

21 October 2024

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Tēnā koe Dan

Thank you for your request to the Department of Conservation, (DOC) received on 27 September 2024, in which you asked for:

“a list of the actions the Department has undertaken as part of the response to exotic Caulerpa, and any reports sent back to the Department or other stakeholders as a result of these actions.”

We have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982.

The tables below provide a summary and examples of the actions we have taken in the response to exotic *Caulerpa*. DOC is responsible for the implementation, management and monitoring of New Zealand’s marine reserves, under the Marine Reserves Act 1971, hence the delineation of actions in the table below. All actions carried out support the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) as the lead agency in the exotic *Caulerpa* response.

Please note that listing all administrative actions individually would require substantial collation or research.

Actions in Marine reserves

Action	Comments
<i>What we do/have done</i>	<i>Relevant example(s) e.g. locations or specific projects</i>
Pest management: surveillance and control	Surveillance for exotic <i>Caulerpa</i> in marine reserves that are at high risk of <i>Caulerpa</i> incursion. Often collaborative with regional councils, local educational establishments and dive contractors.
Advocacy	Promoting and sharing of communications and key messages.
Administration	Extensive external and internal engagement and information transfer throughout the response.
Training	<i>Caulerpa</i> removal training exercise.

Other actions

Action	Comments
<i>What we do/have done</i>	<i>Relevant example(s) e.g. locations or specific projects</i>
Pest management: collaborative measures in support of the MPI-led surveillance and control operations	Surveillance and removal trial in the Mokohīnau islands. Sampling for confirmation and surveillance for extent in some locations where DOC has local capability. Surveillance in Whangārei harbour.
Administration	Extensive external and internal engagement and information transfer throughout the response.
Data collection	Data collected within a controlled area notice near Ahuahu/Great Mercury Island and supporting the Moehau Ki Tai, Pare Hauraki team.
Asset deployment or assistance	Sharing of marine equipment and assets to support MPI-led surveillance and control initiatives.
Representing the department in MPI-led working groups or hui.	Auckland's Operations Director is DOC's representative on the Exotic Caulerpa National Advisory Group (ECNAG). The ECNAG is co-Chaired by MPI and mana whenua. DOC staff sat on local governance and community action groups in affected districts or regions.
Personnel	DOC Coromandel was funded from MPI to establish 1.5 full time roles which allowed us to employ two biosecurity ambassadors, delivering advocacy at schools, boat clubs and boat ramps. Multiple staff engaged across different teams within DOC.
Advocacy	Promoting and sharing of communications and key messages.

Your request for any reports sent back to DOC as a result of these actions is refused under section 18(e), as no such reports exist. Your request for any reports sent to other stakeholders as a result of DOC's actions is also refused, under section 18(g)(i), as the information is not held by the Department, and we have no grounds to believe it is held by any other agency.

You are entitled to seek an investigation and review of my decision by writing to an Ombudsman as provided by section 28(3) of the Official Information Act.

Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) may be published on the Department's website.

Nāku noa, nā



Hilary Aikman
Director Terrestrial Biodiversity
Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai