



**Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust National Office**

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September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2018

## Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust Charirmanders Report

This year it is a daunting task to sum up the achievements, the hard work, the challenges and the changes which have been rolling through our organisation every week. I firmly believe we have set many things in motion this year that will bear fruit in the coming years.

I would like to start with the part that really matters. As a trust group we now spread throughout the country and even in South Australia with a sister EMR program. We are making a real difference out there in marine and freshwater conservation education and awareness raising. In 2002 in the beginning days of our Trust, that is what we set out to do and we are doing it. I am also pleased that the Trust's programs have created so many worthwhile roles for young environmentalists to get out there and work in the field, with their communities. Again this is what we set out to do in 2002. The challenge of managing and continuing to develop our potential is now literally huge and demanding. This year we have looked at governance issues, what it now means and requires of us as well as our management systems. We are currently putting some things in place around these areas of effort including redefining roles, recruitment of new Trustees, building capacity in key areas of financial management and funding acquisition. We have had a focus on reviewing our relationship with key funders. In this coming year, we look forward to realising some gains in funding support for marine conservation work supporting local initiatives, growing our presence in the Auckland region and continuing to develop our projects in the fast-growing freshwater restoration effort nationally.

Experiencing Marine Reserves and Whitebait Connection programmes continue to inspire, motivate. They provide one of New Zealand's unique environmental educational experiences. The participation rate around the country is significant in contributing to the desperate need to raise awareness in our communities but also politically to get on with the job of caring for the sea and our freshwater streams and catchments. I had the privilege this year of joining in on the annual Poor Knights trip for the EMR 'action competition' winners which included students parents and teachers and some of our Trust funders from around the

country. Every year this is a pinnacle event which becomes a once in a lifetime experience for all involved. It is a special celebration of their EMR experience bringing together some truly outstanding people and of course the spectacular Poor Knights Marine Reserve. EMR also participated in a Peter Blake Trust expedition to the fabulous Kermedec Island Marine Reserve this year. Yes there are no limits to EMR!

I would now like to turn to the people that make all of this happen. We have a very long list of sponsors, thank you for seeing the value in what we do. We have at times as many as thirty coordinators around the country working to deliver our programmes engaging in their communities. Your long hours of effort are truly appreciated. Working alongside our coordinators are many more volunteers which spend hours in cold water supporting our activities and adventures, to all of you we are especially grateful. Our Board of Trustees has had a busy year faced with the challenges of the growth we have experienced. The Trustees have continued to be there in support and contributing to updating our vision and strategic directions. Our national coordinators have again excelled and worked long hours beyond their contracts to lead the way for our growing teams on the ground. Thank you on behalf of the Trust Samara and Kim.

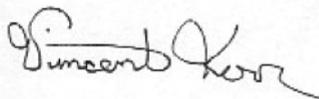
I would like to finish this year with a special acknowledge of the contribution and commitment of two our Trust people.

Dr Roger Grace is a founding Trustee and this year won the prestigious Marine Sciences Association, John Morton Medal for his contribution to Marine Conservation in New Zealand. Roger has been active as a leading voice for conservation action in the Hauraki Gulf and was part of the team supporting the landmark RMA case brought by the Motiti Rohe Moana Trust to enable Regional Councils to 'control fishing' in order to restore marine biodiversity and the katiakitanga role of the Motiti hapu. Roger continues to work tirelessly in support of the Trust's community support projects.

Samara Nicholas this year became a member of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to marine conservation and education. This quote appearing in the media in the aftermath of the award from Samara sums up why she is so special as a leader and also why our Trust and work has stood the test of time,

*"It's nice to have something like this, that someone's taken the time to say this work is important. In this field, because you are passionate there's no boundary to what you do. You do go above and beyond because you do really enjoy it."*

On behalf of the Trustees Samara and Roger congratulations on these awards and thanks for the years of leadership and commitment you have brought to our work.



Regards  
Mountains to Sea Conservation Chairman