Complex Ecological Relationships and the Environmental Legacies of Dioxin

Research on New Zealand dolphins and competing explanations as an example of refusal to investigate complex ecological relationships and repetition of previously established findings

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Thematic overview of three contributions / 20 minutes

The object and the interests of its researchers

Ecological change continues regardless of scientific recognition.

A conservation mission does not establish explanatory adequacy.

Professional stability and population recovery are different outcomes.

Institutional decisions belong within the investigation.

Structural Falsification, Scientific Silence, and a New Research Strategy

A Critical Reconstruction of the Hector's and Māui Dolphin Case

Andrew Gibbs

Researcher, *Pollution and Diseases*

Exclusion can distort an accurate scientific record

The paper reconstructs technical investigations in 1995–1996.

It examines delayed availability and use of the archive.

Source records require transport, exposure and biological tests.

Structural falsification is the authors' diagnosis of systematic exclusion.

Demographic Precision and Causal Narrowness

A Critical Review of Bennington et al. 2026 on Hector's Dolphin Fecundity and Bycatch Management

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A precise parameter cannot identify an omitted cause

Bennington et al. estimate fecundity at 0.291 per mature female per year.

The previous estimate was 0.409. This is a comparison of analyses.

The fitted demographic model supplies no environmental causal ranking.

Lower mortality tolerance does not identify the cause of low fecundity.

Competing Hypotheses and Scientific Non-Recognition

Investigating the Hector's and Māui Dolphin Decline in the Context of Wartime Chemical Legacies

Andrew Gibbs

Researcher, *Pollution and Diseases*

The accusation concerns who can obtain a causal test

Gibbs accuses gatekeepers of deliberate suppression of inquiry.

Official assessments already acknowledge pollution and interactions.

Wartime source attribution and population effects remain unresolved.

Intent requires a documentary inquiry into decisions and reasons.

Three contributions expose three research boundaries

Structural analysis: which consequential records enter research?

Demographic review: what can the fitted model actually explain?

Recognition analysis: who enables or prevents competing tests?

Our overview asks how these boundaries become institutionally durable.

Inside expertise and outside recognition

Specialist competence can coexist with a restricted causal frame.

Separate disciplines can leave ecological connections without an owner.

Outside criticism can expose the boundary of the programme.

The missing test and the proposed explanation need separate evaluation.

Silence as a protective response

The expert reports prolonged silence following external criticism.

Silence can preserve a programme without a public defence.

Professional socialisation may reproduce the same response.

Protective effects and deliberate coordination need different evidence.

Authority without a condition for revision

A claimed mission cannot make a programme immune to scrutiny.

What result would trigger a reassessment of its causal boundaries?

Who can demand independent evaluation of that reassessment?

The wider public has a stake in the object and the decisions.

Complexity and the organisation of ignorance

Sources, transport, exposure and effects cross disciplinary boundaries.

Genuine difficulty must lead to an identifiable research response.

Exclusion can sustain the evidence gap used to dismiss an alternative.

Research decisions and resource allocation require their own audit.

Forecast of the response

Working forecast: extended public non-response is most likely.

External pressure may bring a selective defence of the existing frame.

Administrative intervention is a possible scenario requiring records.

Substantial near-term revision appears less likely than continuity.

The funding claim needs a denominator

Define the research field, period and relevant funding streams.

Record awards, recipients, stated tasks and delivered outputs.

Compare opportunities for competing and interacting explanations.

Trace how allocation decisions affect the tests that remain possible.

Ecological causation and institutional obstruction

Chemical exposure differs from source attribution and population effect.

Incomplete coverage differs from fabrication of observations.

Protective behaviour differs from demonstrated deliberate obstruction.

Each claim needs evidence that can change the conclusion.

Independent inquiry beyond the closed circle

Publish a register of evidence, questions and documented responses.

Map control over funding, advice, data and specimens.

Enable independent comparison of consequential hypotheses.

Measure progress through new tests and accessible evidence.

The programme is also an object of research

Exclusion, limited causal reach and non-recognition connect the papers.

The object's condition and the group's continuity need separate measures.

Scientific authority must answer questions about its own decisions.

Our task is to describe change and make the unexamined examinable.

Three contributions and the supporting record

Gibbs & Nikolaenko (2026). Structural Falsification, Scientific Silence, and a New Research Strategy. doi: 10.66659/tms16797

Gibbs & Nikolaenko (2026). Demographic Precision and Causal Narrowness. doi: 10.66659/ctn59c96

Gibbs & Nikolaenko (2026). Competing Hypotheses and Scientific Non-Recognition. doi: 10.66659/10csws50

Gibbs & Nikolaenko (2026). Chemical Pollution and the Population Crisis. Critical Research Bibliography. doi: 10.66659/ybmw2c82

Bennington et al. (2026). Multi-event modeling of Hector's dolphin fecundity. Conservation Science and Practice. doi: 10.1111/csp2.70242

Who can make the missing tests possible?

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We cannot promise to save the world.
We can describe how it changes.

Research bibliography

Independent evidence and tests define the next stage.

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