

Memorandum

31 January 2020

To: Planning Committee

Cc: All Waitematā Local Board members
Jenny Fuller, Acting Manager Planning – Auckland Wide, Plans & Places
Ruth Andrews, Team Leader – Planning, Plans & Places
Debbie Hogan, Principal Analyst – Strategy, Natural Environment Strategy Unit

Subject: Waitematā Local Board feedback to the proposed National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity

From: The Waitematā Local Board

Purpose

1. To provide Waitematā Local Board's feedback to the proposed National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity.

Context/Background

2. The Government is calling for submissions on *He Kura Koiora i hokia: A discussion document on a proposed National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity*.
3. The National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity provides detailed direction on maintaining indigenous biodiversity, including identification and protection of significant indigenous biodiversity, under the Resource Management Act 1991.
4. Local Board feedback to contribute to the Auckland Council submission is due by 5pm 4 February 2020.
5. Auckland Council will finalise its submission before the Government deadline of 14 March 2020, with a draft submission proposed to be considered by the Planning Committee on 5 March 2020.

Waitematā Local Board feedback

Summary

The Waitematā Local Board:

- strongly supports the need for a national policy statement
- strongly supports more emphasis on pest management
- supports trialling areas of natural regeneration
- supports managing exotics in a role that can foster native biodiversity
- supports the return of default blanket protections for mature trees
- supports interventions that re-establish the keystone indigenous species
- endorses establishing more areas that are protected such as land and marine reserves
- recommends that local boards to be consulted on how tangata whenua will be involved in the management of indigenous biodiversity going forward

6. The Waitematā Local Board strongly agree with the need for a national policy statement and generally agree with the overall intent of the proposed statement.
7. The Waitematā Local Board Plan adopted in 2017 states:
“Our valued natural ecosystems and biodiversity are under threat from pest plants and animals. To address this challenge we will maintain our ecological restoration programmes and grow community capacity around managing weeds and getting rid of pests. We want the council to eliminate agrichemical spraying and embrace its commitment to minimise agrichemical use. You have told us to support alternative weed management techniques, such as the use of hot water and mechanical edging in parks. As a local board we support the target to make New Zealand predator free by 2050.”
8. The Waitematā Local Board Plan 2017 also includes the following biodiversity objectives and key initiatives:

Objective: Increase the urban forest and enhance biodiversity.

Key initiatives:

 - Deliver local initiatives to increase tree planting, such as on St Marys Road, and additional pollinator paths in parks and the road corridor.
 - Develop a local strategy to increase the urban forest in line with a regional urban tree strategy.
 - Encourage Auckland Transport to provide planting, including canopy trees, in every streetscape improvement.

Objective: Regenerate our natural areas to enhance biodiversity.

Key initiatives:

 - Deliver a local ecological restoration programme.
 - Increase community capacity around weed management and pest eradication.
 - Support initiatives which minimise the use of agrichemicals for weed control.
9. The Waitematā Local Board strongly supports the proposed national policy statement to include more emphasis on pest management. The board notes that the residents in Waitematā Local Board area were strongly supportive of the council introducing a targeted rate for managing pests and was the highest positive response overall for Auckland.

10. It is recommended that more areas are considered for trialling natural regeneration which may be more efficient at increasing biodiversity. The local board also supports no mow areas in urban zones to encourage soil health and increase insect habitats.
11. Management of exotics should be based on scientific evidence around their role in fostering native biodiversity, playing a useful role in eco-systems and mitigating climate change.
12. The Waitematā Local Board supports the return of default blanket protections for mature trees. Both native and exotics can have a beneficial effect of creating more habitat for native biodiversity and sequestering carbon.
13. The local board also recommends that more areas are protected such as land and marine reserves.
14. We support interventions that re-establish the keystone indigenous species when habitat conditions are so degraded that it can't re-establish itself without intervention.
15. It is recommended that local boards be consulted on how tangata whenua will be involved in the management of indigenous biodiversity going forward.