OIA25-0052

18 February 2025

Dan Moskovitz
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Dear Dan

Thank you for your email of 28 January 2025 requesting information relating to *Asparagopsis taxiformis* risk assessment. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

You requested the following:

> *Of the six management options proposed in the risk assessment (national eradication, local eradication, suppression (reduce the population), pathway management (slow the spread), gather additional surveillance data, and no response), has MPI made a decision on which option it will pursue? If not, is there a time frame for such a decision?*

Biosecurity NZ has decided to do more surveillance through the marine high-risk site surveillance programme and marine invasive taxonomic service. There is no evidence currently to suggest that the seaweed *Asparagopsis taxiformis* is affecting biodiversity in the areas where it has been found.

Scientists will be looking out for this exotic red seaweed and continuing sampling as part of regular surveillance for marine pests at 12 locations around New Zealand. The seaweed that has been found looks very similar to the native New Zealand red seaweed *Asparagopsis armata* and can grow among that seaweed.

Boaters, fishers, and divers can help stop the spread of invasive seaweeds by keeping their gear clear of any seaweed before moving locations and keeping hulls clean.

Should you have any concerns with this response, I would encourage you to raise these with the Ministry for Primary Industries at Official.InformationAct@mpi.govt.nz. Alternatively, you are advised of your right to also raise any concerns with the Office of the Ombudsman. Contact details are: Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143 or at info@ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Yours sincerely

Fleur Francois
Director, Diagnostics Readiness & Surveillance

Ministry for Primary Industries
Manatū Ahu Matua

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