**Suggested text for email to MPI regarding further consultation on fisheries measures to protect Hector’s dolphins in the South Island**

**Please edit as appropriate.**

**Insert your name title (e.g. member of public, Boat skipper) and email address**

Send this to dolphinTMP@mpi.govt.nz

**Introduction/summary**

I support option 3 and 4 of the set net and trawl plans around Canterbury. I like the additional areas which ban set netting. I also think Option 3 is a step in the right direction in its enforcement of additional restrictions but I wish to call into question the areas that MPI have decided to enforce these restrictions, especially around Banks Peninsula.

The current plan accepts multiple dead dolphins a month as a necessary evil. It is not acceptable for New Zealand to take this approach. New Zealand is the only country in control of the extremely rare Hector’s dolphins. The plan should be aiming for a 100% recovery of the species population. That can only be achieved by further restrictions out to 100m depth around NZ, as proposed by IUCN.

**Option 1**

I don't support the status quo; doing nothing is not an option.

**Option 2**

Whilst the cameras integrated through option 2 may be useful in collecting data and keeping fisher’s honest, it will take years before any real difference is made this way; data needs to be collected, analysis needs to be done, then potential new restrictions must be proposed and only then ultimately enforced. Even the TMP points out this is a long-term fix, saying they hope to “avoid all fishing-related deaths over time.” It will clearly take years, and in the meantime, dolphins will continue to die.

In addition this plan, in the MPI’s own words “includes a range of voluntary components to encourage the development and uptake of new mitigation methods by fishers.” A lot of fisher’s will not make significant changes voluntarily. Most will appreciate the ‘advice’ and carry on with their tried and true methods. This is why we need options that enforce restrictions as opposed to suggesting them.

**Option 3**

Trawling is just as, if not more dangerous as set-nets. It was trawl nets that caught four Hector’s dolphins on the East Coast just [two years ago.](https://www.stuff.co.nz/timaru-herald/news/110513674/four-endangered-hectors-dolphins-caught-in-fishing-trawls) It is unknown how many others have been caught since, as we can only rely on the fisher’s reports. New Zealand needs to do something about trawl net fishing this year, and only Option 3 addresses this. Option 3 is a compromise in that fishers can continue trawling in the same areas, but with added restrictions that may reduce the risk of Hector’s Dolphins being caught. Whilst option 3 is not perfect in our eyes I believe it's better than nothing at all.

However, with the integration of Option 3, one important addition must be made. The proposed restricted areas will not cover the area around Akaroa Harbour. The first issue is that this will undoubtedly draw more fishers to the ‘death zone’ outside of Akaroa Harbour. Instead of bothering to follow the tedious restrictions to the north and south, more fishers will choose to operate in the unchanged death zone on any given day. As a consequence, the chances of Hector’s Dolphins being caught in the area will be much higher. This is why option 3 must extend the new restrictions along the entire East Coast. It is bizarre to leave this area unchanged especially when option 4 accepts the dolphins are found there and closes this area.

**Option 4**

I support any option that may save a Hector’s dolphin’s life. The way in which option 4 makes a difference is self-explanatory. I do support additional areas which ban set-netting, and it will clearly be of some benefit to the dolphin species.

**Option 5**

Whilst this option has not been put forward by MPI,I would like to see further additional protections put in place in line with the IUCN proposals which would restrict netting in areas out to 100m depth around NZ.