

Māngere-Ōtāhuhu Local Board input: Draft National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity

Local Board Position:

The Māngere-Ōtāhuhu Local Board agree in principle with the National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity, set out in the draft document, as this resonates with the local board's 'Protecting our natural environment and heritage', outcome aspiration. The local board aspires to respect, treasure and support the protection of the natural environment to enjoy now and in future (Local Board Plan 2017).

In addition, the Māngere-Ōtāhuhu Local Board:

1. Support the intent of the NPSIB to be consistent with the purpose of the Resource Management Act (RMA), which is to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources; and no reduction in the following:
 - a. the size of populations of indigenous species
 - b. indigenous species occupancy across their natural range
 - c. the function of ecosystems and habitats
 - d. the full range and extent of ecosystems and habitats
 - e. connectivity between, and buffering around, ecosystems
 - f. the resilience and adaptability of ecosystems.
2. Agree to a consistent approach by authorities, including policies and strategies, to minimize any uncertainty and undervaluing of biodiversity in monitoring and decision making as this has contributed to the decline of indigenous biodiversity ecosystems.
3. Agree for authorities to identify areas with significant vegetation and habitats of indigenous fauna and manage their protection through regional and district plans and consent processes under the RMA.
4. Support Māori being the kaitiaki with their role and responsibility to look after our natural environment. Auckland Council will need to work with iwi/Māori to protect taonga, recognise te ao Māori and the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi in biodiversity management utilizing *Hutia te Rito* concepts to achieve an integrated and holistic approach to maintaining indigenous biodiversity.
5. Support authorities to engage with the Manukau Harbour Forum, Tamaki Estuary Environmental Forum, Mangere East Family Service, and other local pro-indigenous

biodiversity stakeholders, in seeking insights into the degradation and protection of the local ecosystems.

6. Support provisions to manage adverse effects from new activities that impact on Significant Natural Areas. The local area has several major infrastructure developments occurring and being planned as a response to the Auckland's population growth. It is important to protect our streams like Tararata Creek, Oruarangi Creek and wetlands, as these are natural filters and play an important part sustaining the indigenous biodiversity system.

7. Support the proposed target as follows: Regional councils must assess the percentage of urban and rural areas in the region that have indigenous vegetation cover, and where cover is less than 10%:
 - a. A target must be set to increase cover to at least 10% for urban areas;
 - b. A target must be set to increase cover for rural areas; and
 - c. For areas already with 10% or more cover targets may be set to increase cover.
 - d. Targets should be included in regional policy statements along with objectives, policies and methods to achieve them.

24 February 2020

Ōtara-Papatoetoe Local Board formal feedback on the National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity

Submission points

The Ōtara-Papatoetoe Local Board generally supports the National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity and would like to note the following:

Objectives and policies

The local board supports the primary objective of the National Policy Statement which is to maintain indigenous biodiversity. We also support the following objectives:

- incorporation of the Treaty of Waitangi in the management of indigenous biodiversity
- restoring indigenous biodiversity and enhancing ecological integrity of ecosystems
- recognising the role of landowners, communities and Tangata Whenua as stewards and kaitiaki of indigenous biodiversity.

The local board supports the requirement for recognition and provision for Hutia te Rito as a fundamental concept to achieve an integrated and holistic approach to maintaining indigenous biodiversity. In our view it is imperative that Mana Whenua have the opportunities to exercise:

- kaitiakitanga over indigenous biodiversity
- be involved in decision making relating to indigenous biodiversity
- incorporate mātauranga Māori.

Application of the National Policy Statement (NPS)

The NPS should apply to all land tenures. We recommend that freshwater ecosystems including effects on wetlands which are not covered by this NPS be recognised as proposed in the NPS for Freshwater Management 2019. The two NPS are compatible and provide the holistic view of the environment rather than compartmentalised and creating unforeseen gaps.

Identifying important biodiversity and taonga - Identifying significant natural areas

The local board understands the Auckland Unitary Plan currently identifies such areas as Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs). We recommend that the Auckland criteria meets, at a minimum, the criteria set out under this NPS. A qualified ecologist can provide an assessment to demonstrate whether the SEAs meet the NPSIB criteria.

Identifying taonga and highly mobile fauna

The NPS requires identification of taonga, subject to working together with Tangata Whenua to determine if they wish to identify taonga and agree on the process and level of detail required. This should be started with Mana Whenua in the first instance.

Managing effects on biodiversity- Managing adverse effects on Significant Natural Areas (SNA)

The local board generally supports this section, in particular the need to ensure that continuation of the existing activity does not lead to loss or degradation of any SNA and adverse effects do not change the character, intensity or scale as at date of NPS.

Restoration and enhancement

The local board generally supports this section, including the requirement to assess percentage of urban and rural areas in region that have indigenous vegetation cover, and where less than 10% cover, targets must be put in place. We would recommend the LiDAR information we commissioned to investigate our local tree canopy coverage should be used as apart of this process.

The Ōtara- Papatoetoe Local Board would like to thank you for your consideration

DRAFT Upper Harbour Local Board input into the Auckland Council submission on He Kura Koiora i hokia - a discussion document on a proposed National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity

The local board supports the National Policy Statement on Indigenous Biodiversity (NPSIB). Upper Harbour is one of the fastest growing areas of Auckland and it also has a rich heritage of biodiversity; with potential through the Northwest Wildlink to be developed, to the enhancement of biodiversity in the region. The NPSIB will provide an improved consideration of protecting biodiversity within the consenting process, as well as progressing the discussion on how development can improve biodiversity outcomes.

However, the board shares the concern of Auckland Council that the relationship between the NPSIB and other planning tools could have unanticipated consequences. If the NPSIB is going to be effective it must apply to biodiversity within environments covered by the National Coastal Policy Statement and the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management. Care also needs to be taken to ensure that the objectives of the NPSIB are not undermined by the National Policy Statement on Urban Development Capacity or The Urban Development Bill.

The board supports the ecological significance criteria in Appendix 1 of the proposed NPSIB. The application of assessment criteria, rather than identifying specific Ecosystem classifications, allows the consenting authority the flexibility to protect novel ecosystems; including ecosystems that are dominated by exotic vegetation, but which provide important habitat for a range of indigenous fauna. While not ideal, novel ecosystems may become increasingly important as climate change impacts the ability of indigenous vegetation to support fauna.

The board supports the distinction between high and medium SNA within the NPSIB. The board sits within the Tamaki Ecological District, where tree cover, including stand-alone trees and exotics, was only measured at 18% in 2013. As such any habitat made up of indigenous vegetation (with the exception of mangrove forests) should be considered of high value and as such, given the maximum protection. The protections specified in the NPSIB will prohibit activities that undermine the values that define high-value significant natural areas (SNAs), while allowing activities of lesser impact. The board recognises that there may be other SNAs that are of medium value within Upper Harbour that require a lesser degree of protection or for which offsets are more easily provided. However, the board also agrees with council that many of the criteria are insufficiently defined and could result in costly litigation.

The board believes that in addition to adverse effects already proposed in the NPSIB that two additional effects should be considered. The increased risk of biosecurity threats other than pest vegetation or fauna incursions; such as the spread of micro-organisms including fungus and phytosphthora. The release of toxins, odours, or light that significantly alters the behavior of flora or fauna.

The board supports the framework for biodiversity offsets specified within the NPSIB. Specifically, the board approves of the way the framework recognises the complexity

of ecosystems and that they take time to mature to achieve the same value of existing environments.

The local board does not support the role of regional councils and territorial authorities within the NPSIB to identify and manage highly mobile fauna. Highly mobile fauna could potentially include many non-threatened species. The role of regional councils and territorial authorities should be focused on managing land use and protecting ecological habitats that support indigenous fauna.

The local board supports the requirements of the NPSIB for regional councils to develop plans to increase urban and rural tree cover. However, the board has concerns that the plan does not define the kind of area that should be considered to achieve the 10% cover. This may have the unintended effect to allow areas with good vegetation cover; such as the community of Greenhithe which has 42% cover; to be used as a reason not to increase tree cover in neighbouring areas; such as the community of Oteha which has only 8% cover.

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.