



Melbourne Seafood Centre's CEO Ms. Barbara Konstas introducing Angelo Zahos from Aptus Seafoods and fellow buyers to the health and safety requirements of the new centre.

### A NEW ERA

One thing was evident, there was a sense of elation and relief that eight months of sitting on a bed of nails had come to an end.

Wholesalers were busy serving their clients, and in the case of S&J Seafood an old Greek and Middle Eastern tradition was practiced. Chocolates were offered to all who entered their stall, as is customary when a

guest comes to your home.

The morning would not have been complete nor the tradition carried on without the time honoured seafood auction. True to form and tradition, Mr. George Miriklis, from Jack Miriklis Pty. Ltd conducted the first auction at the Melbourne Seafood Centre. Mr Miriklis has been conducting auctions at the Melbourne Wholesale Fish Market for

over 37 years. With that, the transition from the old to the new was complete.

It was only the second day of trading and yes, there were teething problems, as there usually is with anything new of this size. Undoubtedly management took note of them. All in all however, everyone was happy to be on an even keel again.

## photo of the month

IN THE SEAFOOD INDUSTRY



Carrying on the family tradition were Nikolas (left) and Kosta (right) Goulas from Conway Fish Trading in Melbourne. Both boys were on hand to help their grandfather, Con Goulas, during their end of year school holidays. Their grandfather, Con, is an icon of the Melbourne seafood industry.

### Opera house nets prohibited in Victorian public waters



Senior Fisheries Officer, Murray Burns, with an Opera House net which is illegal in public waters.

Fisheries Officers in the Wimmera are concerned with two recent incidents involving the illegal use of Opera House nets or yabby pots.

Opera House nets have the ability to catch and kill unintended by-catch such as turtles, platypus and native water rats.

"To date the detection of this type of illegal equipment has been limited, but as some of the more isolated, small waters are starting to produce good yabbies, this trend is starting to change," said Department of Primary Industries (DPI) Senior Fisheries Officer, Murray Burns.

In the first incident, two people were found at a West Wimmera lake using 16 Opera House nets in public waters, in addition to their legal yabby recreational hoop net entitlement.

The second incident involved a person who was found using six Opera House nets in public waters, as well as the allowable number of recreational hoop nets.

"The people involved in both these incidents will be issued with Fisheries Infringement Notices with costs collectively exceeding \$2500.

"Opera House nets are used by certain individuals in pub-

lic waters. In these instances the offenders were using a significant number of nets illegally and potentially providing a considerable risk to native flora and fauna.

Fisheries Victoria Director of Education and Enforcement, Michael Hodder said DPI had strict bag limits and gear restrictions in place. "The use or possession of Opera House nets is prohibited in, on or next to Victorian public waters. They are classified as commercial fishing equipment and can only be used in private waters such as farm dams," he said.

For more information about yabbies and fishing regulations go to [www.dpi.vic.gov.au/fisheries](http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au/fisheries).

# SEAFOOD NEWS

SERVING THE AUSTRALIAN SEAFOOD INDUSTRY

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# A NEW ERA



On the second day of official trading at the Melbourne Seafood Centre, buyers were lining up at its front gate from as early as 3 am.

At 4:00 am there were about two dozen buyers standing in small groups near the gate and across the road. Most groups were congregated by language, Greek, Vietnamese, Chinese and of course English.

At 4:15 their numbers had doubled and they were becoming anxious for the gates to open at 4:30 am. At almost entry time, some of the waiting buyers started blowing their vehicle's horns heralding the opening of "a new era".

Sure enough when at exactly 4:30 am, the gates were opened, there was an almighty rush by the buyers to be the first to enter.

In record time they had entered, parked their vehicles and were rushing headlong to one of the two entrances eager to get in. The strategically placed bollards just inside the entrance brought them to a sudden halt.

There to meet them was the Chief Executive Officer, Ms. Barbara Konstas who was positioned at the entrance in order to advise buyers about the new Health and Safety Regulations. The new measures include a boot cleaning and rinsing area, hand washing facilities and the wearing of plastic aprons and hair covers for those who were not wearing hats.

To some of the older hands in the seafood industry this early morning ritual was a little foreign to them, but they also understood that times have changed. Once inside many said they felt at "home" in the brand spanking new facility.

The Melbourne Seafood Centre is approximately one third in length compared to the old Melbourne Wholesale Fish Market with its similar layout.

It didn't take buyers long to get acquainted with where their old suppliers were located and to notice the addition of some new seafood wholesalers.

Most, if not all, had something to say about the facility. Kon from "Out of the Blue Seafoods" at the Queen Victoria Market said it "feels good" others said "this will work" and while others said it was good to be in a relaxed market environment.

Continued on page 6



Top. Wholesalers relaxing before the entry of buyers. Above. It has all got to do with the price of fish.

## PREMIER SUPPLIES



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# Victorians hook on to sustainable seafood

Victorians are now consuming more seafood and are becoming increasingly aware of sourcing local sustainable seafood.

Seafood Industry Victoria (SIV), the states peak body for the commercial fishing industry, is delighted that more people are consuming seafood and understands their concerns about sourcing sustainably harvested seafood.

It is therefore encouraging the community to support their local seafood producers who have demonstrated their sustainability credentials.

In answer to the increasing calls from the community for information, that will help them make sustainable seafood choices, the "Sustainable Australian Seafood Assessment Program" is being developed.

Armed with more information consumers will be more confident

that they are purchasing sustainable Victorian seafood products.

Harvesting seafood sustainably is fundamental for productive fisheries. Professional Victorian fisher go to great lengths to ensure there is a catch for tomorrow.

The State's commercial fishing industry also works in close co-operation with Victoria's Department of Primary Industries to ensure the sustainability of Victoria's fisheries.

The use of gear restrictions, size limits, seasonal closures and spatial closures are some of the measures professional fishers adhere to, to ensuring productive fish stocks into the future.

Victoria has a wide variety of sustainable seafood whose assessment criteria and process are independent, transparent, scientifically rigorous and time

and cost effective.

Some species which have been independently assessed, include:

- ▶ Snapper from Port Phillip Bay, Victoria
- ▶ Rock flathead from Corner Inlet, Victoria
- ▶ Silver trevally from Corner Inlet, Victoria
- ▶ Silver trevally from Port Phillip Bay, Victoria
- ▶ Southern calamari from Corner Inlet
- ▶ Southern calamari from Port Phillip Bay
- ▶ King George whiting from Port Phillip Bay
- ▶ King George whiting from Corner Inlet
- ▶ Rainbow trout from Goulburn River Trout Pty Ltd, Alexandra
- ▶ Blue mussel from Sea Bounty Pty Ltd, Corio Bay
- ▶ Blacklip abalone from Ocean Wave Seafoods Pty Ltd, Geelong, Victoria

# Coles launches "Sustainable Seafood"

Giant stops selling endangered or protected species of seafood.

Coles supermarkets has stopped selling all endangered or protected species of seafood and will in future promote sustainable seafood in their stores. The sustainable seafood message will be introduced to fresh fish counters which Coles believes will permit buyers to make the right choice when shopping for seafood.

Of the 300 assessments conducted it was found that almost 90 per cent of wild caught fresh fish sold at Coles is a sustainable harvested and with only 11 per cent (33 assessments) considered unsustainable based on current fishing practices.

The new policy is a result of nearly 300 assessments carried out covering every fishery supplying fresh wild caught fish to Coles. Those found to be from well managed fisheries, caught using fishing methods that reduce environmental damage and unintentional bycatch will

now be highlighted to customers as a better choice for sustainable seafood. "Australians are eating more seafood than ever. It's even more important that we can offer customers reassurance that the seafood they buy is sustainable and will be available for future generations to enjoy".

While the 'Sustainable Seafood' message will initially only apply to wild caught fresh fish, Coles is working with WWF and our suppliers to review farmed and frozen fish and crustaceans. WWF has already started this work, completing a review of Tassal Atlantic farmed salmon - Coles' only supplier of fresh salmon - and rated them as a better choice for sustainable seafood.

Work is already underway with some unsustainable fisheries and other fisheries identified as having less serious sustainability issues. Coles has already stopped selling all threatened, endangered or protected species of seafood.

Coles Business Category Manager, Jon Hagggett, said:

## VRFish urges fishers to respond to Government's Future Fisheries Strategy

After attending consultation meetings across Victoria and convening an extraordinary meeting at their headquarters at Marine House, to ensure that their response accurately reflects the views of recreational fishers, VRFish has submitted its response to the State Government's Future Fisheries Strategy - Proposals for Reform. A policy document which proposes significant changes to recreational fishing in Victoria.

VRFish is urging members, organisations and individual fishers to respond to the Government's proposals. They are asking stakeholders to respond by providing a letter of support to the VRFish submission or by considering the issues inherent in the Future Fisheries Strategy and providing their own response.

## Bryan Green rejects Kim Booths "theories"

The Tasmanian Minister for Primary Industries and Water, Mr. Bryan Green, said no decision had been made about the expansion of fish farms in Macquarie Harbour.

The Tasmanian Government is broadly supportive of the aquaculture industry's expansion, and says there is a clear and transparent process for the approval of new farms.

Mr Green rejected, The Green's, Kim Booth's "theories" "of sediment build-up under fish farm pens and out-gassing incidents" and said all marine farm licensing condition breaches had been handled appropriately by the Department.

The Panel will consider the Planning Authority's report and the representations, and will hold hearings if requested to do so.

"Mr Booth is trying to mount yet another breathless conspiracy theory but the fact is that a small number of breaches since 2006 were handled appropriately by the Department and were followed up with appropriate remedial action by the licensees involved" said Mr. Green.

"It is not until these tasks are completed that the Panel could be in a position to make a recommendation to me as the responsible Minister" said Mr. Green, who expects to receive the recommendation from the Panel in the first half of this year.

Mr. Green has stressed that there is a thorough process underway to ensure that the final decision is environmentally responsible and evidence-based.

# IN BRIEF

## Sustainability: from buzzword to cliché

The word 'sustainability' has been bandied about so much that it has gone from buzzword to cliché and consumers may be forgiven for thinking that the problem has been solved, according to the online "Boston.com."

"Not so, say chefs and seafood market owners. The UN definition of Sustainability is: "The ability to provide for the needs of today without compromising our ability to provide for the needs of the future."

It sounds very good and simple but it really is not so. Due to its complexity, the issue has been interpreted in different ways with a chef declaring "The whole thing about sustainability is that the more I learn, the more confused I get."

## \$1500 fine for Lake Bolac man

A call via the Fisheries Victoria 13FISH offence reporting line has resulted in a 30-year-old Lake Bolac man being convicted and fined \$1500 at the Ararat Magistrates court this week.

The court heard that in November 2011 the man was charged with using and possessing commercial fishing equipment and providing false information to Fisheries Officers.

## Three abalone traffickers jailed

Three Malaysian nationals have been jailed after they pleaded guilty in the Latrobe Magistrates' Court on February 13 to charges relating to abalone trafficking at Cape Liptrap. Two male divers pleaded guilty to three charges including trafficking of a priority fish species being abalone. A third man, who drove the car used in the offences, pleaded guilty to two charges. Two of the men lived in south east Melbourne, the other in northern Victoria.

## EASTER TRADING TIMES

Sanfords: Closed from 6 - 9 April Open on 10th April @ 3:00 am

## Plenary sessions Australasian Aquaculture 2012

### Speakers:

*Wednesday 2 May 2012 in the Plenary 3 Hall. The aim is to get our minds focused on the next ten years of Aquaculture in Australasia.*

**Dr Alex Obach, Managing Director, Skretting Aquaculture Research Centre (ARC)**  
"Direction of Aquaculture R&D for the Next Ten Years"

**Dr Chen Wen, Director of Fisheries Division, Guangdong Provincial Oceanic and Fisheries Administration, China**  
"Guangdong's Aquaculture for Food Security"

*Thursday 3 May 2012 in the Plenary 3 Hall. Just how good could this industry get if we had the right framework nationally and we had the right attitude?*

**Julian Cribb, Principal of Julian Cribb & Associates, specialists in science communication.**  
"The Coming Famine Food Security and Challenges in the Next Ten Years"

**Paul McCarthy, Principle of the RockStar Marketing organisation.**  
"Where will this Industry be in the Next Ten Years?"

*Friday 4 May plenaries are sponsored by the Seafood CRC and in line with the theme of the conference.*

**Prof. Ben Hayes, Research Leader (Livestock Genomics): Department of Primary Industries, Victoria.**  
"Science Innovation Today and its Potential Impacts on Aquaculture Production Challenges in the Next Ten Years"

**Sam Guthrie, General Manager: Global Business Development at The Woolmark Company**  
"Trading with the Woolmark Brand - Lessons for Marketing Australian Seafood in the Next Ten Years"

# Doom and Gloom myths

The eminent marine scientist Dr Ray Hilborn, Professor in the School of Aquatic and Fishery Sciences, University of Washington claims that Australians are being misled about the state of our fisheries, by Non Government Organisations (NGO), pushing a barrage of anti-fishing rhetoric not based on sound science.

Dr Hilborn said the relentless anti-fishing campaign has led to governments imposing restrictions on fishing, making Australians more reliant on imported seafood.

He questions the motives of NGOs in perpetuating myths about the sustainability of Australian fisheries, and says they are out of touch with recent global developments and in denial of fisheries management outcomes in Australia, which are among the best managed in the world.

"Australia is subject to a relentless anti-fishing campaign that is causing doom and gloom myths from misrepresentations of overseas examples of inadequate fisheries management. I believe NGOs need the public to believe fisheries are in poor shape to boost their fundraising," Dr Hilborn said.

Dr Hilborn conducted a series of briefings for industry stakeholders

and politicians in Sydney and Canberra on his recent visit to Australia where he also released a paper titled "Australian Seafood Consumers misled by prophets of gloom and doom" at Parliament House, and taking questions from Members of Parliament, and Senators.

"Australia did not always have its current enviable record in fisheries management, but addressed the generic overfishing problem forcefully. Destructive fishing practices and continued overfishing are no longer significant problems. The great majority of fished stocks are in very good shape and, even more importantly for long-term sustainability, the situation continues to improve," he said.

According to Dr Hilborn, Australians have excellent reasons to have faith in their fisheries management and to consume Australian seafood with confidence and enthusiasm. He is at a loss however to understand why the Australian public is not rejoicing in the success of its fisheries management and why Australians believe they need to implement additional, alternative restrictions on fishing, such as more fishing closures in marine parks.

Dr Hilborn's visit, was sponsored

by the Sydney Fish Market, and coincided with the Federal Environment Minister Tony Burke's proposal for a one million square kilometre marine park in the Coral Sea.

The proposal includes a complete ban on trawling, with additional restrictions on commercial fishing and a complete no take zone for amateur and professional fishermen in the green zone component.

The Managing Director of the Sydney Fish Market, Mr. Graham Turk, views Dr Hilborn's visit as a respected voice of reason to an important issue and thinks that his "paper de-bunks myths which serve to lock up fishing resources, making us reliant on international fish resources that are not as effectively managed as our own".

Mr Tom Bibby, Chairman of the South East Trawl Fishing Industry Association (SETFIA), has welcomed the report as a "conformation of what we have known for many years. The truth is finally coming out and the tide is turning. Buying sustainable fish is as simple as buying Australian fish. The Australian Government must take note and act now to ensure consumers understand how sustainable Australian fish is".

## Hamelin Bay stingrays protected



Wild stingrays and skates frequenting the popular Hamelin Bay tourist spot will be totally protected under new regulations that came into effect yesterday.

The incident raised significant public concern that the species should be protected for conservation and observation.

The regulations identify a protection zone in the area where stingrays and skates (members of the Superorder Batoidea family) cannot be fished or harmed.

The Minister said the new regulations and protection zone would enable fishers to still enjoy Hamelin Bay while locals would be assured the wild rays would continue to be an attraction.

Western Australian Fisheries Minister, Norman Moore said he had called for community and stakeholder consultation, following an incident last year in which a well-known eagle ray, called 'Stumpy', had been legally caught and killed by a recreational spear fisher.

"I appreciate the support Recfishwest and the Western Australian Fishing Industry Council have given to this solution," said the Minister.

"While the fisher had done nothing illegal, the action created great concern among locals and tourists, including young children, who witnessed the incident," Mr Moore said.

The specified protection area incorporates locations where locals and tourists often interact with the rays. Existing penalties for taking and to be aware of the risks when interacting with rays.

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