

# **Fiordland Marine Conservation Strategy**

*Te Kaupapa Atawhai o Te Moana o Atawhenua*

**Published by:**

*Guardians of Fiordlands's Fisheries  
& Marine Environment Inc*

*Tautiaki Ika O Atawhenua*

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Citation: Guardians of Fiordlands's Fisheries & Marine Environment Inc. 2003:  
Fiordland Marine Conservation Strategy (*138 Pages*)

**Published by**

Guardians of Fiordland's Fisheries & Marine Environment Inc.

[www.fiordland-guardians.org.nz](http://www.fiordland-guardians.org.nz)

June 2003

ISBN 0-478-11904-6

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## Foreword

New Zealand and the Southland community have become increasingly aware of the issues facing the Fiordland marine environment and the fisheries that exist within that unique ecosystem.

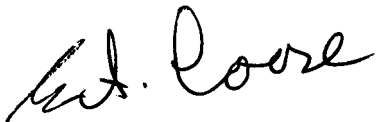
The Guardians' project has provided a multi-interest forum where those involved in the environment and fisheries management of the fiords and surrounding coast have worked together across agency and sector boundaries. The result is amazing both in the output (the various publications including this strategy) and in the strong relationships that will endure into the implementation phase and beyond.

There has been a spirit of goodwill and co-operation between tangata whenua, commercial and recreational fishers, tourism operators, environment and community interests. The Ministry of Fisheries, the Department of Conservation, our Council, the Ministry for the Environment including the Sustainable Management Fund, have together provided significant support and encouragement for the Guardians. This collaborative approach is an excellent example to people in other coastal regions around New Zealand who are concerned about the health and management of their local fisheries and marine environment.

This strategy is an important step in providing the much needed leadership and framework to point us all in the same direction in the management of the unique resources in Fiordland. It is also recognition of the extent and wealth of knowledge of the area and its resources that are held by people within the community. Local interested parties making decisions that affect their own locality is probably the most effective way of implementing government or any other form of policy.

The project must not end with the publication of this strategy, nor should it mean an end for the extensive voluntary effort put in by the Guardians on the community's behalf. I expect the Government to pick up this strategy and action its recommendations as soon as possible. The Government must also provide recognition of the Guardians and their effort by ensuring the Guardians continue to operate via a higher level status as an implementation advisor to Government and the local agencies.

Noho ora mai



Ted Loose  
**Chairman**  
**Environment Southland**

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