

22 December 2021

Penny Nelson,
Director-General and Chief Executive,
Department of Conservation,
P O Box 10420, Wellington 6143.

Dear Penny,

Dolphin management and conservation

Congratulations on your appointment.

In 2015 the Institute prepared a major report, what we refer to as a Project 2058 report, titled *One Ocean: Principles for the stewardship of a healthy and productive ocean*. The report invited Professor Liz Slooten, Department of Zoology, University of Otago to discuss her insights on 'cetacean conservation' (see page 39, found here: <https://www.mcguinnessinstitute.org/publications/project-2058>).

In 2022, the Institute will team up with Liz and other researchers to undertake a major report on dolphin management and conservation. This is for two reasons. The Institute has been following closely the application by New Zealand King Salmon (NZKS) to locate two large salmon farms in the outer Marlborough Sounds (known as Blue Endeavour). Given our engagement, we have learned:

- The data on dolphins, in particular Maui and Hector's dolphins, is poor. The records of how and when dolphins are caught in nets and the nets of salmon farms cannot be found in one place and the data that we were able to find was often unreliable. Further NZKS have not actively pursued detailed research into the extent marine mammals swim in the location they are proposing to farm salmon. The Institute believes this is not good enough and more public research is required. Our report next year will aim to shed light on the data gaps and how they might be collated to create a better picture of where, when, and how we might support dolphins and the wider marine habitat in which they live.
- The sea surface temperature (SST) is rising even in the location where NZKS is proposing to farm salmon. The hot current from the Tasman Sea may overpower the current from the South, warming the Cook Strait. This is best understood by reviewing Figure 3 (page 13) of *Working Paper 2021/14 – The Role of Water Temperature in Climate Change Policy – A New Zealand King Salmon Case Study* (found here: <https://www.mcguinnessinstitute.org/publications/working-papers>). More research is needed.

We are in the process of scoping the above-mentioned Project 2058 report. As part of this process, we have designed a poster to help people identify the types of dolphins that exist in Aotearoa New Zealand and asking them to share with DOC the location of any Maui or Hector's dolphins they may see while on holiday. Please find attached a few complimentary posters. I would like the opportunity to meet with you and/or members of your team in the new year. All the best over the summer break.

Best wishes,

Wendy McGuinness
Chief Executive

PS: Could one of your team follow up with the 0800 DOC HOT team to advise them of the campaign. They sounded a little unsure when I phoned them in early December.