



# Passive surveillance, education, and awareness of marine pests

## Project summary

Aquatic Pest and Health Policy Section

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

## What did we do?

[MarinePestPlan 2018-2023](#) is Australia’s national strategic plan for marine pest biosecurity. Activity 2.3 in the plan aims to promote tailored education and awareness materials to engage marine pest observer groups in passive surveillance activities.

To complete activity 2.3, we worked with the Marine Pest Sectoral Committee (MPSC) and key stakeholders to develop educational materials targeted to ports, marinas, divers, and aquaculture sectors. The aim is to increase awareness of marine pests, leading to improved passive surveillance and reporting of marine pests in these sectors.

A series of custom designed material was developed consisting of A3 posters, A4 fact sheets, social media tiles, PowerPoint templates, virtual backgrounds, and email signature blocks.

The materials were distributed nationally and were in an editable format so that the material could be tailored to highlight marine pests of concern and reporting details in each state and territory.

The final posters and fact sheets are available to download from the [marine pests website](#). To access the full suite of materials, please contact the MPSC Secretariat via [mpsc@aff.gov.au](mailto:mpsc@aff.gov.au)

**Figure 1** Example of the final A3 posters developed for each of the four sectors.



Source: Department of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Forestry

## Why did we do this project?

Australia's marine pest passive surveillance system relies on observers having sufficient knowledge to recognise and report potential marine pests. We wanted to collate existing awareness materials on marine pests and identify which observer groups would benefit from further tailored education and awareness materials. Australia's existing passive surveillance, education, and awareness materials for marine pests has been compiled and is available on the [OceanWatch](#) website. A gap analysis completed in early 2020 identified four specific sectors that would benefit from increased marine pest awareness: ports, marinas, divers, and aquaculture.

## What were the project outcomes?

The materials have been distributed to stakeholders, including displaying posters on-site (such as wharves and marinas), handing out fact sheets directly to end-users and using the digital materials on social media, email correspondence with stakeholders and virtual backgrounds for workshops.

The materials developed have received positive feedback from key stakeholders across the ports, marinas, divers, and aquaculture sectors. A short survey further identified that the visual layout, clear take-home messages, practical use, and readability of the materials were the most effective aspects.

## What were the benefits?

Keeping marine pests out of Australia's marine environment and reducing their spread means we have safe, biodiverse, and productive oceans to enjoy for recreation, support maritime trade and maintain a sustainable seafood industry. The materials developed in this project help to raise awareness of invasive marine pests and increase motivation to report suspected pests. The materials provided clear actions to take to protect Australia's marine environment and industries from marine pests.

### **Contact**

For further information on this project, or to access the full suite of materials, please contact the Marine Pest Sectoral Committee Secretariat at: [mpsc@aff.gov.au](mailto:mpsc@aff.gov.au)