

TOS Marine Biosecurity Partnership Meeting

26 May 2017

1. Welcome

Peter and Paul welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

3. Annual Report (Peter Lawless, TOS Marine Biosecurity Coordinator)

The good news is that after going for 8 years the tide has turned and we are becoming more effective at heading off the risks. Networks, intelligence networks, response rates, standard operating procedures are sorted out but there is a lot more that can be done.

The programme overall is on track. We're making links nationally - linked with NIWA, Cawthron. In terms of being effective, Northland is the leading edge to reduce marine biosecurity risks and we're not far behind them. I travelled around the world last year and in terms of doing something, we are ahead of most countries apart from parts of Australia.

We also had a change in the overall scene with the Biosecurity Direction Statement coming through. There's still a lot of work to have marine biosecurity recognised along with a lot of other things that are being worked on.

The industry network is the most important way to get information - we depend on people who are in the industry and in the environment to be able to tell us what's happening. We've extended our reach to Wellington and have had some good responses particularly from Mana and Seaview, a risk place for us in the Sounds.

The Committee that manages the programme have funded extra activities and surveillance and we're getting a good level of information. In terms of overall incident coordination - material can be found on the website and we keep an Incident Register. A lot of things are getting dealt with by Bruce and his team - removing things from vessels and inspecting vessels, border has improved markedly with MPI. The biggest issue in terms of spread remains *Styela* and we're pretty much on top of *Sabella*.

4. Summer Survey (Barrie Forrest, TOS Marine Biosecurity)

See full presentation on the TOS website.

Question: Did you find much on the club moorings?

Answer: No the club moorings were almost exclusively clean.

Question: Of the six fouled boats were they yachts or launches?

Answer: They were yachts.

Kathy Walls: The issue with the keel of yachts is ongoing. I've tried to address it with travel lift operators and haul out managers and they say it's too difficult. Can we turn our minds to developing a system that wouldn't be difficult or incur a lot of time, because it is a big problem and a lot of people are not aware it's an issue.

Paul Sheldon: In terms of risks to the TOS, we also pose a risk to other areas. Barges out of Tarakohe to Wellington. The Wellington harbourmaster identified *Sabella* was in Tarakohe and asked how we are going to manage this risk. This is positive - we had a good talk about regular inspections and regular antifouling of barges coming out of Tarakohe.

5. **Fiordland Pathways Plan** (Shaun Cunningham, Environment Southland)

Southland is 3 million hectares in size with 3,000 km of coastline, it is very remote, isolated and rugged.

We have a unique ecology easily reached by divers and very fragile to disturbance. Also commercial and recreational, fisheries, people like to know that it's protected. In terms of biosecurity a lot of work is done by Fiordland Marine Guardians. The vision is that the fisheries values are maintained as well as the environment.

The Guardians pushed for a pathways joint agency plan- DOC, Environment Southland, Marine Guardians, MPI are working closely together. The vision is to ensure all vessels and gear entering Fiordland are clean and free from pests.

The Clean Vessel Pass is a big component. All vessels must have one to come into Fiordland.

See full presentation on the TOS website.

Question: When was the last *Undaria* incursion?

Answer: April this year.

Question: What will you do about it?

Answer: At this stage we haven't surveyed the area properly, so we need to get the information and present it to decision makers. Eradication is out of the question but some sort of control could be possible.

Question: Regarding clean vessel passes - do you have teeth on that?

Answer: Every boat must have one or action will be taken. We don't have fines at the moment, we work on default and cost recovery for hull inspections etc.

Comment: We need to think of something like that for the TOS.

Question: Is it under Biosecurity Act or RMA?

Answer: Biosecurity Act.

Question: With the clean vessel pass on the basis of hull inspection are there particular protocols?

Answer: Anyone can get one any time and by doing it you are declaring that it's going to be clean.

6. **Regional Pest Management Plan and Pathways Plan** (Sophia Clark, Northland Regional Council)

Plan just finished hearings on Wednesday.

The current marine biosecurity regime and rules in the current Regional Pest Management Strategy have been a massive player in preventing issues in Northland. Moving to a pathways plan seemed to be the next logical step.

This year went with combined consultation approach.

Council went for full cost recovery - \$122.00 per berth or mooring per year on top of the charges they already pay, including commercial wharves contributing. Response wasn't good with over 500 submissions - 17 page submissions from individuals. Comments came back - marine biosecurity is for all of us to contribute. We'll be going through deliberations and it could be precedent setting for marine biosecurity.

Feedback on pathways plan, people didn't get it, they still see the biggest risk coming from overseas and don't realise we already have pests in NZ. People don't want their boats to be inspected.

We need to get across to the public that it's not just about *Sabella* - it's about future proofing our region and not just being reactive.

See full presentation on the TOS website.

Question: When are your deliberations?

Answer: 7 and 8 June.

7. Hull fouling at the border (Tracey Bates, MPI)

Biofouling is a natural process, vessel hulls represent a large surface for biofouling to accumulate. NZ receives over 3000 vessels annually. Biofouling is the main source of foreign marine species into New Zealand.

We have developed a Craft Risk Management Standard for biofouling on vessels. Basic requirement all vessels are clean below the waterline on arrival. Currently in non-enforceable period, it will be a legal requirement in 2018. NZ is the first country in the world to regulate biofouling.

See full presentation on the TOS website.

Question: Out of 3000 vessels, most are active carting goods around world - is there any figure on proportion that re-fouled and need inspection?

Answer: Can't verify standard, so can't act on every single vessel

8. Progress with *Sabella* and *Styela* (Colin Johnston, Aquaculture NZ)

Aquaculture NZ represent people who grow seafood, we rely on a fantastic environment, producing high quality safe food efficiently, so it is in the industry's best interests to ensure the environment stays that way.

We launched last year A+ NZ Sustainable Aquaculture. Document will have more about biosecurity in it and we will encourage our producers to sign on to it.

For aquaculture it's more than just marine pests - it's also disease, food safety.

See full presentation on the TOS website.

Question: How much of the search effort goes into benthos?

Answer: The first survey wasn't a lot, mainly on farm structures, this time a lot more, so most of benthos around marine farms. The benthos wasn't particularly effected.

Bruce Lines: We find that there's always a particular favoured area or hotspots - initially we see where those areas might be and then concentrate on those hot spots.

Comment: In Waitemata harbour both *Styela* and *Sabella* are found on the backs of scallops and any sort of substrates.

Bruce Lines: When it first appears it goes where it wants to be, but then it spreads everywhere.

9. Small scale management of *Sabella* (Jono Underwood, MDC)

We have three quite small unitary councils, and don't have large resource pools. We now have *Sabella* in Picton, the Haven here in Nelson, and in Tarakohe. One of the key problems is we don't have regulatory authority to police vessels. We are developing a Small Scale Management Programme.

See full presentation on the TOS website.

Question: With SSMP are councils able to cost recover or fine or otherwise take action?

Answer: Only when we've issued a notice of direction. No fines as we don't have the regulations to support fines.

Interactive session

Scenarios:

With marine farms does anyone have a scenario we might face over the next 3 years?

What happens if you find a vessel with *Sabella* on it, adjacent to a marine farm?

The key thing if we have a vessel turn up in Picton with *Sabella* is we address with more confidence locally as a council, we have the administration powers of the Act to direct them to either haul out or move. The SSMP gives us those powers.

What if vessel came into D'Urville island heavily fouled?

With a D'Urville Island scenario - chances are there would be recreational boats moving through region with *Sabella*. A scenario of finding an established population when you've got a fixed budget?

A decision has to be made that if funds are available, is it justifiable to take action? Then ask questions about funding.

If you are giving a vessel a Notice of Direction how will they assist with containment?

In Marlborough we have haul out facilities in Picton and Waikawa including full containment and filtration and nothing gets into the water. We do have ability to get people into these hubs and due to networking of the Partnership team people are on board. For Nelson/Tasman it's a different scenario in terms of facilities, there are limitations around that.

We should be exploring a fab dock as a tool.

By 1 July all three councils will have papers presented and decisions around notifying Small Scale Management Programme. Good step forward. Will be more discussions around pest management plans.

11. Summing up and closure (Paul Sheldon)

There have been a good range of positions and views in terms of management in the top of the south. It's early days yet but it is actually now happening that we are evoking powers and putting in place a more structured response, thinking through what operational plans will look like and working with politicians to make sure we have enough funding.