



Aim of the Game

Learn about what happens in a marine environment when species numbers get out of balance e.g. due to overfishing.

Resources

Kids, whistle

How many can play?

As many as you like.

Rules

- Teacher explains that the game will help the children see what happens when different sea creatures – fisher, snapper, kina, kelp (seaweed) interact – mention foodchain and what eats what.
- One person is the fisher; rest of children evenly divided into snapper, kina and kelp groups.
- Fisher can run and tag as many snapper as they can. Snapper have to swim (walk fast acting like a fish); kina can only crawl on feet and hands; kelp can only stay in one spot and sway like seaweed. Have children demonstrate different ways of moving about.
- Teacher tells children that if the fisher tags the snapper, the snapper become fishers, if the snapper tag kina, the kina become snapper; if the kina tag kelp, the kelp become kina. Have representative children show how the species change from one to another as they are 'eaten'.
- Teacher asks children what they think will happen to the whole foodchain.
- Teacher sends everyone except for the fisher out into a restricted area (not too large), then blows the whistle so all sea creatures start living a normal life. 10 seconds later the fisher is allowed to start fishing.
- Teacher keeps an eye on the population dynamics; once the balance starts to change to less snapper more kina blow the whistle again. Everyone stops where they are.
- Teacher asks – what's happened? Why are there more kina, less kelp, etc. How could things be done better to protect the whole food chain?

Variations

- Longer time period before stop whistle is blown.
- Nets vs hooks. Nets = as more than one fisher is created (through catching snapper) the fishers can hold hands simulating a net and scoop up more fish. Be careful this doesn't degenerate into Bullrush! Hooks = fishers act independent of each other and when they catch (tag) a snapper they have to go to the sidelines for 2 seconds to 're bait' their hooks.