

National Centre for Aquatic Biodiversity & Biosecurity

protecting our natural heritage

Over the past 100 years foreign species have become established in New Zealand waters at a rate of about one every 9 months. Not all these species have become pests, but a few have caused significant problems for human health, native plant and animal species, and the fishing and aquaculture industry. The National Centre for Aquatic Biodiversity & Biosecurity is working with the Ministry of Fisheries to develop a national surveillance programme for marine pests so that pests can be detected soon after they arrive in the country.

Non-indigenous species can have negative effects on New Zealand's native aquatic communities, sometimes with severe environmental and economic consequences. A thorough knowledge of our native plants and animals is the best protection against alien invaders because it ensures that new arrivals can be accurately distinguished before they become established and cause problems. The Centre is contributing significantly to our biosecurity defences by addressing information gaps in freshwater and marine environments through taxonomic studies, baseline surveys, and the production of identification guides and other publications to help central and local government, communities, and other sectors protect and restore biodiversity. The Centre's free quarterly newsletter, *Aquatic Biodiversity & Biosecurity*, which is also available on our webpage, helps provide information to stakeholders about new research, not only from NIWA, but also from other research providers and funders.

The Centre carries out research around New Zealand and in the Southern Ocean and the Ross Sea to support the government's biodiversity and biosecurity strategies. It helps bring research results to the community, including industry, iwi, councils, and government agencies. It also enhances access to NIWA's aquatic biodiversity and biosecurity expertise, increases awareness of issues facing New Zealand, fosters collaboration and cooperation between research organisations here and overseas, and provides new tools and services.

Scientists are still discovering and describing new species from many different groups as they carry out the essential task of documenting New Zealand's marine and freshwater aquatic environments. The research being done by the Centre is helping us understand the distribution of plants and animals in and around New Zealand. By doing this, we are not only documenting our biological heritage, but also providing the baseline of knowledge that is critical for understanding our diverse aquatic environments. This knowledge is essential if we are to protect and restore our environment for the enjoyment and use of future generations.

www.niwa.co.nz/ncabb

Hullcam

All New Zealand's 13 major trading ports will be surveyed for marine pests, as will three northern marinas which are the main points of entry for international yachts and launches.

Chrispin Middleton and Oliver Floerl.



Identification workshops



Hoe Chang



Te Papa Chief Executive Dr Seddon Bennington and NIWA Chief Executive Dr Rick Pridmore sign the new agreement that will provide stronger research and public education links between the two organisations. NIWA and Te Papa will work more closely together to increase public awareness and appreciation of the natural environment and its protection, restoration, and management. The focus will be on issues of aquatic biodiversity and biosecurity, sustainability, climate change, and natural hazards.

