

02 August 2021

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Tēnā koe Wendy

Thank you for your Official Information Act request to the Department of Conservation, received on 05 July 2021 in which you asked for:

- “Q1. When did the Māui RAG last meet?*
- Q2. What has happened since March 2018? Please provide any recent papers, research report and/or presentations.*
- Q3. Can you advise when and where the next meeting is? And whether I would be able to attend”*

Your questions and our responses are listed below:

1. When did the Māui RAG last meet?
The last meeting of the Māui dolphin Research Advisory Group took place on 26 March 2018. This was also the final meeting of the Māui dolphin RAG prior to the review of the Hector’s and Māui Dolphin Threat Management Plan.
2. What has happened since March 2018? Please provide any recent papers, research reports and/or presentations (either forwarded directly by email or updated and made available on the DOC website).
In 2018 the then Ministers of Conservation and Fisheries directed the Department of Conservation (DOC) and Fisheries New Zealand to undertake a full review of the Hector’s and Māui Dolphin Threat Management Plan. An extensive review process, involving research, risk assessment, and evaluation components, was undertaken in 2019. Consultation took place in mid-2019 to seek feedback from stakeholders and the public based on the results of the review process.

After considering feedback from the public consultation, the then Minister of Fisheries announced new fishing measures to take effect in October 2020, and the then Minister of Conservation announced her intention to vary five marine mammal sanctuaries and the Kaikoura Whale Sanctuary, to increase protection for the dolphins.



As part of the implementation of the updated Threat Management Plan, the Department of Conservation and Fisheries New Zealand are currently working to establish a North Island Stakeholder Forum and a South Island Stakeholder Forum. These Forums will aim to provide a mechanism whereby agencies can share progress and information with stakeholders and receive feedback.

All documents relating to the Threat Management Plan have been available to the public and can be found on the following DOC web page:

<https://www.doc.govt.nz/our-work/protecting-species/protecting-marine-species/our-work-with-Māui-dolphin/hectors-and-Māui-dolphin-threat-management-plan/>

Documents relating to workshops and stakeholder forum meetings held for the purpose of reviewing the Threat Management Plan can be found on the following web page:

<https://ftp.doc.govt.nz/public/folder/SOxZa9wtNUJhTD8d7XvNw/Archive%202018%20and%202019%20review%20workshops%20and%20forums>

3. Can you advise when and where the next meeting is? And whether I would be able to attend?

No further Māui dolphin Research Advisory Group meetings are planned. These meetings will instead be replaced by the North Island and South Island Stakeholder Forums. DOC and Fisheries New Zealand are currently in the planning stages for these forums, and the mechanism by which membership will be determined is still under consideration. Agencies will need to balance stakeholder participation with the need to ensure groups are not too large to allow for meaningful discussion, and opportunities for observation or external participation still need to be determined.

Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) and enclosed documents may be published on the Department's website.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Elizabeth Heeg'.

Elizabeth Heeg
Acting Director Aquatic
Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai