

Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau (PLAS) Biosecurity Project – March 2021

What and why? – Biosecurity and invasive species



Invasive non-native species (INNS) are plants and animals that do not naturally occur in the area but have been moved here mostly by human activities and cause significant damage. They outcompete native species, introduce diseases and are estimated to cost the British economy around £1.7 billion per year. Marine INNS arrive through various 'pathways' including through ballast water, fouling of boat hulls/gear, hitching a ride with farmed aquaculture stock, etc., through activities such as recreational boating, shipping, fishing activities, live bait, aquaculture and tourism. Biosecurity means implementing simple things to prevent their introduction and spread. It is much easier to prevent them from getting here in the first place than remove them after they've arrived, especially in the marine environment. The PLAS biosecurity plan will focus on what we can do to reduce the risk of introduction and spread of marine INNS.

American lobster photo © Crown copyright

Progress so far

We have been gathering evidence for the biosecurity plan including:

- Looking at which marine INNS are already present in the area and which species are likely to arrive in the future.
- Identifying high risk areas and activities for the introduction and spread of marine INNS.
- Researching the impacts that these INNS have and could have on important marine habitats, fishing and aquaculture, recreation, etc.

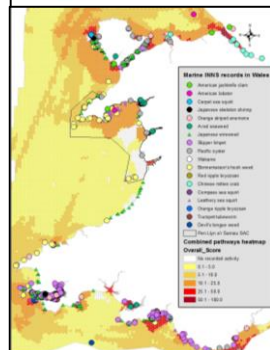
Other work that has been carried out:

- Distributing questionnaires and information to stakeholders to find out what biosecurity actions might be required and what is a threat to stakeholders.
- Raising awareness of marine invasive species through social media, articles and sending out information.
- Working with the Marine Biological Association to create a marine invasive species identification guide for Wales.



Assessing the impact of key Marine Invasive Non-Native Species on Welsh MPA habitat features, fisheries and aquaculture.

Tilin, H.M., Kessel, C., Sewell, J., Wood, C.A. Bishop, J.D.D.
Marine Biological Association of the UK
Report No. 424



What's next?

We need further stakeholder input to help us identify feasible biosecurity actions such as training (in INNS identification and reporting), signs and posters, providing cleaning facilities, producing and following guidance (on cleaning boat hulls/ gear, for angling competitions, not using INNS as bait, etc.).

We will continue working on action plans for reducing the risk of marine INNS introduction and spread and the pathways by which they are arriving and spreading. We are also currently creating species fact sheets, looking at locations and methods for monitoring marine INNS and working on having various marine INNS added to the Governments Catch Recording app for fishers to voluntarily record.

We are planning to hold an online workshop in April and will send further details once this has been confirmed.

It would be great to hear from you, please contact Chloe at

chloe.powelljennings@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk or call 07813407562 for more information