



***Southern Seabird Solutions***  
*Conservation through cooperation*

Media Release  
13 December 2002

**AWARD FOR SEABIRD-SAFE NZ FISHER**

New Zealand fisher John Bennett from Sanford Ltd has received international recognition for his seabird-safe fishing practices.

Mr Bennett was given the Golden Albatross Award at the recent Second International Fishers Forum in Hawaii.

The four-day forum provides an opportunity for fishers from around the world to exchange ideas and techniques to avoid catching seabirds in the course of fishing.



Several members of Southern Seabird Solutions attended the forum. Southern Seabird Solutions is an alliance of representatives from some of New Zealand's key fishing companies, environmental groups and government agencies who are working together to promote the international conservation of seabirds.

The coordinator of Southern Seabird Solutions, Janice Molloy from the Department of Conservation, says John Bennett won the Golden Albatross for his unstinting efforts to improve practices on his vessels so that seabirds would not be caught during the course of fishing.

“John has inspired his crew to take this issue very seriously and a host of different measures are used on the vessel the San Aotea II,” she says.

“These include a very sophisticated set of streamer lines that hang above the fishing line to deter seabirds from taking baited hooks, a ‘jiggler’ that keeps the line moving so it is more visible to the birds, a noise cannon that scares the birds away, and weights that carry the baited hooks down quickly out of reach of the seabirds.”

The Golden Albatross Award was presented to Mr Bennett by the executive director of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council, Kitty Simonds.

“The search for practices to conserve sensitive species is a long and challenging road that is sometimes discouraging and sometimes inspiring. Occasionally someone emerges that gives hope and inspiration to everyone around him or her, and raises the bar for performance and commitment.”

Sanford Ltd managing director Eric Barratt says he is pleased to see John Bennett’s efforts recognised at an international level.

“John has long been one of the forerunners in the development and use of seabird-safe fishing practices. He commands great respect for this amongst New Zealand skippers, but the Golden Albatross Award has put his work into perspective on the world stage. We are extremely proud to have him working here with us.”

Janice Molloy says there was a lot of interest in the formation of Southern Seabird Solutions and several countries were considering establishing similar alliances with fishing and environmental representatives.

For further information contact:

- John Bennett, Sanford Ltd, ph: 025-316-250
- Greg Lydon, NZ Seafood Industry Council, ph: 04-385-4005
- Janice Molloy, Department of Conservation, ph: 04-4713-081

#### **About Southern Seabird Solutions:**

- It was formed in July 2002 at a workshop in Nelson, convened by the Department of Conservation and the Ministry of Fisheries to develop a programme to promote the international conservation of seabirds.
- It includes representatives from key fishing companies (such as Sanford, Sealord, New Zealand Longline and Moana Pacific), environmental groups (such as WWF, Birdlife International) and government agencies (Department of Conservation, Ministry of Fisheries, Ministry of Foreign Affairs).
- Southern Seabird Solutions was established to foster the widespread use of seabird-safe fishing practices by fleets operating in New Zealand and in other parts of the southern ocean. Because the albatrosses and petrels that breed in New Zealand migrate to other parts of the world where they are caught by longline fleets, a global approach to promoting solutions is needed.
- Southern Seabird Solutions aims to establish cooperative projects with other southern hemisphere countries so that expertise and knowledge are more freely exchanged. This will accelerate progress in solving the capture of albatrosses and petrels in fishing operations.