



30 May 2018

Notice to providers of hull cleaning services in New Zealand

In-water cleaning of macrofouling on international vessels within New Zealand waters is prohibited under the Biosecurity Act 1993.

Any removal of macrofouling from the vessel within New Zealand waters via contractor or otherwise, may constitute an offence and result in enforcement action being taken by MPI.

Macrofouling on an international vessel visiting New Zealand is a risk good and deemed to be uncleared goods under the Act. Macrofouling is defined as any fouling in excess of a slime layer, and includes all organisms visible to the naked eye, such as macroalgae, barnacles, marine worms, bivalves, and soft-bodied organisms. In-water cleaning of international vessels presents an unacceptable biosecurity risk to New Zealand, and any person who removes macrofouling in-water within New Zealand Territory will have committed an offence under the Biosecurity Act.

In-water cleaning refers to any removal of biofouling done while the vessel is in water. This includes maintenance activities such as propeller polishing and scrubbing of the waterline/boottop. Note that as the cleaning of microfouling (slime layer) does not present a biosecurity risk, in-water grooming of microfouling on international vessels is not considered an offence; however, operators providing microfouling grooming services should ensure they have the appropriate resource consents to do so and should not remove any macrofouling while providing those services.

These rules apply to all international vessels visiting New Zealand, regardless of vessel type, including both commercial and recreational vessels. International vessels are those vessels visiting New Zealand temporarily and that have not received full biosecurity clearance from MPI. These vessels generally fall under the "short-stay" category of the Craft Risk Management Standard (CRMS) for Biofouling, and include short-stay vessels that have been found compliant with the CRMS. Domestic vessels are those that are based in New Zealand permanently, or have received full biosecurity clearance from MPI. "Long-stay" vessels that are compliant with the CRMS and other biosecurity requirements are granted full biosecurity clearance, and become "domestic" vessels for the duration of their stay in New Zealand. Domestic vessels must be aware of and follow all local regulations regarding in-water hull cleaning.

In some rare cases, MPI may grant approval for in-water cleaning of low risk biofouling on international vessels. However, these approvals will be issued to vessel operators only in exceptional circumstances, and will be given in the form of a Notice of Direction. MPI will require documentation of the state of the vessel's hull and niche areas prior to approval of any requests, and no removal of any macrofouling is permitted to take place prior to receipt of official approval. Diving service providers should ensure that any international vessel requesting in-water macrofouling cleaning services has explicit approval from MPI prior to providing these services.

Any enquiries regarding in-water cleaning on international vessels should be sent to standards@mpi.govt.nz.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Paul Hallett'.

Paul Hallett
Manager, Facilities and Pathways
Ministry for Primary Industries