

A school of blue tang fish swimming in clear blue water near a seaweed reef. The fish are densely packed and moving in a coordinated pattern. The background is a deep blue, and the seaweed is visible in the lower right quadrant.

Seaslugs and Seaweed

By Kyra B.

MTS

Mountains to Sea
Conservation Trust

I volunteer with Experiencing Marine Reserves (EMR), a program under MTS that helps people learn about and love the ocean through firsthand experiences.

EMR runs snorkelling and education programs for schools, school holiday programs, and free guided snorkels for the public. Seeing the ocean for themselves really helps people understand why we need to protect the moana and the habitat around it.

Also under MTS is Wai Connection, the freshwater version of EMR (minus the snorkelling).





What am I doing, though?

Wai Connection offers a game for kids to play while they wait, and it educates them about the environment in a fun way.

But EMR has no such thing, so I'm making one!

The Wai Connection game

Bean bags:
10 of each stage of the life cycle:
egg, larvae, whitebait, adult



The “Board” Game

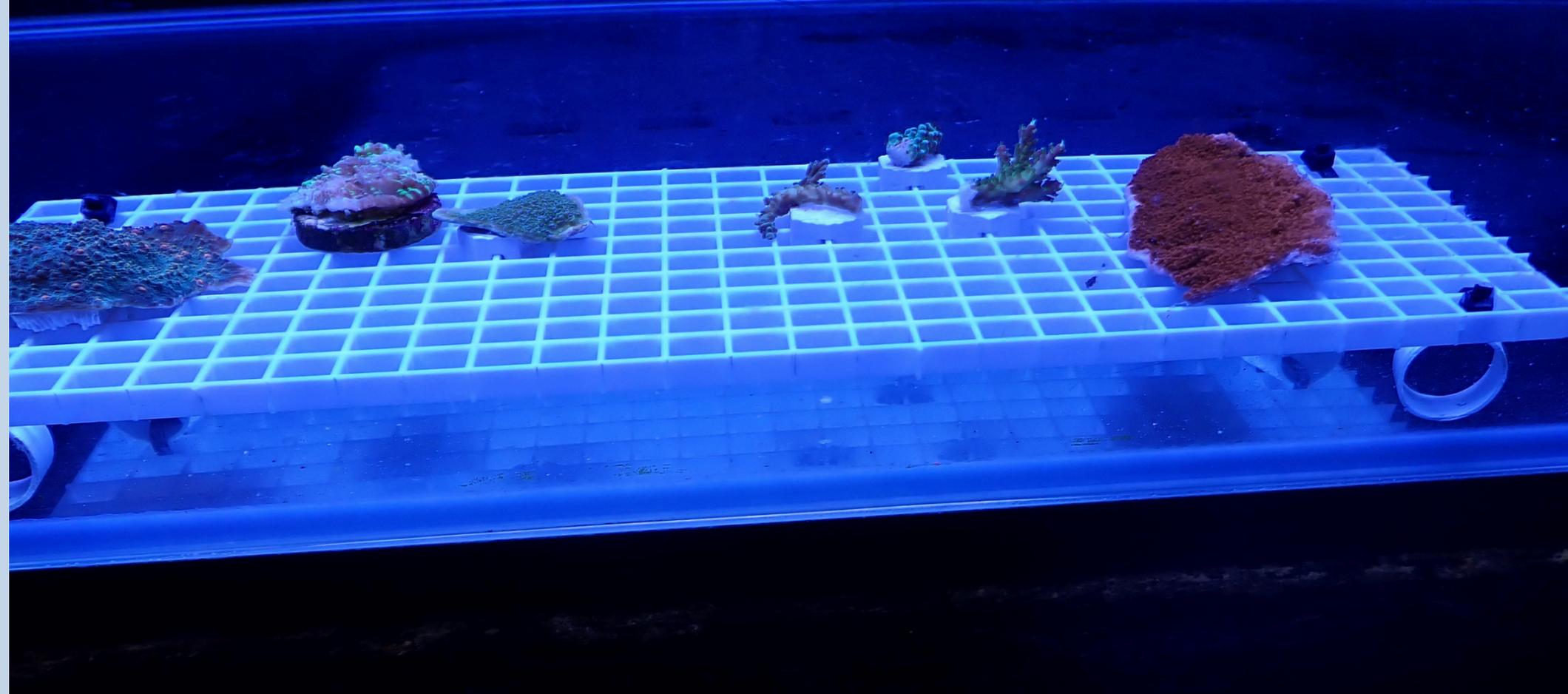
Ideas and design

In my last project, I mentioned doing something for EMR, and this is that!



Name of The Game

The game will be based on Snakes and Ladders (which is public domain) and will be called **Seaslugs and Seaweed!**



Ladders Seaslugs

The ladders from S&L are going to be Seaslugs.

The Seaslugs will represent Positive marine actions.

Snakes Seaweed

And the snakes from S&L are going to be Seaweed.

And the seaweed will represent Negative marine actions.

The aim is to raise awareness, especially for kids.

Information

Design

- The grid concept isn't fully decided, but 6×6 (36 squares) or similar is the rough plan.
- The original plan was vinyl, but it's not great for the environment. Luckily, there are eco-friendly versions of vinyl that don't use plasticisers!
- Eyelets for pegging the mat down are a must

Each key square might introduce a simple, real-world marine fact, especially focused on New Zealand's coastal ecosystems

Size

The plan was to make only one version for EMR that would be big enough for kids to play by standing on it, but I think if I could, I would like to make another, smaller board game version! Both would be made with eco-friendly materials.

Sponsorship

The plan is to fundraise through beach cleanups. Or get sponsors from conservation organisations like WWF, Government agencies like DOC, and potential stockers of the board game, like the zoo, the museum and educational game shops



Information!

Positive Impacts

The Seaslugs will be things that have positive impacts on the environment.

A few options

- Te Kohroua Rewilding Initiative
- Goat Island Marine Reserve
- The Waiheke Marine Project
- Marine reserves in general
- and many more

Negative Impacts

The seaweeds will be things that have negative impacts on the environment.

Some options are

- Overfishing
- Dredging
- Habitat loss
- Pollution
- Littering
- Climate change
- Invasive species

All the Impacts, positive or negative, will be real events, solutions, or problems

For whom?

The goal is for it to be directed at kids, but fun to play for everyone

Extra

I would just like to add that seaweed isn't inherently bad, and sea slugs aren't inherently bad. I chose them both for the rhyme and because I love them.

Mediterranean fanworm

Invasive organisms

Lemon nudibranch

Sea hare

Australian droplet tunicate

Undaria

Gem nudibranch

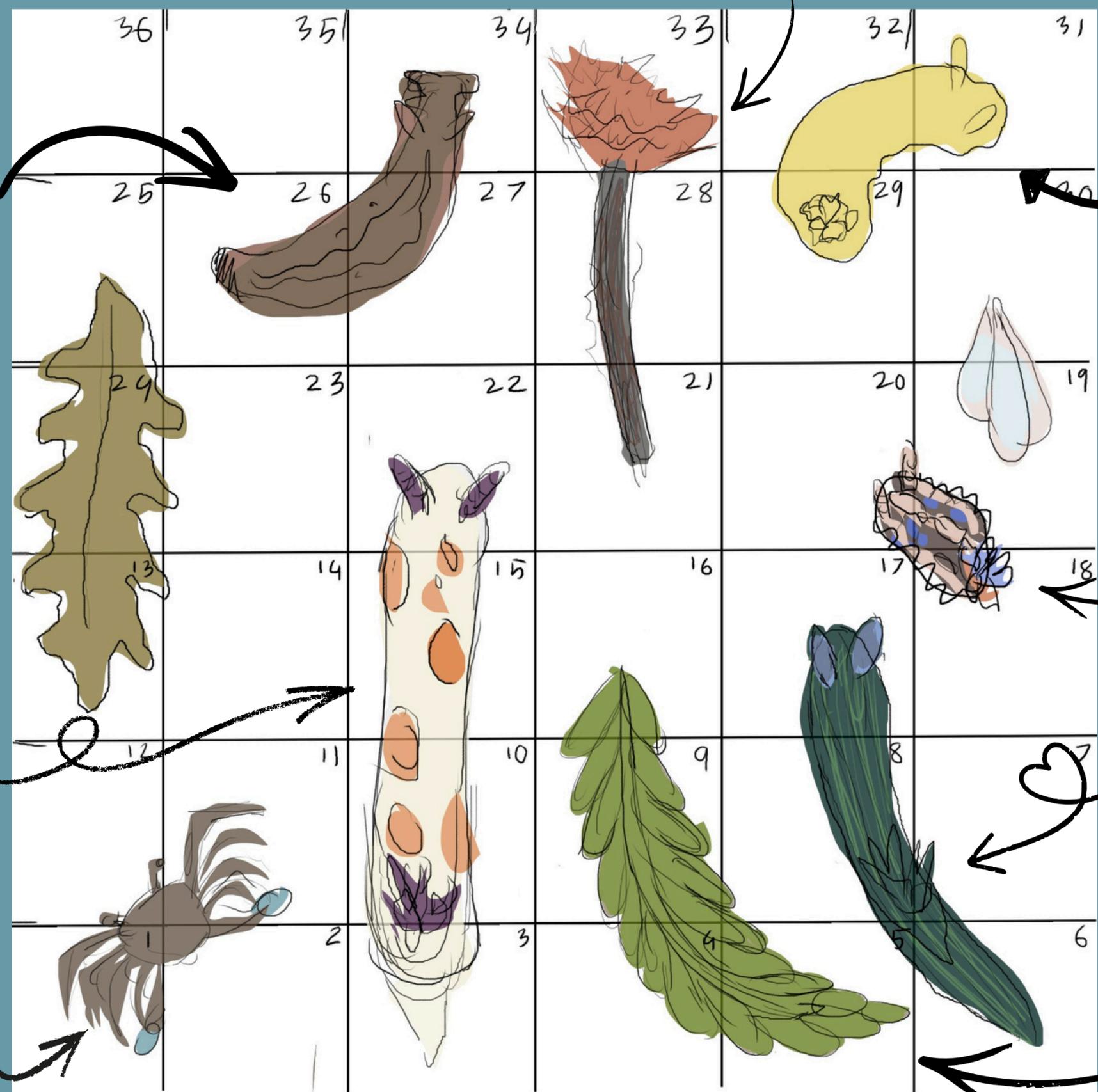
Clown nudibranch

Tambja
Tenuilineata

Asian Paddle Crab

Seaslugs

Caulerpa



Conclusion

In short terms, Seaslugs and Seaweed will be a kid-friendly board game inspired by Snakes and Ladders, designed to teach marine conservation through play.

As players move around the board, they discover how good choices can help the sea, and how bad choices can cause problems. The game will turn real marine ideas into something easy to understand and fun to talk about.

Most of all, it will be about helping kids feel curious, excited, and connected to the ocean, so they want to care for it long after the game is over.



Thank you for
listening and reading!