

New Zealand Herald, September 9, 2008

## **Marine environmental group to disband**

A working group set up to stop the spread of sea squirt in the South Island has disbanded.

The Didemnum Working Group was set up two years ago to keep didemnum vexillum in Marlborough at bay and prevent the invasive pest spreading.

Agriculture Minister Jim Anderton had allowed for up to \$150,000 to be redirected from the biosecurity budget but group chairman, Graeme Coates says an eradication programme would cost \$13 million which was not affordable. He says all the factors were weighed up and it has been decided the group will disband.

Mr Coates says marine farmers are now making efforts to restrict the sea squirt's movement.

10:00AM Tuesday September 02, 2008