

News



PHOTO: WILL RAYMENT

LAST CHANCE: Hector's dolphins like this one often die in fishing nets.

Help us save dolphins – MAF

By Stacey Hunt

New Zealand has lost the race to be the first to force a marine mammal into extinction in the 21st century – but we could become the second.

The Yangtze River dolphin, found in China, became extinct in December 2006, making concerned conservationists wonder how long it would take for New Zealand to follow suit with the Hector's and Maui's dolphins.

In response to these concerns, the Department of Conservation and the Ministry of Fisheries have recently released a draft Threat Management Plan, which is open for public submission until October 24.

Chris Howe, executive director of World Wildlife Fund New Zealand, says that there is a need for urgency.

"Right now, we have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to tell the Government that as a nation we want them to save Hector's and Maui's from extinction," says Howe.

"Years of human activity have pushed Maui's to the brink. Now the situation is so critical that only by removing all human threats will we stop their extinction."

Divided into three sections, the Threat Management Plan looks at how to mitigate fishing, non-fishing and fishing-related threats, and gives details on proposed mammal sanctuaries.

Organisations such as Forest and Bird and WWF believe the plan, as it stands, may not be enough to save these dolphins.

Howe says the worry is that even the strongest of the three options falls well short of what is necessary and is calling for the public to sign their petition.

"It still does not go far enough to give Hector's and Maui's dolphins a chance of long-term survival and recovery. Maui's dolphins are already on the verge of

extinction.

"With such a tiny, fragile population, the only way we can give them the best chance of survival is to remove all human threats to their existence," says Howe.

Forest and Bird is also calling for further changes to the draft management plan.

Although happy with the basis of the plan, it believes the long-term strategy is not good enough and wants to see netting and trawling measures become more strict.

Kirstie Knowles, Forest and Bird conservation advocate, says:

"The situation is so critical that only by removing all human threats we will stop their extinction."

"There is a need to remove the known threats and look after their natural captivity in order to stop the decline and try to recover the dolphin numbers."

Jim Slack, from the Ministry of Fisheries, says it is possible for the plan to change and each option will be considered.

"The consultation closes soon and we are hoping for as many submissions as possible from people who know the area and know the dolphins, and we look forward to going through them," says Slack.

He says they will consider each option and nothing is set in stone yet.

Meanwhile Marineland in Napier has proposed a captive breeding programme, but Knowles says although the idea may be in good spirit it is "ludicrous".

"The species don't generally do well in captivity and they don't breed well."

Hector's and Maui's dolphins are found only in New Zealand and are closely related, with Maui's dolphin being a subspecies of Hector's dolphin.

Today, there are just over 7000 Hector's dolphins left, which is down from more than 26,000 in 1970. Maui's dolphins are regarded as being critically endangered, with just 111 left.

It's up to you, say Radiohead

By Dan Satherley

British rock band Radiohead turned the music world on its head this month, with the announcement that fans can purchase their new album for any amount they want – even for free.

Released independently on the internet on Wednesday, *In Rainbows* is the band's seventh album and first without their long-time record label EMI.

The news came as a shock to many in the music industry.

Time magazine reported one executive for a major label as saying: "If the best band in the world doesn't want a part of us, I'm not sure what's left for this business."

Columnist and independent New Zealand musician Chris Knox says Radiohead's pay-what-you-want business model is "a great idea".

"It's not the first time it's been done, but it's the first time it's been done by such a big band still at the height of its popularity," he says.

Long the primary source of revenue for both artists and their labels, sales of recorded music have declined significantly since 2000, when pioneering website Napster brought freely downloading music from the internet into the mainstream.

The legality of "file-sharing" has been debated since, with representative groups such as the Recording Industry Association

of America often filing lawsuits against people they believe have traded copyrighted material without permission.

Radiohead singer Thom Yorke previewed the band's intentions as far back as 2004. When speaking to *Time* he said: "I like the people at our record company, but the time is at hand when you have to ask why anyone needs one. And, yes, it probably would give us some perverse pleasure to say, 'Fuck you' to this decaying business model."

"The interesting thing is most people are paying the going rate for a CD – they're coming up with their 10 quid."

Many artists now make the majority of their income from live shows and merchandise.

Despite the album being legally available for free, Knox doesn't expect Radiohead to lose money.

"The interesting thing is most people are paying the going rate for a CD – they're actually coming up with their 10 quid. I think Radiohead are going to do really well."

The unconventional release of *In Rainbows* follows the widely publicised giveaway of Prince's latest album *Planet Earth* with a UK tabloid.

It is not the first time Radiohead have raised eyebrows in promoting an album, however. In 2000 the band released the experimental *Kid A* without a single or traditional music video, choosing instead to use several

30-second-long clips distributed over the fledgling internet.

Fans who aren't satisfied with a physical package needn't worry though. In December a "discbox" containing two CDs and two vinyl records will be available to order through the band's website.

Though Knox includes himself in this category, he is excited by the possibilities Radiohead's move might open up in the industry.

"I think the more ways you can disseminate music the better – the more they become acceptable the more it will benefit every musician."

"I'm definitely going to investigate the upload/download situation and see how it works," he says.

"I had considered selling CDRs just through a website using paypal, but I never considered doing what Radiohead are doing."

Since the announcement, British rockers Oasis and funk band Jamiroquai have been reported as considering using a similar method of distribution for their new albums.

Nine Inch Nails' Trent Reznor has also declared himself a "free agent", posting on his website: "I have been under recording contracts for 18 years and have watched the business radically mutate from one thing to something inherently very different and it gives me great pleasure to be able to finally have a direct relationship with the audience as I see fit and appropriate."

Sponsors forced to rethink ads after AB's early exit

By Sarah Lockwood

Telecom may have to pull some of its World Cup advertising after the All Blacks' shock loss to France on Sunday.

TV3 pre-sold all World Cup advertising, with Telecom, Heineken, Bank of New Zealand and Harvey Norman being the four major sponsors.

Telecom spokesperson Nick Brown says it is currently reviewing what changes may be needed to their All Black ads following the team's departure from the cup.

"If an ad no longer feels appropriate then we will phase it out."

He also says media staff are looking at the expected impact on viewer numbers for the rest of the cup and how that affects their media placements.

"We are obviously disappointed at the result of the game on Sunday, but it's pragmatic that you can't guarantee any result – and it's still a high-profile event to be associated with."



PHOTO: DYLAN QUINNELL

HEARTBREAK: Fans like Richard Priest were hard hit by the loss but advertisers may be worse off.

Head of news at TV3 Mark Jennings says New Zealand's loss will have very little effect on TV3 revenue, because advertising was pre-sold.

"I think everybody knows when they go into this that potentially the All Blacks could lose – it happened in most of the other World Cups."

"So I don't think any of the advertisers went in refusing to believe this might happen."

He says the viewer numbers will be lower, but it's too early to be able to assess that kind of impact.

"We'll know next Saturday when the semi-finals are on."

"I think all the rugby fans will still watch the games. The France-England game will be a big drawcard."

Heineken brand manager for DB Breweries Jacqui Clement says the All Blacks' success is neither here nor there in regards to their sponsorship and advertising positioning.

"Heineken is an official sponsor of the tournament. We're an international brand – it was more about the association with the entire tournament, it had nothing to do with the All Blacks."

She says rugby is still a massive sport in New Zealand and we still show interest in games played between other countries.

"I think there's no doubt the viewer numbers will drop away a little, but the key thing is I do think people will come back and watch it."