

Biodiversity Strategy
for the
Taranaki Regional Council

Taranaki Regional Council
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Over the life of the Strategy, the Taranaki Regional Council aims to achieve the following:

Vision

The full range of Taranaki's indigenous ecosystems and species are maintained in a healthy and fully functioning state, from the mountain to the ocean depths and from protected areas to productive landscapes.

Agencies, community groups and individuals work cooperatively in partnership, taking an integrated, efficient and cost effective approach that is based on sound science.

People living in Taranaki value and better understand biodiversity so that we can all enjoy and share in its benefits, as the foundation of a sustainable economy and society.

(refer section 3)

Four priorities

We will achieve the vision by implementing the following strategic priorities for action:

Private Key Native Ecosystems (KNEs)

Building on existing Council programmes

Working with others

Information management and gathering

Description

Work programmes to support private landowners with KNEs (regionally significant sites) to maintain and protect the full suite of ecosystems within the region

Increased 'biodiversity focus' for other Council programmes contributing to the protection of healthy functioning native ecosystems

Facilitate and support the efforts of others in the community contributing to biodiversity outcomes as part of a collective regional effort

Contribute to the community's management and development of information systems to promote public awareness and actions based upon sound scientific information

Key actions (over duration of the Strategy)

(refer section 4)

- Continue to identify KNE representing the full suite of ecosystems within the region
- Prepare at least 10 biodiversity plans per annum for privately owned KNEs
- Work with and support biodiversity plan holders to improve the condition of priority KNEs

- Enhance the biodiversity capacity and focus of Council officers
- As part of the Riparian Management Programme, establish wildlife corridors from the mountain to the sea
- Expand the Self-help Possum Control Programme, to support community driven pest initiatives, including landscape predator control

- Implement programme to support land occupiers and community groups contributing to biodiversity outcomes in KNEs
- Implement landscape predator control programme
- Provide servicing and support for Wild for Taranaki
- Implement programme using environmental enhancement grants to support iconic or significant biodiversity initiatives
- Develop shared services arrangements with key agencies and biodiversity entities where there are mutual benefits

- Maintain and develop Council's biodiversity databases
- Monitor and report on Taranaki's biodiversity through its state of the environment monitoring programmes
- Work with other agencies and biodiversity entities to promote and share biodiversity data capture

(refer section 5)

Outcomes

Key outcomes delivered by the Strategy by 2027 that contribute to the vision are:

- More than 25,000 ha (>18%) of Taranaki's remnant native ecosystems on private land is subject to active management to protect and enhance biodiversity, through the KNE programme, other council programmes and by working with others
- Including the public conservation estate, 60% (170,000ha) of Taranaki's remnant native ecosystems are formally protected
- Intensively farmed catchments (the ring plain and coastal terraces) are retired and vegetated to create wildlife corridors from the mountain to the sea
- In the Egmont National Park and intensively farmed catchments, possums and predators are being maintained at very low levels (over 32% of the region) to protect remnant native ecosystems and indigenous wildlife
- Egmont National Park is pest-free and characterised by high quality habitat protection and species richness for both the Park and surrounding areas
- Wild for Taranaki and community groups are widely supported and resourced to facilitate the efficient and effective delivery of biodiversity initiatives and outcomes for the region
- Biodiversity policy in the region is informed by strong science and robust information.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This document is entitled the Biodiversity Strategy for the Taranaki Regional Council (the Strategy).¹

The purpose of the Strategy is to set out the Taranaki Regional Council's (the Council) priorities and programme of action to be implemented for the maintenance and enhancement of indigenous biodiversity in the Taranaki region.

1.2 Scope and background

This Strategy is a non regulatory document that has been prepared by the Council to part of a 'whole of council approach' for biodiversity in the Taranaki region.

The Strategy will assist the Council to implement the biodiversity objective, policies and methods of the *Regional Policy Statement for Taranaki*. However, the Strategy outlines work programmes across all sections of the Council and across all legislative responsibilities, including under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA), the Local Government Act 2002, and the Biosecurity Act 1993. In so doing, it addresses Council aspirations and responsibilities for biodiversity on land, in freshwater, within the coastal environment, and offshore.

The RMA defines 'biological diversity' as "...the variability among living organisms, and the ecological complexes of which they are a part, including diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems".

That definition incorporates three key elements:

1. *Genetic diversity*: This is the genetic variation between individuals of a single species or within a population of a single species. Genetic diversity is important for the long-term survival of a species because it increases the adaptability and, therefore resilience of a species to external changes.
2. *Species diversity*: This is the variety of species within a specific geographic area (sometimes referred to as 'species richness').
3. *Ecosystem diversity*: This is the variety of ecosystem types or different assemblages

(combinations) of species. Ecosystem diversity is closely related to variation in the "non-living" (physical) components of the environment such as soil, nutrients, light, temperature, water which interact with biota to form distinct ecosystems.

Unless the context indicates otherwise, for the purposes of this Strategy the term 'biodiversity' refers to indigenous biodiversity. Although described as separate dimensions, the three types of diversity outlined above are, in fact, inter-dependent. That is, all must be present for any one to be maintained long term. For example, species biodiversity is reliant on genetic diversity and genetic diversity is reliant on ecosystem diversity.

The Strategy includes a vision, which is our stake in the ground against which to rally action and to measure success against. The "How" part of this strategy outlines the first steps in the action plan. We are identifying where our key biodiversity areas and habitats are located now, we are prioritizing projects so that key habitats and species are stabilised, and then we will work towards ensuring they are enhanced, healthy and functioning.

Achieving our vision might seem a long way off, but impacts on our indigenous biodiversity have been a long time in the making and as a community we are realistic about the challenge ahead. It has taken more than 200 years to create the biodiversity problems we have today, so it's going to take a while to make progress towards fixing them.

1.3 Structure of the Strategy

The Strategy has been prepared in six sections as follows;

Section One introduces the Strategy, including its purpose, scope and structure.

Section Two sets the scene in relation to biodiversity. It includes what is happening with Taranaki's biodiversity and the Council's roles and responsibilities. The roles and responsibilities of other key players are also identified.

Section Three sets out the Council's vision or goals for managing indigenous biodiversity.

¹ This Strategy is the second document of its type. It is the outcome of a review on the first Strategy which was adopted in 2008 following extensive targeted consultation.

Section Four identifies four priority areas (and explanation) for the Council to achieve the Strategy's vision for biodiversity. The four priority areas relate to:

1. the implementation of the Key Native Ecosystems programme
2. enhancing the biodiversity component of other existing Council programmes
3. working with others, and
4. improving biodiversity information gathering and management.

Section Five sets out, in relation to each priority area, the suite of actions being undertaken or proposed to be undertaken by the Council to contribute to biodiversity outcomes. The section of Council responsible for implementing each action is also identified.

Section Six outlines the monitoring and review provisions of the Strategy.

A definition of terms and acronyms used in the Strategy, and appendices containing supporting information are presented at the back of the Strategy.

The largest remnant concentrations of indigenous forest in the region occur in the Egmont National Park, and the steeper parts of the eastern hill country



2. The Taranaki context

2.1 What is happening with Taranaki's biodiversity?

Taranaki is a unique part of New Zealand with a wide variety of native species, habitats and natural features.

Before humans settled here, almost the entire region would have been covered in dense forests, rich in bird life. Clearance of vegetation cover started with early Māori and continued with the arrival of Pākeha leaving a legacy of widespread modification of the natural ecosystems.

Forest clearance, wetland drainage, and stream realignments have been necessary for the development of the region. However, development has had a considerable impact on indigenous biodiversity.

Little remains of the original forests, and other natural habitats, like wetlands, have been greatly diminished and modified. The Egmont National Park and the hill country to the east contain the only sizeable remnants of natural vegetation. The highly modified ring plain and coastal terraces now have only a few fragmented remnants.

Taranaki's remaining biodiversity is still vulnerable to a range of threats, particularly ongoing habitat loss and modification of the landscape, and browsing and predation by invasive introduced species. It is often difficult to attribute declines in biodiversity to specific threats, but it is recognised that the adverse impact from one threat can be exacerbated by the effects of other threats acting together, i.e. habitat fragmentation combined with invasive species.

Despite extensive modification, Taranaki contains a great diversity of landscapes, habitats, plants, animals, and areas of high biodiversity value. There are areas in Taranaki which support a diverse and significant range of indigenous species and terrestrial, freshwater and coastal ecosystems, including the Egmont National Park,

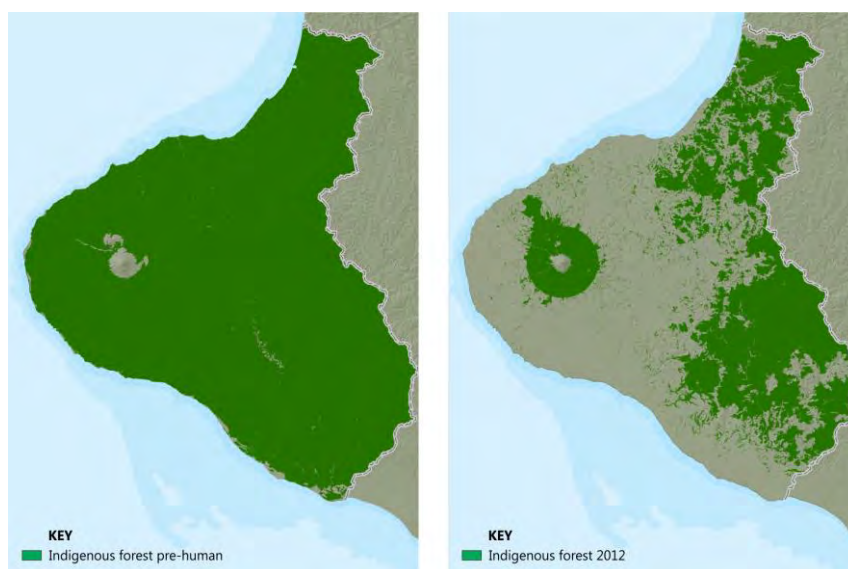
Parininihi, Lake Rotokare, and the Sugar Loaf Islands. Many of these sites are in very good condition.

Several endemic species which are nationally threatened or regionally distinctive have remnant populations in the region. These include the Western North Island brown kiwi, whio (blue duck), gold-striped gecko, *Notoreas* moth (*Notoreas perornata*), and the *Powelliphanta* 'Egmont' land snail.

Commercial forests and farmland are also important to regional biodiversity as these areas have wetlands, and plantings for erosion and sediment control and riparian protection.

Though the rich range of species that used to thrive in our region is greatly reduced and fragmented, nationally significant fragments of land and wildlife remain.

For further information refer to the biodiversity chapters in the Council's state of the environment report 2015 – *Taranaki as One*.



It is estimated that prior to human settlement most of Taranaki was covered in native forest, shrubland and wetland vegetation (left.) Today, remnant vegetation covers about 40% of the region (right).

Key facts

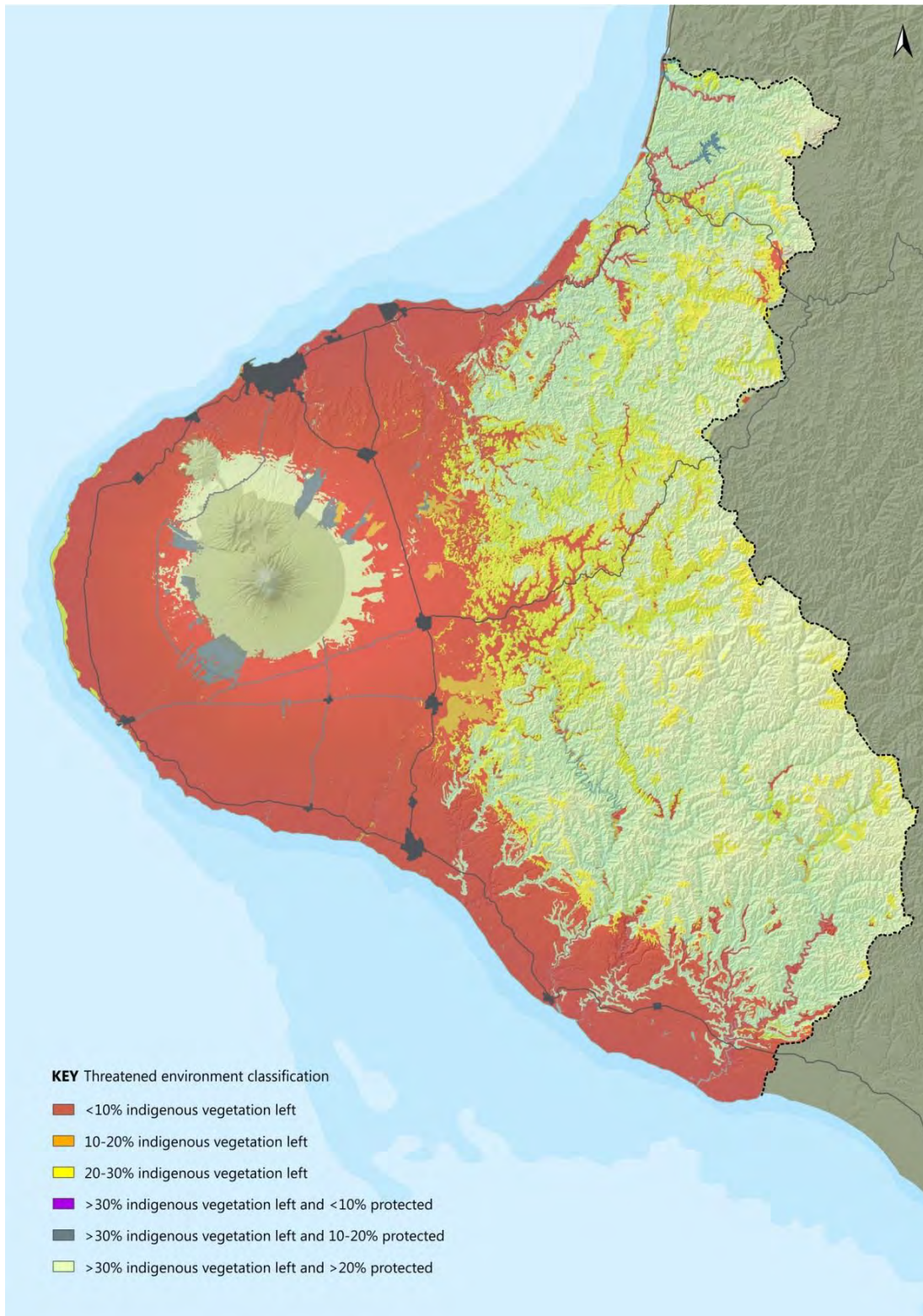
- ✦ 40% of Taranaki is native forest or shrubland (compared to 24% nationally)
- ✦ Largest remnant concentrations of indigenous forest in the region occur in Egmont National Park, and the steeper parts of the eastern hill country
- ✦ 21% of Taranaki is legally protected, including Department of Conservation reserves, local purpose reserves and QEII covenants. This equates to approximately 50% of Taranaki's native forests and shrublands
- ✦ Some environment types (Figure 1) are particularly threatened in that there is less than 20% of the original indigenous vegetation remaining in the area
- ✦ 8.2% of Taranaki's original wetlands remain
- ✦ 17% of New Zealand's 270 threatened or at-risk terrestrial fauna species, subspecies, or unique populations are present in Taranaki
- ✦ Taranaki has 37 native bird species, two bat species, eight reptile species, and 54 plants that are nationally threatened or at-risk
- ✦ Eastern Taranaki is considered to be a stronghold for the Western North Island taxon of the Brown Kiwi (*Apteryx mantelli*)
- ✦ Taranaki has six species of threatened or at-risk terrestrial invertebrates, including the Notoreas moth (*Notoreas perornata*), which is 'nationally vulnerable'. One endemic large land snail species (*Powelliphanta* 'Egmont') is found only in Taranaki
- ✦ Eighteen species of native freshwater fish are present in Taranaki. Ten of these species are classified as nationally 'threatened' or 'at risk'. Although they live in freshwater, many native fish species have a marine stage in their life-cycle
- ✦ Some native species are considered 'regionally distinctive' because Taranaki is the national stronghold for the species, the species is particularly uncommon in the region, or the species does not exist either further north or further south of Taranaki. Regionally distinctive species are not necessarily nationally threatened.



New Zealand dotterel.



The nationally 'at-risk' gold stripe gecko is more widespread in Taranaki than in any other region.



Approximately 52% of the region's land environments are classified as 'acutely' or 'chronically threatened' in that there is less than 20% of indigenous vegetation remaining in those areas. The most threatened environments are located on the intensively farmed ring plain, coastal terraces, and alluvial valley floors in the eastern hill country.

2.2 Taranaki Regional Council's authority to act

The Taranaki Regional Council (the Council) has a number of statutory roles, responsibilities and powers relating to biodiversity management. Of particular note are the statutory mandates provided for under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA), the Biosecurity Act 1993, and the Local Government Act 2002.

2.2.1 Resource Management Act 1991

Under Section 30(1)(ga) of the RMA, Taranaki Regional Council functions include:

"The establishment, implementation, and review of objectives, policies and methods for maintaining indigenous biological diversity".

Under the RMA the Taranaki Regional Council is responsible for controlling use and development of the coast, fresh water, air and land for soil conservation purposes. Council objectives, policies, rules and other methods relating to these functions are set out in the *Regional Policy Statement for Taranaki* (2010) and a suite of regional coastal, freshwater, land and air plans.

What does maintaining indigenous biodiversity entail?

An amendment to the RMA in 2003 established a unique function that refers broadly to the establishment and implementation of methods (not just narrow regulatory control) and includes an objective (maintenance) within the function itself. That is, not only do local authorities have to manage natural resources so as to avoid, remedy or mitigate effects on the biodiversity of its region, they must (in theory) establish and implement methods to *maintain* biodiversity.

That is an ambitious task for two related reasons:

- First, maintaining biodiversity in the face of the threats faced will likely require more than managing the negative externalities of resource use and will require active intervention by councils, other agencies, and the communities they represent.
- Second, whether biodiversity is maintained will depend on a range of parties and actions outside of a local authority's control (including for example, how well the Department of Conservation manages its estate and species recovery programmes).

There needs to be a close link between the RMA functions and LGA tools and priority setting processes (refer section 2.2.3).

Section 30 regulatory functions by themselves are likely to be insufficient to deliver the *maintenance* of biodiversity (only an avoidance of, or reduction in, adverse impacts) other, additional, actions may be necessary to fully deliver the section 30(1) (ga) "maintenance" function. These will likely centre on tools and mandates provided under other legislation (discussed in sections 2.2.2 and 2.2.3 below).

2.2.2 Biosecurity Act 1993

Under the Biosecurity Act 1993 a regional council has the *power* to prepare regional pest management plans and regional pathway management plans.

Such plans contain rules requiring owners of land to eradicate, manage or contain plant or animal pests or otherwise manage pest pathways. Plans must also set out sources of funding for methods that may be proposed to address a pest issue.

While regional councils do not have a mandatory function requiring them to control pests for biodiversity (or other) purposes, before preparing pest and pathways plans regional councils must be satisfied that a number of tests can be met. One of these is that the pest to be managed under the plan is capable of causing adverse effects on one or more aspects of the New Zealand environment including:

- The viability of threatened species of organisms
- The survival and distribution of indigenous plants and animals
- The sustainability of native and developed ecosystems, ecological processes and biological diversity².

Thus the Biosecurity Act provides a mandate and a set of powers and tools for pest control that aims to protect biodiversity.

The powers and tools available to regional councils under the Biosecurity Act are also available to government agencies/Ministers.

² See section 71 (d) of the Biosecurity Act.

2.2.3 Local Government Act and associated legislation

The 2012 amendment to the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA) narrowed the statutory purpose of local government and the role of local authorities. It did not, however, affect the role of councils in biodiversity since that role is prescribed by separate statute (i.e. the RMA) – despite biodiversity protection not being a “core service” in section 11A.

The key relevance of the LGA is that it provides, in the form of Long Term Plans (LTPs), the framework for the direction and priorities of each local authority. Through LTPs councils secure funding for non-regulatory (operational) biodiversity protection methods (with specific measures subject to the work programming/budgeting and community consultation process).

As noted earlier, proactive non regulatory measures (e.g. incentives for landowners and community groups, education and awareness raising, pest control, stock exclusion etc) are a critical component of delivering on the ambitious RMA function of maintaining biodiversity (something that will often require more than just managing the negative externalities).

This is the conundrum and principal source of tension in biodiversity management. Operational measures are required to deliver on the “maintain biodiversity” function of regional councils under the RMA, but the nature and extent of such measures remains, of necessity, a matter for regional council/community to determine under the LGA processes.

Of note regional councils may also use section 85 of the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002 to provide for rates remission for land that has high biodiversity value where they have a policy to do so under section 109 of the same Act.

2.3 Other agencies’ statutory mandate

A large number of agencies and groups (in addition to regional councils) have statutory or voluntary roles affecting biodiversity management. The key agencies/groups and their roles are outlined briefly below. These roles are identifiable from the functions listed in legislation or from the programmes that agencies implement.

2.3.1 Department of Conservation

The Department of Conservation (DOC) is the principal central government agency involved in the conservation of biodiversity. Its role is broad and multifaceted operating under a number of different statutes, including the *Conservation Act 1987*, the *National Parks Act 1980*, the *Wildlife Act 1953* and the *Reserves Act 1977*. DOC’s statutory responsibilities can be grouped as follows:

- Legal protection of land and marine areas for conservation purposes (i.e. creation and extension of a terrestrial and marine public conservation estate) including the on-going management of that estate. In Taranaki, DOC is responsible for 146,973 hectares of Crown land (or 21% of the region).
- The pro-active protection of species and populations on, and affecting public conservation land and, to some extent, more broadly. Threatened species recovery programmes in Taranaki include recovery of the Western North Island brown kiwi and the whio (blue duck) in Egmont National Park and adjacent farmland. Part of the DOC species recovery programme is to support the re-establishment of kōkako in Taranaki.
- Promotion of conservation off the public conservation estate through funding and advocacy.

2.3.2 District councils

There are three district councils in Taranaki - New Plymouth District Council, Stratford District Council and South Taranaki District Council.

Under the RMA, the district councils have a role for controlling the effects of use and development and protection of land, including for the purpose of the maintenance of indigenous biodiversity.

Each district council has objectives, policies and actions or methods of implementation in their district plans in relation to indigenous vegetation generally or significant natural areas (SNAs) specifically. Most

councils have funds available for private landowners for the protection of significant natural areas, e.g. the NPDC Heritage Protection Fund targeted at helping landowners with fencing of natural areas to help facilitate covenanting with QEII. Each district council also manages a number of council owned reserves and undertakes direct management of plant and animal pest threats within parks, reserves and other council administered lands.

2.3.3 Ministry for Primary Industries

The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) has three roles relevant to the maintenance of biodiversity.

- *Fisheries management* (including the four freshwater species in the quota management system) – controlled under the Fisheries Acts 1983 and 1996 and various regulations
- *Indigenous forest management* to ensure sustainable harvest – under Part IIIA of the Forests Act 1949 (as amended in 1993).
- *Biosecurity/pest management* – leadership of the national biosecurity system. This includes certain pre and post border roles that are important to maintaining biodiversity. (Note that new measures aimed at managing pests that threaten biodiversity at the national level (such as a pest management plan) would be led by DOC in accordance with the general scheme of the Biosecurity Act).

The first two of these roles illustrate MPI's role as lead agency for the *sustainable use* of New Zealand's biodiversity.

2.3.4 Fish and Game New Zealand

The New Zealand Fish and Game Council is a statutory but non governmental entity charged under the Conservation Act with managing both sports fish and game. This involves operating a licensing system and well as operational activity to maintain fish and game stocks.

Fish and Game's role extends to advocating for the protection of habitat for those game and sports species (all of which are introduced) and may, according to recent case law, extend to advocating for freshwater habitat protection more generally.

2.3.5 QEII National Trust

The QEII National Trust assists landowners to secure legal protection of private land (usually by covenant with the Trust acting as the perpetual trustee). Although supported both by DOC and local authorities the QEII National Trust is an independent entity and source of advice for landowners that operates under its own governing legislation (the Queen Elizabeth II National Trust Act 1977).

Voluntary uptake of QEII covenants provides a method and tool for the protection of areas and habitats of importance to the maintenance of biodiversity.

2.3.6 Science Research Institutes

Landcare Research is a key provider of land cover information, science and research and custodian of various biodiversity relevant data bases (and geospatial information tools) including the National Vegetation Survey (NVS) – to which DOC, regional councils and others also contribute data. NVS is a detailed centralised database of vegetation cover from survey plots throughout New Zealand.

NIWA is the key provider for information and research concerning freshwater and marine environments. NIWA undertake a range of biodiversity research projects and maintaining databases such as the National Freshwater Fish Database. Regional councils, DOC and others contribute to that database.

2.3.7 Trusts and community organisations

Dozens of trusts and other community organisations around the region have established and maintain reserves and/or programmes involving "hands on" conservation work. Most of these will contribute in some way towards maintaining biodiversity.

In Taranaki, examples of trusts and community organisations actively undertaking conservation work include the North and South Taranaki branches of Forest and Bird, Nga Motu Marine Reserve Society, Ngati Tara Oaonui Sandy Bay Society, Taranaki Kiwi Trust and the Patea Planting Trust..

The Council supports several individual trusts within the region that involve broad community involvement and are making a particularly significant contribution to habitat and threatened species protection. These trusts include the Tiaki Te Mauri o Parininihi Trust, Purangi Kiwi (formerly East Taranaki Environment Trust), Lake Rotokare Scenic Reserve Trust and the Rapanui Grey Faced Petrel Trust. The Council has worked with each of these trusts over the years, providing technical and funding support alongside a

range of partner organisations, including DOC and district councils.

Of particular note is the 'Wild for Taranaki' branded Taranaki Biodiversity Trust. This independent trust was formed in 2015 following several years of the Council facilitating closer engagement between biodiversity entities within the region. This facilitation work culminated in the preparation of a constitution and election of a trust board in 2015.

While still in its infancy Wild for Taranaki will arguably be the most significant non-government biodiversity organisation in Taranaki and will be responsible for several projects that the Council considers will be iconic within the region, including;

- 'Restoring Taranaki' – facilitating and supporting a collaborative, multi-agency approach to the progressive, staged protection and enhancement of the region at landscape scales;
- 'Wild for Wetlands' – facilitating and supporting the protection and enhancement of the regions wetlands;
- 'Wild for Coasts' – facilitating and supporting the protection and enhancement of the regions coastal environment, and the;
- 'Community Biodiversity Fund' – a programme of strategic fund raising and redistribution to community initiatives that will resource the protection and enhancement of biodiversity within the region.

Eighteen species of indigenous freshwater fish are present in Taranaki. Ten of these species are classified as nationally 'threatened' or 'at risk'.

Although they live in freshwater, many indigenous fish species have a marine stage in their life-cycle.



2.4 Overview of statutory roles and responsibilities for biodiversity management in Taranaki

There are certain things that regional councils must do in accordance with their statutory obligations. However, regional councils may choose to deploy additional resources and institute non regulatory programmes and/or regulate using powers available under other legislation. Table 1 below outlines Council's (and other central and local governments) place in the wider legislative framework for biodiversity management.

Table 1: Taranaki Regional Council's place in biodiversity management

	Habitat Quality			Species protection/population management & recovery
	Legal protection of sites	Management of adverse effects of resource use	Operational investment in habitat protection and restoration	
Private (including Maori) land	DOC [Nga Whenua Rahui, Nature Heritage Fund QEII - covenants Territorial authorities [consent conditions/notices, reserves acquisition] Regional councils [Memorandums of Encumbrance]	Territorial authorities Regional councils* MPI [Sustainable forestry permits]	Regional councils [riparian, fish barrier, wetland & KNE programmes] Territorial authorities [SNA programmes]	DOC [Biodiversity advice & condition improvement funding] Regional councils [Direct & 3 rd party funding of habitat protection projects] Regional councils/DOC/ MPI [pest management]
Freshwater environments	-	Regional councils*		DOC – [Wildlife protection MPI [Indigenous forest harvesting] DOC [Wild animal control] MPI [Biosecurity – incursion response]
Marine environments (<12NM)	DOC [Marine reserves]	Regional councils*	<i>Regional councils*</i> [Oil Spill recovery]	DOC – [Freshwater fish and whitebait management] MPI [Fisheries management] MPI [Biosecurity – incursion response]
Marine environments (12NM – 200NM)	DOC [Marine reserves]	Minister for the Environment/EPA	-	MPI [Fisheries management] MPI [Fisheries management] DOC [Marine mammals protection]
Public conservation estate	DOC [Ownership]	Regional councils*	DOC	DOC – Access and concessions system DOC [species recovery, mainland islands, pest control] Regional councils [pest management]

* Mandatory regional council biodiversity functions in *italics*.

3. What we want to achieve

This section sets out the Council's vision for biodiversity in the Taranaki region. It is what we want to achieve and involves four inter-related outcomes:

A vision for biodiversity in Taranaki³

The full range of Taranaki's indigenous ecosystems and species are maintained in a healthy and fully functioning state, from the mountain to the ocean depths and from protected areas to productive landscapes.

Agencies, community groups and individuals work cooperatively in partnership, taking an integrated, efficient and cost effective approach that is based on sound science.

People living in Taranaki value and better understand biodiversity so that we can all enjoy and share in its benefits, as the foundation of a sustainable economy and society.

Taranaki's own unique character and the biodiversity matters of national importance are sustained and enhanced now and into the future.



The kereru or wood pigeon

³ Vision was developed and confirmed following targeted consultation on the 'Biodiversity Strategy – An Operational Strategy to Guide Biodiversity Actions of the Taranaki Regional Council'.

Table 2: Strategic considerations for prioritising Taranaki Regional Council's biodiversity activities

Strategic considerations for prioritising the Council's biodiversity actions	
<p>One of the challenges in achieving our vision for biodiversity is that there is invariably more work than can be achieved with the resources available. Some prioritising of it biodiversity actions and responses actions is necessarily required by the Council.</p> <p>In determining its biodiversity priorities and actions (refer sections 4 and 5 of this Strategy), the Council has had regard to the following strategic considerations.</p> <p>Authority and mandate</p> <p>Community support for the Council's biodiversity work is strongest where it is clearly enshrined in legislation or where it has obtained a social mandate for that work.</p> <p>The following legislation, strategies and plans contribute to authorising the Council's biodiversity related programmes and activities (for further information refer Appendix I):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Legislation such as the RMA and the Biosecurity Act + National policy such as the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement and the National Priorities for Protecting Rare and Threatened Native Biodiversity on Private Land + Resource management strategies and plans such as the Regional Policy Statement for Taranaki, Regional Coastal Plan for Taranaki, and the Regional Fresh Water Plan for Taranaki + Pest management plans + Long term plans under the Local Government Act. <p>The Department of Conservation is funded and empowered, in its own right, to manage the public conservation estate. Similarly other agencies identified in section 2.3 above are funded and empowered to undertake their statutory responsibilities. It is important not to duplicate the work of other agencies, but rather to work cooperatively, provide support and add value where appropriate.</p> <p>Operational capacity - what can the Council do?</p> <p>The Council's biodiversity work will be more effective where it builds on existing programmes.</p> <p>In particular, the Council has an opportunity to enhance biodiversity outcomes by utilising its existing operational capacity across a broad range of work areas, including:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Building on positive working relationships and the goodwill of private landowners built up through the Council's existing biodiversity, land management and pest management programmes + Recognising that the Taranaki Riparian Management Programme will ultimately lead to restoration of indigenous vegetation and habitat on threatened land environments (the ring plain and coastal terraces), and the creation of wildlife corridors between the mountain and the sea (and the many fragmented forest and wetland remnants in between) + Incorporating wetlands and remnant bush on private land, particularly on threatened land environments, into the existing land management plans + Recognising that the current Self-help Possum Control Programme protects remaining indigenous vegetation on threatened land environments and within the iconic Egmont National Park + Building on the success of the significant wetland and key native ecosystem programmes by expanding support to other sites of significance + Promoting greater understanding of biodiversity values and threats through existing media and environmental education programmes + Recognising the biodiversity component of consent compliance and monitoring programmes. <p>Other good ideas - what else should the Council do?</p> <p>There are other good ideas in relation to what the Council could do for the public good, to add value and/or contribute to the Council's vision for biodiversity in the region.</p> <p>'Biodiversity work' spans an extensive suite of possible actions – from planning, advocacy and consent management, to protecting wetlands or bush remnants with covenants, fencing, and pest animal and plant management. While all might be 'good ideas', to make the most efficient use of Council resources available for biodiversity, the actions that the Council chooses to undertake must be strategic and prioritised.⁴</p> <p>Appendix II sets out a list of possible biodiversity actions for the Council based upon the outcomes of targeted consultation undertaken when preparing the first biodiversity strategy action plan in 2008.</p>

⁴ To do otherwise runs the risk of being unable to deliver on community expectations or spreading resources too thinly for effective outcomes, such as focusing on carrying out direct control where a focus on building landowner and community knowledge and capacity to do that control may produce greater results.

4. Priorities for biodiversity

This section sets out four priority areas (and explanation) for the Taranaki Regional Council to achieve the Strategy's vision for biodiversity. The priorities take into account the Council's authorisation for undertaking biodiversity work, the extensive scope for biodiversity work in the region, and the Council's existing capacity, skills and experience (i.e. the strategic considerations outlined in Table 2).

Council's Top Biodiversity Priorities⁵

1. Continue to grow and implement an integrated and co-ordinated biodiversity protection and enhancement programme, that supports private landowners with Key Native Ecosystems (regionally significant sites) representing the full suite of ecosystems within the region.
2. Acknowledge the biodiversity component of existing Council programmes, particularly the provision of education and advice. Bring an increased 'biodiversity focus' to these programmes, especially as they relate to Key Native Ecosystems and other sites or places with regionally significant biodiversity values.
3. Where appropriate, facilitate improved coordination of biodiversity work undertaken by different agencies, trusts and community groups across Taranaki and, in particular, consider and investigate larger landscape scale biodiversity initiatives, while partnering with others.
4. Contribute to the management and development of biodiversity information systems relevant to Taranaki to ensure management decisions are based on sound scientific information and to enable the monitoring of outcomes for biodiversity in the Region and the revision of priorities as necessary.

⁵ In no priority order.

4.1 Private Key Native Ecosystems

Continue to grow and implement an integrated and co-ordinated biodiversity protection and enhancement programmes that prioritise support towards private landowners with Key Native Ecosystems (regionally significant sites).

Explanation

All landowners within the region wanting to protect biodiversity on their properties are eligible for advice and information from the Council. However to effectively maintain biodiversity and ecological condition across a full range of indigenous ecosystems in Taranaki, the Council will prioritise its work and funding to sites on private land with regionally significant indigenous biodiversity values.⁶

The *Inventory of Key Native Ecosystems* (2008) has been the first step in identifying sites to be prioritised for biodiversity protection. It recognises that in terms of the Council's vision of maintaining the full suite of ecosystems within the region, some ecosystem types are more vulnerable to use and development than others (e.g. wetlands and lowland forest) or are now very poorly represented in the region. Information on original and residual extent of the region's ecosystems will also be important in helping target engagement with the owners of potential KNE.

Identifying and prioritising sites is a means to ensuring that limited resources are directed to the most important sites first, or sites where the Council can make the most practical difference in a sustainable way. Like elsewhere in New Zealand, much of Taranaki's remaining rare and threatened indigenous biodiversity is found on private land. Many habitat types and species depend upon these remnants for their survival.

The Council will continue to work collaboratively with landowners on issues such as legal protection, fencing,

⁶ Site prioritisation has previously been supported by the community through consultative processes for the Regional Policy Statement, LTP and the previous Biodiversity Strategy. It also reflects the National Priorities for protecting rare and threatened native biodiversity on private land.

revegetation, pest management, monitoring and technical advice and support.

This prioritization contributes to the Council's vision of maintaining a full representative range of ecosystems and habitats by focusing on those most vulnerable or representatively rare in Taranaki.

4.2 Building on existing Council programmes

Acknowledge the biodiversity component of existing Taranaki Regional Council programmes, particularly the provision of education and advice. Bring an increased 'biodiversity focus' to these programmes, especially as they relate to Key Native Ecosystems and other sites or places with regionally significant biodiversity values.

Explanation

Biodiversity work, by its very nature, requires a 'whole of agency' approach. Practically every section of the Council undertakes some sort of biodiversity work, therefore there is an opportunity for existing Council programmes to contribute and/or add value to biodiversity outcomes.

The Council has a number of existing programmes that already contribute to biodiversity outcomes on private land, rivers, streams and wetlands, and in the coastal marine area in the region. The Council will maintain and enhance the 'biodiversity focus' of these programmes to:

1. Take action where there is **urgent and imminent threat** to local populations of indigenous flora and fauna
2. Take action to avoid the incremental loss of habitat in the following order of priority:
 - **protect** what habitats we already have
 - **restore** degraded ecosystems
 - **create** new areas of habitat.

In line with its vision, the Council will bring an increased biodiversity focus to existing programmes, particularly where these are focused on threatened land environments, wetlands, sand dunes, 'originally rare' ecosystems or habitats for threatened species.

4.3 Working with others

Where appropriate, facilitate improved coordination of biodiversity work undertaken by different agencies, trusts and community groups across Taranaki and, in particular, consider and investigate larger landscape scale biodiversity initiatives, while partnering with others.

Explanation

The Council is well placed strategically to add value to the business of biodiversity management on private land in Taranaki. The Council will facilitate better coordination of all the region's various biodiversity related groups, agencies, trusts, iwi and individuals. Greater coordination will contribute to greater efficiencies and biodiversity outcomes for Taranaki.

The RPS signals that the Council will promote integrated management of indigenous biodiversity in the Taranaki region by working with other agencies, community groups, trusts and individuals.

The Council is particularly interested in supporting Wild for Taranaki (Taranaki Biodiversity Trust) as part of its ongoing work supporting other agencies and community groups. It is envisaged that members of Wild for Taranaki will make effective and valuable contributions to some flagship projects that will protect and enhance Taranaki's biodiversity on a regional scale. Wild for Taranaki has identified the following key regional projects:

- 'Restoring Taranaki'
- 'Wild for Wetlands'
- 'Wild for the Coast', and;
- The 'Community Biodiversity Fund'.

These projects along with 'Project Taranaki Mounga'⁷ are considered by the Council to be 'iconic projects' that involve collective regional action. These projects, will amplify the biodiversity work being undertaken by individual agencies and community groups, showcase good biodiversity protection techniques and contribute

⁷ *Project Taranaki Mounga is a ten+ year project involving pest eradication and reintroduction of species over the 34,000ha of Egmont National Park and off-shore islands. It is a collaborative project involving DOC, iwi, the NEXT Foundation and the local community including the Council. The vision of the project is to 'protect our mountain for our wellbeing – Ko Taranaki tooku whakaruruhau'. Project Mounga also recognises the important role of involving the regional community in the control of invasive animals and plants and biodiversity protection and enhancement, in a 'halo' adjacent the national park and outwards to the sea and eastern hill country - connecting up Taranaki biodiversity.*

to a network of 'biodiversity-jewels' in the Taranaki landscape.

The Council also recognizes and supports 'significant' independent trust projects that are highly organized, make significant contributions to biodiversity in their project areas, and provide significant opportunities for local and wider community involvement. These trusts include:

- Lake Rotokare Scenic Reserve Trust
- Purangi Kiwi
- Tiaki Te Mauri O Parinihi Trust, and
- Rapanui Grey Faced Petrel Trust
- Taranaki Kiwi Trust.

Opportunities exist to work more collaboratively with the three territorial authorities in the region to achieve greater support of the owners of private land in order to maintain significant biodiversity values. It is also of importance that the Council works closely with the Department of Conservation in the mutual identification of priority areas for active management and maintenance of biodiversity across a full suite of representative ecosystems within the region.

Working with other agencies is particularly relevant to the marine environment where the Council's mandate is focused on the coastal marine area and managing it under the RMA. This alone will not fully achieve indigenous biodiversity outcomes as the management of the coastal marine area rests with the Crown and is carried out by the DOC and MPI. The Council does not intend to take over or duplicate Crown management responsibilities, but could contribute to improved coordination between the agencies.

4.4 Information management and gathering

Contribute to the management and development of biodiversity information systems relevant to Taranaki to ensure management decisions are based on sound scientific information and to enable the monitoring of outcomes for biodiversity in the Region and the revision of priorities as necessary.

Explanation

Biodiversity management, like all other aspects of resource management, relies on having good systems for gathering and managing data and information. Systems need to be maintained, reviewed and improved for identifying and gathering strategic and relevant biodiversity information. In particular work undertaken with Key Native Ecosystems requires systems for managing information for site identification and prioritization, identification of significant values, threats, planning, management and monitoring information.

The Council has a longstanding philosophy of undertaking resource management from a position of sound scientific information. The biodiversity field is no different. It is important to identify strategic indicators to measure progress with Council policies and to gather information for specific resource investigations to inform decision making. The Council has commenced establishing baseline data in selected indicators and will be measuring changes resulting from biodiversity management and changes within the region generally as part of its state of the environment and operational monitoring.

Working with DOC and others to gather regional species distribution data would be highly beneficial. This data is essential if we, as a region, are to ensure that all species present are represented within priority habitat areas for protection, either on private land or land administered by DOC, and possibly by district councils.

The Council could also support regional initiatives that serve the wider biodiversity community through development of information gathering platforms that can be contributed to by the wider community. Further investigations on the most effective means of supporting community gathered data could be made.

*The release of who
into the wild.*



5. Plan of action –what we want to do

This section sets out the actions either being undertaken or proposed to be undertaken by the Taranaki Regional Council in relation to maintaining and enhancing indigenous biodiversity.

Programmes and activities are structured according to the strategic priority areas identified in Section 4:

1. Key Native Ecosystems programme;
2. Biodiversity in existing Council programmes;
3. Integrating with others working in the biodiversity field; and
4. Information gathering and management.

In the sections that follow, an objective has been identified for each priority area. In relation to each objective, tables (and a brief explanation) set out the specific activities, measures and targets to be undertaken or achieved.

The Section within the Council with lead responsibility for each activity is identified. Most activities are already being implemented by the Council. However, some activities seek to enhance or build on existing programmes or represent a new activity. Any new or additional actions are highlighted in the tables below by grey shading.

The Umutekai Wetland on the outskirts of New Plymouth.



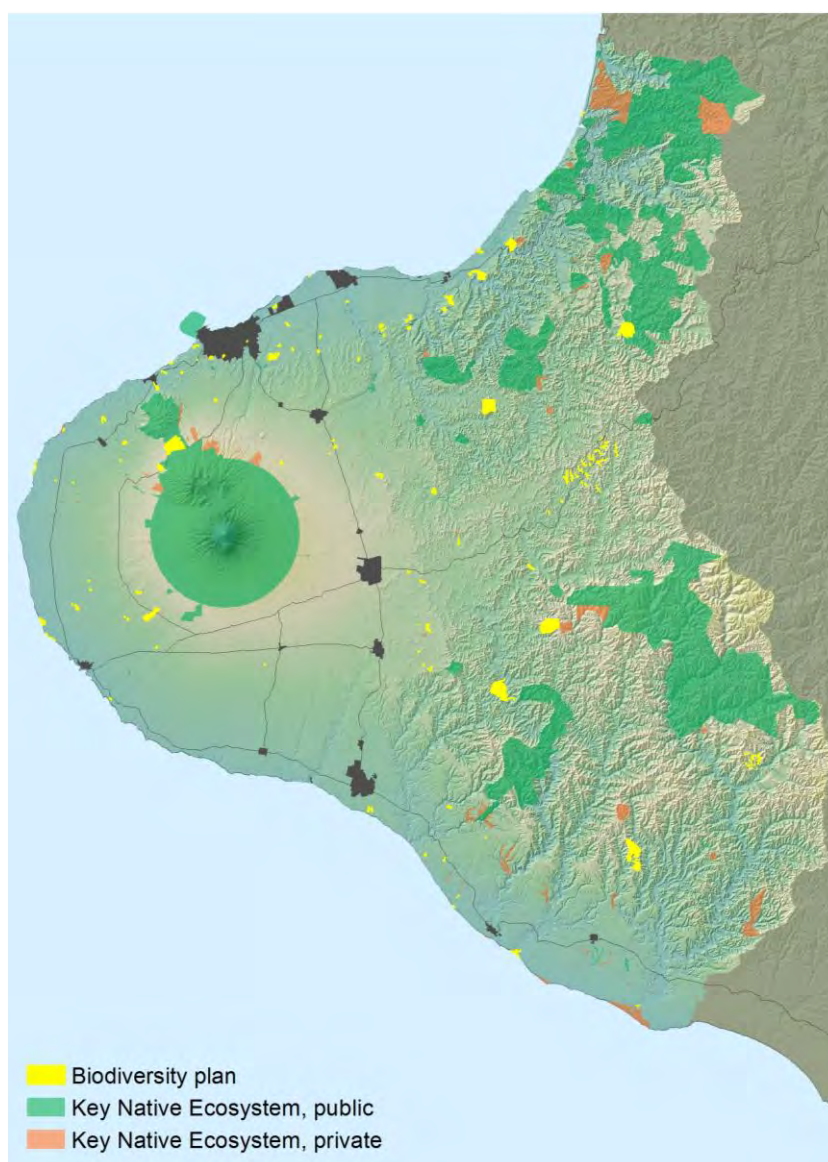
5.1 Key Native Ecosystems programme

5.1.1 Objectives

The objectives of the Key Native Ecosystem programme are:

For the duration of the Strategy, maintain and improve the condition of sites with regionally significant indigenous biodiversity values, primarily on private land and, within the Taranaki region, by:

1. *Identifying sites with regionally significant indigenous biodiversity values – Key Native Ecosystems (KNEs)*
2. *Prioritising privately owned KNEs for site management, particularly sites representing the full suite of ecosystems within the region and other areas of particular ecological significance*
3. *Preparing Biodiversity Plans for priority KNE sites, with an integrated package of actions*
4. *Supporting landowners and community groups with the implementation of biodiversity plans providing ongoing information and management advice.*



*Key Native Ecosystems with Council-developed
Biodiversity Plans at July 1 2017*

5.1.2 Identifying Key Native Ecosystems

An initial identification has been made of regionally significant sites, or Key Native Ecosystems (TRC, 2006). The Key Native Ecosystem inventory included regionally significant sites on land, most regionally significant wetlands and some coastal sites. This work has regularly been updated and is maintained on the Council's GIS system and relevant databases.

OBJ 1: Identifying sites with regionally significant indigenous biodiversity values – Key Native Ecosystems (KNEs)		Lead responsibility
Activities for identifying KNEs		Lead responsibility
1.	Maintain and regularly update current inventory of KNEs in Taranaki and the information it contains	Environment Services
2.	Maintain an inventory of regionally significant wetlands with high biodiversity values through the Freshwater Plan ⁸ and in the riparian planning GIS	Policy Environment Services Land Management
3.	Maintain an inventory of significant coastal sites in the Coastal Plan	Policy
4.	Utilise criteria and maintain processes for identifying regionally significant sites and places for terrestrial, freshwater and coastal biodiversity for their possible inclusion in the KNE inventory and/or regional plans according to the following criteria ⁹ : <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presence of rare or distinctive indigenous flora or fauna 2. Representativeness of the place or site, including consideration of threatened land environment (LENZ) status and residual ecosystem extent, presence of indigenous vegetation on sand dunes, wetlands, or 'originally rare ecosystem types' 3. Ecological context of an area 4. Sustainability of the area to continue to be significant in the future 	Policy, Environment Services
5.	Investigate original and residual ecosystem extent representing the full suite of terrestrial ecosystems within Taranaki, in order to identify priority sites for potential inclusion to the KNE Inventory	Environment Services
6.	Undertake site assessments at ' candidate ' KNE sites identified with (2) to (5) above and, where sites meet the necessary criteria and given landowner approval, include them to the KNE Inventory	Environment Services (terrestrial) Environment Quality (freshwater and coastal)
7.	Consider during the review of the Freshwater Plan, the inclusion of additional rivers, streams or reaches of regional significance for biodiversity	Policy Environment Services Environment Quality
8.	Consider during the review of the Coastal Plan, the inclusion of additional coastal sites, places or features of regional significance for biodiversity ¹⁰	Policy Environment Quality

⁸ Refer Appendix II and III (wetlands) of the Regional Freshwater Plan for Taranaki (2001).

⁹ Refer Policy 4 of the Regional Policy Statement for Taranaki.

¹⁰ Coastal areas of significant conservation value have been identified in the Coastal Plan and the Inventory of Coastal Areas of Local or Regional Significance in the Taranaki region (TRC, 2004).

5.1.3 Prioritising Key Native Ecosystems for action

As at 1 July 2016, the Council's Inventory of KNEs includes 218 sites, 172 of which are partially or completely privately owned. At that time numerous KNEs were subject to landowner management, with 101 Biodiversity Plans subject to ongoing Council support. The Council is targeting sites where the greatest amount of biodiversity protection could be achieved, alongside willing landowners, in the most cost effective manner.

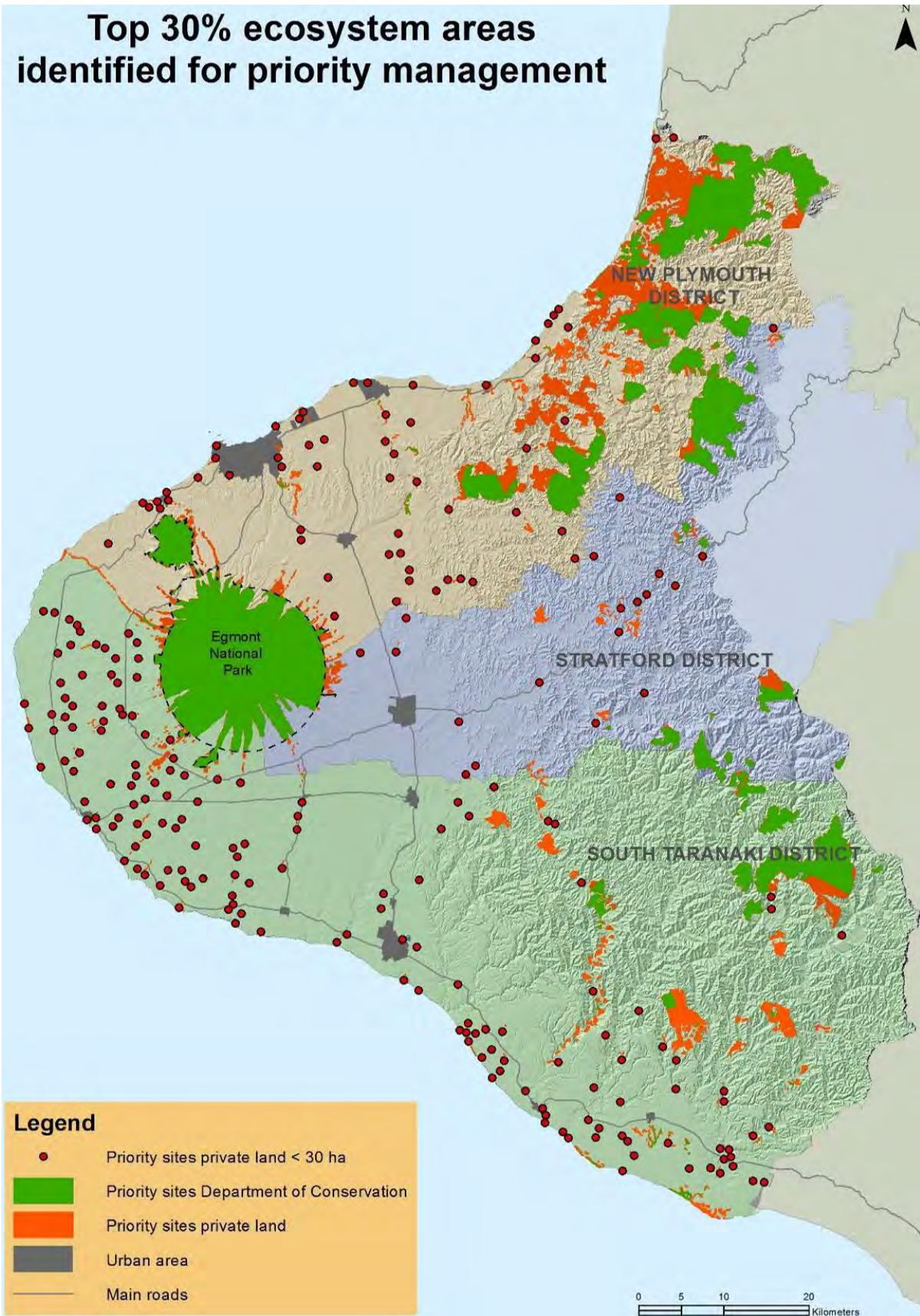
Over the next ten years the Council will continue to constructively engage with KNE landowners, in order of ecological priority. The focus is to bring as many KNE under biodiversity management as possible, to a level as agreed with well informed landowners.

OBJ 2: Prioritising privately owned KNEs for site management, particularly representative sites and areas of ecological significance to the region		Lead responsibility
Activities for prioritising protection for KNEs		Lead responsibility
9.	Prioritise management for KNEs on private land according to their ecological value (such as, but not limited to, size, presence of threatened species, threatened land environment, habitat complexity, residual extent of ecosystems, representativeness etc.) and on the basis of current or required management needed to address the threats to those values	Environment Services
10.	For prioritised sites, identify those that are already fenced, legally protected and in the Self-help Possum Control Programme or other ongoing pest control regime, as these are the ones most likely to be ready for the next level of management	Environment Services
11.	Provide information to all landowners of privately owned KNEs about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the KNE programme, • significant ecological values and species within their KNE, • key threats to ecological values within their KNE, • ecological management actions landowners can undertake themselves, • Council support and funding opportunities, • opportunities and support for landowners, in addition or alternative to Council support 	Environment Services Land Management
12.	Respond to all requests for service from landowners (KNE or otherwise) within the region that are interested in more information on biodiversity sites on their land, by conducting site assessments and providing advice	Environment Services Land Management



The Council works with willing landowners of KNEs to identify measures to protect their values.

Top 30% ecosystem areas identified for priority management



Top 30% ecosystem areas prioritized for biodiversity plans

5.1.4 Preparation of Biodiversity Plans for Key Native Ecosystems

A planned approach to the management of KNE sites is important to ensure that landowner management actions are effective and efficient.

The Council will continue to incrementally extend its KNE biodiversity planning programme throughout Taranaki. The Council has developed much experience with preparing '*Biodiversity Plans*'. These 'site led' plans vary according to the complexity of management needs at a particular site and capacity of its owners. Developing a property-specific biodiversity plan of the required management actions will:

- provide the landowner with a clear idea of the values of the site, actual and potential threats to those values, and what management is required to sustainably manage the site for biodiversity purposes
- define respective roles and responsibilities (landowner, Council and others) to ensure responsibilities are allocated for the various management actions, and
- assist landowners to access funds from the various funding pools available (e.g. QEII, TRC Environmental Enhancement Grant, district council heritage funds, Wild for Taranaki, Biodiversity Condition Fund etc).

Implementation of initial Biodiversity Plans, typically over a five-year timeframe, provides the opportunity to increase landowner knowledge around site management and the opportunity for Council to assist with initial biodiversity protection and control of threats. Revised plans may be prepared for subsequent management beyond 5 years, in order to take stock of achievements and to set out an ongoing maintenance regime for the landowner, alongside ongoing advice from Council officers.

In addition to site-led Biodiversity Plans there is scope to develop plans that include wider consideration of ecosystems and threats at the landscape scale.

With some plans, liaising with other agencies is a critical part of the planning process, as those other agencies may already have developed a relationship with the landowner. It is important to streamline the management of biodiversity at certain sites to avoid doubling up of effort. Other agencies or community groups may also be helpful in terms of information gathering, monitoring progress, funding, volunteer support etc.

OBJ 3: Preparing biodiversity plans with an integrated package of actions		
Activities for preparing Biodiversity Plans		Lead responsibility
13.	Maintain detailed KNE Procedures to inform staff and to achieve consistent preparation and review of Biodiversity Plans for KNE	Environment Services
14.	Prepare various types of Biodiversity Plans to suit different situations, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Comprehensive Biodiversity Plans</i>: for legally protected sites that are more complex to manage and likely to attract significant Council funding support 2. <i>Simple Biodiversity Plans</i>: for sites that are less complex to manage are likely to attract low to moderate levels of Council funding support and will generally be subject to existing covenants. Simple plans may be prepared on a case-by-case basis for un-protected sites, subject to certain criteria and funding limits 	Environment Services Land Management
15.	Investigate the potential to prepare <i>Biodiversity Landscape Plans</i> to efficiently cover KNE in composite land-ownership or for landscape settings where multiple KNE may benefit from co-ordinated responses to protect identified values	Environment Services
16.	Involve other relevant agencies in legal protection and Biodiversity Plan preparation processes for KNEs where appropriate, including: QEII, district councils, DOC, Wild for Taranaki, and ecological restoration groups	Environment Services Land Management

5.1.5 Implementing biodiversity plans and providing supporting information, advice and assistance

The key to effective implementation of Biodiversity Plans for KNEs will be the Council working with and developing a good relationship with the landowner. The Council's assistance and support to implement Biodiversity Plan recommendations should facilitate and empower the landowner to undertake the necessary management steps. The Council will also liaise with other agencies where appropriate to support the landowner in their management of a KNE.

OBJ 4: Supporting landowners and community groups with the implementation of biodiversity plans providing ongoing information and management advice		
Activities for implementing biodiversity plans		Lead responsibility
17.	Develop and maintain a good relationship with the landowner and build their awareness of biodiversity values within their KNE and management of threats to those values	Environment Services
18.	Ensure integration of landowner support and site monitoring between agencies that have an interest in KNEs with Biodiversity Plans	Environment Services
19.	For KNEs with Biodiversity Plans, facilitate landowner's access to the Council's Environmental Enhancement funding, and other funding including from QEII, Wild for Taranaki, district council heritage funds and DOC community funding	Environment Services Land Management
20.	Ensure actions relating to the implementation of Biodiversity Plans are recorded in relevant databases, such as IRIS, to enable reporting	Environment Services Land Management
21.	Consider adopting new technologies and approaches to biodiversity and pest management, either as best practice or in specific situations	Environment Services Land Management
22.	Monitor the effectiveness of the management of KNE with Biodiversity Plans alongside unmanaged sites as part of regional State of the Environment reporting for terrestrial biodiversity	Environment Services Land Management
23.	Maintain a suite of relevant information sheets and best practice guidelines available from the Council and other sources on protecting, retaining and enhancing biodiversity on private lands	Environment Services, Information Officer Land Management
24.	Ensure Operations staff are sufficiently trained to effectively provide biodiversity management information to landowners with KNE and other landowners throughout the region	Environment Services Land Management
25.	Ensure information on KNEs and biodiversity values within the region generally is available on TRC website and is promoted to the public via various media	Public Information, Environment Service

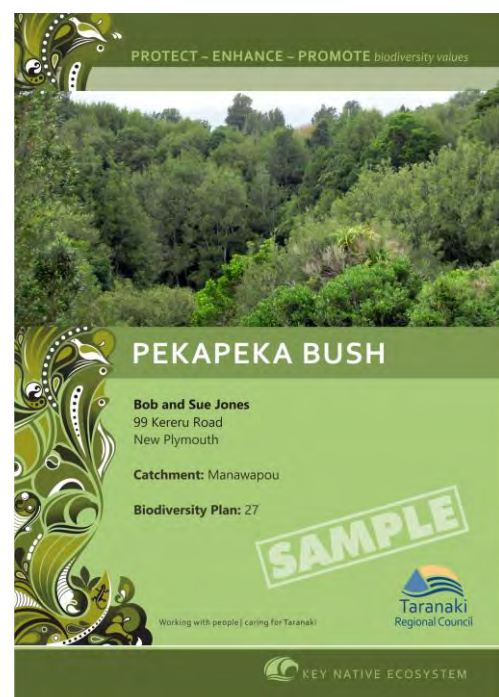
5.1.6 Measuring and reporting progress with the KNE programme

The Council will report regularly to its Policy and Planning Committee on progress with implementing the KNE programme through quarterly reports. Measuring its progress with implementing the KNE programme will also be reported annually as part of the Long Term Plan process under the Local Government Act 2002 and five yearly as part of the Council's state of the environment reporting on biodiversity outcomes undertaken pursuant to section 35 of the RMA.

Key performance indicators for the KNE Programme are:

1. Number, or area (ha) of KNEs added to inventory
2. Number of KNEs with a Biodiversity Plan and area (ha) covered by site specific and landscape scale plans
3. Progress with management recommendations from the Plans
4. Change in the number, or area (ha) of KNEs under formal protection (legal covenants, Council Memorandums of Encumbrance, or rules in district or regional plans)
5. Number of KNEs, or area (ha) under a sustained animal pest control programme (i.e. including area within the self help possum control programme)
6. Number of KNEs, or area (ha) under a sustained weed control programme
7. Number of KNEs that are fully fenced or otherwise stock proof
8. Number of KNEs in receipt of biodiversity funds (from a range of sources – Council funds, district council funds, QEII, central government funds etc)
9. Change in biodiversity condition of specific sites that are being monitored through Biodiversity Plans
10. Change in biodiversity indicators across representative KNE sites (refer Section 5.4 actions).

A biodiversity plan is prepared in consultation with the landowner, providing them with a clear idea of what is required to protect a KNE's biodiversity values. It also details what work the landowner can perform and areas where Council staff or other groups may help.



5.2 Enhancing biodiversity component in other Council programmes

5.2.1 Objectives

The objectives of the Council's biodiversity work generally are:

For the duration of the Strategy, to enhance the biodiversity focus of existing Taranaki Regional Council programmes and activities by:

1. *Building biodiversity capacity and awareness across the Council*
2. *Promoting biodiversity outcomes through policy development and review*
3. *Increasing peoples awareness and changing attitudes and behaviour through public information, advice and communications*
4. *Promoting biodiversity outcomes through the Sustainable Land Management Programmes*
5. *Promoting biodiversity outcomes through pest management programmes*
6. *Exercising legislative powers to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects on indigenous biodiversity from use and development of natural resources.*

5.2.2 Building in-house capacity within the Council

Maintenance of indigenous biodiversity covers a whole spectrum of activities across the entire Council's functions. Recognising biodiversity as part of the culture and ethos of the Taranaki Regional Council enables staff to identify and take up opportunities for undertaking biodiversity work within their own work area.

OBJ 1: Building biodiversity capacity and awareness across the Council		
Activities for building capacity in the Council		Lead responsibility
26.	Encourage all Council officers to recognise the biodiversity component of their current work	Executive team
27.	Include biodiversity in the orientation process for new staff	Human Resources
28.	Identify biodiversity training required for Council officers	Directors and Supervisors
29.	Maintain a biodiversity steering group with representatives from the Operations teams to oversee the implementation of the Biodiversity Strategy and works to raise the profile of biodiversity across all areas of the Council's work	Director - Operations

5.2.3 Policy development and review

The Council develops and reviews policies under the RMA and the Biosecurity Act. The following actions will assist the Council to integrate biodiversity actions into these other plans. This list of actions also identifies those areas of policy that could be reviewed to give a greater biodiversity focus or to provide the systems to streamline biodiversity actions.

OBJ 2: Promoting biodiversity outcomes through policy development and review		
Activities for biodiversity policy development and review		Lead responsibility
30.	Consider indigenous biodiversity during the interim and statutory reviews of the regional freshwater, soil and coastal plans and Regional Policy Statement	Policy
31.	Determine through the Council's Long Term Plan and annual planning processes the level of Council funding to be attributed to biodiversity specific and related work within the region	Policy Corporate Services
32.	Consider indigenous biodiversity during the interim review and statutory review of pest management plans	Policy
33.	Consider Council biodiversity practice notes and implications of threatened species recovery plans when developing Council policies	Policy
34.	Review this Biodiversity Strategy to ensure it continues to be relevant, effective and efficient	Policy Environment Services
35.	Maintain and develop systems to determining eligibility for Council's funds and support towards regional biodiversity initiatives	Environment Services
36.	Review the use of TRC encumbrances to safeguard ecological and environmental values at sites where Council resources are invested to support landowner decisions, investment and actions	Environment Services Land Management
37.	Consider coastal and marine biodiversity when developing oil spill contingency plans	Inspectorate
38.	Support Wild for Taranaki in the implementation, development and review of that organisation's policy	Policy Environment Services



5.2.4 Information, advice and communications

Increasing people's awareness, capacity to act, and changing attitudes and behaviours so that biodiversity is appropriately valued is critically important. The provision of information, advice, education and communications are key methods used by the Council to raise public awareness and understanding of issues and subsequently to lead to behavioural change. The following actions specifically target biodiversity communication activities and will be undertaken in accordance with the *Environment Services Communication Plan*.

OBJ 3: Increasing peoples awareness and changing attitudes and behaviour through public information, advice and communications		
Activities for promoting biodiversity through advice and education		Lead responsibility
39.	As part of the ongoing review and maintenance of the Council's website ensure that information on biodiversity in a range of environmental domains is available and up to date	Public Information
40.	Ensure information sheets and guidelines are available to assist landowners in the identification of biodiversity values, threats, protection and management actions	Environment Services
41.	Identify any gaps in public information on biodiversity matters and develop information to fill those gaps	Environment Services Public Information
42.	Promote 'good news stories' on biodiversity and relevant Council programmes through various electronic and print media to cultivate a greater community awareness of biodiversity values and opportunities	Public Information
43.	Promote community understanding of indigenous biodiversity issues through showcase projects on Council land, such as the Pukeiti Gardens, and through field days etc	Regional Gardens Public Information Environment Services
44.	Include biodiversity components to the integrated Environmental Education programmes delivered to schools by the Council	Public Information
45.	Seek opportunities to present talks to groups, in conjunction with other biodiversity agencies/trusts/community groups on biodiversity and biosecurity management and opportunities in Taranaki	Environment Services Land Management Science Services
46.	Provide input to industry developed education programmes that promote and encourage practical biodiversity outcomes, e.g. Wild for Taranaki, Dairy NZ discussion groups	Environment Services Land Management
47.	Promote awareness of the pest characteristics of invasive plants and animals	Environment Services Public Information
48.	Promote awareness of the importance of remnant wetland and bush areas, particularly on threatened land environments or where important habitat for threatened species during interactions with landowners	Land Management Environment Services
49.	Maintain and develop a communications campaign to raise the profile of Taranaki's riparian programme and increase implementation of the riparian plans by landowners	Land Management Public Information
50.	Make nominations for Environmental Awards to recognise individuals or groups who have contributed to the maintenance, protection or enhancement of indigenous biodiversity	Environment Services
51.	Provide information to school groups on freshwater biodiversity and threats to biodiversity (i.e. pest fish, didymo) and encourage school based monitoring through the Council's education programme	Environment Services Public Information
52.	Provide information to school groups on coastal biodiversity and encourage school based monitoring through the Council's rocky shore education programme	Public Information
53.	Provide information on biodiversity as part of the Council's Rainforest School at Pukeiti	Public Information
54.	Investigate options for creating an on-line information sharing system to assist with two way information sharing.	Environment Services



The Council's Education Officer leads students on a journey of conservation discovery as part of the Rainforest School at Pukeiti.



The Council's Land Management Officers work with farmers in the hill country to promote sustainable land management practices including the retirement of remnant wetlands and bush.

5.2.5 Sustainable land management programmes

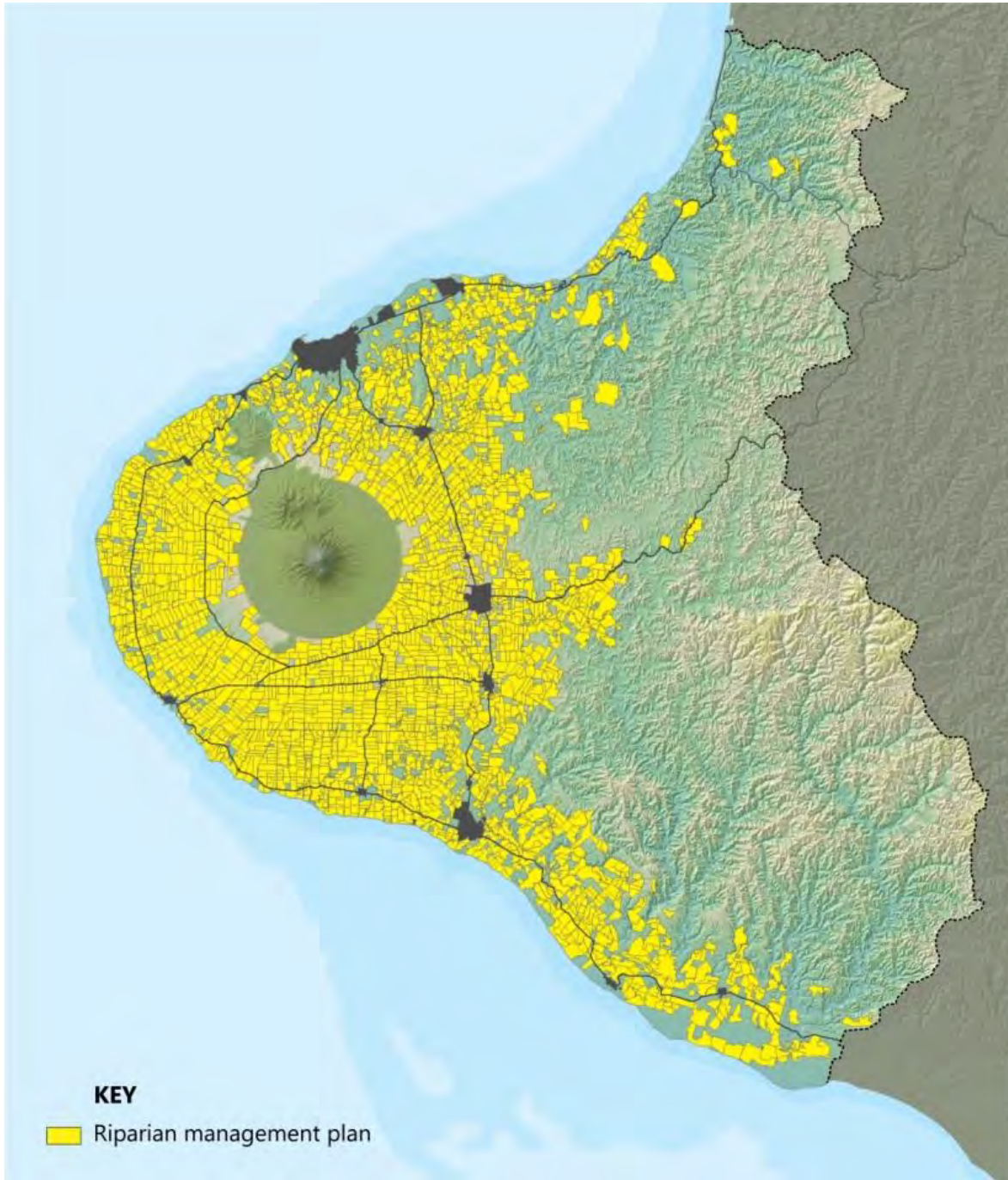
The Council's sustainable land management programmes provide landowners with advice and information on riparian restoration on the ring plain and sustainable management of the hill country. The Taranaki Riparian Management Programme, in particular, is transforming the Taranaki landscape by creating ecological corridors, from the mountain to the sea, through stock exclusion and riparian planting along Taranaki waterways traversing intensively farmed land on the ring plain and coastal terraces.

The Council's environmental enhancement grant funding may be used for the protection of significant biodiversity within the region. Sustainable land management programmes are important components of the Council's freshwater, terrestrial and coastal biodiversity work. In recent years a shift in focus has accentuated the biodiversity benefits of these programmes.



OBJ 4: Promoting biodiversity outcomes through the Sustainable Land Management Programmes

Activities for promoting biodiversity outcomes through sustainable land management programmes		Lead responsibility
55.	Continue to promote the voluntary retirement and planting of riparian margins with indigenous vegetation forests and wetlands through the Taranaki Riparian Management Programme in a manner that recognises the biodiversity benefits of restoring and re-connecting KNEs and ecosystem priority areas	Land Management
56.	During the monitoring of riparian or farm plan implementation, promote the voluntary identification, protection and restoration of indigenous biodiversity (e.g. remnant bush, wetlands, small streams, seeps, lake and estuarine margins etc), particularly on ecosystem priority areas, threatened land environments, or where important habitat for threatened or distinctive species is evident	Land Management
57.	Promote the importance of maintaining freshwater fish passage and the effects of fish passage obstruction caused by small in-stream structures such as weirs, fords and culverts.	Land Management Science Services
58.	Promote, as appropriate, the protection, retirement or planting of areas of indigenous forest or scrub on highly erosion-prone land during the preparation of comprehensive farm plans.	Land Management
59.	Provide appropriate native plant materials at low cost to land users for land stabilising, soil conservation and riparian and ecological restoration	Land Management
60.	Maintain a system to facilitate the use of contractors to assist landowners with riparian planting and biosecurity programmes	Land Management
61.	Facilitate as appropriate opportunities for community assistance with riparian planting on public or private land, e.g. schools, Rotary, sports clubs etc to assist landowners with riparian planting programmes within Wild for Taranaki project areas	Land Management.
62.	Promote the use of local indigenous species for riparian restoration	Land Management
63.	Providing landowners with assistance/information/support for plant and animal pest control in riparian areas	Land Management Environment Services
64.	Assist landowners in accessing funds to protect areas of biodiversity, particularly on priority ecosystem areas, threatened land environments or to protect habitat for threatened species, through the Council's Environmental Enhancement fund, Wild for Taranaki, Fish and Game etc.	Land Management Environment Services



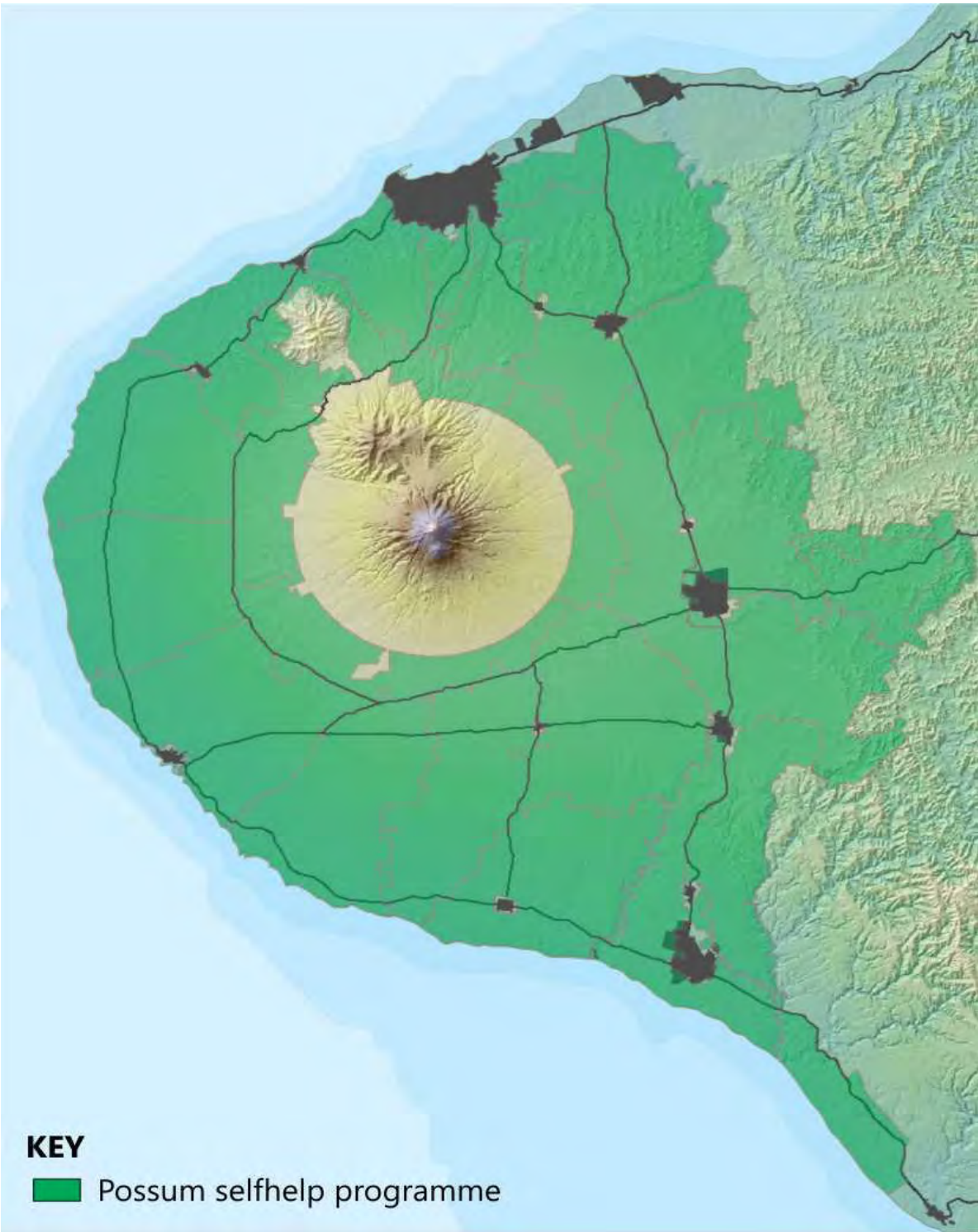
Riparian management plans covering almost all of the ring plain and coastal terraces create potential wildlife corridors in the region – from the mountain to the sea.

5.2.6 Pest animal and plant management programmes

The Council's pest management programmes focus on invasive animals and plants that pose a problem to both agriculture and the natural environment. The Council's self help possum control programme covers the majority of the ring plain with the aim of maintaining possum numbers below 10% residual trap catch (RTC). This is an important and valuable contribution to safeguarding biodiversity on threatened land environments. However, the Council also manages other ecological pests within the region through a site-led approach, including predators (rodents, mustelids, hedgehogs, cats) and browsers (pigs, goats and deer).

There is an increasing interest within the national and regional community for landscape scale predator and browser control, or even predator free status, to protect biodiversity as well as land productivity.

OBJ 5: Promoting biodiversity outcomes through the pest management programmes		
Activities for promoting biodiversity outcomes through pest management programmes		Lead responsibility
65.	Continue to support, encourage and advise landowners on possum control in the Self-help Possum Control Programme	Environment Services
66.	Investigate expanding the Self-help Possum Control Programme, or developing new programmes, to target other pests at landscape scales	Environment Services
67.	Continue to support, encourage, advise landowners on pest plant control throughout the region and enforce compliance with pest management rules where necessary	Environment Services
68.	Continue to support the Department of Conservation's ongoing 1080 operations within the Egmont National Park by facilitating control on adjacent private land, and consider increasing support through potential new initiatives as the DOC 'Project Mounga' evolves and matures	Environment Services
69.	Continue to promote urban pest control to protect indigenous biodiversity values within urban landscapes and their wider rural context	Environment Services
70.	Consider providing pest animal and plant control assistance on private land to protect indigenous biodiversity as part of select large scale regional projects; e.g. partnership projects with Wild for Taranaki and other community groups	Environment Services
71.	Assist landowners to access funds to undertake pest control on areas of biodiversity (not already identified as KNEs), particularly on threatened land environments or to protect habitat for threatened species etc	Environment Services
72.	Provide support, encouragement and advice to landowners to assist with pest plants and other weeds capable of impacting on biodiversity values	Environment Services
73.	Explore opportunities for joint pest plant projects with communities and district councils, particularly as a tool to encourage urban community groups to get active in urban biodiversity maintenance	Environment Services
74.	Ensure pest management officers have sufficient training to effectively promote biodiversity protection during their interactions with landowners, and then keep training up to date.	Environment Services
75.	Work with other agencies (MPI, DOC) on the surveillance, response and management of invasive species incursions (e.g. didymo, undaria, deer)	Environment Services
76.	Work with local communities and inter-regionally to address potential pathways for pest incursion within and to the region	Environment Services



By June 2016, the Self-help Possum Control Programme covered approximately 32% of the region.

5.2.7 Consenting and enforcement

The Council exercises legislative powers under the RMA and the Biosecurity Act. The inclusion of this table of actions in this Strategy clearly recognises the important component of the Council's overall biodiversity work achieved through the processing, monitoring and enforcing of resource consents, or through the enforcing of rules developed under pest management plans.

OBJ 5: Exercising legislative powers to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects on indigenous biodiversity from use and development of natural resources		
Activities for promoting biodiversity outcomes through consenting and compliance programmes		Lead responsibility
77.	Apply regional rules (in existing regional plans) to regulate, mitigate or prohibit resource use and development activities that have potential or actual adverse environmental effects on indigenous biodiversity on land, freshwater or marine	Consents Inspectorate
78.	Apply regional rules (in pest plans) relating to the control of pest plants and animals that have actual or potential adverse effects on biodiversity values	Environment Services
79.	Require sufficient information on resource consent applications, from both applicants and Science Services, to be able to adequately assess the effects of a consent application on biodiversity	Consents Science Services Environment Services
80.	Maintain and develop consent conditions that avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse environmental effects through the maintenance, restoration and enhancement of indigenous biodiversity on land or freshwater or in the coastal marine area	Consents
81.	Review and implement the Council's Biodiversity Practice Notes and utilise the ' check list ' for consent processing	Consents, Policy, Environment Services
82.	Enforce compliance with regional rules, consent conditions, and pest rules that aim to safeguard or protect indigenous biodiversity.	Environment Services
83.	Progressively identify, prioritize and address fish passage issues, identified in an ongoing basis through the inventory of barriers to fish passage ¹¹ .	Scientific Services
84.	Maintain and implement guidelines for both applicants and consenting officers in terms of information they need to gather for consent applications involving small stream modifications, channelising and culverting	Consents Land Management Science Services Policy

Through the consenting process, issues such as native fish passage and or avoiding , remedying or mitigating habitat loss are considered



¹¹ Dams, Weirs and Other Barriers to Fish Passage in Taranaki (2001).

5.2.8 Measuring and reporting progress with enhancing biodiversity in existing programmes

The Council will report regularly to its Policy and Planning Committee on the progress of biodiversity achievements of existing programmes through quarterly reports and as part of the Long Term Plan process under the Local Government Act 2002 and five yearly as part of the Council's state of the environment reporting on biodiversity outcomes undertaken pursuant to section 35 of the RMA.

Key performance indicators for enhancing biodiversity in existing programmes are:

1. Trends arising from digital media monitoring
2. Number of riparian property plans or comprehensive farm plans prepared
3. Length of stream bank where riparian vegetation has been fenced and restored¹²
4. Trends in the number of consents granted for piping or realigning small streams for land improvement purposes (as a contra indicator)
5. Change in hill country land that has been retired
6. Amount of indigenous vegetation remaining in the region
7. Amount of wetland habitat remaining in the region
8. Trends in assessment of ecological condition at managed forest and wetland sites
9. Number of regionally significant wetlands covenanted or formally protected.
10. Number of properties in Self-help Possum Control Programme with residual trap catch levels below 10% post treatment
11. Number of structures in streams that are a barrier to fish passage¹³
12. Amount of money allocated from the Council's environmental enhancement grant.

¹² Refer to targets relating to dairy farms for preparation and implementation of property plans in the Sustainable Dairying Accord.

¹³ Dams, Weirs and Other Barriers to Fish Passage in Taranaki (2001).

5.3 Working with others

5.3.1 Objectives

The objectives of the Council in working with others are:

To contribute to co-ordination and help build capacity for the maintenance and enhancement of indigenous vegetation and the habitats of indigenous species within the region by:

1. *Establishing and participating in biodiversity forums*
2. *Establishing protocols with key conservation agencies and community groups involved in biodiversity*
3. *Working with and supporting other agencies and community groups to improve biodiversity outcomes related to iconic and significant projects*
4. *Working with iwi on biodiversity management*
5. *Working with other key conservation agencies and community groups involved in biodiversity to add value to the business of biodiversity management in Taranaki*
6. *Advocating and lobbying to other agencies and organisations to promote biodiversity outcomes for the region.*



'Local community groups and organisations play an important part in managing biodiversity in the region ...'

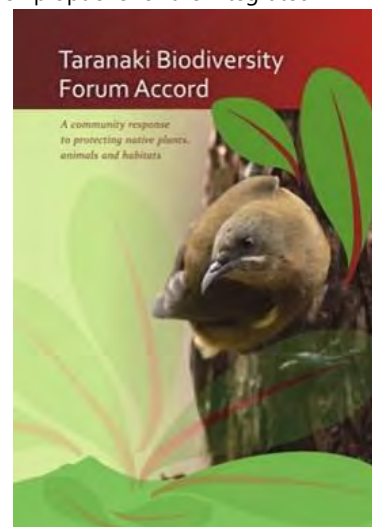
5.3.2 Biodiversity forums

Taranaki is one of a number of regions where a regional biodiversity forum is being used for promoting networking, information dissemination and integrated management, including assessing partnership options for the integrated delivery of services and funding.

The Taranaki Biodiversity Trust, branded 'Wild for Taranaki', includes the Council and arose from biodiversity forum activity.

Wild for Taranaki builds on the work of the former Taranaki Tree Trust, which administered funding and published guidelines for restoration planting. Wild for Taranaki aims to identify significant partnering projects, where regional biodiversity groups can work together to achieve and demonstrate landscape scale biodiversity protection within the region. Wild for Taranaki is also seeking to regularly run community events and workshops, coordinate the receipt and redistribution of biodiversity funding to support initiatives within the region, plus maintain a database of existing community biodiversity projects.

The Council may participate in other forums, or platforms for collaboration and information sharing, with individual government agencies and non government organisations or groups with a topical interest.



OBJ 1: Establishing or participating in biodiversity forums		
Activities for promoting biodiversity outcomes through forums		Lead responsibility
85.	Promote integrated management of indigenous biodiversity in the Taranaki region by liaising and maintaining linkages with territorial authorities, DOC, MPI, iwi, community groups and NGOs	Policy Environment Services Land Management
86.	Provide servicing and support to Wild for Taranaki. Encourage Wild for Taranaki to assist with implementing actions in this Strategy where objectives are aligned	Environment Services
87.	Facilitate Taranaki's contribution to the MPI's 'Freshwater Biosecurity Partnership Programme' and assist with development of a regional response plan	Environment Services
88.	Establish joint approaches with DOC to promote public awareness and to develop shared data on the distribution and sightings of significant indigenous species and pests (such as pest fish, deer, goats, argentine ants, wasps, plague skinks, and invasive weeds of shared concern)	Environment Services Land Management Public Information
89.	Participate in working party with Fish and Game to investigate options for enhancing wetlands for duck shooting/biodiversity purposes	Environment Services
90.	Advocate to DOC and MPI the value of gathering together all those agencies/groups with an interest in better coordinating marine biodiversity in order for groups to meet, discuss marine biodiversity projects and identify opportunities for working more closely together to progress marine and coastal biodiversity initiatives	Science Services
91.	Participate in Te Taihauauru Fisheries Forum and liaise as appropriate with the Taranaki Commercial Fishing Association	Science Services Iwi Communications Officer
92.	Encourage the 'two-way sharing' of information between Council and groups who have specific skills and experience to share, e.g. contribute as appropriate to technical advisory groups and/or provide in-kind support for significant biodiversity projects	Environment Services
93.	Explore opportunities for supporting Wild for Taranaki, community groups and landowners through running forums, workshops, and supporting them to attend workshops	Environment Services Land Management

5.3.3 Protocols with others

Improving communication with other agencies, groups, trusts or individuals involved in biodiversity work will primarily be undertaken on an informal basis. However, there are specific occasions where more formal protocols or agreements, e.g. memorandums of understanding (MOUs) could help clarify roles and responsibilities.

Through establishing protocols (informal or formal) with community groups working on biodiversity, the Council has the opportunity to focus on capability building and identifying practical ways of supporting community initiatives.

Identifying ways to make private and community initiatives more viable, effective and durable will be the challenge for the Council, but in the long term, probably the most effective means of stretching limited resources. Such initiatives might include Council officers providing technical ecological input to habitat protection programmes and projects, or help with developing sustainable administrative capacity within community groups.



Council Environment Officer working with Conrad O'Carroll from Tiaki te Mauri O Parininihi Trust.

OBJ 2: Establishing protocols with key conservation agencies and community groups involved in biodiversity

Activities for promoting biodiversity outcomes through forums		Lead responsibility
94.	Develop protocols for managing and sharing information with other agencies and groups – particularly in relation to databases developed for storing information on significant sites and location of sensitive species ¹⁴	Policy and Planning Environment Services
95.	Develop agreements with the QEII National Trust, district councils and, where appropriate, DOC, on working together to support private-land owner initiatives to protect biodiversity	Environment Services Land Management
96.	Develop agreements between the different agencies (e.g. district councils, QEII, DOC) regarding site specific biodiversity work Agreements may cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key contacts per KNE, Significant Natural Areas, covenants, adjoining reserve land • Protocols for keeping other agencies informed in a timely fashion • Providing best possible information to private landowners • Respective responsibilities and commitments around site management actions • Monitoring e.g. joint monitoring with QEII or DOC • Data management and sharing 	Environment Services
97.	Work with DOC to prioritize and identify management needs, capacity and opportunities for crown managed land and for private land across the full suite of ecosystems within the region	Policy and Planning Environment Services
98.	Develop agreements with Wild for Taranaki and other community groups working on 'iconic' projects within the region	Policy and Planning Environment Services
99.	Maintain MOU and 'in-kind' work agreements with trusts operating 'significant' biodiversity protection projects within the region, including Lake Rotorangi Scenic Reserve Trust, Tiaki Te Mauri o Parininihi Trust, and Purangi Kiwi	Environment Services

¹⁴ Method 18(b) Regional Policy Statement for Taranaki.

5.3.4 'Iconic' and 'significant' projects

The Council works with other agencies or community groups on a small number of 'big-ticket' projects that contribute to the protection of a network of 'biodiversity-jewels' in the Taranaki 'crown', particularly those that showcase Taranaki's biodiversity and the value of communities and different groups working together. These projects are referred to as either iconic or significant projects.

'Iconic' biodiversity projects, projects of the Wild for Taranaki Trust and Project Mouna, are recognized by the Council to be collaborative initiatives that will amplify the biodiversity work being undertaken by individual community groups or agencies. These projects will help develop and showcase good biodiversity protection and enhancement techniques, and connect up a network of control of invasive animals and plants for biodiversity protection at the regional scale.

'Significant' biodiversity projects include the Tiaki te Mauri O Parininihi Trust's Parininihi project where the Council has supported in intensive possum and rat control to protect ecosystems and to benefit kiwi and improve the potential return of kōkako to the region.

The Council has also provided technical and financial support to the Lake Rotokare Scenic Reserve Trust in South Taranaki, whose work has included eradicating introduced mammals and constructing a predator-proof fence around 230 hectares of remnant forest and wetland around Lake Rotokare. This has led to an improvement in many indigenous plant and animal populations. The tieke (saddleback) and whitehead, previously lost from the area, have both been successfully reintroduced to the Reserve.

The Council also works with the Purangi Kiwi, a restoration trust that targets possums, goats, and stoats on more than 13,000 hectares in north-eastern Taranaki in efforts to improve habitat condition and to secure and enhance species, including a notable population of the Western North Island brown kiwi. A core area of more than 1,000 hectares is extra-intensively controlled for rats and possums. This is to prepare a habitat suitable for reintroduction of kōkako to the region.

The Rapanui Grey Faced Petrel Trust and the Taranaki Kiwi Trust are species-lead initiatives that are also considered to be significant within the region. They have both proven to be sustainable and are well organized in mobilizing community effort in providing protection for their focus species.

Over the life of this Strategy, the level of Council involvement in iconic or significant projects will be assessed on a case by case basis taking into consideration:

- The project being based on sound scientific/ecological information
- The project covering sites and areas recognised as having regionally significant biodiversity values
- Strong and sustainable community and landowner support and active involvement
- The ability for the Council to assist by providing technical support and/or leveraging funds from the community or central government
- The ability of the project to become a public showcase of Taranaki's biodiversity (i.e. educational opportunities, level of public access etc), and
- The benefits of investing ratepayer resources.



*Opening ceremony of the kiwi
kōhanga at Rotokare 2012.*

OBJ 3: Working with and supporting other agencies and community groups to improve biodiversity outcomes related to iconic and significant projects

Activities for working with others on iconic or significant projects		Lead responsibility
100.	Work with the iconic Project Taranaki Mounga to support the development and implementation of habitat protection and enhancement initiatives, where the project interfaces with private land surrounding the Egmont National Park.	Environment Services
101.	Work with Wild for Taranaki to support the development and implementation of the four iconic regional biodiversity initiatives: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Restoring Taranaki 2. Wild for Wetlands 3. Wild for Coasts 4. The Community Biodiversity Fund 	Policy and Planning Environment Services
102.	Provide technical advice and encouragement to priority community group projects, appropriate to the scale and significance of projects, in a way that builds sustainable community ownership. It is expected that the council will continue to extend funding support to Wild for Taranaki, who in turn will be supporting community group initiatives at various scales throughout the region	Environment Services Land Management
103.	On a case-by-case basis, work with biodiversity trusts deemed to be significant within the region to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop memoranda of understanding (+/-3 years) to define cooperative arrangements • develop in-kind work programmes as appropriate • support development of sustainable operational and administrative capacity • provide technical and practical assistance with developing and implementing pest monitoring and control at varying scales • provide technical and practical assistance with developing and implementing biodiversity outcomes monitoring. 	Environment Services
104.	Explore opportunities for leveraging additional resources into community biodiversity initiatives within the region	Environment Services

5.3.5 Working with iwi

Māori are interconnected with the natural environment. As kaitiaki, Māori have a unique and important role in the protection, management, restoration and enhancement of indigenous biodiversity.

The principles of the Treaty of Waitangi are the legal foundation for continued Māori connection with indigenous biodiversity, in particular in regard to the retention of rangatiratanga or sovereignty over resources and taonga. This recognises the diverse range of interests that tangata whenua have with biodiversity ranging from governance to protection, to customary and commercial use.

Of importance to tangata whenua is the ability to maintain and sustain Mātauranga Māori (Māori traditional knowledge) through biodiversity. Mātauranga Māori includes traditional biodiversity protection mechanisms tapu (ban) rahui (temporary ban) and noa (lifting of the ban). Traditionally, these tools provided for sustainable use of indigenous resources and ensured that food, fibre and medicines in its many varieties would always be in plentiful supply.

Customary use describes traditional Māori use, practice, and knowledge carried out through the use of tikanga (customs), kawa (protocols) and Mātauranga Māori, as well as contemporary uses of biological resources. For example, native species are an important source of materials for carving, weaving, and rongoa (medicine). Alongside customary use, the growing commercial interests of iwi and hapū in agriculture, forestry, fisheries, aquaculture, and eco-tourism, are all associated with successful biodiversity management. Customary use is integral to sustaining relationships with traditional areas and maintaining Mātauranga Māori.



The Council recognises the importance of developing partnerships with iwi to progress biodiversity protection and enhancement. The Council is in the process of developing and formalising relationships with iwi. This will help to better engage with iwi on biodiversity matters. Both the Council and iwi have 'kaitiakitanga' roles to play in the management of biodiversity and opportunities to work together will need to be sought.

Obj 4: Working with iwi on biodiversity management

Activities for working with iwi		Lead responsibility
105.	Incorporate biodiversity work into memorandums of understanding developed with iwi who have completed Treaty Settlements and other MOU such as with PKW	Policy
106.	Seek opportunities to engage with, and assist iwi on biodiversity related projects, e.g. Tiaki Te Mauri o Parininihi Trust pest control and Kokako reintroduction, and Okoki Pa KNE Biodiversity Plan with Ngati Mutunga.	Environment Services Land Management
107.	Gather case studies to illustrate examples of kaitiakitanga in action. Use these for State of Environment reporting	Science Services
108.	As appropriate include iwi in monitoring of consents – e.g. Fonterra outfall discharge	Science Services
109.	Provide opportunities for tangata whenua to be represented on the Taranaki Regional Council's Policy and Planning Committee, the Consents and Regulatory Committee, and other committees arising from Treaty of Waitangi settlements	Council
110.	Encourage iwi participation in the activities of the Taranaki Biodiversity Forum and Wild for Taranaki initiatives	Environment Services

5.3.6 Working with others

In addition to 'iconic' or 'significant' projects in Taranaki, many agencies, community groups and individuals have an interest in biodiversity and it is sensible and more efficient to work collaboratively with others. Along with other agencies, the Council provides funding to private landowners or to trusts for biodiversity projects on private land. Between 2008 and 2013, the Council allocated a total of \$1,857,295 through the Environmental Enhancement Grant. The New Plymouth District Council also allocated \$138,083 through its Natural Heritage Fund and DOC allocated \$882,646 through the Community Conservation Partnerships Fund (formerly the Biodiversity Condition Fund).

The Council could also play a role in setting up and running information gathering platforms that the whole community could feed information into. The Council is not the only agency or group interested in gathering biodiversity information, and indeed, it is sensible and more efficient to work collaboratively with others to both identify information needs and gather information.



OBJ 5: Working with other key conservation agencies and community groups involved in biodiversity to add value to the business of biodiversity management in Taranaki

Activities for promoting biodiversity outcomes by working with others		Lead responsibility
111.	Work with landowners on privately owned KNEs (Refer Section 5.1)	Environment Services
112.	Work with others on iconic and significant biodiversity projects (refer sections 5.3.4 and 5.3.5)	Environment Services Land Management

5.3.7 Advocacy

A key tool at the Council's disposal for biodiversity work is advocacy – at both the regional and national level. The following actions identify specific opportunities for advocacy.

OBJ 6: Advocating and lobbying to other agencies and organisations to promote biodiversity outcomes for the region		
Activities for promoting biodiversity outcomes by advocacy		Lead responsibility
113.	Advocate for additional funds for biodiversity, for long term sustainable funding for regional projects	Policy
114.	Advocate for tools and sensible policy approach from MfE, MPI and DOC in relation to managing indigenous biodiversity on private land	Policy
115.	Advocate to district councils that district plans and long term plans have appropriate provisions to safeguard local biodiversity values.	Policy Environment Services
116.	Advocate for the protection of freshwater biodiversity values through the Water Programme of Action ¹⁵	Policy
117.	Advocate the sustainable use of the marine environment ¹⁶	Policy
118.	Advocate for appropriate biodiversity management on Crown land and land owned by local government	Policy
119.	Advocate, subject to community views, for a Taranaki-wide approach for establishing a network of areas that protect marine biodiversity in the Taranaki region through a mosaic of marine reserves, marine parks, mataitai, taiapure, seasonal closures and area closures to certain fishing method	Policy
120.	Advocate for the maintenance and protection of biodiversity through making submissions on activities that have the potential to affect biodiversity, e.g. on planning applications adjacent to KNEs	Policy
121.	Work with DOC, the district councils and other regional councils to identify areas for collaboration for more effective management of biodiversity, e.g. databases, research priorities, leveraging research and reporting on national priorities	Policy Environment Services
122.	Advocate for better integration of national and regional data management systems, particularly for geo-spatial information	Policy
123.	Advocate for research institutions to undertake research that will help inform regional council biodiversity management generally and where appropriate specific to Taranaki through the promotion of a research and monitoring programme for biodiversity	Environment Service Land Management Science Services
124.	Advocate for research into issues and options for reconnecting biodiversity within the region, in particular riparian habitat, and protecting areas in the long term from environmental weeds, predators etc	Environment Service Land Management
125.	Advocate for research into biodiversity management in KNEs and waterways presenting significant habitat or habitat for threatened and regionally distinctive freshwater species	Environment Service Land Management

¹⁵ Action 2.1a New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy.

¹⁶ Method 13, Regional Policy Statement for Taranaki.

5.3.8 Measuring and reporting progress with working with others on biodiversity programmes

The Council will measure and report the progress with working with others on biodiversity projects annually as part of the Long Term Plan process under the Local Government Act 2002 and five yearly as part of the Council's state of the environment reporting on biodiversity outcomes undertaken pursuant to section 35 of the RMA. A system will be developed for gathering this information, and will incorporate case studies to illustrate examples of the Council adding value through facilitating greater networking and communication between agencies and community groups.

Key performance indicators for working with others are:

1. Establishment and support for the Taranaki Biodiversity Forum and Wild for Taranaki initiatives
2. Number of community groups undertaking work to maintain biodiversity and area in hectares covered
3. Level of Council funding distributed to Taranaki landowners and community biodiversity initiatives.
4. Level of funding realised and re-distributed to biodiversity initiatives within the region by Wild for Taranaki
5. Submissions made to other agencies to advocate for biodiversity outcomes.
6. Number of formal partnerships/protocols/memorandums established.
7. Progress with significant and collaborative regional biodiversity projects (recognising and acknowledging the different levels of commitment and contributions to projects).



The regionally extinct tīeke (saddleback) has been successfully re-introduced at Lake Rotokare through the combined efforts of a large number of organisations and individuals led by the Lake Rotokare Scenic Reserve Trust.



5.4 Monitoring and information management and sharing

5.4.1 Objectives

The objectives of the Council in biodiversity monitoring and information management and sharing are:

To develop and manage efficient and effective systems for gathering and managing data and information on indigenous biodiversity in the Taranaki region by:

1. *Gathering monitoring information on the effectiveness of the Council's management actions relating to biodiversity;*
2. *Gathering state of the environment monitoring information on terrestrial, freshwater and coastal biodiversity to inform future reviews of Council policy;*
3. *Exploring and supporting opportunities for the consolidation and sharing of biodiversity information between interested parties about indigenous biodiversity in the region; and*
4. *Undertaking or commissioning biodiversity resource investigations as appropriate.*



5.4.2 Operational monitoring and information management

The Council maintains a number of databases that it uses to manage its work. Furthermore, many areas of work are digitalised and represented spatially in a GIS. There are different types of information that need to be managed for either further analysis or to record information on management actions undertaken at a particular site.

This section sets out the actions necessary to maintain and further develop systems for managing operational data that monitors our actions, including the efficiency and effectiveness of our actions.

OBJ 1: Gathering monitoring information on the effectiveness of the Council's management actions relating to biodiversity		
Activities for maintaining biodiversity data and information		Lead responsibility
126.	Maintain and further develop the IRIS database and GIS data management systems to manage Council information on the identification, values, threats, management actions, levels of protection, and condition of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KNE sites • Regionally Significant Wetlands • State of the environment terrestrial monitoring sites, and • other natural areas, including coastal, freshwater and terrestrial sites that have been assessed by Council officers 	Environment Services Land Management Corporate Services
127.	Further develop and maintain Council's GIS based ecosystem prioritization data and update as approaches to ecosystem prioritization evolve. Target engagement with the owners of sites that may meet criteria for inclusion in the KNE Inventory and Biodiversity Plans	Environment Services
128.	Maintain, review and, if necessary, update protocols relating to the collection of biodiversity data and management of information on Council's databases (e.g. field protocols for data collection, adding new information to databases, updating existing information, running reports)	Environment Services Policy
129.	Monitor effectiveness of freshwater consent conditions for managing adverse effects on biodiversity values, including the maintenance of indigenous fish diversity and abundance through provision of fish passes	Science Services
130.	Monitor effectiveness of coastal consent conditions for managing adverse effects on coastal biodiversity values	Science Services
131.	Regularly review the needs/wants from various databases for Council programmes that involve an element of biodiversity work and maintain and develop such data management systems, e.g. riparian programme, Self-help Possum Control Programme, regional weed monitoring programme	Environment Services Land Management Corporate Services Policy
132.	Update and maintain current GIS layers to capture information in riparian plans identifying wetland polygons and potentially remnant bush and intact dune areas.	Land Management Corporate Services
133.	Explore opportunities, and the appropriateness, of sourcing DOC and community biodiversity data to improve Council's biodiversity datasets , including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • national databases (e.g. Nature Watch, EBird) • external data management systems (such as the NIWA freshwater fish database , DOC's threatened species databases, national vegetation survey archive, national herbaria, five minute bird count database etc) • regional biodiversity and ecosystem data gathered and maintained by community groups (such as gathered by Orthinological Society, Herpetological Society, EMAP etc) 	Environment Services Land Management Corporate Services Policy

5.4.3 State of biodiversity in Taranaki

The Council gathers information on biodiversity as part of its State of Environment (SoE) reporting under the RMA.

The state of the region's terrestrial biodiversity is largely monitored through four programmes outlined in the *Terrestrial Biodiversity Monitoring Plan for Taranaki*. These programmes monitor the extent and condition of forest, wetland and coastal ecosystems, the pressures on them and Council and community efforts for improving the regions biodiversity. Monitoring sites include both managed sites (such as KNEs with biodiversity plans) and unmanaged sites. Additional general condition monitoring is also conducted at other managed KNE and Regionally Significant Wetlands through regular condition assessments. Freshwater and coastal biodiversity are separately monitored for under other consents and SoE related programmes.



OBJ 2: Gathering state of the environment monitoring information on terrestrial, freshwater and coastal biodiversity to inform future reviews of Council policy

Activities for monitoring terrestrial biodiversity		Lead responsibility
134.	Maintain the State of Environment monitoring programme for terrestrial biodiversity in the Taranaki region, including unmanaged sites and sites subject to biodiversity management actions. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • monitoring remaining regional extent of indigenous vegetation and terrestrial ecosystems, including dunes and wetlands, in relation to historic extent using remotely sensed data • monitoring ecological condition of forest, wetland and coastal dunes and turfs over time at selected sites • monitoring pressures on indigenous ecosystems including habitat loss and distribution and relative abundance of selected exotic plants and animals that impact negatively on indigenous biodiversity • gathering and reporting on data relating to biodiversity protection in Taranaki including formal protection of habitats, extent of indigenous cover in water catchments, area and effectiveness of management for biodiversity 	Environment Services
135.	Continue regular condition assessments at selected KNE and Regionally Significant Wetland sites	Environment Services Land Management
136.	Monitor the area covered by indigenous forest at the 25 hill country sites, or using the land cover database	Land Management
137.	Monitor changes in land use, and implications for biodiversity restoration in the hill country, through evaluating implementation of comprehensive farm plans	Land Management.

Activities for monitoring freshwater biodiversity		Lead responsibility
138.	Maintain the State of Environment monitoring programme for freshwater biodiversity in the Taranaki region. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • monitoring freshwater biodiversity through SEM of invertebrate communities • monitoring changes in indigenous freshwater fish species at selected sites 	Science Services Policy
139.	Implement, and review as appropriate, a SEM programme for regionally distinctive freshwater fish species	Science Services

Activities for monitoring coastal biodiversity		Lead responsibility
140.	Review and maintain the State of Environment monitoring programme for coastal biodiversity in the Taranaki region, which may include estuarine, soft sediment and rocky shore programmes	Science Services

5.4.4 Consolidating and sharing regional biodiversity data and information

In addition to the Council, other parties have a significant role and are active in biodiversity management in the Taranaki region. Many other agencies, groups and organisations therefore gather and maintain information that may be of interest to others.

To promote the effectiveness and efficiency of our respective efforts the Council will work with others to explore ways to incorporate information gathered by other groups.

OBJ 3: Exploring and supporting opportunities for the consolidation and sharing of existing and new information between interested parties about indigenous biodiversity in the region

Activities for maintaining and sharing regional biodiversity data and information		Lead responsibility
141.	Work with DOC and others to identify known habitats and/or range of threatened and regionally distinctive species within the region	Environment Services
142.	Work with DOC and local experts to develop and maintain regional threat classifications for indigenous flora and fauna	Environment Services
143.	Update and maintain database and reporting of known fish passage barriers in line with national direction	Science Services
144.	Investigate working with Wild for Taranaki on setting up or promoting existing information gathering platforms (e.g. Nature Watch) that the whole community could feed information into	Environment Services
145.	Investigate working with groups and agencies in the community that are gathering biodiversity information (e.g. Ornithological Society, Project Hotspot, RSRT, Purangi Kiwi, TKT etc) to assist with the holding, analysing or reporting of the data, for example GIS	Environment Services Land Management Science Services
146.	Advocate for research and investigations into: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> issues and options for reconnecting biodiversity within the region, in particular riparian habitat, and protecting areas in the long term from environmental weeds, predators etc biodiversity management in KNEs and freshwater and coastal habitats with regionally significant values 	Environment Services Land Management Science Services

5.4.5 Biodiversity resource investigations

This section sets out those one off specific resource investigations identified as necessary for establishing a solid scientific baseline of biodiversity information to inform management decisions.

OBJ 4: Undertaking or commissioning biodiversity resource investigations as appropriate		
Activities for resource investigations – biodiversity general		Lead responsibility
147.	Develop and maintain list of possible resource investigations for biodiversity management in Taranaki and use these to advocate for appropriate research to be undertaken within the region by universities and other research organisations	Environment Services Land Management
148.	Consider or support investigation into incentives, drivers and impediments to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> landowners actively engaging in biodiversity management on their own land, and as part of collective action across landscapes public engagement in supporting landowners in active biodiversity protection and enhancement on private land: e.g. riparian planting, pest animal network servicing, weed control, biodiversity monitoring 	Environment Services Land Management
Activities for resource investigations – terrestrial		Lead responsibility
149.	Collate all existing research on indigenous biodiversity in Taranaki into an easily searchable inventory, identify information gaps and establish protocols for keeping current	Environment Services Science Services Corporate Services
150.	Incorporate biodiversity information from other agencies, and community groups (e.g. from Orthinological Society) into Biodiversity chapter of State of Environment report	Environment Services Policy
151.	Consider or support investigation into: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> changes in predator and prey behaviour, population dynamics and habitat use in response to landscape scale control biodiversity and biosecurity responses to riparian restoration programme to help inform ongoing management the ecology and management of fragmented biodiversity (forest and wetland fragments) in intensively farmed landscapes, e.g. ring plain fragments the ecology and management of biodiversity on private land in extensively farmed hill country landscapes 	Environment Services Land Management
Activities for resource investigations – fresh water		Lead responsibility
152.	Reassess issue of the cumulative effect of piping small streams and land drainage in relation to potential loss of freshwater biodiversity (Small Streams Report)	Science Services
153.	Investigate or support investigations to identify freshwater biodiversity values of significance within landscape scale biodiversity protection projects within the region	Science Services, Environment Services
Activities for resource investigations – coastal		Lead responsibility
154.	Review inventory (or equivalent) of coastal areas of local or regional significance to update information on biodiversity values	Policy Science Services
155.	Continue to maintain and identify new opportunities to work in partnership with others (e.g. DOC, MPI, researchers, iwi and community groups) to research, identify and map sensitive marine habitat areas, including reefs	Policy Science Services
156.	Explore working with DOC and/or MPI to ensure a complete environment monitoring system is developed for the coastal marine area	Science Services
157.	Investigate or support investigations to identify coastal/marine biodiversity values of significance within landscape scale biodiversity protection projects within the region	Environment Services Land Management

5.4.6 Measuring progress with working with biodiversity information gathering and management

The Council will measure and report the progress with biodiversity information gathering and management annually as part of the Long Term Plan process under the Local Government Act 2002 and, five yearly as part of the Council's state of the environment reporting on biodiversity outcomes undertaken pursuant to section 35 of the RMA. The Council's 5 yearly State of Environment report will also be a critical vehicle for reporting overall trends in biodiversity across the region, and across land, freshwater and marine ecosystems. Input for the State of the Environment report will be sought from all the various groups working on biodiversity in the region.

Key performance indicators for monitoring and the gathering and sharing of biodiversity information are:

1. Maintenance and development of biodiversity databases for managing information on KNEs.
2. Reporting on the condition of KNE and Regionally Significant Wetland sites..
3. Preparation of integrated biodiversity chapter for the State of Environment report.
4. Collaboration with regional biodiversity data management initiatives.
5. Progress with identified biodiversity resource investigations.



6. Monitoring and reviewing the Strategy

This section outlines the monitoring and review provisions of the Strategy.

6.1 Monitoring implementation of the Strategy

The Council will report regularly to its Policy and Planning Committee on progress with implementing the Strategy.

Measuring its progress with implementing the KNE programme will also be reported annually as part of the Long Term Plan process under the Local Government Act 2002.

The Council will also report five yearly as part of the Council's state of the environment reporting on biodiversity outcomes undertaken pursuant to section 35 of the RMA. The Council's 5 yearly State of Environment report is a critical vehicle for reporting overall trends in biodiversity across the region, and across land, freshwater and marine ecosystems. Input for the SOE report will be sought from all the various groups working on biodiversity in the region.

6.2 Review of the Strategy

The Strategy is a 10 year document. However, to ensure it continues to be relevant and up-to-date, the Council will commence an interim review:

- ✚ Where relevant circumstances have changed to a significant extent since the commencement of the Strategy, including the promulgation of new Government legislation or policy or the review of New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy and the *National Priorities for Protecting Rare and Threatened Native Biodiversity on Private Land*
- ✚ Every five years to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the Strategy (i.e. 2022).

A review of the efficiency and effectiveness of the Strategy will include:

- ✚ An assessment of the efficiency of the Strategy in relation to the extent to which Strategy actions were implemented (i.e. did we do what we said we would do)
- ✚ An assessment of the effectiveness of the Strategy in relation to achieving the desired outcomes and addressing the priorities
- ✚ A report to the Policy and Planning Committee of the Council on the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of the Strategy.

Progress on implementing the Strategy will be monitored and reported on in a number of ways:

- ✚ 'Biodiversity Significant Activity Reports' will be prepared quarterly that address progress with biodiversity functions across the whole of Council's operations;
- ✚ The Council's annual report will report against targets and measures set out in the LTP;
- ✚ A number of individual programmes are likely to be reported on individually in more specific detail, particularly working with others including Wild for Taranaki, resource investigations or high profile KNE projects and new KNEs identified; and
- ✚ The Council's five-yearly State of the Environment report will contain a biodiversity chapter, which will report on the state and pressures on biodiversity across the region. Other chapters will also report on matters pertaining to biodiversity, such as the state land and freshwater resources and biosecurity issues within the region.

The above reporting opportunities will be used by the Council to report on progress with implementing national policies such as the New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy, the *National Priorities for Protecting Rare and Threatened Native Biodiversity on Private Land* and any relevant national policy statement.

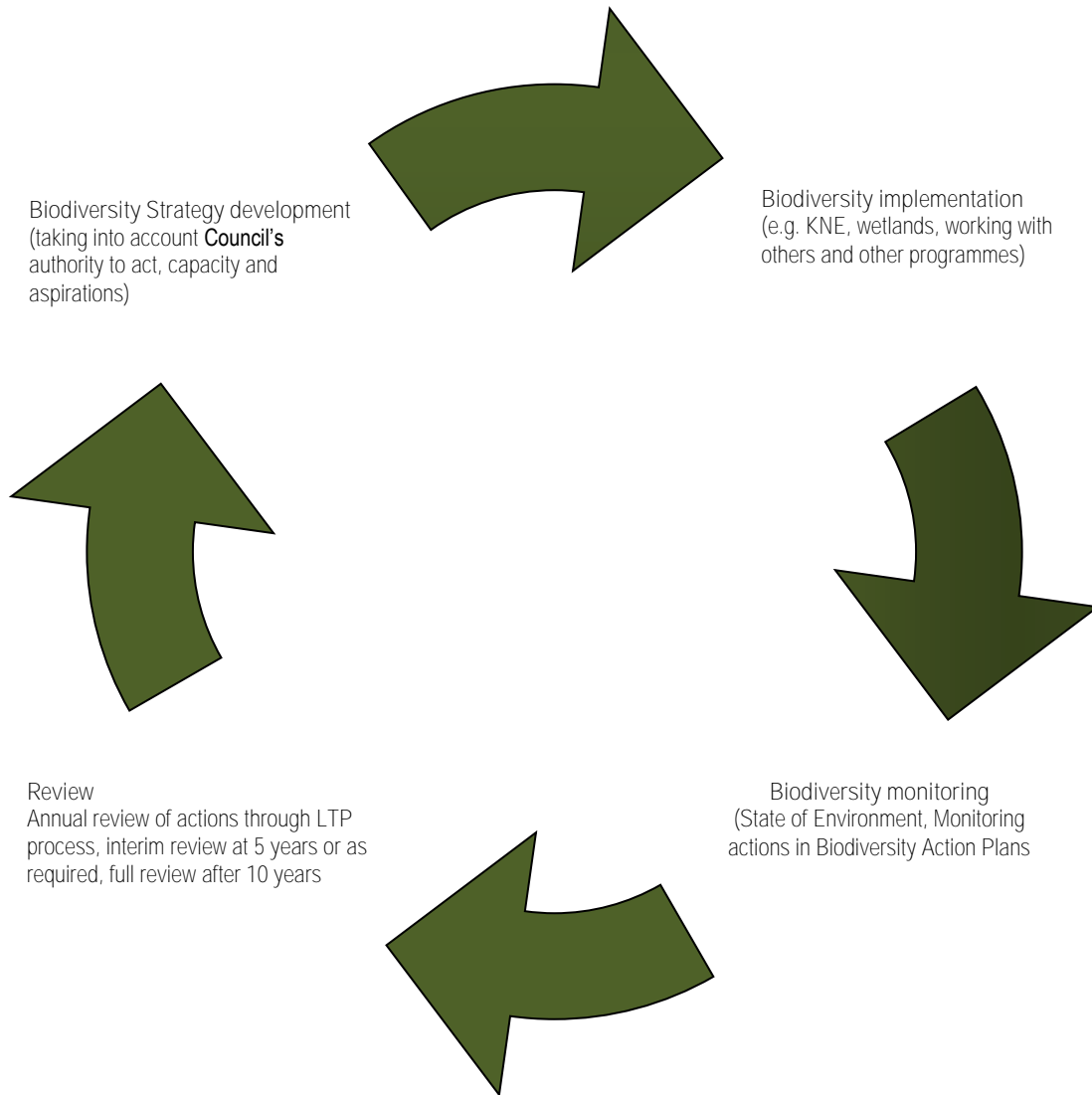
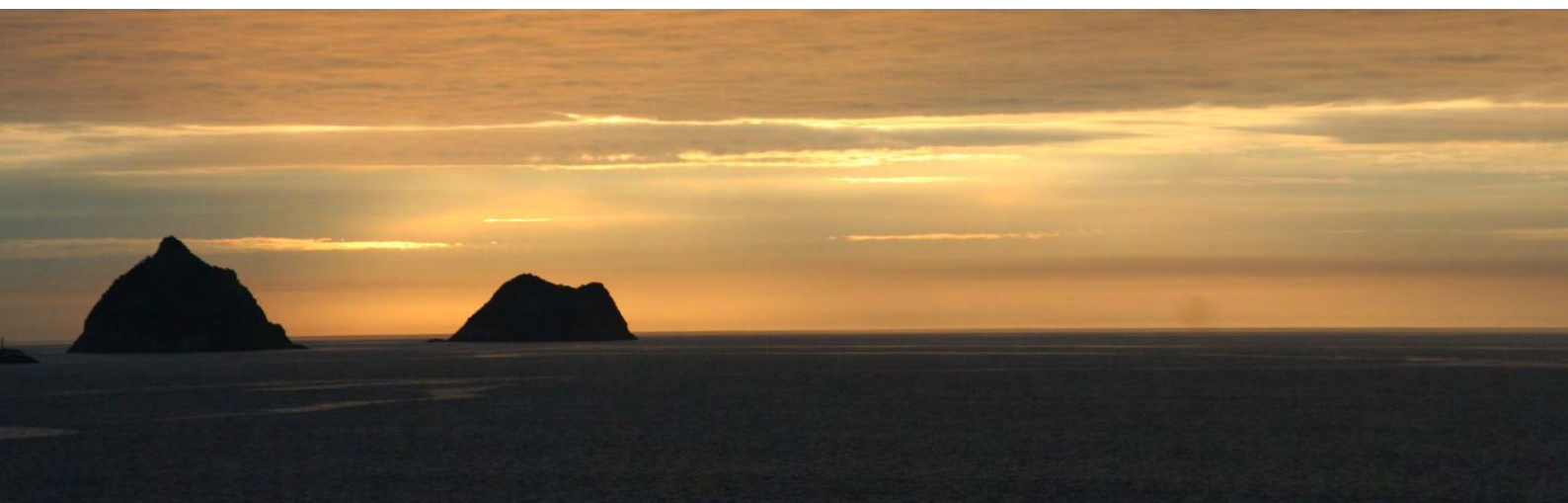


Figure 1: The planning, implementing and reviewing cycle of biodiversity planning



Definition of terms

This section provides the meanings for terms used in the Strategy.

Active management refers to physical works and action on land for the purposes of maintaining and enhancing biodiversity values. Active management includes species recovery programmes, habitat restoration and sustained weed and pest control.

Areal refers to an area.

At risk means a species facing a longer-term risk of extinction in the wild (either because of severely reduced or naturally small population size or because the population is declining but buffered by either a large total population or a slow rate of decline) as identified in the New Zealand Threat Classification System lists.

Biological diversity (biodiversity) means the variability among living organisms and the ecological complexes of which they are a part, including diversity within species, between species, and of ecosystems.

Capacity refers to the technical and technological ability, skills, knowledge and organisational structure required to undertake management actions, and to collect and interpret information.

Conservation refers to the preservation and protection of natural and historic resources for the purpose of maintaining their intrinsic values, providing for their appreciation and recreational enjoyment by the public, and safeguarding the options of future generations.

Ecological context refers to the connectivity of a given site with the surrounding landscape and ecological processes.

Ecosystem refers to an ecological community together with its environment, functioning as a unit, an interacting system of living and non-living parts such as sunlight, air, water, minerals and nutrients.

Ecosystem prioritization means a systematic approach to conservation planning that identifies and prioritizes areas within residual ecosystems for active management. The approach acknowledges limited resources and aims to inform inter-agency and community collaboration in identifying, maintaining and restoring representative areas of the full suite of ecosystems within a region in a healthy and functioning state.

Endangered species means species in danger of extinction and whose survival is unlikely if the causal factors continue operating.

Endemic species refers to an indigenous species which breed only within a specified region or locality and is unique to that area.

Formally protected refers to the application of legal mechanisms, which provide long-term security of a geographically defined area for nature conservation purposes or to maintain biodiversity values. It may be either publicly or privately owned.

GIS refers to geographic information system.

Habitat refers to the place or type of area in which an organism naturally occurs.

Indigenous means native to New Zealand.

Indigenous species means a species or genetic variant found naturally in New Zealand, including migrant species visiting New Zealand on a regular or irregular basis.

Indigenous vegetation means any local indigenous plant community through the course of its growth or succession consisting primarily of native species and habitats normally associated with that vegetation type, soil or ecosystem or having the potential to develop these characteristics. It includes vegetation with these characteristics that has been regenerated with human assistance following disturbance or as mitigation for another activity, but excludes plantations and vegetation that have been established for commercial harvesting.

Introduced species refers to a plant or animal species which has been brought to New Zealand by humans, either by accident or design. A synonym is 'exotic species'.

Invasive species refers to introduced animal or plant species that can adversely affect indigenous species and ecosystems by altering genetic variation within species, or affecting the survival of species, or the quality or sustainability of natural communities.

Invertebrate refers to an animal without a backbone or spinal column, including insects, spiders, worms, slaters, corals, sponges and jellyfish.

Iwi refers to tribe or grouping of Maori people descended from a common ancestor(s).

Kaitiaki refers to a person who is active in the guardianship of the mauri of ecosystems.

Kaitiakitanga refers to the active protection and enhancement of the mauri of ecosystems.

Key Native Ecosystems or **KNEs** refers to terrestrial (land) areas identified by the Taranaki Regional Council as having regionally significant ecological values.

Land environment means a region or area (environmental domain) classified under the Land Environments of New Zealand system.

Land Environments of New Zealand or **LENZ** is a classification of environments mapped across New Zealand's landscape, derived from a comprehensive set of climate, landform and soil variables known to influence the distribution of species.

Macroinvertebrate Community Index (MCI) refers to an index commonly used to assess stream health: MCI quantifies stream condition with a single number.

Mahinga kai refers to the customary gathering of food and natural materials and the places where those resources are gathered.

Maintenance means 'no net loss' as achieved by the protection of existing areas and habitats and/or the restoration and enhancement of areas and habitats as may be required through biodiversity off-sets or other initiatives.

Native species: See Indigenous species.

Public conservation land refers to land administered by the Department of Conservation for whatever purpose. It excludes land administered under conservation legislation by other parties.

Regionally distinctive species includes both threatened and non-threatened species that are worthy of protection because they are largely confined to the region, are particularly uncommon in this part of the country, or because Taranaki represents the limit of their national distribution range.

Restoration and enhancement means the active intervention and management of degraded biotic communities, landforms and landscapes in order to restore biological character, ecological and physical processes.

Significant Natural Areas refers to natural areas identified as being significant in the *New Plymouth District Plan* and the *South Taranaki District Plan*.

Species refers to a group of organisms capable of interbreeding freely with each other but not with members of other species.

Sustainable use refers to the use of components of biological diversity in a way and at a rate that does not lead to the long-term decline of biological diversity,

thereby maintaining its potential to meet the needs and aspirations of present and future generations.

Tangata whenua refers to people of the land.

Threatened land environments refers to land environments, defined by Land Environments of New Zealand at Level IV (2003), that have 20 per cent or less remaining in indigenous vegetation cover.

Threatened species means a species facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild and includes nationally critical, nationally endangered and nationally vulnerable species as identified in the New Zealand Threat Classification System lists.

Wetland includes permanently or intermittently wet areas, shallow water, and land water margins that support a natural ecosystem of plants and animals that are adapted to wet conditions.

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Appendix I: Legislative and policy sources authorising the Council's biodiversity work

Table 3: Legislative and policy sources authorising the Council's biodiversity work

Source of legitimacy	Summary
Resource Management Act 1991	Principal legislation governing the use of resources and so has a key role in managing biological diversity. A number of sections are relevant, particularly s5, 6(c), 7(d) and s30 (1)(c)(iia) that states that it is a function of regional councils to control the use of land for the purpose of maintaining and enhancing ecosystems in water bodies and coastal waters, and s30(1)(ga) which states that it is a function of regional councils to establish, implement and review objectives, policies and methods for maintaining indigenous biodiversity.
National priorities for protecting rare and threatened native biodiversity on private land	The statement of national priorities was developed by the Ministry for the Environment and DOC to provide local government a national perspective on the biodiversity priorities. The four priorities for the protection of indigenous vegetation are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous vegetation associated with land environments (defined by Land Environments of New Zealand at Level IV) that have 20% or less remaining in indigenous vegetation • Indigenous vegetation associated with wetlands and sand dunes • Indigenous vegetation associated with 'originally rare' ecosystem types, and • Habitats of threatened species.
Long Term Plans (LTPs)	The LTP was developed in consultation with the community under the provisions of the Local Government Act 2002. Key aspects of relevance are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies flourishing biodiversity as a vital ingredient of a prosperous, healthy and sustainable community • Anticipates the Council expand its role further in maintaining and protecting the region's biodiversity • Identifies the major role the Council has to play through pest management to tackle the decline of biodiversity • Notes Council's desire to redirect pest control efforts into biodiversity protection on specific sites as targets on the Self-help Possum Control Programme on the ring plain are met, and • Notes that practical assistance in the form of environmental enhancement grants will be provided for regional initiatives protecting and enhancing biodiversity.
Regional Policy Statement for Taranaki (RPS)	The RPS contains an objective, policies and methods that aim to maintain and enhance the indigenous biodiversity of the Taranaki region, with a priority on ecosystems, habitats and areas that have significant values.

Source of legitimacy	Summary
Regional Freshwater Plan for Taranaki	The Regional Freshwater Plan for Taranaki contains objectives, policies and methods that indicate that the Council will undertake environmental management in a manner that safeguards ecological processes (which would safeguard biodiversity), and significant areas (e.g. Appendix 1A of the Plan for high value rivers and streams, and Appendix II for significant wetlands).
Coastal Plan for Taranaki	The Regional Coastal Plan for Taranaki contains objectives, policies and methods that indicate that the Council will undertake environmental management in a manner that safeguards ecological processes (which would safeguard biodiversity values) and identifies a separate management regime for areas of significant conservation value.
Biosecurity Act 1993	This Act provides for the exclusion, eradication and effective management of pests and unwanted organisms. Under this Act local authorities may prepare regional pest management plans.
Pest management strategies	The pest management strategies for Taranaki identify pest species, including those impacting on biodiversity values. Through the strategies rules may apply requiring the land occupier to undertake control. The Council may also access Part 6 [Enforcement] powers under the Biosecurity Act to undertake direct control of pest animals and plants.

Appendix II: Assessment of possible ideas for biodiversity actions against legislation and policy, and Council capacity

As part of the process of developing the first Biodiversity Strategy in 2008, discussions were held internally (with land management officers, pest officers etc) and feedback was sought from key stakeholders (including DOC, district councils, QEII Trust and other community groups involved in biodiversity) on 'good ideas' on what the Council could deliver in relation to biodiversity. Set out in Table 4 below is the 2008 assessment of good ideas for the Council's biodiversity activities having regard to its authority to act, its operational capacity, and its strategic priorities.

Table 4: Assessment of possible good ideas for Council's biodiversity work

Work area	Possible actions (good ideas)	Authorising legitimacy						Council's operational capacity	Strategic priorities for Council's biodiversity work
		RMA	LTP	RPS	FWP	RCP	RPMPs		
Animal pests	Advice and education	x	x	x			x	x	Existing Council programme
	Statutory planning	x	x	x			x	x	Existing Council programme
	Enforcement	x	x	x			x	x	Existing Council programme
	Direct control on private land		x	x			x	x	Key action for Biodiversity Plan, particularly for KNEs
	Direct control on public land								No mandate and no capacity, but may work with community groups operating on public land and able to work with DOC to optimise operations on the private/public land interface
	Monitoring of pest numbers		x	x			x	x	Key action for biodiversity strategy
	Monitoring of control effectiveness		x	x			x	x	Key action for biodiversity strategy

Work area	Possible actions (good ideas)	Authorising legitimacy						Council's operational capacity	Strategic priorities for Council's biodiversity work
		RMA	LTP	RPS	FWP	RCP	RPMPs		
Pest plants	Advice and education	x	x	x			x	x	Existing Council programme
	Statutory planning	x	x	x			x	x	Existing Council programme
	Enforcement	x	x	x			x	x	Existing Council programme
	Direct control on private land		x	x			x	x	Key action for Biodiversity Plan, particularly for KNEs
	Direct control on public land								No mandate and no capacity
	Monitoring of pest plant distributions		x	x			x	x	Existing Council programme
	Monitoring of control effectiveness		x	x			x	x	Existing Council programme
Threatened species	Threatened species management, e.g. captive rearing								No mandate and no capacity, DOC role
	Habitat protection for threatened species	x		x			x	Limited	Key action for biodiversity strategy
	Monitoring of threatened species							Limited	Principally DOC role. Limited monitoring undertaken by Council as part of its KNE monitoring and state of environment reporting
Freshwater – rivers, lakes	Advice and education	x	x	x	x		x	x	Existing Council programme
	Statutory planning	x	x	x	x		x	x	Existing Council programme
	Enforcement	x	x	x	x		x	x	Existing Council programme
	Monitoring of freshwater biodiversity	x	x	x	x			x	Existing Council programme
	Habitat protection	x	x	x	x		x	x	Existing Council programme
	Working with owners of structures to improve fish passage	x	x	x	x			x	Existing Council programme
	Managing freshwater fisheries								No mandate and no capacity, role of MPI and DOC

Work area	Possible actions (good ideas)	Authorising legitimacy						Council's operational capacity	Strategic priorities for Council's biodiversity work
		RMA	LTP	RPS	FWP	RCP	RPMPs		
Freshwater - wetlands	Advice and education	x	x	x	x			x	Existing Council programme that could be enhanced for non-significant wetlands
	Statutory planning	x	x	x	x			x	Existing Council programme
	Enforcement - significant wetlands	x	x	x	x			x	Existing Council programme
	Enforcement - remaining wetlands	x							Possible action
	Working with landowners on legal protection - significant wetlands	x	x	x	x			x	Existing Council programme
	Working with landowners on legal protection - remaining wetlands	x						Limited	Existing Council programme
	Monitoring condition of significant wetlands	x	x	x	x			Limited	Key action for biodiversity strategy
	Determining extent of remaining wetlands	x			x				Existing Council programme
Coastal and marine	Advice and education	x	x	x		x	x	x	Existing Council programme
	Statutory planning	x	x	x		x	x	x	Existing Council programme
	Enforcement of coastal plan rules	x	x	x		x		x	Existing Council programme
	Monitoring of consent conditions	x	x	x		x		x	Existing Council programme
	Monitoring of estuarine and rocky shore	x	x	x		x		x	Existing Council programme
	Managing nearshore fisheries								No mandate and no capacity, role of MPI
	Managing areas of significant conservation value	x		x		x		x	Existing Council programme
	Managing fisheries								No mandate and no capacity, role of MPI

Work area	Possible actions (good ideas)	Authorising legitimacy						Council's operational capacity	Strategic priorities for Council's biodiversity work
		RMA	LTP	RPS	FWP	RCP	RPMPs		
Work area	Advocating for marine protection, including marine reserves	x		x				x	Action for biodiversity strategy
	Establishment of marine reserves								No mandate and no capacity, role of MPI and DOC
	Management of marine parks and reserves								No mandate and no capacity, role of DOC (and MPI)
Property planning	Developing integrated site specific plans for KNEs and also riparian and hill country farm plans	x						x	Key action for achieving biodiversity gains on KNEs, on farms and in the region's catchments
Working with others	Facilitating community access to biodiversity funds	x	x	x				x	Key action to achieve efficient biodiversity gains
	Working with other agencies		x	x				x	Key action to achieve efficient biodiversity gains
Data management etc	Monitoring state of the environment	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Key action for achieve efficient biodiversity gains
	Maintain and further develop systems for data management for KNEs and biodiversity data	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Key action for achieve efficient biodiversity gains
	Facilitate sharing of regional biodiversity data as appropriate	x	x					Limited	Key action for Biodiversity Strategy

Appendix III: Current state of Key Native Ecosystems

Table 5: Current state of Key Native Ecosystems in Taranaki (as at October 2016)

Indicator	Number (as at Aug 2007)	Number (as at October 2016)
Total number of Key Native Ecosystems	155	218
Number that have some private land	99	173
Number that are fully fenced	55	136
Number in the self-help possum programme	49	105
Number in public ownership with other pest animal programmes	19	99
Number in private ownership or with some form of formal protection agreement	102	124 (98 fully protected, 26 part protected (multiple owners))

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Appendix III: Addressing national priorities

National priorities for protecting rare and threatened native biodiversity on private land have been set by the Government. In relation to the each national priority, the table below identifies strategic priorities adopted in this Plan that will contribute towards meeting the Government's priorities for protecting rare and threatened native biodiversity on private land.

National Priorities:	Council strategic priorities:	Sections in the Plan
1. Indigenous vegetation associated with land environments (defined by Land Environments of New Zealand (LENZ) at level IV) that have 20% or less remaining in indigenous cover	1.1 Key Native Ecosystem programme for those regionally significant sites on threatened land environments 1.2 Building on existing programmes – e.g. riparian programme and self help possum programme both occur on threatened land environments 1.3 Working with others 1.4 Developing systems for gathering and recording information.	5.1, 5.2, 5.3; 5.4
2. Indigenous vegetation associated with sand dunes and wetlands; ecosystem types that have become uncommon due to human activity	2.1 Key Native Ecosystem programme for those regionally significant sites that are either sand dunes or wetlands 2.2 Building on existing programmes – e.g. general education and advocacy for wetlands in general 2.3 Working with others e.g. assisting the Ngati Tara Oaonui Sandy Bay Trust 2.4 Developing systems for gathering and recording information.	5.1, 5.2, 5.3; 5.4
3. Indigenous vegetation associated with 'originally rare' terrestrial ecosystem types not already covered by priorities 1 or 2	3.1 Key Native Ecosystem programme for those regionally significant sites that are 'originally rare' ecosystem types 3.2 Gathering and recording information on 'originally rare' ecosystem types.	5.1, 5.2, 5.3; 5.4
4. Habitats of acutely and chronically threatened indigenous species.	4.1 Key Native Ecosystem programme for those regionally significant sites with threatened species 4.2 Building on existing programmes – e.g. self help possum programme safeguards habitat important for kereru 4.3 Working with others on sites important for threatened species, e.g. supporting kiwi projects in east Taranaki 4.4 Developing systems for gathering and recording information on threatened species on private land.	5.1, 5.2, 5.3; 5.4

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