

Press Release - for immediate release Sunday 1 November 2015

## Nominate your Seaweed 2016 Ocean Champion



NZAEE Seaweed is delighted to announce that nominations are now open to find the Seaweed "Ocean Champion" for 2016.

Visit the Seaweed website at [seaweed.org.nz](http://seaweed.org.nz) to nominate your "Ocean Champion" and celebrate all those individuals, groups and organizations who work so hard to look after our seas and the marine life that lives in them.

Nominations will be open from Sunday 1 November 2015 until Friday 29 January 2016 and voting will take place during February 2016. Nominees will all be featured on the Seaweed website.

The winner will be announced during Seaweed 2016 and will receive a prize of \$500 donated by the New Zealand Coastal Society.

Last year's Ocean Champion - ocean campaigner, advocate, educator and conservationist Pete Bethune - was voted in from a total of 17 nominations.

The theme for this year's Seaweed, which runs from Saturday 27 February to Sunday 6 March 2016, is "*Toiora te Moana - Toiora te Tangata, Healthy Seas - Healthy People*".

Seaweed National Coordinator Dr Mels Barton says "This year's theme challenges us to delve deeper into our many connections with the sea and look at what we are learning from studying its wonders. The issues that affect the sea are not necessarily obvious or immediate and many originate from actions taken on the land. Making the connection between catchment and sea, surface and depth, water quality and ecology, our use of the sea and its health - and how that affects our health - are all areas to explore within this year's theme as well as reflecting on the lessons the sea teaches us. We all contribute to taking care of our oceans."

New for Seaweed 2016 will be the launch of more great opportunities and resources to

inspire children to get involved in citizen science.

Many events will be scheduled around the country during SeaweeK 2016, including favourites such as 'Farewell to the Godwits' bird watching, clean-ups, adventure races, films, lectures and guided snorkeling trips. Sustainable Coastlines have already announced a large project to clean-up the entire Manukau Harbour in Auckland during SeaweeK. If you are interested in organising an event contact the SeaweeK Regional Coordinator for your area to discuss how they can support you. Their contact details and all events will be available on the SeaweeK website.

The SeaweeK team would love to hear what events your school or group is doing to explore next year's SeaweeK theme "*Toiora te Moana - Toiora te Tangata, Healthy Seas - Healthy People*" and help you with publicity and resources. Please let the National Coordinator, Mels Barton know your ideas and plans: [mels@subliminal.co.nz](mailto:mels@subliminal.co.nz)

SeaweeK 2016 is supported by Foundation North (formerly ASB Community Trust), Department of Conservation, New Zealand Marine Studies Centre (Otago University), Environment Canterbury Regional Council, Greater Wellington Regional Council, The National Aquarium - Napier City Council, DSP Print Group Ltd, New Zealand Coastal Society and many local sponsors.

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**Links:**

NZAEK SeaweeK [seaweeK.org.nz](http://seaweeK.org.nz)  
New Zealand Coastal Society [coastalsociety.org.nz](http://coastalsociety.org.nz)