



How to become an eco-ninja warrior and fight marine pests!



A video for young and old describing what to do if you see something 'odd' down at the beach.

The development of the 'Kina' marine pest video has been *"A lot of fun and something a bit different"*, says Abraham Growcott, Senior Adviser, Marine Biosecurity Surveillance. *"We are always wanting to improve the public's awareness of biosecurity and get the message across about what to do if you see something 'odd' down at the beach, or anywhere for that matter"*.

The idea for the development of the video was partly due to the rise in the use of online citizen science websites like Marine Metred Squared (MM2) and iNaturalist. MM2 is run out of the Otago Marine Science Department, Abraham's old stomping ground, and is all about getting school-aged children to conduct biodiversity surveys at their local rocky shore. On the MM2 website there are many videos teaching users how to conduct the surveys and identify species. After talking to the MM2 project coordinator it was suggested that a marine biosecurity-focused video be created.

"There is a real opportunity to engage citizen scientists as 1000s of New Zealander's are uploading photos to these websites of what they see in their 'neck of the woods', and there is a high likelihood that they could detect new invasive species before anyone else. Because of this, it is really important that these detections are reported to Biosecurity New Zealand as soon as possible as the earlier newly arrived species are detected the better chance we have of implementing successful management interventions, whether that be eradication or population suppression. This is especially important in the marine environment where new arrivals can spread via currents, marine equipment, in ballast water or attached as biofouling to the hulls of boats", says Abraham.

The video is targeted at 9-12 year olds and the goal is for it to be incorporated into already existing environmental education programmes or websites.

"A lot of organisations are developing wonderful educational material for use in schools, so we didn't want to recreate what is already being done, but complement it", says Abraham.

So this summer keep your eyes peeled for anything 'odd' down at the beach and be a part of the biosecurity team of 4.7 million!