



Hot topics get thrashing

It was a historic occasion on August 7th when the Bay of Islands Swordfish Club hosted its first hui of the mid north iwi fisheries forum, the Hokianga Accord. This meeting enabled club members, northern Maori, Greenpeace, other environmental organisations and New Zealand Sport Fishing Council representatives to gather and thrash out issues of collective interest.

Club President Bruce Smith jumped at the chance to host the Accord's 17th public hui.

“We welcomed the Hokianga Accord to our Club and are pleased with the progressive nature of the conversations. It was very helpful to have the marine reserve proponents in the same room as club representatives, local Maori and residents. There is now a greater understanding of the aspirations of each group.”

Mr. Smith noted there were spatial planning forums already underway in other parts of the country and it was important that Northland people were up to date with the latest developments concerning the Bay of Islands and coastal region.

“The Bay of Islands is an iconic fishing and recreational space and any moves to alter the status of our waterways will be keenly monitored”, continued Mr. Smith.

Participants agreed the hui had been a success; the challenge now was to continue the conversations around marine protection to find an acceptable outcome.

Crayfish mismanagement, deepsea oil exploration ventures and LegaSea's latest campaign, Tip the Scales, were other issues discussed during the hui.

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