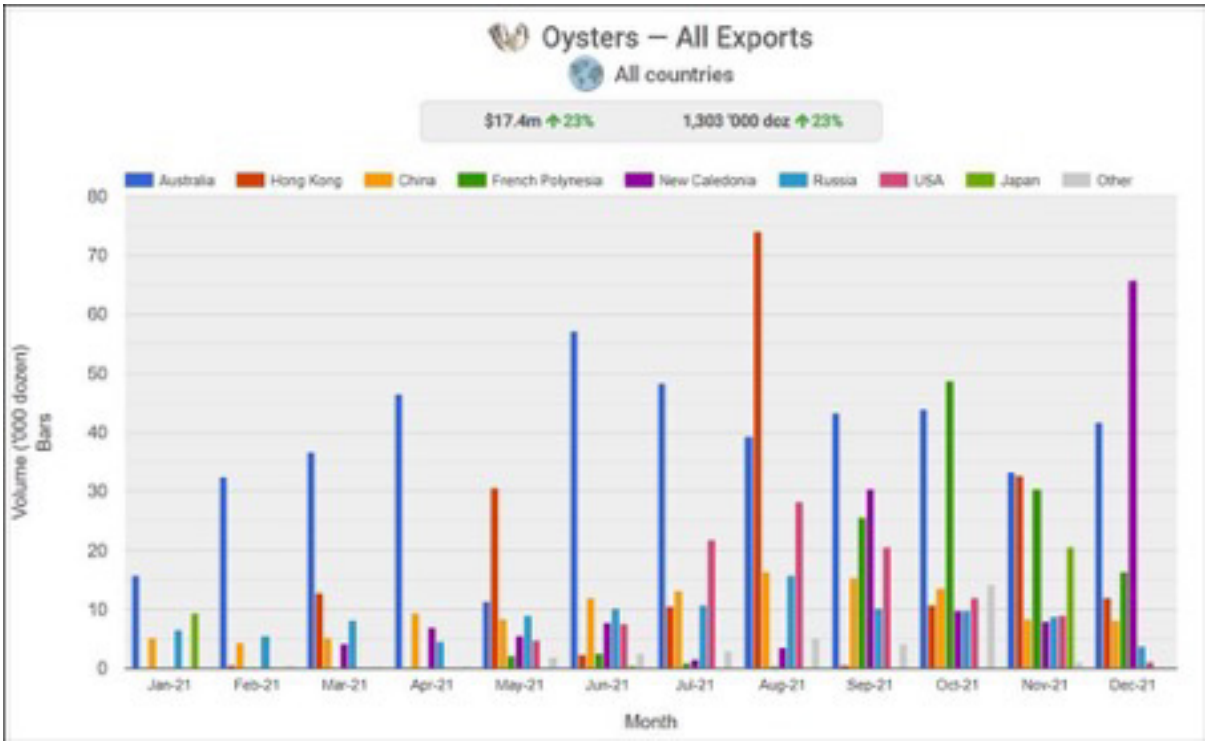
Salmon Exports

2021 was a fantastic year for salmon exports – export value up 35%, compared to 2020, to $139.3m and volume up 59% to 7,662 MT. This record export revenue year was more than 20% above 2019 - our previous record calendar year. This is a great result for our salmon exporters!



Oyster Exports:

Total oyster export value is up 23% this year to $17.4m and volume is also up 23% to 1,303,000 dozen. Export value is made up of 58% frozen oysters, 37% live and 3% chilled.



ToS Biosecurity Update

Fanworm were found on two vessels but no structures or seabed during the summer survey this year.

"We are still processing the data which will be up online at https://marinebiosecurity.gitlab.io/report in March" said Barrie Forrest who leads the survey. "We had a great response from the boating community with good cooperation from most vessel owners. My overall impression is that vessels were cleaner this year and it will be interesting to see if the data bear this out.

Styela clava the clubbed tunicate was found mostly on vessels from Nelson. This harmful organism is spreading in the region and is now being found on the seabed in locations outside the ports and marinas particularly in the Kenepuru.

"We found one vessel in the Abel Tasman where the new owners were in water scraping their hull and dropping the waste on the seabed. This included Styela clava. At least this skipper was making an honest mistake. We see other vessels where the owners should know better but keep up scraping in otherwise pristine locations" said Forrest.

No invasive species new to the region were found in the survey although there were over 1,100 data points logged.

It's in the blood for Dean

Dean Higgins is third-generation of a Marlborough family involved in the mussel industry since well before the farming of the species began.

His parents, Albie and Raelene who still live in Blenheim, used to handpick mussels in the Kenepuru and Nydia Bay (for Norman Wells) in the mid-1960's

And his grandfather on his mother's side, Tom Slape, occasionally worked for Winston Pickering who started Wairau Fisheries in the 1960s, processing and cooking wild mussels.

Dean's grandfather, Tom Slape, (left) working at Wairau Fisheries in the 1960s

So, it's no surprise that as a fifteen-year-old, the night shift at Sanford's Havelock factory was Dean's own introduction to a 35-year career in the seafood industry, mostly centred on greenshell mussels. He's enjoyed just about every day of it and established friendships that have proved life-long.

Dean worked on the Sanford processing line in 1986 as a fifth former at Marlborough Boys College during the holidays as well as some night shifts. The following year he left school and joined the permanent staff.

"I did just about every job in the factory apart from cooking."

But his eye was on the mussel boats bringing in the sacks every day to the factory. He approached Chris Godsiff, then managing operations for Sanford, who put him on top of the list.

"Two weeks later he tapped me on the shoulder when I was opening mussels and said: I've got a job for you."

He joined the Wait Iti at age 18 as a deckhand, serving with Vaughan Ellis as skipper.

"It's a book in itself the adventures I had with Vaughan. The industry was just beginning, and we had a lot of fun. One of our proudest achievements was developing and catching the first commercial quantities of local spat in Pelorus Sound. Don't get me wrong, people had been catching spat before us, but we were first to catch huge volumes for commercial scale operations. Back in those days we caught so much spat we couldn't use it all."

They also worked ridiculous hours. "One time we worked three days straight without stopping. I've seen grown men falling asleep standing up on many occasions."

When Dean was 21, Vaughan was offered a management role at Sanford and told Dean the first-ever skipper's course in Picton was about to be held:

He said: "You're starting it next week."

Dean circa 1990. He reckons haircuts cost half a week's wages back then

Vaughan Ellis, around the same time in his obligatory 'big snapper' photo

It was four intensive weeks with the exams held on the final Sunday.

"If I passed, I was taking a boat out on Monday; if not, I was back as a deckhand," says Dean.

Only two out of 18 students passed the course and Dean started the week as skipper of the San-Tai.

San Tai which Dean skippered straight out of the Picton skipper's school

After a few years at the helm in the early 90s, Dean decided to try his hand at inshore fishing. This included surface long-lining out of Bluff, catching hoki in Cook Strait and chasing albacore tuna off the West Coast.

But he missed the mates and the mussel industry and returned in 1998 to a skipper's role with Marlborough Mussel Company, owned by the Yealands family, and Vaughan Ellis turned up not long after in a management role. It was soon bought by Pacifica and after a year Merv Whipp took over running the operation. He asked Dean if he'd like to take on a job in management assisting Vaughan.

"I came off the boats and got trained up in management. Merv was awesome to work for."

Pacifica's mussel business was sold to Sanford in 2010. Vaughan had gone overseas and Dean joined Kono which was then expanding. Merv had gone to Ngai Tahu and lured Dean across.

After a couple of years, Ngai Tahu decided to sell its aquaculture division and it was bought by Kono.

"So, I boomeranged back to Kono." He's been there ever since and now is Operations Manager across Golden Bay and the Pelorus.

"I've worked for a lot of different people and it's given me a good overview of the industry. There's not many mussel farms (in the top of South) I haven't visited."

That included a lot of diving back in the day which confirmed for him the wider benefits of mussel farming beyond being a sustainable source of fantastic food for the world.

"Every mussel farm is a mini marine reserve. Every time I dived underneath a farm it was just teaming with life. You'd go off the farm and it was just mud with nothing happening."

Mind you, diving under a farm almost cost him his life. He and a buddy were in Crail Bay in the mid-90s, searching for a block which had dragged in on a mussel line. Dean hadn't checked his air gauge after a first dive attempt. The block had gone down into a trench and Dean discovered he was at 147 feet down with no air left. He credits his diving buddy, Aaron Williams with saving his life by sharing his air through a rapid ascent. They surfaced with blown out noses and ears and masks full of blood.

"No one could understand why we didn't get the bends."

Dean stopped diving after that but there was no shortage of other hard physical work. He was part of an effort to grow scallops on lantern trays and there was always the mussel harvesting, much of it involving manual effort.

The dumb barge "Brutus" harvesting around 1990

"If you processed 10 tonne in a day the boss would shout you a beer at the pub. We do that now in minutes. We had no hiabs on the harvester; it was pallets and a pallet jiffy to move one tonne bags around the deck."

While technology has moved on hugely, Dean says it's still developing and needs to as nature is aways going to throw curved balls.

"You're always worried about having enough spat, how are they going to grow and perform. We've only been marine farming for about 40 years. They've been working the land for thousands of years. We are still breaking new ground every day."

"While it's been amazing to watch and be involved in the innovations and improvements that have been made in the industry, if 35 years of mussel farming has taught me anything, it's that people are the most important asset to any operation; having the right people, passionate about what they do, fully supported and looked after, will make any business succeed.

MFA fund to support research, innovation and environment projects

Got an idea that could benefit the top of the South aquaculture sector? If so, you might want to apply to the new MFA fund aimed at encouraging innovation and research. The Fund offers up to $40,000 to companies or individuals to develop products, services or projects that will benefit members and the wider industry.

MFA GM Ned Wells says the contestable fund will be overseen by MFA's Research, Development and Technology sub-committee (RDTSC) and its Environment & Compliance sub-committee (ECSC).

"We have two work streams that applicants can target. They can either address MFA's research and innovation priorities or a number of environmental initiatives."

Applications open on the 1st of April 2022 and close at the end of May. Shortlisted applications then progress to interviews with the Panel and funding will be awarded 30th of June 2022.

Ned says there is a wide range of criteria across the two different sets of MFA priorities.

"We are wanting to encourage a whole range of applications across research and innovation ideas along with those which reflect the MFA's commitments to our environment and sustaining it."

Ned says research and development projects relating to new aquaculture species are not included in the scope as there are other sources of funding for such R&D.

"But if your research is about production of existing species in a polyculture/co-culture arrangement which might include new species, that would meet the requirements of the contestable fund."

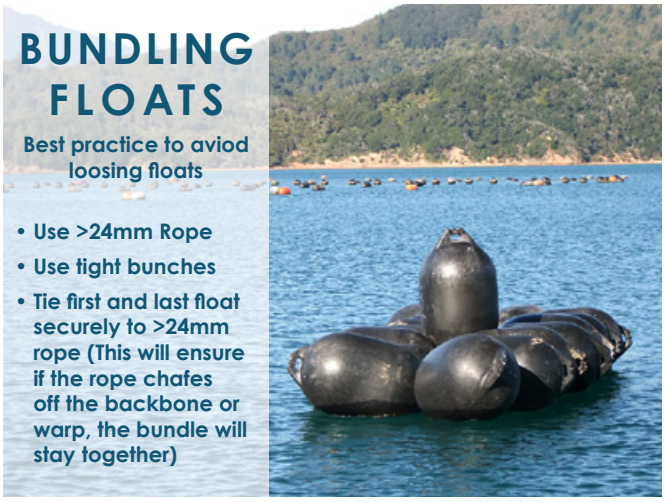
When assessing applications, the MFA panel will consider whether applicants have addressed one or more of MFA's 'priorities', adequately described the project/research and how it will benefit the aquaculture industry, demonstrated the skills, capacity and experience required to successfully deliver the project and included a realistic budget and timeline.

"We will also be looking at whether applicants have feasible plans to leverage the seed funding to maximise the research scope".

For successful applicants, the MFA will draw on its own networks to connect them with industry members who are able to share knowledge and provide practical input into a given project. MFA will also support, as appropriate, any bids for additional funding.

Ned says he is hopeful that access to seed funding will encourage people to progress that lightbulb idea or support important research.

Full details of the MFA Contestable Fund available here
https://www.marinefarming.co.nz/mfa-contestable-fund/



Marine Farm Compliance Audit Programme

Declarations are Due
30th April 2022

If you have not sent in your declaration for the 2nd quarter, please do so as soon as possible

ONE **DECLARATION FORM PER SITE**
DUE BY THE END OF EACH PERIOD

November, December, January	(1)
February, March, April	**(2)**
May, June, July	(3)
August, September, October	(4)

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No boarder - 210mm x 297mm
With boarder - 180mm x 267mm
Ordinary Members $100 +GST
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NIWA delivers six-month forecasts of sea-surface temperature

NIWA has launched a web-page that provides access to forecasts of sea-surface temperatures for the coming six months. NIWA compiles these forecasts using data available from the Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S, https://climate.copernicus.eu/) project.

You can find the web-page here:

https://niwa.co.nz/climate/sea-surface-temperature-update

NIWA intends to issue updated forecasts through that web-page on or around the 20th of each month for at least the remainder of this financial year.

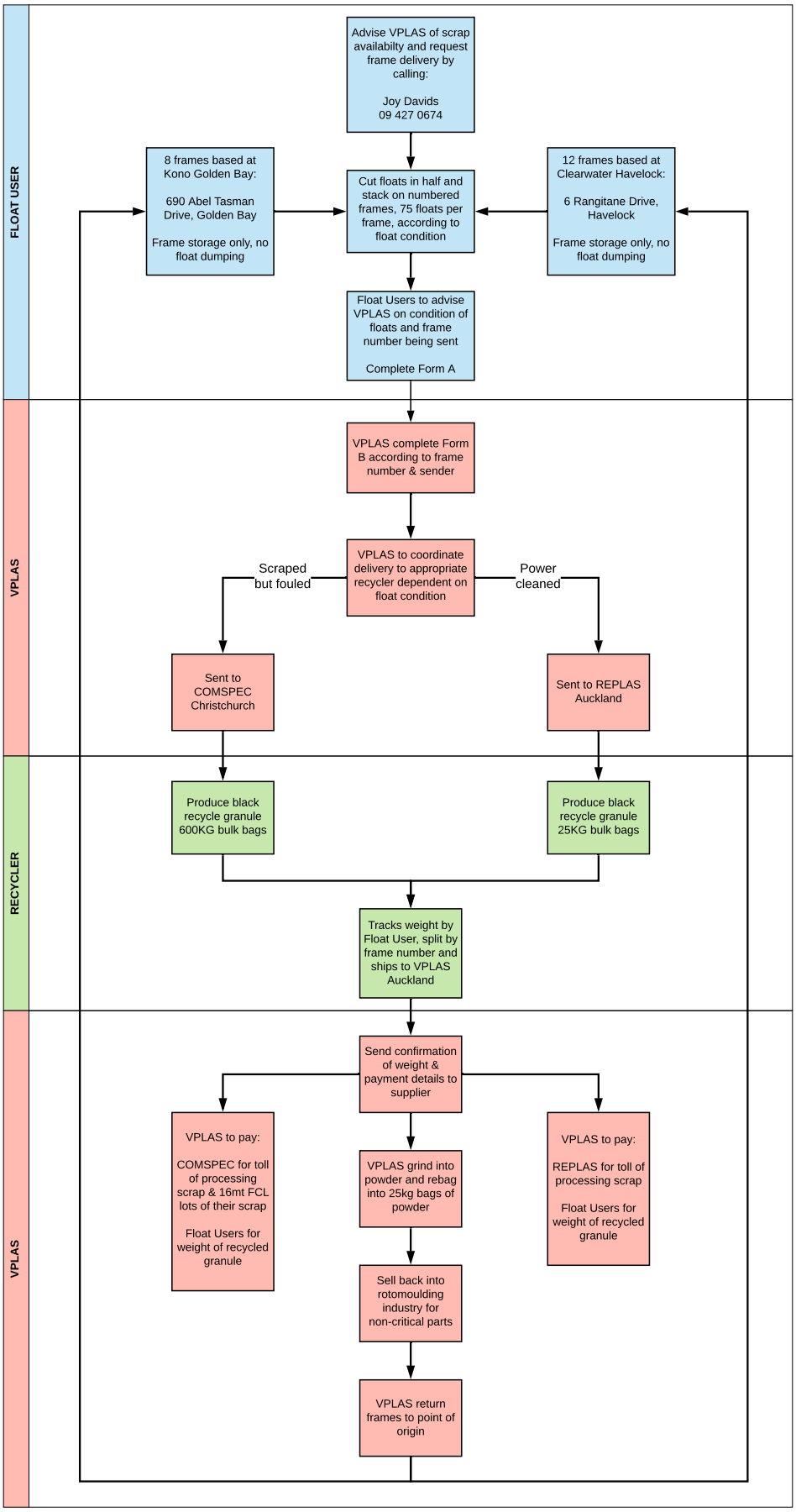
The forecasts are presented as maps of the monthly average temperature anomalies (differences from the long-term average for the calendar month). They stem from simulations made by suite of models. Each model has a horizontal spatial resolution of around 150 km x 150 km. Whilst this resolution is sufficient to enable them to represent simple, open coastlines with moderate fidelity, they cannot represent finer features such as the Marlborough Sounds. The temperatures that arise on any given day within a specific bay may prove higher (or lower) than the projected, larger spatial-scale month average temperature in the more open waters outside the bay. NIWA is working towards developing methods to better forecast temperatures inside such bays. Whilst NIWA offers no warranties on the quality/accuracy of these forecasts, we hope that you will find these forecasts interesting and useful.

NIWA is keen to hear how and why you use these forecasts and how we could work with you to make future forecasts more relevant to your needs. Please offer any feedback to Niall Broekhuizen (Niall.Broekhuizen@niwa.co.nz, 07 856 7158).

This work is funded through NIWA's Strategic Science Investment Fund from the Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment.

NIWA
Taihoro Nukurangi

FLOAT RECYCLING PROCESS



Slap on that seaweed

A project supported by a top of South aquaculture company and researchers is looking at the potential for endemic and native seaweed and algal species to be used in sun care products.

There are 3 main groups of seaweeds,(often referred to as macroalgae: Green, red, and brown, all of which are farmed or harvested in some manner. Photo: Rossella Nicolai

Cawthron Institute has partnered with Wakatu Incorporation and Auckland-based SRW Laboratories Ltd on an 18-month marine farm seaweed biodiversity study to identify, sample and collect species seasonally.

Led by Cawthron's Mike Packer and Tom Wheeler, the Seaweed sun defence project is investigating whether Aotearoa New Zealand seaweeds can be used in environmentally friendly and innovative sun care products.

Paul South is a Cawthron ecologist who specialises in seaweed biodiversity. On a field trip last year he and aquaculture technician Rossella Nicolai measured and collected seaweed samples from marine farms to understand what seaweed species are present and how much there is. The Marlborough Sounds trip was facilitated by Dean Higgins and Greg Smith from Kono New Zealand, part of Wakatu Incorporation.

Photo: Rossella Nicolai

The collected material has been analysed for the target bioactives and antioxidants as a step towards developing a proof-of-concept for commercialisation.

Aotearoa New Zealand has one of the highest skin cancer rates in the world. Sunscreen, make-up, and lip care products contain ingredients that can filter skin-damaging UV rays. However, many sun care products can have damaging side-effects, and many are being banned due to their environmental impact on corals and other marine life.

Mike Packer says we need better products that don't harm us or the environment.

"Some seaweed and algae species have compounds that can protect them from damage caused by UV rays. Some of these compounds are being used overseas in high-value 'natural' sun care products. We are interested in their potential to prevent and treat sunburn in new ways beyond simply blocking damaging UV light. This includes potentially interacting with the processes underlying the sunburn process in the skin and modulating this for beneficial effects; that is, having a 'bioactive' effect,".

The project is drawing on Matauranga Maori and western science to identify which species are best to develop for sunscreen protection.

"Beyond our industry partners, the knowledge generated in this project will help to diversify aquaculture activities, provide employment, improve ecosystem health and develop a seaweed aquaculture industry in Aotearoa," says Mike.

This aligns with the goal of the Blue Economy to create economic value from marine activities, and contribute positively to social, cultural and ecological well-being."

The project is supported by the Sustainable Seas Innovation Fund, by in-kind funding from Wakatu and SRW Laboratories Ltd is providing in-kind funding and $200,000 direct co-funding.

Rossella collecting seaweed samples. Photo: Paul South

Mike Packer says collaboration is essential to the success of this Innovation Fund project.

"For this stage of the project, Wakatu Incorporation are supplying the seaweed biomass and helping carry out the biodiversity study on their marine farms, covering Stewart Island to the Marlborough Sounds."

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**Prices are GST exclusive. Components are $90 per float + GST. Payable end March 2023.*

New buoy in Golden Bay will provide Nelson Tasman region with real-time data about ocean conditions

Nelson's Cawthron Institute and its partners in their new MBIE funded Open Ocean Aquaculture research programme (Nga Punga o Te Moana: Anchoring our Open Ocean Aquaculture Future) have ticked off their first project milestone by deploying the 'Mohua' monitoring buoy in Golden Bay.

Research programme leader and Cawthron scientist Kevin Heasman said the state-of-the-art buoy gathers oceanographic information including wind (direction, speed, gust), waves (height, period, direction), currents (speed and direction) at 0.5m depths from surface to seafloor, and sea surface temperature.

Cawthron buoy deployment in the Coromandel

"The core purpose of the Mohua buoy is to help marine farmers remotely monitor conditions near their farms in real-time," Heasman said.

"This helps farmers make efficient use of vessels and avoid unnecessary trips out to the farm. It also helps farmers better understand how weather is

influencing their stock, how bad the conditions were during a storm event, and consequently what maintenance might need to be conducted."

Although the Mohua buoy's first purpose is to serve marine farmers, Heasman said some of the data (wind, waves and surface temperature) from the buoy will be publicly accessible via Cawthron's website.

"The buoy was deployed approximately 8 km northwest of Port Tarakohe on Thursday 25th November and Cawthron will make the data accessible to the public soon via Cawthron's website so that boaties and fishers have access to it this summer," Heasman said.

"The web app and the buoy will be monitored and tweaked as required over their first few months of operation and a final version of the tool will be launched in early 2022."

The buoy is very similar to another Cawthron buoy in Opotiki called 'KataiCam' and Heasman says it has been useful for the aquaculture industry, as well as fishers and boaties.

"We hope that it will provide the general benefit of improving water safety practices and preventing incidents at sea caused by a lack of awareness of ocean conditions."

The Mohua buoy data will be updated every hour and will include 3 – 7 days of hindcast data for people interested in the past weather.

The tool will be publicly accessible from mid-December via www.cawthron.org.nz/our-tools/

MARINE FARMING ASSOCIATION
To Promote & Nurture Sustainable Marine Farming

SEED FUNDING OF UP TO $40,000

For aquaculture-based innovation, available to all New Zealand residents, citizens and those studying at New Zealand tertiary institutions.

The Marine Farming Association (MFA), supported by the Environment Committee and the Research, Development and Technology Sub-committee, are offering a contestable fund for those interested in developing products or services for the benefit of the aquaculture industry and MFA members.

Research priorities include,

- Spat retention
- Spat health
- Maximising the value of existing farmed species
- Addressing emerging issues
- Restoration of marine habitats and ecosystems
- Communicating the benefits of aquaculture
- Advancing restorative aquaculture practices
- Reducing plastic use
- Reducing vessel noise
- Minimising light spill
- Working towards zero waste from marine farming activities
- Recycling and repurposing marine waste, tools and equipment
- Supporting the industry to adapt to climate change

Greenshell Mussels

King Salmon

Pacific Oysters

Find out more at www.marinefarming.co.nz

Amber's off

If you weren't aware, the MFA's energetic Office Manager, Amber McNamara, finished her role at the end of January.

After two and half quite hectic years, she's going out on her own. Amber has wasted no time and already has a contract to consult on rolling out a new software programme across Australasia. Her first client is in Adelaide – which will probably have to be done remotely given Omicron's spread.

You will still see and hear from Amber as she will be helping MFA out for a while yet.

The Association will miss having her around full time, says MFA GM Ned Wells.

"Amber has been a real asset to MFA and has been instrumental in delivering some really positive change. She hit the ground running and never looked back"

Amber came to the MFA with a strong background in finance and operations management. Prior to the MFA, Amber had spent 5 years back in her hometown of Oamaru working for Numat Group, a nationwide business specializing in safety surfacing. Amber oversaw the financial and operational success of all design & install projects whether in a dairy shed or the new play space of an early learning center.

Amber has worked across many industries, in fact she started her career working for bungy pioneer A J Hackett's clothing label, AJ Gear. When

she finished up there, she was the Production Manager for the clothing range providing uniforms to most major adventure tourism companies in NZ, however, having started with Bungy in retail this allowed Amber to be onsite daily "I did some jumps too" which will come as no surprise to any of us who have got to know Amber.

In 2019, another new industry for Amber to get her head around, this time Aquaculture. She certainly was dropped in the deep end, having no prior knowledge of the sector other than enjoying cooking and eating lots of farmed seafood.

Amber says "the people I have met in this industry are amazing and I just love how all the companies work together to ensure the best outcomes for the entire industry, it's really special"

Among those amazing people are MFA GM Ned Wells and MFA President

Jono Large. "They've both been great to work with"

Highlights at the MFA for Amber include rewriting the MFA Environmental Certificate Programme, working with schools, upgrading all the MFA office software and of course, getting out on the water across the top of the South.

She has also enjoyed her time on the Havelock Mussel Festival Committee, her role was Treasurer but as many of you will know who have been on committees, you don't just have one role, everyone mucks in, and you pull off amazing events together.

The biggest challenge was juggling a multitude of balls through the first 18 months of the role, before Alex Henry joined the small team to provide some support in administration.

Amber has somehow found spare time to play netball, become a Career Navigator Mentor with the Graeme Dingle Foundation, be on the Marlborough Local Advisory Committee for Fire and Emergency NZ and provide Brigade Support to the Blenheim Fire Station.

She hopes marine farming can continue to be a part of her life and will continue living in Blenheim to be close to her sister and nephews who were instrumental factors in her move here.

"I'd like to still be involved in some way. I think the future is very bright for aquaculture."

Marine Farming Industry - thanks for your support!

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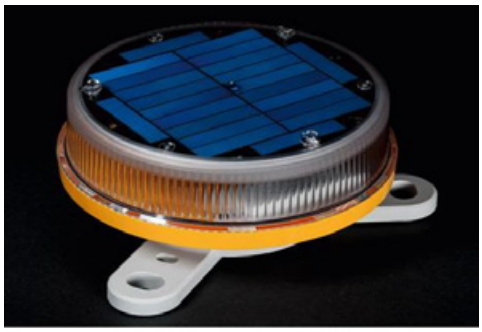

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