

Pest management review FOR Taranaki



Factsheet: 5

The Taranaki Regional Council's role in biosecurity

Biosecurity and pest management are vital to New Zealand's environmental and economic well-being, with weeds, wasps, rats, possums and feral cats among thousands of harmful species that cost the country billions in control and lost revenue.

It has been conservatively estimated that weeds alone cost the economy \$1.2 billion per annum in control and lost production.

Weeds and invertebrate pests are a serious threat to our native flora and fauna, as are pathogenic micro-organisms such as didymo and those responsible for the kiwifruit vine disease 'Psa'.

Other pathogens not yet present, such as foot and mouth disease, pose an extraordinary risk to our primary sector.

Our role in the New Zealand biosecurity system

The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) is the national leader for New Zealand's biosecurity system, which consists of pre-border, at the border, and post-border activities, with the Taranaki Regional Council (among others) having a role in the latter.

Many parties, from the government to individuals, have a responsibility or an interest in protecting our country from harmful organisms. Biosecurity is everybody's business.

Pre-border control

- Pre-border activities aim to reduce the risk of new pests and diseases entering New Zealand. They include managing risks offshore, developing international standards and rules, monitoring emerging risks and setting import health standards.

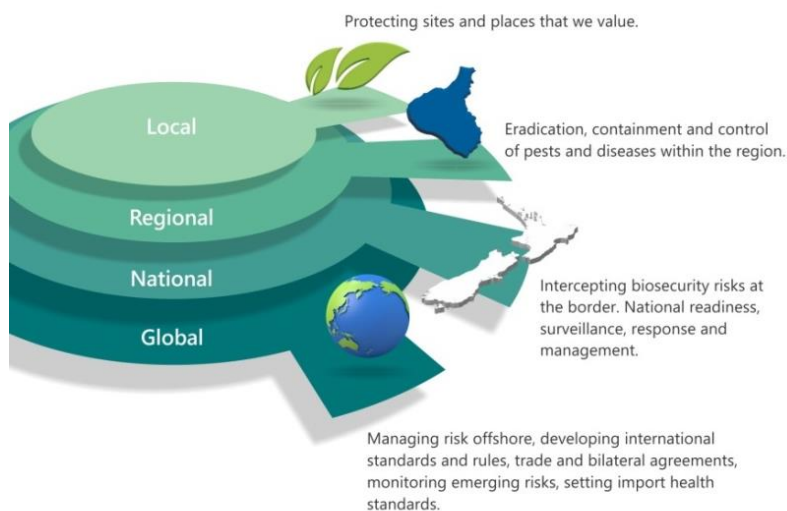
Control at the border

- Border control aims to intercept biosecurity risks at airports, seaports, mail centres and coastlines; verify compliance, and cover national readiness, surveillance and response.

Post-border control

- Post-border control, commonly known as 'pest management', is about the monitoring, surveillance and control of harmful species already in New Zealand.

Biosecurity from local to global



The Biosecurity Act – the Council's authority to act

The Taranaki Regional Council's mandate for undertaking pest management on behalf of the region largely comes from the Biosecurity Act 1993, which provides for "...the exclusion, eradication and effective management of pests and unwanted organisms".

The Biosecurity Act provides regional councils with a leadership role and powers to manage harmful species classified as pests or unwanted organisms.

It also enables councils (and others) to prepare rules or access its regulatory powers via pest plans.

Significant amendments to the Biosecurity Act in 2012 introduced:



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- National and regional leadership responsibilities for pest management.
- New policy instruments such as the National Policy Direction for Pest Management 2015.
- New 'Good Neighbour Rules' that govern land occupiers, including the Crown.
- Changes relating to the development and review process for pest management plans.

The Council's roles and powers

Under the Biosecurity Act, the Taranaki Regional Council has the power to:

- Make or approve a regional pest management plan.
- Implement such plans and undertake surveillance, monitoring, rule enforcement, advocacy, direct control and biological control, and support other agencies in their pest management work.

Regional pest management plans

Regional councils aren't required to prepare a regional pest management plan, but if a local community wants rules or

regulation to enforce pest control it must prepare a plan, to be approved by a regional council. These plans are the 'rule books' for regional pest management.

Because rules impose costs and obligations on people, regional pest management plans and rules are rigorously tested through processes set out in the Biosecurity Act.

Under the Biosecurity Act, 'pests' mean organisms specified as such in a pest management plan, and their nomination must comply with the Act and clause 7(1) of the *National Policy Direction for Pest Management 2015*.

The National Policy Direction

The Direction aims to ensure that pest management activities under the Biosecurity Act provide the optimum use of available resources for New Zealand's best interests, and align activities to national outcomes where appropriate.

Regional councils must be compliant and consistent with the Direction, as well as the Act, when developing or reviewing pest management plans.

Biosecurity and pest management are crucial to New Zealand's environmental and economic wellbeing

Pathogenic micro-organisms

pose a threat including cabbage tree die-back, kauri decline, and bacterial kiwifruit vine disease.

Invertebrate pests

There are an estimated 2,200 established exotic invertebrate species.

Marine pests

displace native species and pose threats to aquaculture, maritime industries, recreational pastimes and affect human health.

Vertebrate pests

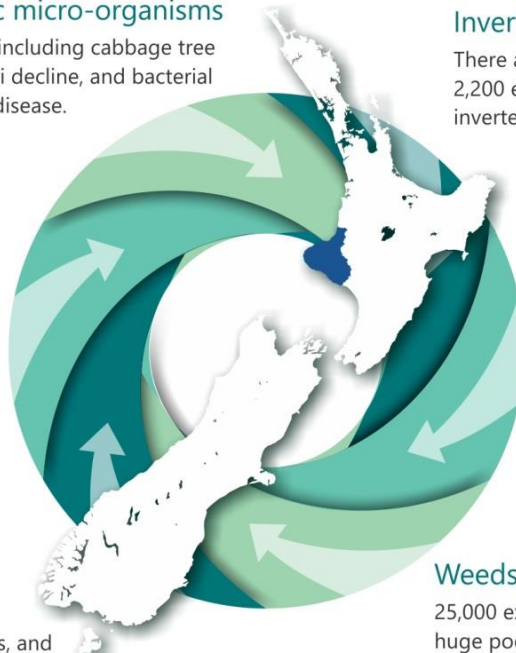
32 mammal and 35 bird species have become established and many have become pests.

Freshwater pests

destabilise aquatic habitats, and modify water flow with negative consequences for drainage, irrigation, power generation, and recreational activities.

Weeds

25,000 exotic plant species form a huge pool for potential 'sleepier weeds' threatening both the conservation and agricultural sectors.




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Source: Royal Society of New Zealand, 2014.