



An ANZAC perspective on the management of marine biosecurity risks from shipping



The International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments (BWM) was ratified and entered into force in 2017. New Zealand and Australia played key roles in developing the initial guidance that underpinned the BWM. Both countries have since also taken a lead in developing international measures to manage risks from vessel biofouling. Ratification of the BWM, almost 30 years on from adoption of the initial guidelines by the International Maritime Organization (IMO), provided an opportunity to reflect on current knowledge around risk-based management of marine pests and the experience gained using these tools in the New Zealand and Australian context.

International vessel transport has been translocating marine pests around the world through ballast water and vessel biofouling for hundreds of years, but it is only in the last three decades that science policy and management has attempted to understand and address related issues. A retrospective review undertaken by scientists from Australia's CSIRO and NIWA evaluates this recent history of successes and failures at the science-policy interface in dealing with marine pests.

The article looks in-depth at the efficacy and costs of treatment options for ballast water and vessel biofouling, and the relative merits of species-specific vs. broader-based approaches to risk assessment. Three policy challenges were identified for the ongoing management of risk: determining defensible or adaptable thresholds for risk standards, implementing robust compliance monitoring, and developing surveillance to evaluate whole-of-system outcomes.

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Read the article

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