



## Office of Hon Phil Heatley

MP for Whangarei

Minister of Fisheries

Minister of Housing

- 5 MAY 2009

Bruce Hamilton  
Chair  
West Coast Marine Protection Forum  
PO Box 201  
WESTPORT

Dear Bruce

May I offer my sincerest apologies for being unable to attend the meeting with you and your colleagues of the West Coast Marine Protection Forum. I was unfortunately detained in a prior meeting.

I was disappointed to miss the opportunity to discuss the proposals with you, and to review the work being undertaken on the West Coast of the South Island with regards to the establishment of marine protected areas.

My officials have briefed me on your presentation. It is evident that there has been a lot of work put into the proposals. I note the 9 areas, including marine reserves, being put forward and look forward to see the outcomes of the public consultation.

I understand that part of your presentation related to 11 Mātaitai applications that had been put in by local Runanga of Ngai Tahu and the effects these would have on the areas you had chosen. You proposed the combining of these two processes to come up with a coordinated proposal to the Ministers' of Conservation and Fisheries.

Mātaitai reserve applications and marine protection areas undergo different statutory processes and timelines when it comes to their creation and approval. As Minister of Fisheries, my department and I have clear statutory guidelines outlining our obligations in processing Mātaitai applications.

I can only encourage you to continue discussing the issues with local Runaga there may be a way of achieving multiple goals with one fisheries tool.

I acknowledge your concerns over the effect these applications may have on your proposal, however I have a commitment to fulfil my statutory obligations

with reference to Mātaitai applications and this is something that I cannot change.

Obviously I also have a separate commitment to consider the proposals put forward by the West Coast Marine Protection Forum and I will readily do so as appropriate.

I do acknowledge and thank you for the work you are undertaking. This is a difficult challenge and I appreciate the effort and commitment of the forum to come up with proposals that are suitable.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Phil Heatley', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Hon Phil Heatley  
**Minister of Fisheries**