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Trans-Tasman Resources Limited Submission

I am nearing 60 years of age and I am very passionate about our coast. I got my first job in Wanganui and have spent the rest of my life here and intend living here for the rest of it. I have spent several years fishing out of Wanganui and was introduced to scuba diving in the early 80's. Following on a friend took me to this fantastic spot he had been diving for some years. Upon diving on the traps off the Patea coast I was blown away, this is an absolute gem of a place. The fish life and forna are stunning. After diving the traps for several years and also diving all around New Zealand I really began to appreciate just how special our traps are, until the introduction of reserve sanctuary's there wasn't anything around New Zealand to match the fish life and forna we have here, remembering this was in the 80's. I have dived this area every year since then and I am never failed to be amazed at the fish life, crayfish numbers and consistency of the anaemias colour. There are walls of colourful anaemias the brightest pinks, orange and yellows. It is rear to dive and not have closer encounter with huge schools of kingfish. Nowhere else around New Zealand have I had an encounter like this?

Having grown up in Wanganui and having a family I could not wait until my children were big enough so I could share this very special experience of diving on the north and South traps. They were amazed as well with this experience and we still dive their today. There are also lots of smaller reefs all around that area and are all equal to the experiences of the traps. Also while diving this area we have spent a huge amount of time fishing with excellent results over a large area out from Patea. We find the fish stocks still strong and in some cases ie: Groper that were rarely caught have returned in good numbers and in this particular case these fish are caught where TTR are proposing seabed mining!! The thought for me that our coast being a huge resource for fishing and diving and obviously in a healthy condition for the whole community, that anyone could threaten all of this with seabed mining is beyond belief. This area like so many ecosystems is fragile and to carry out the proposed seabed mining could only be catastrophic for the whole area. I now have grandchildren and would certainly hope that if they one day wish to dive and fish our fantastic coastline that it won't have been devastated for the sake of seabed mining.

I read with amazement the volumes TTR are proposing to excavate per annum off the sea floor I can only imagine the devastation this will cause. I find it hard to comprehend that if it were a land base operation there is NO WAY consent would be given to mine an area on this scale yet for reasons unknown it is ok out at sea, of course the worst being because it's underwater it's not easy to see the devastation left after the mining operation.

I have been reading all the relative articles and letters in recent times in our local papers etc. and on so many occasions TTR is discrediting local information and then proceeding to try and gain support by in turn suppling misleading information such as 1600 local jobs into the local economy and that the area in question is devoid of any form of flora and forna etc.

I am strongly against this operation getting started on our coastline and hope that our coastline will remain as is for generations to come.

Hugh Russell