

Subject: Revitalising the Gulf : Marine Protection Proposals.
Respondent: Auckland City Centre Residents Group
Date: 28 October 2022
Submission: See below

The City Centre Residents Group (CCRG) was established in 2005 with the support of the former Auckland City Council. The purpose was to provide a strong residential voice for developments in the Auckland city centre area and specifically for projects/developments involving expenditure of the City Centre Targeted Rate (CCTR) that properties within the area pay annually.

Our interest in the Hauraki Gulf is extremely high as it is the key feature of what defines our city centre – both physically and historically.

We congratulate the Department of Conservation for the original proposals contained in the June 2021 Revitalising the Gulf – Government Action on the Sea Change Plan document.

We are especially supportive of the two overarching outcomes in the more recent Marine Protection Proposals that have been designed to deliver the revitalisation of the Hauraki Gulf, namely -

The Strategy sets out the actions Government will take to restore the health and mauri of the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park (the Gulf), guided by two overarching outcomes:

- *effective kaitiakitanga and guardianship in the Gulf, and*
- *healthy functioning ecosystems that:*
 - *underpin the wellbeing and prosperity of people who live, work and play in the Gulf*
 - *sustain healthy fisheries that replenish and enhance the pātaka kai (food basket) for customary, recreational and commercial uses*
 - *regulate, support and sustain the Gulf, and*
 - *support resilient and diverse habitats and marine life.*

The Strategy drives change with multiple integrated actions. Government is committed to delivering:

- *increased marine protection to allow the recovery of some of the most biodiverse regions in the Gulf*
- *New Zealand's first area-based fisheries plan tailored to the unique needs of the Hauraki Gulf*
- *wider seabed habitat protection by restricting trawling and other fishing methods*
- *increased shellfish abundance through harvesting restrictions and catch limits*
- *an expanded programme of protected species management*
- *a habitat restoration guide to better direct habitat restoration resources and initiatives*
- *increased participation of mana whenua and stakeholders in local fisheries management decisions*

- *Government supported mana whenua and local community projects to achieve local aspirations for nearshore environments (Ahu Moana)*
- *a prosperous, sustainable aquaculture industry and aligned biosecurity programmes.*

The establishment of 12 High Protection Areas, 5 Seafloor Protection Areas and 2 more protected areas adjacent to existing ones, are all pragmatic steps that will help stop the environmental decline that the Hauraki Gulf suffers due to human activities.

The CCRG also totally supports the submission of the Friends of the Hauraki Gulf below.

1. That fishing 'customary' or otherwise must not occur in any conservation or designated protected area. To favour one form of resource exploitation or group of exploiters over another is wrong in principle. To proceed otherwise is inequitable and flies in the face of the proven benefits of no-take marine protection and moreover undermines the credibility of stated conservation goals of the 'Revitalising the Gulf' initiative.

2. The proposed extensions to the Whanganui a Hei (Cathedral Cove) and Cape Rodney to Okakari Point (Leigh) marine reserves must be formally incorporated into the adjacent marine reserves under the Marine Reserves Act and therefore given the statutory protection of no-take marine reserves. A similar extension of the Tāwharanui marine reserve, for the same reasons, should be included in the plan.

3. Finally, to give public credibility to the stated objective of 'Revitalising the Gulf' and to include the coastal marine area of Waiheke Island, the proposed Hākaimangō–Matiatia (NW Waiheke) Marine Reserve which has been through statutory public notification and has drawn overwhelming public support, needs to be formally adopted by the government and incorporated into the 'Revitalising the Gulf' plan.

The one focus that we think is missing from all of these documents is enforcement. Without this, all the words in the world will not save the Hauraki Gulf. To that end we all now need to see the next document in support of the June 2021 proposals to specify how protection of the Hauraki Gulf will be **enforced** and the role that citizens/residents may be able to take in that process.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the Marine Protection Proposals for our prized Hauraki Gulf and look forward to working with the Department of Conservation to support all of the recommendations and outcomes above.

Noelene Buckland
 Chairperson
 Auckland City Centre Residents Group
www.ccr.org.nz