



Top of the South Island Marine Biosecurity Strategic Plan 2021 to 2030

Approved December 2021

Principles	Vision for 2030	Functions
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Act constructively and promptly in the face of uncertainty. 2. Take a cautionary approach in making decisions to allow for the limits to our understanding of environmental complexity. 3. Take action by those best placed to act with the resources that are available. 4. Acknowledge the kaitiakitanga of tangata whenua iwi and Crown commitments under the Treaty of Waitangi relevant to this strategic plan in so far as these commitments are consistent with partners' obligations under their relevant legislation. 5. Rigorously assess costs, benefits and risks, including social, economic, cultural and environmental effects to enable best use of limited resources. 6. Apportion costs equitably taking into consideration legal obligations, roles and responsibilities, contribution to risk, and benefit received. 7. Encourage community involvement, individual responsibility and full participation. 	<p data-bbox="612 264 959 573"><i>The Top of the South Island marine environment is not subjected to impacts from new and damaging marine pests and diseases. This contributes to broader aims to restore rich and healthy ecosystems to sustain the needs of present and future generations.</i></p> <p data-bbox="724 607 852 633" style="text-align: center;">Outcomes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>The whole community is cooperating to minimise new introductions and minimise the spread of damaging marine organisms.</i> 2. <i>All parties have confidence in the biosecurity system which addresses marine pest threats in the Top of the South Island.</i> 3. <i>Partnerships between agencies, industry and other stakeholders are effective in dealing with the issues.</i> 4. <i>Demonstrated successes of the biosecurity system are celebrated by an informed community and the reputation of the Top of the South as the "jewel in the crown" of Te Waipounamu has been enhanced.</i> 5. <i>Regulation has been used appropriately to provide for biosecurity bottom lines and ensure consistency in actions and understanding.</i> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Undertake coordinated marine biosecurity education and advocacy activities. 2. Coordinate regional marine biosecurity activities. 3. Provide integration of regional with national marine biosecurity systems. 4. Provide partners with access to regional intelligence, resources and organisational structures. 5. Provide operational resources for nationally-led activities (e.g. personnel, boats, etc). 6. Coordinate local surveillance programmes including stakeholder involvement. 7. Use regional powers of regulation under the Resource Management Act, Biosecurity Act and Local Government Act to support regional marine biosecurity. 8. Use asset management authorities of partners as owners and managers of local ports, marinas and other areas of intense marine activity to enhance marine biosecurity. 9. Provides funding according to legal responsibility, capacity to pay and agreed priorities. 10. Use such other powers and resources as appropriate to support regional marine biosecurity.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this strategic plan is to outline the ways in which partners of the Top of South Marine Biosecurity Partnership intend to work together to achieve the 2030 vision.

2. About this strategic plan

This is a regional strategic plan prepared within the framework of national biosecurity led by the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI), and regional biosecurity led by regional councils.

This strategic plan provides guidance and principles for better coordination of marine biosecurity actions in the region. It identifies priority actions and provides a framework for determining who is best placed to undertake implementation actions in these areas.

While this strategic plan does not directly address border control, which is the responsibility of MPI, actions taken guided by this plan will make a significant contribution to preventing the introduction of new damaging organisms to New Zealand. The area of action for the plan is restricted to the Territorial Sea due to current limitations on legal powers of the partners. However, in practical terms actions beyond this area may have significant effects on the marine biosecurity of the Top of the South region.

The geographic area of interest for the strategic plan is that portion of the New Zealand coast administered by the Tasman, Nelson and Marlborough Councils. It includes all of the associated marine area below the limit of high spring tides within the Territorial Sea and contiguous areas that affect the biosecurity of this area of interest. The area spans from Kahurangi Point on the west coast to Willawa Point on the east coast (see Figure 1).

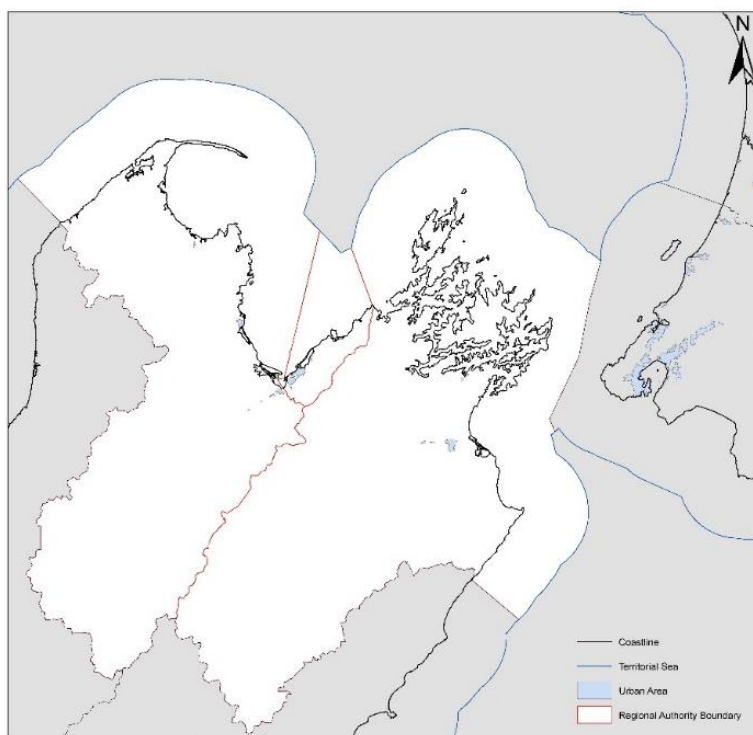


Figure 1: Top of the South Region

The strategic plan addresses matters associated with all damaging marine organisms from viruses to plants and animals. This strategic plan takes into account management at and beyond the New Zealand national border, but provides only for coordinated action within the Top of the South Island region.

A review of technical information on marine biosecurity issues in the Top of the South region can be found at <https://www.marinebiosecurity.co.nz>.

3. About the Top of the South region

The Top of the South Island, Te Tau Ihu o Te Waka a Maui, is a place of great environmental diversity and immense cultural and economic value.

This marine area shares ecological characteristics of both northern and southern New Zealand. It spans the exposed West Coast, the sheltered waters of Golden and Tasman Bays and the Marlborough Sounds, and the narrows of Cook Strait to the open waters of the Pacific on the east coast. This area also has its own unique environments and species.

With two regional ports and some of the best recreational boating areas in New Zealand, the area experiences significant vessel traffic. It also has the largest concentration of marine farming in New Zealand and in Nelson has New Zealand's busiest commercial fishing port. Marine farming in Marlborough produces approximately 80% of all commercially grown seafood in New Zealand. On average 65,000 tonnes of mussels and about 6,000 tonnes of salmon are harvested each year in Marlborough, together earning more than \$300M in exports. The Tasman region is poised to match that with Golden Bay mussel farming being developed to achieve production levels that will match Marlborough. Recreational boating also makes a substantial contribution to the economy in the TOS with around 3,000 in-water vessels contributing about \$8,000 direct expenditure per vessel into the regional economy¹. The Ports of Picton and Nelson together retain gross earnings of around \$80M and were estimated by BERL to be associated closely with activity contributing to about a third of regional economic activity and employment²³.

4. Biosecurity risk

The Top of South Region is exposed to marine biosecurity risk through human mediated spread of harmful organisms. Such spread occurs when activities may act as vectors accidentally transporting harmful organisms. The common vectors for the TOS region on domestic pathways are:

- Hull fouling
- Ballast water discharge
- Bilge water discharge
- Marine industry gear transfers (with the scale of activity marine farming is particularly relevant in the TOS)
- Discarding viable organisms transported for aquaria or science

At the border the Ministry for Primary Industries provides a risk assessment and control system for marine biosecurity risks. These cover hull fouling through the Craft Risk Management Standard and ballast water through the health standard for ballast water. The Ministry coordinates with partner organisations in the TOS to integrate border management with regional focus on domestic pathways.

¹ https://www.marlborough.govt.nz/repository/libraries/id:1w1mps0ir17q9sgxanf9/hierarchy/Documents/Your%20Council/Environmental%20Policy%20and%20Plans/MSRMP%20Plan%20Change%2021%20Section%2032%20Report%20List/E_Appendix_D_Revised_Economic_Assessment.pdf

² https://www.portnelson.co.nz/media/t34e5fx1/27308-annual-report-2020-web_reduced-file-size_2-compressed.pdf

³ https://www.portnelson.co.nz/media/t34e5fx1/27308-annual-report-2020-web_reduced-file-size_2-compressed.pdf

For the TOS recreation boating and marine farm activity are the vectors of greatest concern. Border controls intercept much of the risk from hull fouling and ballast from commercial vessels. The marine farming industry is a major beneficiary of good marine biosecurity and working with industry organisations can effectively manage associated risks. The Ministry for Primary Industries takes a lead nationally in supporting the development of industry standards and systems. Consequently much of the activity of the TOS Partnership will be focused on the recreational boating vector, particularly in-water vessels where hull fouling can be significant.

5. How this strategic plan works

This strategic plan works by recording the commitment of responsible organisations to agreed operating principles and aligned action to improve marine biosecurity in the Top of the South Island. In endorsing the strategic plan organisations agree to participate in the Partnership and undertake appropriate actions (such as preparing more detailed plans) that align with the vision of this strategic plan.

6. The Top of the South Marine Biosecurity Partnership

The Partnership enables integrated management of marine biosecurity through:

1. Clear leadership and role clarity.
2. Consistent and coordinated operations.
3. Efficient, effective and sustained action.
4. Wide public support and community engagement.

The Partnership relies on, but is not part of, the national border control regime.

The brief of the Top of the South Marine Biosecurity Partnership is to:

- Undertake coordinated marine biosecurity education and advocacy activities.
- Provide integration across regional with national marine biosecurity initiatives.
- Provide partners with access to regional intelligence, resources and organisational structures.
- Facilitate the provision of operational resources for nationally-led activities (e.g. personnel and boats).
- Coordinate local surveillance programmes including stakeholder involvement.

The relevant regional agency partners will:

- Explore the appropriate use of regional powers of regulation under the Resource Management Act 1991, Biosecurity Act 1993 and/or Local Government Act 2002 to support regional marine biosecurity programmes.
- Where appropriate, use their roles as managers of local ports, marinas and other areas of intense marine activity to enhance marine biosecurity.
- Provide funding according informed by the use of regulatory mechanisms, capacity to pay and agreed priorities.
- Explore opportunities for domain-based integration (e.g. navigational safety, coastal science and scientific monitoring) to support regional marine biosecurity.

Goal 1 - Coordinate and strategize		
Priority actions		Timing
1	Participate in inter-regional and national initiatives, plans and strategies to foster consistent management approaches that reduce risks on harmful organism pathways.	Ongoing
2	Sustain and continue to develop the <i>Top of the South Marine Biosecurity Partnership</i> , an ongoing coordinating body engaging Iwi through a body mandated to act for Iwi on marine biosecurity issues.	Ongoing
3	Sustain regional marine biosecurity coordination capacity. Responsibilities would include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination the partnership platform. • Developing and/or implementing advocacy programmes. • Developing and/or implementing surveillance programmes. • Developing standard procedures. • Engaging with marine users and other stakeholders. 	Ongoing
4	Encourage research providers to focus on research that supports effective risk management.	Ongoing
Goal 2 - Plan and prepare		
Priority actions		Timing
5	Improve intelligence gathering and analyse risk pathways to support effective regional, interregional, and national initiatives in focusing on priorities and making effective interventions.	2023
6	Ensure provisions in statutory plans align and support the goals of the Partnership.	As RPMP and RMA plan processes require.
7	Encourage industry standards and plans to include appropriate marine biosecurity provisions, particularly: aquaculture, marinas and ports, and standards for service provision such as in-water inspections.	As required by relevant processes.
8	Prepare integrated annual plans for key operations such as intensive surveillance within high-risk nodes.	Annual for plans and reporting.
9	Maintain the joint Incident Response Manual.	Updated as required and reviewed 3-yearly.

Goal 3 - Act		
Priority actions		Timing
10	Conduct regular intensive surveillance within nodes that have a history of high-risk detections, to meet targets under RPMPs or other agreed targets.	Ongoing
11	Develop and implement integrated regional surveillance including summer surveys of recreational vessels, structure inspections by key stakeholders (e.g. mooring service providers, aquaculture), and use of new technologies such as eDNA.	Ongoing
12	Develop enforcement strategies and undertake enforcement action to support compliance with relevant rules.	Ongoing
Goal 4 Change behaviour and communicate		
Priority actions		Possible timing
13	Provide education and awareness to marine users, stakeholders, industries, agencies.	Ongoing
14	Identify barriers to behaviour change and design and implement strategies to overcome these (in collaboration with other regions and national campaigns).	2023
Goal 5 Monitor and review		
Priority actions		Possible timing
15	Complete an annual report card for public release identifying progress, risks averted, new risks, and new opportunities.	Annual
13	Review the progress of this strategic plan after ten years.	2031

7. Glossary

Biosecurity is not defined in legislation, but the NZ Biosecurity Strategy defines it as the exclusion, eradication or effective management of the risks posed by pests and diseases to the economy, the environment and human health.

Central government refers to the legislature, executive and public service on the New Zealand national government.

Coastal marine environment is defined in the Resource Management Act 1991 as the foreshore, sea bed, and coastal water, and the air above the water:

- (a) of which the seaward boundary is the outer limits of the territorial sea
- (b) of which the landward boundary is the line of mean high-water springs, except that where that line crosses a river, the landward boundary at that point shall be whichever is the lesser of -
 - (i) one kilometre upstream from the mouth of the river; or
 - (ii) the point upstream that is calculated by multiplying the width of the river mouth by 5.

CIMS (Coordinated Incident Management System) is a set of management rules that is common to all emergency service providers. Basic principles in CIMS include:

- Common terminology
- Modular organisation
- Integrated communications
- Consolidated Incident Action Plans
- Designated incident facilities.

DOC is the Department of Conservation, the government agency charged with protecting and preserving native species, managing wild animals, and administering public conservation lands.

Ecosystem is a dynamic complex of plant, animal and micro-organism communities and their non-living environment interacting as a functional unit.

EEZ is the Exclusive Economic Zone of New Zealand. It lies between 12 and 200 nautical miles from the coast. (see also Territorial Sea).

Environment as defined in the Resource Management Act 1991 includes—(a) Ecosystems and their constituent parts, including people and communities; and

- (b) All natural and physical resources; and
- (c) Amenity values; and
- (d) The social, economic, aesthetic, and cultural conditions which affect the matters stated in paragraphs (a) to (c) of this definition or which are affected by those matters.

Exotic species are those that have evolved elsewhere and have been brought by people to this place or by natural spread from another location.

Iwi form the largest everyday social units in Māori populations and in the context of this strategic plan refer to the tangata whenua of Te Tau Ihu: Ngāti Tama, Ngāti Rārua, Te Atiawa, Ngāti Toa Rangatira, Ngāti Kōata, Ngāti Kuia, Rangitāne and Ngāti Apa and to Ngai Tahu.

Kaitiakitanga is an inherited responsibility of tangata whenua to look after the mauri (life force) of ngā taonga tuku iho. It includes protecting biodiversity and the maintenance of resources for present and future generations.

Local government in New Zealand comprises regional, district and city councils but in the area of this strategic plan all three councils are unitary authorities with all the functions of both regional and territorial local authorities that apply within the limits of the Territorial Sea.

MPI is the Ministry for Primary Industries responsible amongst other things for leading a fully integrated, transparent and efficient biosecurity system for the country.

Mauri is the life force of places and natural things.

National Pest Management Plan is a legally binding plan established at a national level for managing a pest and identifies (among other things) the powers to be used and how the strategy will be funded.

Ngā taonga tuku iho are the treasured resources (particularly natural) of this area.

Regional Pest Management Plan is a legally binding plan established at a regional level by a regional council for managing pests.

Residual Risk is the risk that remains after specified risk reduction management actions have been taken.

Stakeholder is a person or group with an interest in the issue under consideration.

Surveillance in biosecurity is the process of systematically collecting and analysing information about the presence (and distribution) or absence of pests and diseases. In plain language, biosecurity surveillance means looking for pests, diseases, animals, plants and other living things (which either don't belong in New Zealand or can cause problems for animals, plants or the environment) - to find out whether they're already here - if they are, where exactly they are - and if they're not, to detect them early should they arrive.

Territorial Sea of New Zealand is the area of sea within 12 nautical miles of the baseline, where the baseline is mean low-water mark except where it takes a straight line across the mouth of bays less than 24 nautical miles across.

Te Tau Ihu o te Waka a Maui, literally the prow of Maui's canoe.

Vector in biosecurity management refers to things that can transport damaging organisms into and within our environment.

Vision is an image of the ideal future we would like to reach.

8. Appendix 1 - Roles and participation in marine biosecurity

The table below shows roles and responsibilities for marine biosecurity in the Top of the South.

Type	Circumstance		Responsible party*	Top of the South Actions
Population management (Species-led management)	Pest not previously detected in New Zealand.		MPI.	MPI manages border, national high-risk site surveillance and national incursion responses and keeps partners of risks and opportunities to support.
	Pest already in New Zealand and an objective has been set to eradicate or contain nationally.		MPI.	Leads national pest programmes and national surveillance and keeps partners of risks and opportunities to support.
	Pest already present in New Zealand and there has been a decision not to eradicate or contain nationally.	Pests affecting public goods, and either not previously in Top of the South or established, but tools to manage are available.	Tasman, Nelson and Marlborough Councils to co-ordinate joint decision making with MPI and DOC and interested parties (depending on nature of the pest).	Regional coordinator facilitates cooperative action and decision making between the parties.
		Pests affecting a specific sector, industry or private interest, and either not previously in the Top of the South or established, but tools to manage are available.	Industry and/or interested parties to co-ordinate joint decision making with those best placed to provide support.	Regional coordinator facilitates cooperative action and decision making between the parties.
	Pests widespread in the Top of the South and there has been a decision not to eradicate or contain regionally.		Becomes site-management issue (see below).	Regional coordinator facilitates cooperative action and decision making between the parties.
Pathway/vector management	Prevention of pest establishment in New Zealand (at border activity - ballast water, biofouling, hitch-hiker organisms, goods and containers).		MPI.	Manages border, national high-risk site surveillance and national incursion response and keep partners informed of risks and opportunities to support.
	Risk to any national or regional value associated with inter-regional vector movement.			Requires national focus as automatically multi-regional. Keeps partners informed of risks and opportunities to support
	Risk to any national or regional value associated with intra-regional movement of vectors (for example, of structures, equipment and vessels).		Tasman, Nelson and Marlborough councils.	Regional coordinator facilitates cooperative action and decision making between the parties.
	Risk to any national or regional value associated with development of marinas, wharves, jetties and moorings and the ongoing			Led by relevant Council.

Type	Circumstance	Responsible party*	Top of the South Actions
	maintenance of such facilities.		
	Risk to any national or regional value associated with dumping of organic material from vessels (within the 12 nautical mile limit and on land).		Led by relevant Council.
	Risk to any national or regional value associated with dumping of organic material from vessels and offshore installations in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) (from the 12- to 200-mile nautical limit).	Maritime New Zealand.	Regional coordinator establishes links and procedures for Top of the South with Maritime NZ.
Site/place management (Management to protect values of specific places)⁴	For example: Westhaven (Te Tai Tapu) Marine Reserve and Westhaven (Whanganui Inlet) Wildlife Management Reserve in Whanganui Inlet, Tonga Island Marine Reserve, Horoirangi Marine Reserve, Long Island - Kokomohua Marine Reserve, Duffer's Reef Wildlife Management Reserve, Farewell Spit Nature Reserve, Abel Taman national park foreshore, Takapourewa and other reserves that include foreshore managed under the Reserves Act administered by DOC.	DOC.	DOC undertakes programmes as necessary informing partners of risks and opportunities to support.
	Marine protected areas (MPA) administered by bodies other than DOC.	The primary administering body with the necessary powers.	Regional coordinator identifies such areas and establishes links with administering bodies (e.g. taiapure committees).
	Places recognised by formal regional policy as being of special value to regional communities (not being sites as above).	Regional councils.	Action led by relevant council keeping partners informed of risks and opportunities to support.
	Privately owned structures occupying marine and other environments including ports, wharfage areas and marinas at Collingwood, Takaka River Mouth, Marahau, Tarakohe, Motueka, Mapua, Nelson, Croiselles Harbour, Picton, Waikawa Bay and marine farms, jetties and moorings throughout the Top of the South Island. Needs full inventory of owners and defined responsibilities.	Structure owners ⁵ .	Regional coordinator reviews current approach and identifies opportunities to close gaps and apply best current practice.
	Other sites.	Party or parties with the incentives to act and necessary powers to achieve desired objective for the site.	Regional coordinator facilitates collective action where this has benefits out weighing costs.
*Lead intervention, decision-maker responsible for bringing together parties with the necessary powers, functions and resources.			

⁴ Guiding principle: That the party with the primary interest in a place ought to be the intervention decision maker in respect of that place.

⁵ Structure owners will manage those pests that they have an interest in but will also be subject to a regional coastal plan and may also be required, under the conditions of their resource consent, to take specified steps to manage pests as part of a broader regional pest initiative.