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Voices of Land & Sea - Cat Peters on dolphin research (5 May, Turner Centre); MPA Consultation submissions; Festival of Exploration and Seaweeek; volunteer opportunity - membership.

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**"No water, no life.
No blue, no green."
Sylvia Earle**



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Welcome to Fish Forever Matters #7 (April 2016)

It's been a while since we've sent out a full newsletter - our summer activities have been keeping us fully occupied!

The **Voices of Land and Sea** talk series, supported by the Bay of Islands-Whangaroa Community Board and DoC's [Community Conservation Partnership](#) fund, has hosted four speakers of the summer period. At our next talk, on Thursday 5th May at the Turner Centre, Catherine Peters will be presenting her newly-released research on the behaviours of common bottlenose dolphin in the Bay of Islands.

In terms of fieldwork, there are a series of projects underway in Maunganui Bay, including baited underwater video work and a study on triplefins. Two other projects are taking place over the entire bay. The first is an assessment of kina barren extent on the exposed coastal areas. The second project is the search for the special and unusual features, species, habitats and ecosystems within the Bay's marine environment. You can [read a summary](#) of these two latter projects on our website.

Our [Festival of Exploration](#) has come to an end. While the submission numbers haven't been huge, it has been an enjoyable learning experience for us, discovering which community outreach projects work. The most popular activity was the [photo competition](#) which we ran through our [Facebook page](#). We have also started a promising citizen science project at Wairoa Bay, as part of Seaweeek, which links into the national [Marine Metre Squared](#) program; it is likely that we will repeat this project seasonally and we hope local schools will be able to participate. Results of the festival (and prizes!) will be shared in June's special Voices of Land and Sea event in Paihia.

The national news event in marine protection this year has been the release and public submissions for the proposed [Marine Protected Areas legislation](#). Fish Forever conducted a campaign around this, which is reported below. We also made our own [detailed submission](#).

The Fish Forever team

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Just one of a series of beautiful underwater photographs by **Tina Godbert**, taken in the Bay of Islands this summer and submitted to our Festival of Exploration.

MARINE PROTECTED AREAS: SUBMISSIONS

In January 2016 the government released "*A new Marine Protected Areas Act: [Consultation document](#)*". This long-awaited document sets out how the government proposes to reform existing legislation around marine protection - including the 1971 Marine Reserves Act - to create a new approach to marine protection in New Zealand.

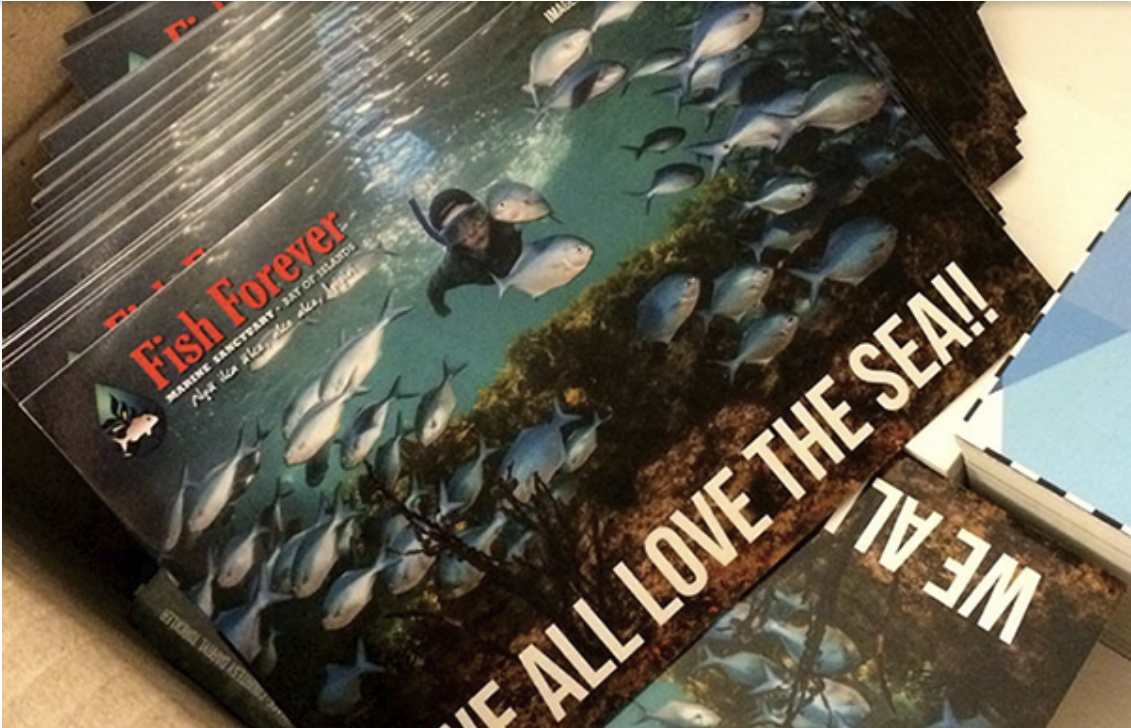
It is wonderful that the government is proposing that future MPAs can be created for the explicit purpose of preserving and restoring biodiversity. However the document lacks clarity about the criteria against which new MPAs would be assessed and has a strong emphasis on economic values. It also indicated that several Ministers could be involved in deciding whether a proposal could even be put forward.

As part of Seaweeek, Fish Forever hosted a public meeting in which Karen Field, former NIWA scientist and current board member of Forest and Bird, talked us through the document to help the community make their submissions. To complement the talk, Fish Forever put together some information sheets as guidelines to those who wished to make a submission. We also set up a submission page on our website that enabled people to make their submission direct. A total of **387 submissions** were made via our website. Thank you all for your efforts.

We are hearing that the new MPA legislation will be written over the coming months. After the Bill has been introduced to parliament we are likely to be calling on you again to make submissions on the detail of the proposed legislation.

You can find the [Bay of Islands Maritime Park MPA submission](#) on our website.

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WE ALL LOVE THE SEA!

As a direct result of the MPA Consultation Document Fish Forever decided to create a postcard campaign to remind the Minister for the Environment that the sea is for everyone:

“Enhance my opportunities for meaningful underwater recreational experiences with accessible no-take marine reserves. I want to snorkel and dive in an ocean that isn’t empty.”

We have 2000 of these to distribute. If you would like to have a handful of postcards for your friends and family to fill out, just email info@fishforever.org.nz and we’ll arrange it. These are FREEPOST cards pre-addressed to Nick Smith; you simply fill in your name and address and pop it in the mailbox.



VOICES OF LAND AND SEA

We are pleased to be hosting **Catherine Peters** for our fifth Voices of Land and Sea talk. She will be presenting her research on the Bay of Islands' favourite marine mammal - the **Common Bottlenose Dolphin**.

Join us at the Turner Centre in Kerikeri on **Thursday 5 May at 7pm** to hear about her research. The talk is a free public event. Koha is appreciated to help cover costs. There will be further announcements regarding this talk nearer the time.



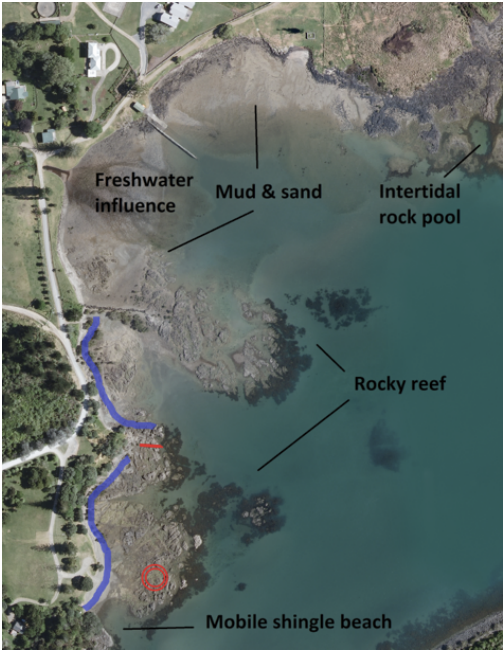
SEAWEEK: Marine Metre Squared

It’s called ‘Citizen Science’. The world over, citizen Joe/Jo Bloggs is becoming a key player in recording change over time in marine communities. As waters warm and become more acidic, as sea-levels rise, and as our shores are subject to wilder weather, we can expect to see shifts in the distribution and abundance of marine life. One way to get a handle on this change is to establish one-square-metre quadrats and to monitor them over time using the same standard approach.

A bunch of locals, coordinated by Fish Forever, set the ball rolling for the Bay of Islands during Seaweeek. Wairoa Bay, near Waitangi, has a wide variety of communities (see image), rocky reef being the one explored.

The rocky reef quadrats were sampled along the red line. Marine expert Dr Steve O’Shea (below) talks turkey at the red circle. Rubbish collected along the blue line is sorted and also reported.

The four quadrats sampled have been permanently marked. It’s planned they be appraised seasonally for one year, and then annually, with results submitted online to [MM2](#).



[Identification brochures](#) specific to northern New Zealand rocky and soft shores are available from Fish Forever. Email info@fishforever.org.nz if you would like be part of this local citizen science project.

by John Booth



FESTIVAL OF EXPLORATION

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to our Festival of Exploration. We had a

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beautiful poem from Stella Kake, a insightful habitat study from Lena Huia Booth that complements the work she did the [previous year at Whapukapirau Bay](#), and a whole series of beautiful photos from various contributors.

The plan is to celebrate these entries, and share them with our community at our mid-winter Voices of Land and Sea talk in Paihia. We will have a couple of shorter presentations, present a few prizes and share some kai and korero with our supporters. We look forward to this social winter gathering. Date to be confirmed.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY
Seeking a Membership Coordinator

We have an opening within the team to help support us with membership. This is for the [Bay of Islands Maritime Park Inc Soc](#), which is the mothership of both Fish Forever and Living Waters. It is a non-committee role, but a great way to get to know the team, make some new friends and contacts and, of course, contribute to conservation work in the Bay of Islands.

If you are interested, please email info@fishforever.org.nz. It is time to renew our annual memberships and we need some extra support.

JOIN FISH FOREVER



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