

Welcome to the June edition of **Feike News!**. As always, we trust that you find our selection of important and hot issues worth reading. Also visit **Feike's Breaking News** at www.feike.co.za.

Editorial comment:

The fishing industry might be asking itself if MCM is keeping a cat from getting out of the bag. On 2 May 2007 the Equality Court ordered that a task team made up of departmental officials and the applicants to the court, principally the Masifundise Development Trust, to develop a new legislative and policy framework "to accommodate traditional fishers more effectively". If the outcome of the task team does not achieve its objective satisfactorily the applicants have the right to return to the Equality Court to seek further relief. On 10 May 2007 MCM and the applicants agreed on a set of "interim relief measures" for applicants clients. The essence of this is that the applicants identify the most deserving and needy 1,000 fishermen or women who, if in possession of a recreational license, would be able to catch and legally sell 4 lobster and 30 fish per day. Various further conditions apply. At a meeting held in Kalk Bay on 7 June Masifundise told an audience of several hundred that the interim relief should not be confused with the courts' order that traditional fishers be accommodated in the long term. In uncompromising and unequivocal terms it is demanded that the Marine Living Resources Act be amended to not merely refer to subsistence, recreational and commercial fishers, but that the term 'artisanal' be included.

Unless MCM has some cards up its sleeve, Feike wonders how this will eventually pan out. If the suggested legislative change was to be pursued by MCM and then enacted by Parliament, the long term allocations decisions are dead in the water. This will unquestionably lead to litigation. If this is not done Masifundise will pursue their litigation. If the court eventually rules in Masifundise's favour, more litigation will ensue. Even if Masifundise eventually fails to get satisfaction from the courts, MCM will still be entangled in very lengthy court proceedings. If Masifundise was to fail and not change





the MLRA, the expectations and dashed hopes of indigent fishermen will be impossible to manage.

Naseegh Jaffer of Masifundise has no illusions about his venture. He says that if he fails in his promises to poor fishers, his reputation lies in ruins. It is not right for poor fishers to be on yet another roller-coaster ride that ends up in tears. It is not right for the fishing industry to be thrown into volatility once again. When the two sides hammer out an agreement they have to be held accountable on both scores.

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1. No Middle Ground at the International Whaling Commission

The well-known ritual was once more being acted out at this years' International Whaling Commission meeting held in Anchorage, Alaska. For the first time South Africa was represented by a Minister, Minister Marthinus van Schalkwyk.

He indicated that South Africa would not switch its anti-Whaling vote, which is reassuring. He would however have been under severe pressure from a group calling themselves the 'open-minded'. This group has positioned themselves between the pro and anti whalers, trying to find a compromise between whale killing and conservation. Their numbers have dwindled in recent years as the cross fire between the adversaries has intensified. South Africa might well have been tempted to locate itself here in an apparent attempt to reconcile its 'sustainable use' policy in regard to elephants and other beings to that of the leviathans of the oceans, the whales.

There appears to be a school of thought that takes the concept of sustainable utilization at its most shallow and then intend to apply it across the board. Hopefully this was not where the Minister was aiming at. Like in any war, especially one with high stakes on either side you can ill afford to sit on the fence. Among the fence sitters are countries such as Switzerland, Ireland and Sweden. There are signs however that the USA is willing to seek a compromise as it seeks to appease the Inupia and Yup'ik communities in Alaska and for them to be re-allocated a whale quota.

It is the middle ground that shows up the hypocrisy of the annual ritual that the IWC performs. When the IWC was established in 1946 the pro-whalers, Japan, Norway and others had reduced whale populations close to extinction. The IWC arose out of their recognition that they needed a quota board so that the butchers could talk to each other if their blood sport was to survive. Japan reminds the IWC delegates every year that the IWC is nothing more than a quota allocation instrument and should revert to its former role.

In my view the debate around whaling has become distorted over the years and the IWC is an outmoded instrument, totally inappropriate for this day and age. Other international high seas organizations have as their objective 'conservation'. Take ICCAT the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas or CCSBT the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Blue Fin Tuna. When I voted in favour of the creation of an Environmental sub-committee at the IWC at its Berlin meeting in 2003 and subsequently became its Chairperson, the Japanese threatened to leave the IWC. They said: How can a quota board have a conservation committee?

There are many reasons why South Africa should not allow itself to become the handmaiden that allows those who destroyed our environment for 150 years to be given





a second chance. Sadly Japan knows how to get these hand maidens in large numbers – always poor and developing countries that do not stand a snow balls' hope of gaining from the spoils, were whaling operations to ever start on a legal basis again. Let's face it, the IWC is being used in the name of majority voting, to grant three or four nations the right to have the exclusive use of our (also southern) oceans to kill whales for their exclusive economic benefit.

Why should we? These are the people who wantonly killed whales to the point of extinction and they now want us to give them a second chance. They tell us they will be more careful this time. But will they? Japans record is horrendous. They have admitted to over-fishing tunas, in our southern waters, such a blue fin to a point where the species is endangered. This did not happen 50 years ago when they depleted whale populations, it happened in 2006. Their record at the CCSBT is an abysmal litany of over fishing year after year. The money is so good they pay a fine every year. To boot they prevent South Africa from joining, thus denying us a quota.

The mistrust toward Japan does not stop there. The creation of the South East Atlantic Fisheries Organization (SEAFO) was created in recent years and is of particular interest to Namibia, Angola and South Africa. It begins to create responsible fishing management on the high seas just beyond our Economic Exclusion Zones. Although Japan has been invited to join SEAFO, their silence is deafening. Why? Their fishing fleets are operating here – in our very own back yard. And not being a signatory to the agreement means you can do as you please.

To lend Japan a hand to come and kill whales in southern hemisphere waters, as they continue to do under their supposed 'scientific' whaling programme, is an outrage and was rightly opposed in Anchorage. Their record stinks. Why should we give any whaling country a second chance when they messed up so badly first time round? Remember: Walvis Bay was called so for a reason but in 1912 Norwegians and others landed 512 dead whales in the bay. And then there was silence. Some 50 humpback whales were seen for the first time again off the Namibia coast last year. Throughout my youth I never saw a whale in False Bay but a century earlier hundreds of whales were killed and landed by operators in the Bay. Today their numbers are slowly increasing and fortunately most people this time round want to see them, not kill them.

Minister van Schalkwyk, when justifying South Africa's anti-whaling vote should avail himself of the arguments elaborated on above. In the quest for control of the oceans there is no reason for South Africa to help Japan achieve this. And Norway should know better than join the fray for monopoly control of the oceans.



2. Officially endangering the Tsitsikama Marine Protected Area

"The government of South Africa, faced with tremendous pressure to deliver on poverty reduction, economic development and equity in coastal areas as well as to address the ever-dwindling marine life in our waters and meet international commitments, has already entered dangerous waters," says Endangered Wildlife Trust director Nick King.

He warned against plans to open the Tsitsikamma MPA, saying scientists have identified it as "an extremely important nursery area that sustains the entire line-fish industry of the southern Cape".

"Given that only two of approximately 150 line-fish species in South Africa are considered still exploitable, the rest falling into the categories of collapsed, threatened or overexploited, any protected area contributing to the regeneration of fish stocks should be assigned extra protection, not less."

3. A good case for a tax concession for emerging businesses

New businesses and thus typically new BEE entities in the South African fishing and aquaculture industry are, not surprisingly negotiating equity purchases in existing businesses. In this way the transfer of technology and marketing know-how via these transactions will develop and strengthen BEE, spawn new black controlled businesses and create jobs over time.

There is however a tax burden, that if corrected could result in many more such transactions taking place (in all industry sectors) and would better link the second and first economies. The anomaly results from the fact that a new, small or medium or BEE entity has to pay tax upfront on the income it will (not has) earned, that is to say on a loan that has to be repaid but for which no income exists as yet. Given the way that deals are financed through loans, the debt burden rises before there is a chance to benefit from a return. Second economy companies, typically small and medium enterprises, by their very nature have very little of their own equity available to finance acquisitions of shares in companies. Were the Ministry of Finance prepared to allow the loans to be repaid without these funds being taxed (the cost to the state would be minimal) the benefits to the economy will far outweigh this cost.

This is not rocket science. It has been done in other countries, especially when a new industry or sector is encouraged to take root in order for the overall economy to grow.

4. Key Findings from the BCLME Climate Change Workshop

In this article we will report on the key findings of the climate change workshop that was held on 15 to 17 May 2007. The workshop analyzed data sets stretching approximately 50 years. What these data sets show are that trends and cycles are beginning to emerge from the data and models. The major findings of the workshop include:

- The strongest trend in the data has been a warming at the northern and southern boundaries of the Benguela system. In the inshore areas of the Agulhas Bank and southern Benguela it has cooled slightly.
- There has been an increased frequency of "warm events" off southern Angola and northern Namibia in the last decade.
- There has been a long-term increase in southerly winds which induce upwelling in the southern Benguela with modulation over decadal time scales. In the northern Benguela, winds also follow a decadal cycle and are currently in a low wind phase.
- Sea level in the region has risen at approximately the same rate as the rest of the world.
- Zooplankton has increased by approximately 10-fold over the last 50 years in the Benguela region as a result of changes in productivity and upwelling, but was moderated by the pelagic fish boom in 2000-2003.
- Pelagic fish trends have been dominated by heavy fishing in the 1960's which resulted in the collapse of the sardine stocks. Despite the steep decrease in fishing pressure in Namibia in the 1990's, sardine has failed to recover to its former levels. This could be attributed to warming, competition with increased horse mackerel stocks or heavy predation. In contrast southern pelagic stocks have increased accompanied by an eastward shift in sardine and anchovy. These eastward and westward shifts appear to be cyclical. The 40-60 year cycles are characteristic of sardine and anchovy worldwide even before commercial fishing, judging by scale deposits.
- Horse mackerel stocks in Namibia increased after the collapse of sardines but have recently started to decline. The stocks of horse mackerel found off southern Angola have also sharply declined in recent years, resulting in a ban on harvesting horse mackerel and a need to import fish for local consumption.
- There is no evidence for changes in hake distribution in the southern Benguela, but deepwater hake have expanded northwards in Namibia in response to improved oxygen levels.
- Rock lobsters have declined in the central Benguela and shifted southwards and eastwards in the southern area. This could be as a result of heavy sustained fishing, exacerbated by increase in low oxygen waters in inshore waters that lead to massive walkouts in the 1990's. As a result employment has dropped on the west coast and increased in the Walker Bay area.
- Top predators have responded to the changes in fish availability. Seals have expanded northwards into southern and central Angola and stabilized in the central





Benguela. Sea birds have declined sharply in the northern Benguela. The eastward shift of fish has led to recent steep declines in penguin and gannet populations on the west coast. Several other seabirds, which do not depend on fish, have also expanded their range eastwards.

- Viewing the system as a whole, it is not clear whether that these changes are linked exclusively to climate change or to natural long term cycles. The shift at the northern and eastern extremes of the Benguela has created economic hardship for communities in the BCLME region. The variability in driving forces in the BCLME and the South Atlantic suggest that management of marine resources need to adapt over similar time scales.

The future of the BCLME ecosystem appears to be hanging in the balance due to a myriad of issues including a lack of understanding of the entire system as a whole. Fortunately, knowledge and understanding of the ecosystem is growing, and these workshops are important steps in the direction of sharing this knowledge.

5. More Global Warming Evidence

In 2005, west Antarctica experienced the worst ice melt ever recorded during three decades of observation using satellites, NASA scientists said.

The findings were released by the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in California, which co-operates with environmental researchers at the University of Colorado in measuring and interpreting the satellite data.

The team measured snowfall accumulation and melt in Antarctica and Greenland from July 1999 to July 2005.

The South Pole melt occurred 900 kilometres inland, at high latitudes only 500 kilometres from the South Pole and at elevations of 2 000 meters, where "melt had been considered unlikely," the scientists said.

Air temperatures were abnormally high, reaching five degrees Celsius at one point and remaining above the melting point for a week.

"Antarctica has shown little to no warming in the recent past with the exception of the Antarctic Peninsula, but now large regions are showing the first signs of the impacts of warming as interpreted by this satellite analysis," said Konrad Steffen of the University of Colorado.

"Increases in snowmelt, such as this in 2005, definitely could have an impact on larger-scale melting of Antarctica's ice sheets if they were severe or sustained over time."



The 2005 melt was intense enough to create an extensive ice layer when water refroze after the melt. However, the melt was not prolonged enough for the melt water to flow into the sea.

However, large amounts of polar melt could cause ice sheets to slide into the ocean, raising global sea levels. The water flowing from the melt could also raise levels.

This year's round of reports by the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change offered the direst evidence to date that global warming has occurred due to man-made greenhouse emissions.

In three reports released this year, thousands of scientists agreed that temperatures will continue to rise this century, and if left unchecked, could have disastrous impact on parts of the world population.

The South African base, SANAE IV, used to be 300 km from the sea, but as ice has become dislodged from the continent, the distance to the sea had decreased to 150 km in 2005 and another 20 km piece, hundreds of kilometres long was then about to break into the ocean. Coupled with this has been the height of the ice at the shoreline. Whilst the SA Aghulas used to be able to lift cargo off when the distance was 300 km, the height now has made this impossible. Cargo is now discharged at a place hundreds of kilometres further away, resulting in long and treacherous tractor journeys before reaching the South African base.

6. Demand an end to subsidies - scientists

A group of 125 international marine scientists from 27 countries urged the head of the World Trade Organization to push for global accord to slash subsidies paid by many countries to their fishing industries. In the declaration they warned that unless support was reduced soon, overfishing would damage the ecosystem of the world's oceans beyond recovery.

Earlier in May, Oceana and the Swiss-based conservationist organisation WWF called on countries in the 150-member WTO to back a US proposal on ending subsidies that have boosted the size of world fishing fleets.

Global fishery subsidies total some US\$34 billion a year, support longer periods at sea and greater catch efforts and include low-cost fuels and loan guarantees for gear or vessels. These subsidies also include cash for research and stock management.

It should be important to note, however that there are positive and negative subsidies. What are positive and negative subsidies? A positive subsidy would have been if the traditional linefish and hake handline sectors which are required to have a functioning Vessel Monitoring System were subsidized to enable these right holders to purchase the VMS.

On the other hand, a negative subsidy could be construed as subsidies towards the abalone fishery in an attempt to keep the fishery running. The subsidies are required due to the fact that the fishery has virtually collapsed and the allocated quotas are no longer commercially viable.

The issue of subsidies is a complex issue, particularly in developing countries who have to try and compete with developed countries whose fisheries are generally subsidized. This is particularly true with regard to trade in fish and fish products.

Overheard and worth knowing about:

Fishermen Affected by more Dams Built in Oliphant's River

A Feike correspondent in the fishing industry writes: I am no expert on these matters but I think the authorities should take account of the following. The mouth of the Oliphant's River has been reduced to an irregular trickle of water. This has gravely affected of those who hold net permits to only fish in the mouth of the river. Their livelihoods are in jeopardy. The reason for the reduction in water is due to the number of new dams and the amount of water pumped out of the river for agricultural purposes. Once the Clanwilliam dam has had its wall heightened, as is going to happen, the mouth of the river will have ever less water.

The worst affected are the people from Ebenezer. What the local fishermen observe is that the mouth of the river is now so narrow that few fish migrate upstream, the source of livelihood for this community for hundreds of years. Instead there is an increase in algal growth associated with increased levels of insects and bad odours. As a result migrant birds, including flamingos have disappeared.

MCM is phasing out the river net permits in the river mouth with the explanation that estuaries are vital recruitment waters for spawning fish.

Poor fishermen are being penalised but the real cause lies elsewhere. Be reminded that the Orange River mouth was declared a RAMSAR sight because of devastation caused by diamond mining and no doubt impacted on fish spawning ability there too. The links to the fish stock reductions in the Benguela current due to changes to the rivers estuaries into the Atlantic is a matter for concern, better management and careful study.

Another Reason why Marine Resources are Under Pressure

Environmentalist Paul Watson of the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society states that the largest marine predator on Earth is now the cow, with over half the fish catch serving as fish-meal feed for domestic livestock. "Domestic house cats are apparently eating more fish than all the world's seals combined and some 50 to 60 marine fish are caught to raise one farm-raised salmon."





Potential New Aquaculture Technologies

With world fish demand on the increase, mariculture is seen as a viable alternative to wild-capture fisheries. It already accounts for 43% of seafood consumed globally. This US\$63 billion global industry will play a crucial role in coming years.

With regards to sustainable aquaculture production, environmental concerns most often relate to the type of operations used and the type of feed (e.g. Fish meal). Technologies are being developed to address many of these concerns.

"There are many promising developments in the field of aquaculture right now," says Matt Elliott, conservation director for San Francisco-based Sea Change Management, LLC. "Many of these have yet to be widely adopted by the industry, so it's hard to say what the environmental implications might be, if any."

Advances in ocean-based systems seem to lean towards rigid spheroid designs. There are several companies that are patenting such designs. While improved containment systems reduce the threat of farmed fish escaping, they do not solve all environmental issues, but it is a step in the right direction.

Some companies are even exploring the potential of raising ocean finfish in land-based, fresh water systems, thereby reducing or removing issues relating to escapes and wastes. A company pioneering such a system in the U.S. is Australis Aquaculture which raises barramundi. The company has steadily reduced the amount of fishmeal used in feed and recycles water and nutrients at its state-of-the-art facility in Massachusetts.

MariCal a privately held aquatic sciences company announced a joint venture to raise cobia. According to MariCal, the patented technology involves no genetic modification, hormones or antibiotics to assist the fish in adapting to freshwater.

These methods allow for traceability within aquaculture products.

With regard to feed, fishmeal and fish oil are important ingredients in the diet of carnivorous finfish. Advanced BioNutrition has developed a feed ingredient using algae to provide the fatty acids and some amino acids found in fish oil and fish meal. This allows shrimp producers to completely replace the fishmeal and fish oil in their diets without affecting growth. Because ABN's ingredients are products of fermentation technology, they can be certified as organic.

The commercial viability of such new innovations remains to be seen, it is possible that there will be more investments in better practices and technologies for aquaculture.

Namibia Shows the Way at the Brussels International Seafood Exposition

From 24 - 26 April the annual Brussels International Seafood Exposition took place. Namibia showed off its budding aquaculture capacity for the first time. More importantly Namibia's Department of Trade and Industry grasped the nettle and ensured that Namibian companies all exhibited under one national stand. The public relations around the stand is said to have been slick with the country having made its mark in the face of massive competition from other country exhibits from around the globe.

South Africa on the otherhand stands out in that DTI has played no role and SA fishing companies, if they could afford it, exhibited individually, thus being distributed across the many acres of exhibition floor.



New EIA Amendments

A draft amendment bill to the National Environmental Management Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations was published on 4 May 2007 for comment. There is some confusion as to the section dealing with aquaculture. The amendment states that aquaculture farms with product through put of 10 000 kilograms, design capacity and wet weigh or more per year are may not commence without environmental authorization and EIA's. This could have a significant impact on aquaculture in South Africa – if we knew what it meant?

Confused or Expedient? Will the Real South Africa Please Stand Up?

SA's votes at the recent IWC meeting:

1. A resolution to set up a South Atlantic sanctuary where there would be no whale hunting was sponsored by Brazil and Argentina. South Africa voted in favour of the sanctuary. The sanctuary would cover the southern Atlantic from South America to Southern Africa. Since this vote requires a 75% majority before it is mandatory on IWC members, the resolution was not passed. South Africa should have co-sponsored this resolution.
2. The resolution condemning Japan's "scientific" whaling and their killing of 50 humpback whales annually was passed. South Africa voted in favour of the resolution.
3. The resolution to promote ways that whales can be used in a sustainable way without killing them (promoting whale-watching over whale killing, for example), was passed. South Africa voted in favour.
4. Every five years, the quota for aboriginal subsistence whaling has to be re-agreed. Greenland proposed to increase this whaling quota. This resolution was passed by only by 2 votes. Sadly and thus sowing confusion about what its real anti-whaling stance is, South Africa was one of the two votes that provided Greenland with a majority.
5. The proposal that the moratorium on whaling remains necessary, was passed with a simple majority. South Africa voted in favour. South Africa also voted in favour of the proposal to send the above message to CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species).

New South African Research Vessel Ready for Launch

The new South African research vessel the MV Ellen Khuzwayo arrived safely at the synchrolift at the Cape Town harbour and was launched on Monday 28 May 2007 after being moved from Farocean's dry-dock using the Goldhofer modular trailer system.

The 43 metre, 600 ton research vessel was commissioned by the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism is designed for deep water sampling, marine wildlife study and observation of the Cape Town area fisheries. The MV Ellen Khuzwayo has winches, calibrated echo-sounders, twin props and bow thrusters. With a complement of 23 crew, including seven-aboard scientists, the Khuzwayo will monitor rock lobster, pelagic fish, seabird, plankton and shark populations.

She was designed by Norwegian firm Skipsteknisk and built at the Table Bay dry-dock by Farocean Marine. Many thanks to Greg Davids of Urban Soul for providing us with some unique pictures!



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Source: Greg Davids (Urban Soul)



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