



MARINE PEST SURVEYS COMING TO YOUR HARBOUR SOON

The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) conducts regular checks for marine pests in a number of high-risk marine areas around the country and has been doing so since 2002. The focus of this surveillance is the early detection of a number of pests that are not known to be in New Zealand, and we are actively trying to keep out.

WHAT DO WE LOOK FOR?

We target five species that have considerable harmful impacts overseas:

- » Northern Pacific seastar, *Asterias amurensis*
- » Asian clam, *Potamocorbula amurensis*
- » European shore crab, *Carcinus maenas*
- » Chinese mitten crab, *Eriocheir sinensis*
- » Aquarium weed, *Caulerpa taxifolia*

We also look for any and all new species in these locations, and established pests with limited distribution, like the Mediterranean fanworm, *Sabella spallanzanii*. For more information about what species we specifically target, go to www.biosecurity.govt.nz/pests/salt-freshwater/saltwater.

WHY?

If these pests were to arrive in New Zealand, they could threaten our environment, the economy, our fisheries, native species or our enjoyment of our unique coastal and marine areas.

We undertake the surveys twice a year, so that we maximise the chance of detecting one of these pests early. The faster we find a pest the more chance we have to eradicate it before it becomes established.

HOW?

In conjunction with MPI, the National Institute for Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA) designed the surveys. A number of different methods are used to sample a wide range of marine plants and animals, including dive surveys, crab traps, benthic sleds (similar

to a scallop dredge), shoreline searches and crab condos (juvenile fish and invertebrate settlement devices). Both the crab condos and the crab traps are deployed underneath surface buoys; these buoys will be marked **NIWA Research** with a contact phone number.

WHERE?

The program surveys a number of ports, harbours and marinas around the country twice a year, including this one. These locations were chosen because vessels arrive there from overseas.

Marine pests are known to hitch a ride to new locations attached to vessels hulls or in ballast water. Within each harbour, potential habitats for the target species are surveyed including wharfs and floating marinas, breakwalls, rocky reefs, aquaculture structures, beaches, sand flats and deeper soft sediment areas.

WHO?

NIWA is contracted to undertake the field work for MPI. A team of 5 – 8 NIWA scientists, divers and boat operators undertake the work at each port, and usually operate out of several small research boats. Divers are Authorised Persons under the Biosecurity Act 1993 and may physically inspect the hulls of vessels and take samples of organic material or organisms for further inspection and testing, under sections 109 and 121 of the Act. All reasonable attempts to locate the skipper or occupants of the vessel prior to carrying out these inspections will be made, or written notice will be provided following the inspection if no such persons can be located.

HOW CAN I FIND OUT THE RESULTS?

Email surveillance@mpi.govt.nz stating your port(s) of interest, and you will be added to an email distribution list, and sent results as they become available.

The full results for all ports and marinas around the country are available annually, via our website: <http://www.mpi.govt.nz/news-and-resources/publications>.

The details of the next survey are:

Location	Dates	Contact

ADDITIONAL INFO AND LINKS

To see more about MPI, go to www.mpi.govt.nz.

To see more about NIWA, go to www.niwa.co.nz.

To learn more about the distribution of marine pests in NZ, go to www.marinebiosecurity.org.nz

To learn more about regional biosecurity measures, go to Northland biosecurity information www.nrc.govt.nz/Environment/Weed-and-pest-control/Marine-pests/

Top of the South marine biosecurity Partnership
www.marinebiosecurity.co.nz

Fiordland marine biosecurity partnership
www.biosecurity.govt.nz/fiordland

Southland marine biosecurity
www.es.govt.nz/environment/pests/marine/