

**New Zealand Seafood Industry Council Ltd**  
**Business Plan**

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*1 October 2008 - 30 September 2009*

The New Zealand Seafood Industry Council Ltd works with its shareholders and the industry to develop and maintain a responsible, sustainable and profitable seafood sector through the provision of effective policy advice, technical support and advocacy.

## Operating Environment Key Influences 2008-09

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- A deterioration in New Zealand's economy and increasing inflationary pressure, marked by high interest rates, a continued high exchange rate; tight labour market; falling consumer and business confidence; fishing business compliance costs including cost recovery and spiralling fuel costs; loss of access to fishing grounds and increasing demanding environmental protection standards are among the key issues that will continue to challenge the industry at all levels, putting evermore pressure on seafood industry profitability. This will likely lead to further rationalisation and consolidation of businesses. However, international prices are expected to remain firm and the demand for quality seafood should continue to increase.
- On the political front, the general election is expected in November 2008. The lead up to that election provides an opportunity for the industry perspective to be heard and taken into account to better align industry and government policies and ensure effective, sustainable development of the sector.
- The proposed review of the Fisheries Act will require active industry engagement and considerable resources if we are to make progress on our intention to achieve greater self determination and self management of the fisheries resources in a responsible, efficient and sustainable manner.
- Government has agreed on a Marine Protected Area Strategy which is to be implemented at a local level, requiring active industry participation to protect its interests. Retaining access to fishing grounds and ensuring industry is properly compensated for closure of commercial grounds is a priority. The industry also faces continuing pressure from environmental groups to limit fishing opportunity and aquaculture development. The domestic public concern about incidental capture of seabirds and marine mammals and international market demand for environmentally sound products will continue to influence government policy and decision making.
- A functional relationship between Government and industry is essential to achieving effective, appropriate policy development that is beneficial to both the industry and the fisheries' long term sustainability.
- The effective integration of customary and commercial fishing rights will be an ongoing challenge as Mātaihai applications and negotiated Treaty settlements increase.
- We aim to facilitate a cooperative process involving recreational, Māori and commercial rights holders to enable shared access and utilisation, with decision-making based on research and management planning and implementation processes that are fair, equitable and transparent.
- In the year ahead the New Zealand industry will face further market pressure for sustainability certification for wild catch and aquaculture products and also have to meet new transparent compliance regimes set by the EU.
- International pressure to limit fishing opportunities on the high seas remains on the agenda with a calendar of forum meetings with international bodies and government which we must participate in to preserve access for our fleet.

- Industry must take a proactive approach to ensure that they are recognised as accountable custodians of the oceans resources. Appropriate behaviour, matched by credible and professional information and advocacy based on fact, scientific information and proper risk assessment will be essential to show that New Zealand's Quota Management System is world class, environmentally and sustainably sound; and that the industry is a vital contributor to the wealth and wellbeing of the country and local communities as an exporter, employer, food provider and tax payer.

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## SeaFIC 2008-09 Strategic Objectives

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### **Influence the delivery of a legislative and regulatory framework for a Sustainable Industry and Self Determination and Management in the long term**

SeaFIC must manage constructive, participative and influential relationships with the Minister of Fisheries, senior officials and key ministries in Government to positively influence change in the command and control approach currently impacting the seafood industry.

SeaFIC's long term goal is to increase industry control with regulatory and legislative frameworks, processes and relationships in place that enable self determination and self management of the fisheries.

The expected change in Minister later in the year and a number of major law reviews including the Fisheries Act and aquaculture legislation, provide opportunity to promote our position and progress our objectives to create new frameworks and processes of engagement that take into account access, property rights, sustainable practice, economic and commercial vitality and contribution, and social responsibilities.

SeaFIC as the industry representative body must be included in all discussions and have the opportunity to present a compelling case for change based on the iniquities of the current situation where industry pays for the science but government determines the priorities. Government rather than independent observers are placed on boats to check for by-catch, industry pays for compliance costs when it should be with crown, and Government closes fishing grounds to commercial operators without appropriate compensation.

Our approach at all times will be constructive, presenting fact, scientific information where appropriate and sound analysis but also ensuring that there is no doubt that the seafood industry and SeaFIC, as the industry representative, are valuable contributors to the country on many fronts and responsible custodians and users of the ocean resource.

## Key strategies and outcomes

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### Protection and Enhancement of Property Rights

- Promote policies to ensure the Quota Management System is enhanced and appropriate to changing cultural attitudes, international trends, and remains an internationally recognised framework that protects the sustainability of New Zealand's fisheries
- Participate robustly in review of the Fisheries Act
- Complete shared fisheries processes with Maori and recreational fishers
- Influence the implementation of
  - MPA's/Marine Reserves
  - Mātaitaito protect quota rights
- Influence Ministry of Fisheries Strategic Review to enable industry influence over:
  - Fishery management
  - Science strategies
  - Contestability for Observer Services
  - Compliance recognised as public good

### Outcomes

- SeaFIC is included and consulted in all review discussions to have industry positions recognised
- Sound and compelling arguments are presented on merits to shifting fisheries management to quota owners from ministry
- Business case presented to demonstrate efficiencies and better alignment between sustainable management, science priorities and costs
- SeaFIC participates in a tripartite discussion between commercial, recreational and Moari on a shared fisheries management plan that is fair and transparent
- SeaFIC and government agree a process for reaching agreement on compensation for closure of commercial fishing grounds
- SeaFIC provides robust scientific, economic, environmental and social risk and responsibility assessments and management strategies to retain commercial access to fishing grounds
- Government and wider publics have relevant and timely information to show the industry as a responsible and innovative steward of the QMS and ocean resource
- Encourage Government to publicly 'own', promote and endorse the QMS which after all is its own sustainable management system.

### Long term

Quota owners are made responsible for fisheries management with the actions taken in 2008-09 contributing to the ultimate objectives by influencing the review process and regulatory frameworks.

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## **Government and Industry Relations are constructive, respectful and participative to promote industry positions and understanding of issues**

- (Influence new Minister of Fisheries to adopt industry policies for fisheries and aquaculture)
- Position SeaFIC as knowledgeable and reliable source of quality information and counsel on key fisheries issues
- Develop partnership relationship with Ministry of Fisheries to provide solutions to industry issues and devise a framework that enables devolution to the industry
- Build strong relationships with all commercial stakeholder organisations and other stakeholders including fishermen and mandated iwi authorities.

### **Outcomes**

- SeaFIC is called on for information, advice and counsel
- SeaFIC is viewed as reliable and dependable source of best quality of information by policy and decision makers and as the industry voice and facilitator
- Relationships with Minister and officials are constructive and influential at all times
- SeaFIC has access to policy and decision makers at all times
- SeaFIC knows what is going on
- SeaFIC efforts position the industry as responsible, insightful and innovative, capable of self management of fisheries to include public interest issues as well as commercial interests
- Seafood Industry Charter adopted and complied with

### **Long term**

Industry perspective and interests help frame new act and regulations to progress a shift to industry self management.

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## **Protection and Enhancement of Access Rights**

- Participate in relevant government and international meetings to present case for continued access to fishing grounds within the EEZ and on the High Seas
- Demonstrate that NZ has legitimate right to fish within the EEZ and on the High Seas and is not further damaging the ocean environment from this limited activity
- Promote a decision making process based on risk assessment and risk management in advance of spatial closures that effectively confiscate access
- Ensure Industry has robust factual and verifiable data at hand to advance negotiations to enable workable alternatives to spatial closures
- Position NZ as world class and responsible stewards of the ocean resource with an improving environmental record

## **Outcomes**

- Preserve opportunity for NZ fishermen to operate in the High Seas through effective international lobby
- Deliver positive outcome from South Pacific RFMO negotiations
- NZ is not tainted or drawn into bottom trawling environmental debate or used as an example of poor practice
- Government considers alternatives to spatial closures including the extent and location of reserves
- Industry innovations and improvements relating to preservation of marine mammals, albatross and by-catch are known
- Industry viewed as environmentally responsible and sensitive

## **Long term**

New Zealand fishers have surety of tenure over commercial fishing grounds and continue to be seen as improving their stewardship of the ocean resources and environmental practices

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## **Market Access**

- Maintain and expand market access for NZ products
- Discuss and resolve outstanding issues on EU traceability requirements with relevant senior officials
- Inform and educate industry on EU traceability requirement, timings and consequence of non compliance
- Continue to lobby for NZ shellfish access to Europe and Australia and seek commitment for process for resolution

## **Outcomes**

- Issues resolved to ensure NZ can practically comply with new system and timing
  - Provide timely and relevant information to support industry compliance
  - Keep shellfish access issue on agenda
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## **Aquaculture**

- With Aquaculture NZ develop and promote policies to ensure certainty of tenure for aquaculture industry through independent review process
- Provide information to educate and demonstrate the value of aquaculture to NZ and to local communities
- Support Aquaculture NZ in implementing its strategy

## **Outcomes**

- SeaFIC and Aquaculture NZ work to achieve an agreed policy position as a basis for discussion with the independent review team
- Arguments are consistent and robust

## **Long term**

Security of tenure is assured.

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## Science

- Complete strategic science project on management of low information stocks and evaluate its usefulness with industry stakeholders
- Provide input into all Government Science processes including:
  - Research Planning
  - Sustainability
  - Conservation Service Levy
  - Aquatic Working Group
- Develop Industry Research Strategy to enable effective engagement with Fast Forward and other research providers
- Present a robust business case on the need for industry, as the payers, to ultimately take responsibility for the industry science portfolio
- As an interim, convince Government that it is critical to devise and implement a more effective and practical framework, rules and right to make decisions to take remedial action proactively to manage fisheries effectively or undertake research, analysis and modeling as required in best interest of fishers

## Outcomes

- SeaFIC presents compelling case for devising and implementing a more practical and industry aligned and prioritised science agenda
- Opportunity identified for SeaFIC to participate in Fast Forward Government initiative

## Long term

Industry sets and manages own science agenda

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## Training

- Develop and implement strategy to promote the industry as a viable career option enhanced through training opportunities.
- Implement the SITO investment plan with focus in 2008-09 on:  
Skills and leadership training projects
  - Career mapping – identify careers options that can be promoted to attract employees to the industry.
  - To provide training within appropriate timeframes to mitigate company compliance requirements.
  - Support new technologies with appropriate training
  - Customary fishing and governance programmes for Maori that enable Iwi, hapu and whanau organisations to understand the Fisheries environment and add value to their fisheries assets
  - Work with Aquaculture NZ to develop a training strategy that produces the skill sets required to support the development ambitions of the Aquaculture sector
- Develop strategies that enable stakeholders to identify the skills needed to develop their seafood businesses.

- Develop better communications to inform seafood businesses of the services and resources available through the Seafood Industry Training Organisation.
- Work with Seafood companies to implement training programmes that are relevant to their need to enhance productivity and a continuous improvement in the workplace.
- Develop training needs to support environmentally sustainable fishing practices.
- Identify and/or develop training that supports safe work practices in the Seafood Industry.
- Provide subsidy for workplace unit standards based training

### **Outcomes**

- Seafood industry is seen as an exciting viable long term career option
  - Implement the SITO investment plan to enhance the capability of seafood industry employees to add value to support company's profitability.
  - Support the industry to develop staff to meet the future skill needs of their business
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### **Industry profile, reputation and communications**

- Build effective and co-ordinated communications with the industry and other key publics so that they are fully informed on matters which will impact on the long-term sustainability of the industry and individual levy payers
- Proactively manage the reputation and profile of the industry with key influencers including media, commentators, customers, consumers and ginger groups
- Position the industry as a:
  - major export earner and contributor to regional economies
  - a world leader in innovation and sustainable environmental management
  - professional industry capable of self management and managing public interest
  - providers of an essential, quality, environmentally sound, healthy food
- Extend the Greatest Meal programme through to point of sale to generate industry support from consumers through promotion of health benefits of seafood
- Introduce seafood module to school curriculum for middle school years

### **Outcomes**

- Seafood industry is seen as a key contributor to the economy, employment, environmental stewardship, social and personal health of the nation
- Seafood caught in NZ by NZ fishers is the right choice
- NZ's seafood industry is seen as world leader in sustainable and ethical management of ocean resource now and in the long term
- Seafood module ready for launch, with signoffs, collateral and promotional plan before implementation of the new secondary curriculum (start school year 2010)

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