

# NATIONAL REPORT CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

## **Executive Summary**

New Zealand has not yet completed its national biodiversity strategy, but work undertaken to date confirms the general direction of the existing biodiversity management programmes.

A State of the Environment report was completed in 1997, and addresses biodiversity.

New Zealand has a range of institutional and legal arrangements in place to address biodiversity management issues. Most have been subject to recent reform, and overall provide an effective framework for biodiversity work. There are, however, some significant capacity issues which limit outcomes.

A range of programmes are in place or planned to address key objectives for biodiversity management. These are broadly identified in this report, and will be addressed in more detail in the national strategy.

## **Introduction**

New Zealand has not yet completed its national biodiversity strategy. At the time of writing, a first draft of the strategy is being discussed within the Government.

Notwithstanding this, New Zealand does have a very clear programme of action for biodiversity management already in place, and the work on the national strategy is, on the whole, confirming its appropriateness rather than identifying any need for significant change. The challenge for New Zealand is to achieve the necessary level of implementation of the programme, given very significant biodiversity values and threats and limited resources.

The draft strategy and the existing programmes recognise the uniqueness and importance of New Zealand's biodiversity. They also recognise the legacy of loss which current generations have inherited, resulting from unsustainable harvest, habitat destruction, and the impacts of alien species.

## **Biodiversity Status and Issues**

A State of the Environment report was completed in 1997, covering *inter alia* biodiversity issues. A copy of relevant parts is attached.

## Legal and Institutional Arrangements

The following is a broad summary of the major legal and institutional arrangements relating to biodiversity management in New Zealand.

<b>Component of Biodiversity</b>	<b>General Management Approach</b>	<b>Agency(ies)</b>	<b>Principal Legislation</b>
Terrestrial protected area network	Around 32% of country in fully protected, Crown-owned protected areas. Management planning system in place for areas. Active programme to improve representativeness. Active programme of threat management and restoration work.	Department of Conservation	Conservation Act, National Parks Act, Reserves Act, Wildlife Act.
Marine protected areas network	Protection only commenced over last 25 years and only a few ecosystems included. Protected areas are fully protected (almost all are no-harvest) and Crown-owned.	Department of Conservation	Marine Reserves Act
Terrestrial ecosystem management	Outside protected areas ecosystems may be protected through planning legislation or voluntary programmes. Recent legislation is currently being implemented. Government assistance for voluntary legal protection of ecosystems is available. Forestry management of indigenous production forests outside protected areas (with minor exceptions), is required to be undertaken on a ecologically sustainable basis while retaining the forests natural and amenity values.	Ministry for the Environment, Department of Conservation, Ministry of Forestry, Queen Elizabeth II National Trust, territorial local authorities.	Resource Management Act, QEII National Trust Act, Conservation Act, Reserves Act, Forests Act
Species management	Most or all mammal, bird, reptile and amphibian and marine mammal species, and some invertebrates are fully protected regardless of where they live. Freshwater and all marine species are subject to sustainable harvest regimes (which may involve full protection in some cases). Other species are fully protected within the protected area network.	Department of Conservation, Ministry of Fisheries, private sector	Conservation Act, Wildlife Act, Marine Mammals Protection Act, Fisheries Act

Freshwater ecosystem management	All rights to use water are held by the Crown, and central and local government control the use of water. Many freshwater ecosystems are also within protected areas.	Ministry for the Environment, regional councils.	Resource Management Act
Coastal management	Almost all foreshore and seabed within the 12 mile limit is Crown land, and administered for conservation and sustainable use purposes. A NZ Coastal Policy Statement is in place, and regional coastal plans are in preparation.	Department of Conservation, regional councils.	Resource Management Act, Foreshore and Seabed Endowment Revesting Act
Fisheries management	The Fisheries Act 1996 provides for the utilisation of fisheries resources while ensuring sustainability. The Minister of Fisheries is responsible for the setting of sustainability measures in order to ensure the sustainability of stocks or to manage adverse effects of fishing on the environment. This includes setting a total allowable catch (TAC), restrictions on fishing gear, and controls to limit the accidental deaths of protected marine species. In the case of the major commercial fisheries the commercial component of the TAC is allocated to individual fishers as a property right in the form of individual transferable quota (ITQ).	Ministry of Fisheries (marine and commercial freshwater), Department of Conservation (freshwater), fish and game councils (exotic sports fisheries)	Fisheries Act, Conservation Act

Alien species	Border control and biosecurity issues are co-ordinated under one piece of legislation (which provides for regional and national planning and gives extensive powers to agencies) and a Ministerial council. The purpose of the Act is to exclude, eradicate and effectively manage pests and unwanted organisms. An additional piece of legislation provides for the formal approval of new organism imports or the release of genetically modified organisms where these would not become pests.	Agencies or private sector interests which may be affected by a pest or unwanted organism. The HSNO Act is administered by the Environmental Risk Management Authority.	Biosecurity Act. Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act.
Knowledge and research	NZ has a public good science programme covering biodiversity, with central co-ordination of the major research effort.	Ministry of Science, Research and Technology (and associated Foundation of SRT), Department of Conservation, Ministry of Fisheries, Crown research institutes, Ministry of Forestry	
Maori involvement	NZ is addressing this issue on three fronts: carrying out a process to address grievances arising from breaches of the Treaty of Waitangi (including considering a claim to indigenous flora and fauna), increasing the involvement of Maori in government biodiversity management, and assisting management of biodiversity on Maori land.	Office of Treaty Settlements, Ministry of Maori Development, Department of Conservation, Ministry of Fisheries	

### Capacity Issues

The major limitations in implementation of programmes are:

- lack of knowledge about key elements of biodiversity, particularly in relation to invertebrates, fungi and micro-organisms, and marine ecosystems
- lack of cost effective techniques, particularly in relation to alien species, ecosystem recovery and species recovery
- resource constraints

### Objectives of Future Management Programme and Key Actions

Component of Biodiversity	Key Objectives of Future Management Programme	Actions	Agency
Terrestrial protected area network	Improve the representativeness of the network.	Continue the Protected Natural Areas Programme to identify important unprotected ecosystems, and continue land acquisition programmes to fill gaps in network.	Department of Conservation
	Improve protection of the network from threats, particularly alien species.	Continue or where possible expand protection efforts. Develop improved techniques.	Department of Conservation
	Carry out restoration work.	Continue eradication programmes on offshore islands. Expand “mainland island” restoration programmes and develop improved techniques.	Department of Conservation
Species management	Halt the decline in status of species, and where possible improve status.	Continue species recovery programmes.	Department of Conservation, private sector

Marine protected areas network	Improve representativeness of network.	Continue the programme to create new marine reserves.	Department of Conservation
Terrestrial ecosystem management	Improve the effectiveness of the Resource Management Act and other protection mechanisms. Review current exemptions to the legislative requirement for sustainable management of indigenous production forests.	Work with local authorities to build on best practice experience and correct any legislative problems.	Ministry for the Environment  Ministry of Forestry.
Freshwater ecosystem management	Improve the protection of key freshwater ecosystems.	Develop regional policy statements and regional plans which address this issue. Where appropriate, consider establishing further water conservation orders.	Ministry for the Environment, regional councils
Coastal management	Ensure effective implementation of the biodiversity purposes of the Resource Management Act.	Develop and implement effective regional coastal plans.	Department of Conservation, regional councils
Fisheries management	Implement the ecosystem approach to fisheries management contained in the new Fisheries Act.	Develop and carry out an implementation programme.	Ministry of Fisheries

Alien species	Improve effectiveness of border control.	Carry out a risk assessment of key border risks, and where necessary adjust border control programmes to address the highest priority risks.	Biosecurity Council
	Improve effectiveness in managing pests and unwanted organisms.	Develop regional pest management strategies and national policies to establish effective programmes for managing pests and unwanted organisms.  Carry out research to improve management techniques.	Regional councils, Department of Conservation, Crown research institutes
Knowledge and research	Improve our knowledge of indigenous biodiversity and its management.	Develop a co-ordinated strategy for biodiversity science and research.	Ministry of Science, Research and Technology, Department of Conservation, Ministry of Fisheries, Crown research institutes
Maori involvement	Increase Maori involvement in biodiversity management.	Continue to settle Treaty claims.  Develop programmes to increase Maori involvement and expertise.	Office of Treaty Settlements, Ministry of Maori Development, Department of Conservation, Ministry of Fisheries, Ministry of Forestry

Further details on programmes will be provided in the National Strategy when it is completed.