Rallies, Regattas and Races

How to create a simple Event Biosecurity Plan for marine and estuary environments

This guidance is designed to help event organisers develop a simple biosecurity plan which works for a variety of marine events such as rallies, races and maritime festivals and at scales ranging from a small dinghy racing event up to international regattas such as a tall ships event. The examples provided are suggestions for consideration and may not be applicable in all scenarios. Separate guidance and templates are also available for creating an estuary wide biosecurity plan, for site based operations or for construction activities. A template is provided at the end of this document however plans can be in whatever format is most appropriate to the user.

Why Biosecurity?

As an event organiser you are an essential partner in helping to protect the marine environment. Invasive non-native species (INNS) are those that have been transported outside of their natural range and can damage our environment, the economy, our health and the way we live. INNS can ‘hitchhike’ on the outside of vessels and in spaces within them as well as on equipment and clothing. Events are an ideal opportunity for marine hitchhikers as participants and their boats may travel long distances or come from other, different, waterbodies to attend. With this in mind biosecurity, taking action to reduce the chance of spreading INNS, can make a real difference.

Section One – Build in biosecurity from the start

To ensure your plan is effective start thinking about biosecurity as early in the event planning process as possible. Plan to complete Steps 2, 3 and 4 ***before*** any pre-event communications are sent to participants (including participating clubs or muster point organisers) and to contractors. This spreads the responsibility to everyone involved, lets them know what is expected of them and helps them to build biosecurity into their pre-event preparation.

Gather some basic information to help you assess the risks of your event spreading INNS and the pathways which INNS could take both coming to the event and going away from it.

## a) The site or area where your event will be held:

* Salinity (fully saline, brackish or partly in freshwater), the latter can help kill off marine INNS if boats are coming from marine locations
* Tidal flows: strong flows could help to spread NNS
* Environmental sensitivities e.g. conservation designations
* INNS already present at your event site which could be spread during or after the event
* Launching and hauling out points
* Facilities for wash-down and cleaning boats/equipment
* Points where signage can be erected
* Other options for cleaning vessels and equipment
* The main points of contact in the event area should an INNS be suspected

## b) Event participants, vessels and event activities

* List the locations where you expect participants to be coming from, how they are travelling and whether they will be coming from outside your local area. Generally, the longer the distance the greater the chance they could bring with them an INNS not already present in the area where the event will be held.
* Describe the vessel types that will be used including details such as whether they will be trailer launched or making passage and whether they will have ballast water or bilge water which could be discharged.
* List additional in-water equipment (e.g. pontoons, boat trailers etc.) which will be used.
* Describe the in-water activity and whether boats will be anchoring or interacting significantly with the shore e.g. lots of dinghy movements.
* Carry out a skills assessment and set out what staff, organisers and volunteers already know about INNS and biosecurity.
* List biosecurity facilities and equipment that you already have to hand or could readily obtain for the event.

None of these tasks should be allowed to become onerous – be practical in your approach and work biosecurity planning into the general organisation of an event.

Section Two – Activity Risk Assessment

Take the information which you have gathered about the event and think of it in terms of the different activities that will take place from the start of the event to its finish which could introduce or spread NNS. List ***any*** activities where you think this risk could be high. Here are some examples.

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| **Activity** | **High Risk Factors** |
| Vessels participating | Vessels coming from distant locationsDinghies, trailer sailors used recently in other waters (and not washed and/or dried thoroughly from previous use)Vessels with significant hull fouling, ballast and bilge water |
| Use of Trailers | Trailers not washed or dried from previous use elsewhere |
| In-water equipment and structures | Pontoons moved and not cleaned, especially those from a distant location |

Section Three – Biosecurity Actions

Now work through your list of high risk activities and develop the biosecurity actions and measures which you can put in place to reduce this risk. As well as describing what the action entails think about the optimumtime and place (theCritical Control Point) for these actions to take place. For example it’s much better to check-clean and dry a dingy trailer before leaving for an event, not on arrival at the site. It may help to split the actions into lists covering before and during/after the event.

a) Actions which you and the event participants could do before they arrive at the event. Here are some examples:

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| **Who** | **Biosecurity Action** |
| Organisers | Communicate the need for biosecurity in pre-event publicity and get biosecurity information (clean hulls and kit) out to participants with the first booking information. Make participants aware that their help is needed to achieve good biosecurity through applying [CHECK, CLEAN, DRY](http://www.nonnativespecies.org/checkcleandry). Check with [The Green Blue](http://www.thegreenblue.org.uk) for the latest advice and any relevant communication materials. Generally speaking, dinghies and trailers should be washed with freshwater well before the event and arrive clean. For keel boats or motor boats not on trailers you should communicate that they should be appropriately antifouled with no visible fouling on the hull at arrival at the event. |
| Participants | Clean hulls, trailers and all other equipment to ensure arrival at the event free of any INNS. |
| Organisers | Write biosecurity requirements into supplier contracts e.g. hire of pontoons and other in-water equipment such as “the contractor must ensure that all equipment, materials, machinery and PPE used are in a clean condition prior to their arrival on site to minimise risk of introducing non-native species into the marine environment”. |

b) Biosecurity actions which you and the event participants will do during and after the event. Here are some examples:

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| **Who** | **Biosecurity action** |
| Organisers | Before participants arrive run a brief staff and volunteer biosecurity training session – target hull fouling – high level of fouling means no entry.  |
| Organisers | Before event starts set up a dinghy and trailer cleaning station |
| Organisers | Before event starts identify opportunities for an isolation berth near freshwater inflow to marina if appropriate and time allows. Freshwater lowers risk but it is difficult to suggest time required as it will depend on how fresh the water is. If 100% freshwater, 24 hours would be ideal. |
| Volunteers | As participants arrive check their vessel/equipment and give a brief biosecurity briefing and provide copies of an ID guide |
| Volunteers | On arrival check yacht hulls for biofouling using the six point biofouling scale. Direct any vessel with level at 3 or above to isolation berth. |
| Volunteers and participants | ‘Eyes and ears’ – carry out monitoring and surveillance. Promote a culture to report anything which looks worrying or unusual. |
| Participants | Before leaving check and clean clothing, deflated tenders, trailers etc. for NNS |
| Participants | Back home CHECK-CLEAN-DRY all equipment |

Section Four – Decide what to do if there’s an incident and who to contact

Things can and do go wrong, sadly your efforts won’t work 100% of the time. Think through what you would do if there is the discovery of a high risk INNS. Seek advice on who any INNS should be reported to for support and guidance (see *further information* below). Write a brief set of instructions on what to do and who to contact and include this in your training/briefing session for volunteers before the event starts.

# Making the plan work

Keep the plan short and simple, concentrating on a small number of simple actions such as ‘leave home clean’ and ‘check-clean-dry’ is the key to success. Win hearts and minds by communicating the consequences of INNS and their spread and everyone’s responsibility to protect the marine environment. It is important to have some way to measure the success of your Plan – include an action to assess what worked well or room for improvement to inform the development of future Plans.

# Further information

The Green Blue is the RYA/British Marine environment programme. Go to their webpages [here](http://thegreenblue.org.uk/Boat-Users/Antifoul-and-Invasive-Species) for biosecurity advice.

**GB Non-Native Species Secretariat** – Non-native species information, Government policy and strategy for management. [www.nonnativespecies.org](http://www.nonnativespecies.org)

**National Biodiversity Network** – Distribution maps and information about species. <https://data.nbn.org.uk> to be replaced shortly with NBN Atlas [www.nbnatlas.org](http://www.nbnatlas.org)

**European Commission** - European Alien Species Information Network - EASIN <https://easin.jrc.ec.europa.eu/Services/SpeciesSearch> and <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/invasivealien/index_en.htm> and list of Species of Union Concern - <http://www.nonnativespecies.org/index.cfm?sectionid=7>

Guidance on **Marine Biosecurity planning**

* England and Wales - [www.nonnativespecies.org/downloadDocument.cfm?id=1401](http://www.nonnativespecies.org/downloadDocument.cfm?id=1401)
* Scotland - <http://www.snh.gov.uk/docs/A1294630.pdf>
* N Ireland - <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/invasive-alien-species>

**Marine Biological Association** of the UK – Information on marine species including non-native species. [www.mba.ac.uk](http://www.mba.ac.uk) http://www.marlin.ac.uk/

**Bishop Group**, Marine Biological Association – Surveys of INNS and information on INNS. [www.mba.ac.uk/bishop](http://www.mba.ac.uk/bishop) or [www.mba.ac.uk/fellows/bishop-group](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5CSarah%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CMicrosoft%5CWindows%5CTemporary%20Internet%20Files%5CContent.Outlook%5CU8E0WBJI%5Cwww.mba.ac.uk%5Cfellows%5Cbishop-group) or email cwo@mba.ac.uk

**DEFRA** - <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5150>

**DASSH** (The Archive for Marine Species and Habitats Data) - www.dassh.ac.uk/

**MARINE BIOSECURITY PLAN FOR\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

1. **Introduction**
* **Location:**
* **Brief Description of Event:**
* **Plan period:**
* **Biosecurity Manager/Officer:**

**2. Information about the event site/area:**

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| **Salinity** |
| **Tidal Influences** |
| **Environmental sensitivities** |
| **Non-native species known to be present** |
| **Launching and hauling out points** |
| **Facilities for wash-down and cleaning boats/equipment** |
| **Signage areas** |
| **Other options for cleaning**  |
| **Points of contact should INNS be suspected** |

**3. Event participants, vessels and event activities**

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| **Vessel departure locations** |
| **Vessel types** |
| **In-water equipment**  |
| **In-water activity** |

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| **Staff skills assessment** |
| **Biosecurity facilities and equipment**  |

1. **Activity Risk Assessment**

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| --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **High Risk Factors** |
| *e.g. Vessels participating* | *e.g. Vessels coming from distant locations* |
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**5. Biosecurity Control Measures**

**Prior to event:**

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| **Who** | **Biosecurity Action** |
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**During event:**

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| --- | --- |
| **Who** | **Biosecurity Action** |
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**6. Contingency plan**

**Responsibilities:**

**Contact details:**