



# Mediterranean Fanworm Management Plan

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Page	Title	Issue Date	Rev No:

## Contents

Introduction .....	3
What is a Mediterranean Fanworm? .....	3
The MPI, Ministry of Primary Industries (former NZ biosecurity) programme to eliminate Mediterranean fanworm .....	3
The Northland Regional Council programme to eliminate Mediterranean fanworm .....	4
Legal Requirements .....	4
Infected Areas.....	4
BOI Marina's Plan.....	5
Staff.....	5
Training.....	5
Risk assessment.....	5
Risk assessment procedures.....	5
Arrival of Known Carriers.....	6
Records.....	6
Signage.....	7
Variations to Procedures .....	7
References.....	7
Questionnaire .....	8



## Introduction

Bay of Islands Marina (BOI Marina) is located in the Bay of Islands. We will endeavour to ensure that all marine pests are kept out of our waterways. All steps will be made to inform and educate our marina users.

### Northland Regional Council contact information

**24 hr Environmental Hotline: 0800 504 639**

## What is a Mediterranean Fanworm?

The Mediterranean fanworm (*Sabella spallanzanii*) is a marine animal which is a fouling pest typically found in estuaries or sheltered sites. It can form dense populations, potentially smothering other native marine species and altering underwater ecosystems.

It consists of a tough and flexible tube, up to 70cm long, which is always anchored to a hard surface, with a worm inside extending its single spiral fan when feeding. The tubes often have a muddy appearance and the fan varies from white and pale fawn through to orange and banded red-brown. This particular fanworm looks different to New Zealand native fanworms in that it is larger and it has the single fan. Fanworms with two spiral fans are **NOT** this pest. Fanworm produce up to 50,000 eggs per worm that are released during a temperature drop in autumn. Spawning from a vessels hull quickly creates a new colony. Alternatively, mature fanworm can be dislodged and reattach themselves in new environments. Fanworm as small as 50mm in length are capable of sexual reproduction. They are also able to regenerate from the smallest fragment and if the foot is intact can re attach to new substrate within 18 hours.

Aside from affecting native species by competing for food and space, the presence of dense mats of this species could also have an impact on the aesthetics of an area for diving, potentially impacting on dive tourism activities. While they have not yet been recorded to have had significant impacts on fisheries or aquaculture, there is potential that dense beds could become a nuisance to recreational and commercial fishers through the clogging of dredges and fouling of other fishing gear.

## The MPI, Ministry of Primary Industries (former NZ biosecurity) programme to eliminate Mediterranean fanworm

When this fanworm species was detected in Lyttelton Port in May 2006, MAFBNZ now (MPI) embarked on a \$3.6 million five year local programme to attempt local elimination of the pest. The elimination involved ongoing control of the fanworm by diver search and removal and regular monitoring to detect any hidden populations. A communications programme was also undertaken to encourage the owners of moored vessels to keep their boat hulls clean to avoid spreading the pest. In 2009 the elimination programme was extended to treat what was thought to be a small population of the fanworm in Auckland's Viaduct Basin. In January 2010, the worm was however, found in large numbers throughout the Waiheke Harbour. Consequently in June 2010 a decision was made to cease the elimination programme as given the wide spread of the population, it was no longer considered feasible to eliminate the fanworm from New Zealand. NRC and other regional councils are now working with MPI to gain support in the campaign against the species in Northland Waters.

## The Northland Regional Council programme to eliminate Mediterranean fanworm

At the date of print, the Northland Regional Council's (NRC's) efforts have almost eradicated the pest and we are determined to keep the pest out of Northland waters since its initial discovery at Marsden Cove Marina and Port Nikau in 2012. Fanworm has been regularly removed by divers from the structures affected and the new growth has been minimised.

A draft charter has been developed among a group of stakeholders including the BOI Marina to put in place procedures to continue the exclusion and eradicate any new found establishments. A management plan is requested sought to help achieve the objectives of the charter. The parties involved acknowledge that the coast and marine environment of Northland is of significant value from both a cultural and economic point of view and that Mediterranean Fanworm will have a significant impact if established.

The Far North District Council has now also begun to dive check vessels and inform boaties of the pest. In particular they are focusing on the vessels which enter the Bay of Islands from Auckland over the summer.

### Legal Requirements

The Northern Regional Council RPMS 2010-2015 states:

*No person shall knowingly transport or release any marine pest. Every person who sees any exclusion marine pest, or suspects the presence of any exclusion marine pest shall immediately report the sighting to the NRC or the MPI.*

**A breach of these rules, without reasonable excuse, is an offence under Section 154(r) of the Act.**

The Biosecurity Act 1993 section 46 declares that there is a duty to report notifiable organisms, section 52 refers to not knowingly spreading any a pest or unwanted organism and even in section 53 against selling or propagating any.

Those who are found to be carriers will have to pay for the costs involved of haul out, removal and antifouling. It is possible that they will be prosecuted only if they are found to have knowingly carried and not made a plan for removal.

### Infected Areas

At time of print the area infected includes:

**Auckland:** Gulf Harbour Marina, Waitemata harbour including marinas and swing moorings (Bayswater, Silo park Marina, Viaduct Basin, Westhaven, Westpark, Pier 21, Orams, Orakei, Outboard Boating Club, Pine harbour Marina and others),

**Australia:** Adelaide, SA; Eden Harbour, NSW; Spencer Gulf, SA; Davenport, TAS; Port Phillip Bay and Curio Bay, VIC; Albany, Bunbury, Cockburn Sound, Esperance and Freemantle, WA, and more.

Currently assessment is happening in Coromandel and Napier but no other areas of NZ have high enough densities or established populations that could cause spread.

Vessels arriving from Marsden Cove are considered low risk as they are already monitored by NRC. The NRC is also looking at developing a register of risk vessels.

## BOI Marina's Plan

As an on water facility our involvement is getting the skippers aware of the invasive species, in particular the Mediterranean fanworm issue, and to report findings and highly suspicious cases to the Northern Regional Council for eradication.

An initial informative email is to be sent out to selected vessels from the marina's database – stating what the fanworm looks like, its threat and what the NRC rules are – As soon as a vessel is aware that they are carrying the fanworm the NRC is to be informed and a plan is put in place to eradicate it directly. We ask that vessels from the infected Auckland advise us of their last antifouling.

Any marine contract vessels or second-hand structures brought in should also be questioned in regards to carrying the pest.

## Staff

The operator of the facility is:

Chris Galbraith 027 457 3512 or 09 402 5659

The operator's responsibilities as General/Marina Manager.

## Training

- o All staff will be given training in regards to new vessels, or high risk vessels coming into the Marina;
- 1. Training will be conducted by the Marina Manager and or Northland Regional Council biosecurity staff;
- 2. Staff will be made aware of marine pest protocols via staff inductions and Northland Regional Council training. This will be recorded via staff induction sheets within the Standard Operations Procedure Manual.

## Risk assessment

Vessels will be required to answer a short questionnaire. If the vessel is considered 'high risk' BOI Marina will then follow the procedures for 'high risk'.



## Risk assessment procedures

Prior to arrival:

1. If the vessel contacts the Marina prior to arrival, staff will evaluate the vessel as per questionnaire;
2. If the vessel is thought to be 'high risk' the owner will be required to have an inspection and certification prior to arrival. This may be in the form of haul out and anti-foul or having an approved diver inspect the vessel (photographs of hull provided by diver). Alternatively, the vessel could arrange to be slipped and cleaned immediately upon arrival in Opua with the approval of Northland Regional Council. Details of the proposed slipping arrangements must be provided by the owner;



3. On arrival after having been cleared of Mediterranean fanworm, a copy of either the haul out and anti-foul or clearance issued by an approved diver will be kept on file for the vessel;
4. We cannot offer a berth at the Marina if the vessel owner does not wish to comply; and
5. The vessel owner will need to read our terms and conditions and sign that they will abide by these (which contains Mediterranean fanworm awareness questions).

#### On Arrival:

1. When a vessel arrives unannounced at the Marina, the owner will be asked to complete the questionnaire;
2. If the vessel is deemed to be 'high risk' the owner will be informed that a diver will need to inspect the vessel;
3. If the owner does not wish to comply – Northland Regional Council will be informed and provided with the owners details and the vessels name;
4. A Northland Regional Council certified diver will then be required to inspect the hull of the vessel. If the vessel is 'clean' of Mediterranean fanworm, a certificate will be issued to the owner and the vessel will be allowed to remain in BOI Marina. This inspection will be at the cost of the vessel owner; and
5. If Mediterranean fanworm is discovered (or any other notifiable marine pest) then Northland Regional Council will be informed and a plan of action developed by Northland Regional Council.

## Arrival of Known Carriers

If the skipper/owner announces that they are carrying the Mediterranean fanworm **before arrival** then we will inform NRC for it to be monitored and will advise them that they will need to show evidence of removal prior to entering the harbour or to go directly to an approved haul-out facility in Opuia.

**Note: Mediterranean fanworm has the legal status of "Unwanted Organism" under the Biosecurity Act 1993. A vessel owner or any associate commits an offence if they knowingly transport or remove Mediterranean fanworm, or refuse to comply with a direction given by an authorised person such as a Northland Regional Council Marine officer.**

## Records

All records of processes carried out will be kept with the vessels documentation. This will include:

1. Terms and Conditions of BOI Marina – signed and agreed to by vessel owner;
2. Questionnaire completed by owner of vessel;
3. Any inspections that have been carried out while the vessel has been at BOI Marina and previous haul out and anti-foul records will be emailed to Northland Regional Council; and
4. Documentation of any correspondence with Northland Regional Council in regards to the vessel.

This documentation will be kept for a minimum of 12 months.

## Signage

BOI Marina will endeavour to provide information for vessel owners regarding minimising risk of being contaminated with Mediterranean fanworm via web site links, handouts and posters in the Marine office.

## Variations to Procedures

Any variation to this manual will be submitted to Northland Regional Council for approval. No changes will be made until written authority has been obtained.

## References

NRC 24 hour Environmental hotline 0800 504 639

NRC Fax No: 09 470 1202, clearly addressed to Irene Middleton or Don Mckenzie

### Approved haul out yards:

BOI Marina Boatyard 09 402 7124

### Northland Underwater Technical Services

Matt and Kathy Comnee (directors) Telephone: 0274 923 018; A/H: 09 433 5880

Email: [mattkathy@actrix.gen.nz](mailto:mattkathy@actrix.gen.nz)

[www.divecom.co.nz](http://www.divecom.co.nz)

Approx. charge between \$40-80 per person per hour for snorkel assessments, a recreational vessel should take approx. an hour.

### NZ Dive and Salvage in Auckland

Michael Pascoe is the Auckland branch manager Ph: 04 568 2505 Fax: 04 568 2123

Mobile: 021 381 111

Email: [mike@nzds.co.nz](mailto:mike@nzds.co.nz)

Main cost will be mobilisation to Opuia (approx. \$890 each way). Not sure what they would charge for snorkel but going rate for divers is 3 divers approx. \$2,700 per day.





## Questionnaire

Are you aware of Mediterranean fanworm? Yes / No

Please state the Ports and the dates that you have visited and the duration of the stay over the last 12 months:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

When was your last haul out and anti-foul carried out: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Proof of this being done may be sought)

Type of Vessel: \_\_\_\_\_

Age of vessel: \_\_\_\_\_

Size of vessel: \_\_\_\_\_

Average speed: \_\_\_\_\_

I have read the Terms and Conditions of BOI Marina and agree to abide by them

Yes / No

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## Guidelines for a 'High Risk' Vessel

- ✓ If the boat has been in Whangarei or Auckland
  - ✓ If the boat is slow moving
- ✓ If the boat has not been anti-fouled recently
  - ✓ If the boat is derelict
- ✓ If the boat is poorly maintained



# UNWANTED



Image by Crispin Middleton, NIWA



Image by Serena Wilkens, NIWA

## Mediterranean Fanworm (*Sabella Spallanzanii*)

**Appearance:** Brown tube worm with a brightly coloured orange, white and purple striped single spiral fan. The Fanworm very cleverly disguises itself as a muddy tube by retracting it's fan when alarmed.

**Warning:** Could compete with native species for food & space. It is illegal to knowingly transport this exclusion marine pest to Northland.

**Now Established:** Waitemata Harbour & Lyttleton Harbour.

**Previous Sightings:** Marsden Cove Marina, Port Nikau (Whangarei)

**Possible Sighting:** Whangarei Harbour Marine Reserve (Reotahi)

The Mediterranean Fanworm will anchor to any hard substrate, including piers, your hull, especially if it has been moored at Waitemata Harbour in Auckland or other known locations of this pest.

If you have seen this marine pest be alarmed! Take photo if possible, record the place, how many you saw, along with the date, contact Biosecurity officers at Northland Regional Council on **0800 002 004** or the MPI Biosecurity Hotline 0800 80 99 66.

Mediterranean Fanworm is an internationally recognised pest species. Take action against marine pests! **Check-Clean-Dry-Antifoul & Report Sightings.**

Experiencing Marine Reserves [www.emr.org.nz](http://www.emr.org.nz) is working in partnership with Northland Regional Council to keep this pest from being established in Northland.