

**Together for our moana -  
we're shaping our future**

**21 DAY** YOUNG  
OCEAN  
EXPLORERS  
*Challenge!*

**CORE LESSON - HEALTHY OCEANS  
PHASE 1 - YEAR 1-3**

## Background information for teachers:

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS:**

[All about Marine Protection from the Department of Conservation DOC](#)

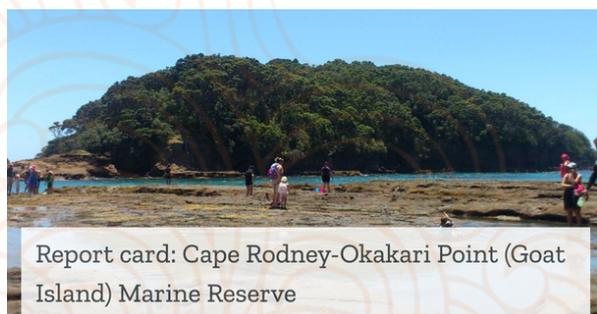
Marine protected areas are an important tool for ensuring that our marine biodiversity remains healthy.

There are three levels of marine protection in New Zealand:

- Type 1 Marine Protected Areas: Marine reserves. Generally known as marine reserves, these are our highest level of marine protection established under the Marine Reserves Act 1971.
- Type 2 Marine Protected Areas. These marine protected areas are protected under legislation and provide protection from the negative effects of fishing.
- Other marine protection tools. Similar to Types 1 and 2, but don't protect as much biodiversity as Types 1 and 2 areas.

### **Report from Te Hawere-a-maki / Goat Island Marine Reserve on marine health over 5 years.**

The ecosystems within Cape Rodney-Okakari Point Marine Reserve are healthier and more natural than those outside its boundaries. The reserve, however, is influenced by the health of the marine environment outside its boundaries – it has no walls.



**Kaitiakitanga - [benefits of marine protected areas](#)**

## HEALTHY OCEANS

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## NZ CURRICULUM LINKS:

Learning areas:	Achievement objectives:
<b>English</b>	Persuasive writing (letters) Vocabulary Critical analysis - interpretations and connections
<b>Mathematics and Statistics</b>	Number operations Statistics - data, graphs
<b>Science</b>	Teachers support students in beginning to observe and describe their surroundings. Students identify and describe observable features. Biological science Organism diversity - Discovering life, how organisms meet their needs Ecosystems - where and how organisms live, habitats, food chains
<b>Learning Languages</b>	Te reo Māori
<b>Social Science</b>	How can people participate as critical, active, informed, and responsible citizens? Places in New Zealand are significant for individuals and groups

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### Slides of lesson plans

Slides of lesson plans found [HERE](#)



This is an option for teachers to teach and learn with the class on a screen to follow along together. This is for all ages, so it won't match this lesson plan completely.

### Whakatauki

Whakatauki source: [Marine Stewardship Council](#)

**Toitu te marae a Tane, Toitu te marae a Tangaroa, Toitu te iwi**

If the land is well and the sea is well, the people will thrive.

**He tai moana, he tai ika,  
He tai timu, he ika nunumi**

A healthy sea, is a sea that flourishes with life

A sea in decline becomes void of sea life

### Fun facts:

- Goat Island was one of the first Marine Reserves in the world. It was the first marine reserve in NZ. It was created in 1975.
- 70% of the Earth's surface is covered by ocean.
- 95% of New Zealanders think "The ocean is important to me" (from LiveOcean.org)
- Over 50% of our oxygen comes from the ocean.
- New Zealand has the 5th largest ocean space on the planet.

## HEALTHY OCEANS

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### Overview

Start to think about ways to care for our environment.

### Learning intention

Tamariki are learning to understand the importance of the ocean in their lives, and exploring how amazing marine reserves are.

### Success criteria

Students can:

- Explain how people affect the environment
- Take part in a positive action to care for the environment.

## LEARNING SEQUENCE

Based on the Inquiry model



### Inspire

Provoke curiosity  
and wonder



### Explore/Educate

Gather information  
Use / apply  
learning



### Activate

Reflect and act

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# LESSON PLAN



## Inspire

🕒 Allow approximately 25 mins

**Watch** - [Riley searches for crayfish](#). What did you learn about marine reserves? *Video is 3.27mins*



**Watch** this quick video about marine reserves (the amount of marine protection mentioned in this video is outdated as it was released 9 years ago... Thankfully there is more marine protection in Tīkapa Moana now! The new protection is listed below.)

*Video is 57 seconds*



The Hauraki Gulf/Tīkapa Moana Marine Protection Act came into effect on 25 October 2025. The new protection includes:

- **Two marine reserves** - extending from the existing reserves Te Whanganui-o-Hei/Cathedral Cove Marine Reserve and Cape Rodney-Okakari Point (Goat Island/Te Hawere ā Maki) Marine Reserve.
- **Twelve high protection areas (HPAs)** - these areas protect and restore marine ecosystems. They allow active restoration of the underwater habitat. They also enable authorised customary fishing practices to continue.
- **Five seafloor protection areas (SPAs)** protect seafloor habitats from high-impact activities. They still allow activities that do not damage them, such as line fishing, spear fishing, diving and harvesting by hand.

Find the map [here](#)

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## Educate

Allow approximately 30 mins

**Teachers - you can choose to do all or some of these activities.**

**QUICK QUIZ** - [What is a marine reserve?](#) *1-minute video with a question*



**Research** - Locate marine reserves near you. How far away is the closest one that your school could visit? [Here is a list of marine reserves in NZ.](#) Imagine if your school could visit that reserve often!

**Compare** - Look at these 360 videos. What shows you that they are healthy or unhealthy ecosystems? (These videos can be used in VR headsets if your school has any.) They are 360-degree videos, so you can move your mouse to look around.

- Firstly, under a wharf in Tīkapa Moana. Look all around. What do you notice? [NZ Geographic 360 dumped.](#)
- Now you can compare it to footage from inside a marine reserve—[NZ Geographic 360 snapper city.](#)

**Discuss:** Class discussion on the whiteboard; list the differences between the 2 videos.

**SORTING ACTIVITY** - what we can / can't do in a marine reserve. [Sort these activities.](#) Teacher to print 1 per group. Add ticks or crosses to sort what you can and can't do in a marine reserve. You can do this in groups or as a class



	We can do this in a marine reserve.
	We can't do this in a marine reserve.

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## Educate

Allow approximately 35 mins

**RESEARCH** - What lives in a marine reserve?

- **Watch** YOE videos - [What is a kelp forest?](#) *Video is 1:24 minutes*
- **Watch** - [Meet the bravest fish in the ocean.](#) *Video is 4:20 minutes*



- Find out more about creatures of your choice. For example, tāmure / snapper, whai repo/eagle rays, red moki, leatherjacket / kōkiri, stingray / oru, blue maomao, kina, kōura / crayfish, parore, spotties / paketi. What does it look like? What does it eat? Where does it like to live? What are its predators? What are some special features?

**ACTIVITY** - To get the kids moving. Get the tamariki to act out all the different creatures you could see in a NZ marine reserve. The teacher or student calls out one animal at a time, and sees your classroom turn into a thriving ocean!!

**WATCH: How** are living things in the moana connected? Here's a great [video from Young Ocean Explorers: What is a food chain?](#)



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### Activate

 Timing will vary

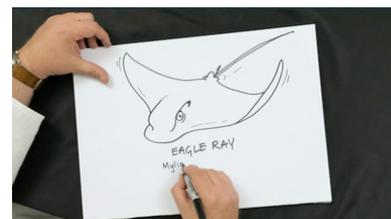
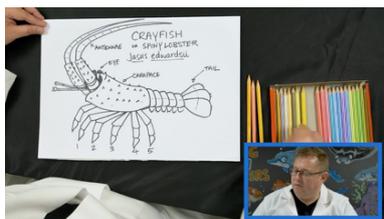
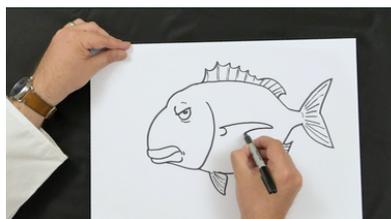
## DAILY ACTION



**MAKE A DIFFERENCE** for our moana – pick up at least 1 piece of kirihou / plastic each day. [Log how many pieces your class picks up on the Young Ocean Explorers website.](#)

**CREATE** a class marine reserve/ healthy ocean mural. Each student draws a creature that could live in a marine reserve in NZ. You might like to try some of these Young Ocean Explorer learn to draw videos to help you. Don't forget to add kelp/seaweed, rocks, sponges, etc., to your mural. Send Young Ocean Explorers a photo (add it as a digital upload on the 'my classroom' tab on the YOE website) – we'd love to see your work!

- [Learn to draw tāmure / snapper.](#)
- [Learn to draw kōura / crayfish](#)
- [Learn to draw whairepo/eagle ray.](#)



**HEALTHY OCEANS****TOGETHER FOR OUR MOANA - WE'RE SHAPING OUR FUTURE****Reminder!**

Send in your letters before the 31st of March 2026 to: PO Box 228, Warkworth 0941. Then we can take them to Parliament!! We want our collective voices heard about why we need to protect our moana and why it is so important to us! More info in the intro lesson plan.

**EXTRA LEARNING AND RESOURCES****See if your library has 'Suzy the scuba diver'.**

Suzy reaches for her dress-up box and, with her vivid imagination, creates a wonderful watery world to explore.

When Suzy invites children into her make-believe worlds, she shows there are no limits to your imagination.

