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National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity 2023

October 2024

Ministry for the Environment
Manatū Mō Te Taiao

Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

Authority

This National Policy Statement was approved by the Governor-General under section 52(2) of the Resource Management Act 1991 on 31 May 2023, and published in the *New Zealand Gazette* on 7 July 2023.

This National Policy Statement is secondary legislation issued under the authority of the Legislation Act 2019.

This version of the National Policy Statement incorporates the amendments made by section 30 of the Resource Management (Freshwater and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2024 in October 2024.

Section 78 of the Resource Management Act 1991 (as inserted by the Resource Management (Freshwater and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2024) should be noted when considering this National Policy Statement. For more information about the changes please visit: https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2024/0043/latest/LMS962882.html?search=ta_act%40act_R_ac%40ainf%40anif%40aaif_ac%40bn%40rn_25_y&p=1#LMS962931.

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Part 1: Preliminary provisions

1.1 Title

(1) This is the National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity 2023.

1.2 Commencement

(1) This National Policy Statement comes into force on the day that is 28 days after notification in the New Zealand Gazette.

1.3 Application

(1) This National Policy Statement applies to indigenous biodiversity in the terrestrial environment throughout Aotearoa New Zealand.

(2) However:

(a) geothermal ecosystems are covered by this National Policy Statement, whether or not they are in the terrestrial environment (but excluding any within the coastal marine area) (see clause 3.13); and

(b) specified highly mobile fauna are covered by this National Policy Statement, whether or not they use areas outside the terrestrial environment (such as the coastal marine area or water bodies) for part of their life cycle (see clause 3.20); and

(c) provisions relating to promoting restoration and increasing indigenous vegetation cover extend to include natural inland wetlands (see clauses 3.21 and 3.22); and

(d) regional biodiversity strategies may extend to include areas outside the terrestrial environment, including the coastal marine area and water bodies (see clause 3.23); and

(e) if an SNA (significant natural area) contains a natural inland wetland, the wetland may be treated as part of the SNA it is located in.

(3) Nothing in this National Policy Statement applies to the development, operation, maintenance or upgrade of renewable electricity generation assets and activities and electricity transmission network assets and activities. For the avoidance of doubt, renewable electricity generation assets and activities, and electricity transmission network assets and activities, are not "specified infrastructure" for the purposes of this National Policy Statement.

1.4 Relationship with other national directions and iwi participation legislation

(1) Both the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement and this National Policy Statement apply in the terrestrial coastal environment.

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(2) If there is a conflict between the provisions of this National Policy Statement and the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010 (or any later New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement issued under the Act), the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement prevails.

(3) If there is a conflict between the provisions of this National Policy Statement and the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020 or the Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Freshwater) Regulations 2020, the latter prevail.

(4) To avoid doubt, nothing in this National Policy Statement limits any relevant provision of any iwi participation legislation (as defined in section 58L of the Act).

1.5 Decision-making principles

(1) This National Policy Statement prioritises the mauri and intrinsic value of indigenous biodiversity and recognises people's connections and relationships with indigenous biodiversity.

(2) It recognises that the health and wellbeing of people and communities are dependent on the health and wellbeing of indigenous biodiversity and that in return people have a responsibility to care for and nurture it. It acknowledges the web of interconnectedness between indigenous species, ecosystems, the wider environment, and the community, at both a physical and metaphysical level.

(3) Consistent with this, the decision-making principles that must inform the implementation of this National Policy Statement are as follows:

(a) prioritise the mauri, intrinsic value and wellbeing of indigenous biodiversity:

(b) take into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti o Waitangi):

(c) recognise the bond between tangata whenua and indigenous biodiversity based on whakapapa relationships:

(d) recognise the obligation and responsibility of care that tangata whenua have as kaitiaki of indigenous biodiversity:

(e) recognise the role of people and communities (including landowners) as stewards of indigenous biodiversity:

(f) enable the application of te ao Māori and mātauranga Māori:

(g) form strong and effective partnerships with tangata whenua.

1.6 Interpretation

(1) In this National Policy Statement:

acknowledged taonga means indigenous species, populations, or ecosystems that tangata whenua have identified as taonga under clause 3.19 but that are not, or not yet, identified in a plan

Act means the Resource Management Act 1991

biodiversity compensation means a conservation outcome that meets the requirements in Appendix 4 and results from actions that are intended to compensate for any more

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than minor residual adverse effects on indigenous biodiversity after all appropriate avoidance, minimisation, remediation, and biodiversity offsetting measures have been sequentially applied

biodiversity offset means a measurable conservation outcome that meets the requirements in Appendix 3 and results from actions that are intended to:

(a) redress any more than minor residual adverse effects on indigenous biodiversity after all appropriate avoidance, minimisation, and remediation measures have been sequentially applied; and

(b) achieve a net gain in type, amount, and condition of indigenous biodiversity compared to that lost.

buffer refers to a defined space between core areas of ecological value and the wider landscape that helps to reduce external pressures; and **buffering** has a corresponding meaning

commencement date means the date on which this National Policy Statement comes into force

connectivity refers to the structural or functional links or connections between habitats and ecosystems that provide for the movement of species and processes among and between the habitats or ecosystems

decision-making principles means the seven decision-making principles in clause 1.5(3)

ecological district means:

(a) in relation to geothermal ecosystems in the Taupō Volcanic Zone, the Taupō Volcanic Zone; and

(b) for all other areas, the ecological districts as shown in McEwen, W Mary (ed), 1987. *Ecological regions and districts of New Zealand*. Wellington: Department of Conservation.

ecological integrity means the extent to which an ecosystem is able to support and maintain its:

(a) composition (being its natural diversity of indigenous species, habitats, and communities); and

(b) structure (being its biotic and abiotic physical features); and

(c) functions (being its ecological and physical processes).

ecosystem means the complexes of organisms and their associated physical environment within an area (and comprise: a biotic complex, an abiotic environment or complex, the interactions between the biotic and abiotic complexes, and a physical space in which these operate)

ecosystem function means the abiotic (physical) and biotic (ecological and biological) flows that are properties of an ecosystem

ecosystem services are the benefits obtained from ecosystems such as:

(a) supporting services, (eg, nutrient cycling, soil formation, habitat creation):

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(b) provisioning services, (eg, food, freshwater, wood, fibre, fuel):

(c) regulating services, (eg, water purification, climate regulation, flood regulation, disease regulation):

(d) cultural services, (eg, aesthetic, spiritual, educational, recreational).

effects management hierarchy means an approach to managing the adverse effects of an activity on indigenous biodiversity that requires that:

(a) adverse effects are avoided where practicable; then

(b) where adverse effects cannot be avoided, they are minimised where practicable; then

(c) where adverse effects cannot be minimised, they are remedied where practicable; then

(d) where more than minor residual adverse effects cannot be avoided, minimised, or remedied, biodiversity offsetting is provided where possible; then

(e) where biodiversity offsetting of more than minor residual adverse effects is not possible, biodiversity compensation is provided; then

(f) if biodiversity compensation is not appropriate, the activity itself is avoided.

electricity transmission network means the electricity transmission network that**:**

(a) comprises the network of transmission lines, cables, stations, substations and works used to connect grid injection points and grid exit points used to convey electricity in New Zealand; and

(b) is owned by Transpower New Zealand Limited; and

(c) is commonly known as the National Grid.

electricity transmission network assets means the physical components of the electricity transmission network, along with all access roads and tracks required to operate and maintain those assets

fragmentation, in relation to indigenous biodiversity, refers to the fragmentation of habitat that results in a loss of connectivity and an altered spatial configuration of habitat for a given amount of habitat loss

functional need means the need for a proposed activity to traverse, locate or operate in a particular environment because the activity can only occur in that environment

geothermal ecosystem means a dynamic life-supporting system made up of a group of living organisms that are located within a geothermal system and are adapted to, and reliant on, geothermal resources

geothermal SNA means an SNA that includes one or more geothermal ecosystems

geothermal system means a system, defined by scientific investigation, that:

(a) comprises:

(i) geothermal energy, stored as water or steam; and

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(ii) the rocks confining it; and

(iii) associated water, steam, and gas emissions; and

(iv) the geothermal surface features resulting from those emissions; and

(b) is believed to have no hydrological connection to another system.

habitat means the area or environment where an organism or ecological community lives or occurs naturally for some or all of its life cycle, or as part of its seasonal feeding or breeding pattern; but does not include built structures or an area or environment where an organism is present only fleetingly

highly mobile fauna area means an area outside an SNA that is identified under clause 3.20 as an area used intermittently by specified highly mobile fauna

identified taonga means acknowledged taonga that are identified in a district plan (as provided for in clause 3.19)

indigenous biodiversity means the living organisms that occur naturally in New Zealand, and the ecological complexes of which they are part, including all forms of indigenous flora, fauna, and fungi, and their habitats

indigenous vegetation means vascular and non-vascular plants that, in relation to a particular area, are native to the ecological district in which that area is located

maintenance, in relation to indigenous biodiversity, has the meaning in clause 1.7

mātauranga Māori means Māori customary knowledge, traditional knowledge, or intergenerational knowledge and is held by tangata whenua at place

mosaic means a pattern of two or more interspersed ecosystems, communities, or habitats that contribute to the cumulative value of ecosystems in a landscape

natural inland wetland has the meaning in the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020

natural range, in relation to a species, refers to the geographical area within which that species can be expected to be found naturally (without human intervention)

operational need means the need for a proposal or activity to traverse, locate or operate in a particular environment because of technical, logistical or operational characteristics or constraints

plantation forest has the meaning in the Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Plantation Forestry) Regulations 2017

policy statements and plans includes regional policy statements and proposed regional policy statements, and regional plans, district plans, and proposed plans

publish, in relation to an obligation on a local authority to publish material, means to make the material freely available to the public on the local authority's internet website or another web-based platform

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reconstruction means reintroducing and maintaining appropriate biota to recreate an ecosystem that would not regenerate or recolonise even with best practice restoration interventions

renewable electricity generation assets means the physical components required for renewable electricity generation, along with the assets and infrastructure (such as cabling, access roads, and tracks) required to store the generated electricity and connect it to transmission or distribution networks or direct to end users

resilience, in relation to an ecosystem, means the ability of the ecosystem to recover from and absorb disturbances, and its capacity to reorganise into similar ecosystems

restoration means the active intervention and management of modified or degraded habitats, ecosystems, landforms, and landscapes in order to maintain or reinstate indigenous natural character, ecological and physical processes, and cultural and visual qualities, and may include enhancement activities

sequence means a series of ecosystems or communities, often physically connected, that replace one another through space

SNA, or **significant natural area**, means:

(a) any area that, after the commencement date, is notified or included in a district plan as an SNA following an assessment of the area in accordance with Appendix 1; and

(b) any area that, on the commencement date, is already identified in a policy statement or plan as an area of significant indigenous vegetation or significant habitat of indigenous fauna (regardless of how it is described); in which case it remains as an SNA unless or until a suitably qualified ecologist engaged by the relevant local authority determines that it is not an area of significant indigenous vegetation or significant habitat of indigenous fauna.

species means a group of living organisms consisting of similar individuals capable of freely exchanging genes or interbreeding, including subspecies, varieties and organisms that are indeterminate.

specified covenant or kawenata means a covenant or kawenata that is:

(a) registered against the record of title or lease agreement (as relevant), under any of the following:

  (i) section 22 of the Queen Elizabeth the Second National Trust Act 1977:

  (ii) Section 27 or section 27A of the Conservation Act 1987:

  (iii) Section 76 and 77 of the Reserves Act 1977; and

(b) is identified, with the agreement of the relevant landowner or lessee and the prior written consent of the covenantee, by the relevant local authority as a specified covenant or kawenata

specified highly mobile fauna means the Threatened or At Risk species of highly mobile fauna that are identified in Appendix 2

specified infrastructure means any of the following:

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(a) infrastructure that delivers a service operated by a lifeline utility (as defined in the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002):

(b) regionally or nationally significant infrastructure identified as such in a National Policy Statement, the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement, or a regional policy statement or plan:

(c) infrastructure that is necessary to support housing development, that is included in a proposed or operative plan or identified for development in any relevant strategy document (including a future development strategy or spatial strategy) adopted by a local authority, in an urban environment (as defined in the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020):

(d) any public flood control, flood protection, or drainage works carried out:

(i) by or on behalf of a local authority, including works carried out for the purposes set out in section 133 of the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941; or

(ii) for the purpose of drainage, by drainage districts under the Land Drainage Act 1908:

(e) defence facilities operated by the New Zealand Defence Force to meet its obligations under the Defence Act 1990.

specified Māori land means land that is any of the following:

(a) Māori customary land and Māori freehold land (as defined in Te Ture Whenua Māori Act 1993):

(b) land set apart as a Māori reservation under Part 17 of Te Ture Whenua Māori Act 1993 or its predecessor, the Māori Affairs Act 1953:

(c) land held by or on behalf of an iwi or a hapū if the land was transferred from the Crown, a Crown body, or a local authority with the intention of returning the land to the holders of mana whenua over the land:

(d) land vested in the Māori Trustee that is constituted as a Māori reserve by or under the Māori Reserved Land Act 1955, and remains subject to that Act:

(e) land that forms part of a natural feature that has been declared under an Act to be a legal entity or person (including Te Urewera land within the meaning of section 7 of the Te Urewera Act 2014):

(f) the maunga listed in section 10 of the Ngā Mana Whenua o Tāmaki Makaurau Collective Redress Act 2014:

(g) Treaty settlement land, being land held by a post-settlement governance entity (as defined in the Urban Development Act 2020) where the land was transferred or vested and held (including land held in the name of a person such as a tipuna of the claimant group, rather than the entity itself):

(i) as part of redress for the settlement of Treaty of Waitangi claims; or

(ii) by the exercise of rights under a Treaty settlement Act or Treaty settlement deed.

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suitably qualified ecologist means a professional ecologist with a background and expertise in conducting terrestrial ecological assessments

terrestrial environment means land and associated natural and physical resources above mean high-water springs, excluding land covered by water, water bodies and freshwater ecosystems (as those terms are used in the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020) and the coastal marine area

Threatened or **At Risk**, and **Threatened or At Risk (declining)** have, at any time, the meanings given in the *New Zealand Threat Classification System Manual* (Andrew J Townsend, Peter J de Lange, Clinton A J Duffy, Colin Miskelly, Janice Molloy and David A Norton, 2008. Science & Technical Publishing, Department of Conservation, Wellington), available at: https://www.doc.govt.nz/globalassets/documents/science-and-technical/sap244.pdf, or its current successor publication

urban environment has the meaning in clause 1.4 of the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020

(2) Terms defined in the Act and used in this National Policy Statement have the meanings in the Act, except as otherwise specified.

(3) Terms defined in the National Planning Standard issued under section 58E of the Act and used in this National Policy Statement have the meanings in that Standard, unless otherwise specified.

1.7 Maintaining indigenous biodiversity

(1) Maintaining indigenous biodiversity requires:

(a) the maintenance and at least no overall reduction of all the following:

(i) the size of populations of indigenous species:

(ii) indigenous species occupancy across their natural range:

(iii) the properties and function of ecosystems and habitats used or occupied by indigenous biodiversity:

(iv) the full range and extent of ecosystems and habitats used or occupied by indigenous biodiversity:

(v) connectivity between, and buffering around, ecosystems used or occupied by indigenous biodiversity:

(vi) the resilience and adaptability of ecosystems; and

(b) where necessary, the restoration and enhancement of ecosystems and habitats.

1.8 Incorporation by reference

(1) Clause 2(1) of Schedule 1AA of the Act does not apply to any material incorporated by reference in this National Policy Statement.

(2) All material incorporated by reference in this National Policy Statement is available at https://environment.govt.nz/acts-and-regulations/national-policy-statements/national-policy-statement-for-indigenous-biodiversity/.

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Part 2: Objective and policies

2.1 Objective

(1) The objective of this National Policy Statement is:

(a) to maintain indigenous biodiversity across Aotearoa New Zealand so that there is at least no overall loss in indigenous biodiversity after the commencement date; and

(b) to achieve this:

(i) through recognising the mana of tangata whenua as kaitiaki of indigenous biodiversity; and

(ii) by recognising people and communities, including landowners, as stewards of indigenous biodiversity; and

(iii) by protecting and restoring indigenous biodiversity as necessary to achieve the overall maintenance of indigenous biodiversity; and

(iv) while providing for the social, economic, and cultural wellbeing of people and communities now and in the future.

2.2 Policies

Policy 1: Indigenous biodiversity is managed in a way that gives effect to the decision-making principles and takes into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi.

Policy 2: Tangata whenua exercise kaitiakitanga for indigenous biodiversity in their rohe, including through:

(a) managing indigenous biodiversity on their land; and

(b) identifying and protecting indigenous species, populations and ecosystems that are taonga; and

(c) actively participating in other decision-making about indigenous biodiversity.

Policy 3: A precautionary approach is adopted when considering adverse effects on indigenous biodiversity.

Policy 4: Indigenous biodiversity is managed to promote resilience to the effects of climate change.

Policy 5: Indigenous biodiversity is managed in an integrated way, within and across administrative boundaries.

Policy 6: Significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna are identified as SNAs using a consistent approach.

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Policy 7: SNAs are protected by avoiding or managing adverse effects from new subdivision, use and development.

Policy 8: The importance of maintaining indigenous biodiversity outside SNAs is recognised and provided for.

Policy 9: Certain established activities are provided for within and outside SNAs.

Policy 10: Activities that contribute to New Zealand's social, economic, cultural, and environmental wellbeing are recognised and provided for as set out in this National Policy Statement.

Policy 11: Geothermal SNAs are protected at a level that reflects their vulnerability, or in accordance with any pre-existing underlying geothermal system classification.

Policy 12: Indigenous biodiversity is managed within plantation forestry while providing for plantation forestry activities.

Policy 13: Restoration of indigenous biodiversity is promoted and provided for.

Policy 14: Increased indigenous vegetation cover is promoted in both urban and non-urban environments.

Policy 15: Areas outside SNAs that support specified highly mobile fauna are identified and managed to maintain their populations across their natural range, and information and awareness of highly mobile fauna is improved.

Policy 16: Regional biodiversity strategies are developed and implemented to maintain and restore indigenous biodiversity at a landscape scale.

Policy 17: There is improved information and regular monitoring of indigenous biodiversity.

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Part 3: Implementation

3.1 Overview of Part 3

(1) This Part sets out a non-exhaustive list of things that must be done to give effect to the Objective and Policies in Part 2 of this National Policy Statement, but nothing in this Part limits the general obligation under the Act to give effect to that Objective and those Policies.

(2) Nothing in this Part limits a local authority's functions and duties under the Act in relation to indigenous biodiversity.

(3) In this Part:

(a) Subpart 1 sets out general approaches to implementing this National Policy Statement:

(b) Subpart 2 sets out provisions relating to the identification of SNAs, the management of adverse effects on SNAs, and the general management of indigenous biodiversity outside SNAs:

(c) Subpart 3 sets out additional specific requirements relating to indigenous biodiversity.

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Subpart 1 – Approaches to implementing this National Policy Statement

3.2 Role of decision-making principles

(1) Local authorities must engage with tangata whenua, people and communities (including landowners) to ensure that the decision-making principles inform, and are given effect to, when implementing this National Policy Statement in their regions and districts.

3.3 Tangata whenua as partners

(1) Every local authority must involve tangata whenua (to the extent they wish to be involved) as partners in the management of indigenous biodiversity and, in particular:

(a) when identifying the local approach to giving effect to the decision-making principles; and

(b) in the processes (including decision-making processes) for managing the implementation of this National Policy Statement; and

(c) when making or changing policy statements and plans that relate to indigenous biodiversity or give effect to this National Policy Statement; and

(d) in developing Regional Biodiversity Strategies, including setting the vision for landscape-scale restoration of indigenous biodiversity; and

(e) in determining how to identify and manage the indigenous species, populations and ecosystems of those species that are taonga; and

(f) in enabling mātauranga Māori to be applied at all stages of management of indigenous biodiversity.

(2) When involving tangata whenua as required by subclause (1), and particularly when making or changing objectives, policies, or methods to give effect to this National Policy Statement, local authorities must:

(a) ensure that engagement with tangata whenua:

(i) is early, meaningful, and in accordance with tikanga Māori; and

(ii) has regard to the different levels of whānau, hapū, and iwi decision-making structures; and

(b) in managing indigenous biodiversity, recognise and value the mana of tangata whenua as kaitiaki of indigenous biodiversity; and

(c) provide specific opportunities for tangata whenua to exercise kaitiakitanga in accordance with tikanga Māori; and

(d) allow for the sustainable customary use of indigenous biodiversity in accordance with tikanga.

(3) Local authorities must work with tangata whenua to investigate the use of mechanisms available under the Act to involve tangata whenua in the management of, and decision-making about, indigenous biodiversity, such as:

(a) transfers or delegations of power under section 33 of the Act:

(b) joint management agreements under section 36B of the Act:

(c) Mana Whakahono ā Rohe (iwi participation arrangements) under subpart 2 of Part 5 of the Act.

(4) When a local authority considers the use of mechanisms to involve tangata whenua in the management of indigenous biodiversity the local authority must:

(a) record the matters considered and the reasons for any decisions reached, or for not making a decision; and

(b) publish those matters and reasons as soon as practicable after the consideration, unless publication would be contrary to any legal obligation.

(5) Local authorities must, with the consent of tangata whenua, enable the application of mātauranga Māori relating to indigenous biodiversity when implementing this National Policy Statement.

(6) Local authorities must actively involve tangata whenua in developing processes for managing information provided by tangata whenua (including providing for how it may remain confidential if appropriate), particularly in relation to the identification and management of species, populations, and ecosystems as taonga (in accordance with clause 3.19).

3.4 Integrated approach

(1) Local authorities must manage indigenous biodiversity and the effects on it from subdivision, use and development in an integrated way, which means:

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(a) recognising the interconnectedness of the whole environment and the interactions between the terrestrial environment, freshwater, and the coastal marine area; and

(b) providing for the coordinated management and control of subdivision, use and development, as it affects indigenous biodiversity across administrative boundaries; and

(c) working towards aligning strategies and other planning tools required or provided for in legislation that are relevant to indigenous biodiversity.

3.5 Social, economic, and cultural wellbeing

(1) Local authorities must consider:

(a) that the protection, maintenance, and restoration of indigenous biodiversity contributes to the social, economic, and cultural wellbeing of people and communities; and

(b) that the protection, maintenance, and restoration of indigenous biodiversity does not preclude subdivision, use and development in appropriate places and forms; and

(c) the exercise of kaitiakitanga by tangata whenua in protecting, maintaining, and restoring indigenous biodiversity within their rohe; and

(d) the importance of forming partnerships in protecting, maintaining, and restoring indigenous biodiversity; and

(e) the role of people and communities, particularly landowners, as stewards of indigenous biodiversity; and

(f) the value of supporting people and communities in understanding, connecting to, and enjoying indigenous biodiversity.

3.6 Resilience to climate change

(1) Local authorities must promote the resilience of indigenous biodiversity to climate change, including at least by:

(a) allowing and supporting the natural adjustment of habitats and ecosystems to the changing climate; and

(b) considering the effects of climate change when making decisions on:

(i) restoration proposals; and

(ii) managing and reducing new and existing biosecurity risks; and

(c) maintaining and promoting the enhancement of the connectivity between ecosystems, and between existing and potential habitats, to enable migrations so that species can continue to find viable niches as the climate changes.

(2) Local authorities must recognise the role of indigenous biodiversity in mitigating the effects of climate change.

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3.7 Precautionary approach

(1) Local authorities must adopt a precautionary approach toward proposed activities where:

(a) the effects on indigenous biodiversity are uncertain, unknown, or little understood; but

(b) those effects could cause significant or irreversible damage to indigenous biodiversity.

Subpart 2 – Significant natural areas (SNAs)

3.8 Assessing areas that qualify as SNAs

(1) Every territorial authority must undertake a district-wide assessment of the land in its district to identify areas of significant indigenous vegetation or significant habitat of indigenous fauna that qualify as SNAs.

(2) The assessment must be done using the assessment criteria in Appendix 1 and in accordance with the following principles:

(a) **partnership**: territorial authorities engage early with tangata whenua and landowners and share information about indigenous biodiversity, potential management options, and any support and incentives that may be available:

(b) **transparency**: territorial authorities clearly inform tangata whenua and landowners about how any information gathered will be used and make existing information, draft assessments and other relevant information available to tangata whenua and relevant landowners for review:

(c) **quality**: wherever practicable, the values and extent of natural areas are verified by physical inspection; but if a physical inspection is not practicable (because, for instance, the area is inaccessible, or a landowner does not give access) the local authority uses the best information available to it at the time:

(d) **access**: if a physical inspection is required, permission of the landowner is first sought and the powers of entry under section 333 of the Act are used only as a last resort:

(e) **consistency**: the criteria in Appendix 1 are applied consistently, regardless of who owns the land:

(f) **boundaries**: the boundaries of areas of significant indigenous vegetation or significant habitat of indigenous fauna are determined without regard to artificial margins (such as property boundaries) that would affect the extent or ecological integrity of the area identified.

(3) If the values or extent of a proposed SNA are disputed by the landowner, the local authority must conduct a physical inspection of the area, unless a physical inspection is not practicable; and in that case the local authority must use the best information available to it at the time.

(4) If requested by a territorial authority, the relevant regional council must assist the territorial authority in undertaking its district-wide assessment.

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(5) A territorial authority need not comply with subclause (1) in respect of any SNA referred to in paragraph (b) of the definition of SNA, (ie, an area already identified as an SNA at the commencement date) if, within six years after the commencement date, a suitably qualified ecologist engaged by the territorial authority confirms that the methodology originally used to identify the area as an SNA, and its application, is consistent with the assessment approach in Appendix 1.

(6) If a territorial authority becomes aware (as a result of a resource consent application, notice of requirement or any other means) that an area may be an area of significant indigenous vegetation or significant habitat of indigenous fauna that qualifies as an SNA, the territorial authority must:

(a) conduct an assessment of the area in accordance with subclause (2) as soon as practicable; and

(b) if a new SNA is identified as a result, include it in the next appropriate plan or plan change notified by the territorial authority.

(7) If a suitably qualified ecologist confirms that an area that qualifies as an SNA comprises or contains a geothermal ecosystem, the SNA is a geothermal SNA.

(8) An area of Crown-owned land may qualify as an SNA without the need for the assessment required by subclause (1), using Appendix 1, if:

(a) the land is managed by the Department of Conservation under the Conservation Act 1987 or any other Act specified in Schedule 1 of that Act; and

(b) the territorial authority is reasonably satisfied, after consultation with the Department of Conservation, that all or most of the area would qualify as an SNA under Appendix 1; and

(c) the area is:

(i) a large and more-or-less contiguous area managed under a single protection classification (such as a national park); or

(ii) a large, compact, and more-or-less contiguous area under more than one classification (such as adjoining reserves and a conservation park); or

(iii) a well-defined landscape or geographical feature (such as an island or mountain range); or

(iv) a scientific, scenic or nature reserve under the Reserves Act 1977, a sanctuary area, ecological area, or wildlife management area under the Conservation Act 1987, or an isolated part of a national park.

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3.9 Identifying SNAs in district plans

(1) A territorial authority must notify a plan or plan change to include as an SNA each area in its district that is identified as qualifying as an SNA.

(2) The notified plan or plan change must include:

(a) the location of the SNA and a description of its attributes; and

(b) a map of the area; and

(c) specify whether the SNA is a geothermal SNA.

(3) When a territorial authority does its 10-yearly plan review, it must assess its district in accordance with clause 3.8 (1) and (2) to determine whether changes are needed.

3.10 Managing adverse effects on SNAs of new subdivision, use, and development

(1) This clause applies to any new subdivision, use, or development that is in, or affects, an SNA, except as provided in:

(a) subclause (6); and

(b) clauses 3.12 and 3.18 (about SNAs on specified Māori land); and

(c) clause 3.13 (about geothermal SNAs); and

(d) clause 3.14 (about plantation forestry activities).

(2) Each of the following adverse effects on an SNA of any new subdivision, use, or development must be avoided, except as provided in clause 3.11:

(a) loss of ecosystem representation and extent:

(b) disruption to sequences, mosaics, or ecosystem function:

(c) fragmentation of SNAs or the loss of buffers or connections within an SNA:

(d) a reduction in the function of the SNA as a buffer or connection to other important habitats or ecosystems:

(e) a reduction in the population size or occupancy of Threatened or At Risk (declining) species that use an SNA for any part of their life cycle.

(3) Any adverse effects on an SNA of a new subdivision, use, or development that are not referred to in subclause (2), or that occur as a result of the exceptions in clause 3.11, must be managed by applying the effects management hierarchy.

(4) Where adverse effects on an SNA are required to be managed pursuant to subclause (3) by applying the effects management hierarchy, an applicant must be required to demonstrate:

(a) how each step of the effects management hierarchy will be applied; and

(b) if biodiversity offsetting or biodiversity compensation is applied, the applicant has complied with principles 1 to 6 in Appendix 3 and 4 and has had regard to the remaining principles in Appendix 3 and 4, as appropriate.

(5) If land in an SNA is covered by a specified covenant or kawenata, a local authority may, at the request of the landowner or lessee, allow certain specified activities within the SNA that may not be consistent with policy statements and plans made under this clause, provided that:

(a) the local authority is satisfied that the specified activities:

(i) are consistent with the specified covenant or kawenata and any current management plan approved by the covenantee; and

(ii) are for the purpose of protecting, restoring or accessing the SNA's ecological values; and

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(b) the covenantee gives its prior written consent to the exemption for the specified activities; and

(c) if the land is Crown owned, the appropriate Crown agency gives its prior written consent to the exemption for the specified activities.

(6) Nothing in this clause applies to adverse effects on an SNA from any of the following:

(a) any use or development required to address a high risk to public health or safety:

(b) the sustainable customary use of indigenous biodiversity conducted in accordance with tikanga:

(c) work or activity of the Crown within the boundaries of any area of land held or managed under the Conservation Act 1987 or any other Act specified in Schedule 1 of that Act (other than land held for administrative purposes), provided that the work or activity:

(i) is undertaken in a way that is consistent with any applicable conservation management strategy, conservation management plan, or management plan established under the Conservation Act 1987, or any other Act specified in Schedule 1 of that Act; and

(ii) does not have a significant adverse effect beyond the boundary of the land:

(d) work within Te Urewera of Te Urewera Board, the chief executive of Tūhoe Te Uru Taumatua, or the Director-General of Conservation, provided that the work:

(i) is for the purpose of managing Te Urewera under the Te Urewera Act 2014 and is consistent with the Te Urewera Act and the management plan under that Act; and

(ii) does not have a significant adverse effect on the environment beyond the boundary of Te Urewera; and

(e) the harvest of indigenous tree species from an SNA that is carried out in accordance with a forest management plan or permit under Part 3A of the Forests Act 1949.

(7) Every local authority must make or change its policy statements and plans to be consistent with the requirements of this clause.

3.11 Exceptions to clause 3.10(2)

(1) Clause 3.10(2) does not apply, and any adverse effects on an SNA of a new subdivision, use or development must be managed in accordance with clause 3.10(3) and (4), if:

(a) the new subdivision, use or development is required for the purposes of any of the following:

(i) construction or upgrade (if the upgrade does not meet the requirements of clause 3.15(2)) of specified infrastructure that provides significant national or regional public benefit:

(ii) mineral extraction that provides significant national public benefit that could not otherwise be achieved using resources within New Zealand:

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(iii) aggregate extraction that provides significant national or regional public benefit that could not otherwise be achieved using resources within New Zealand; and

(b) there is a functional need or operational need for the new subdivision, use or development to be in that particular location; and

(c) there are no practicable alternative locations for the new subdivision, use or development.

(2) Clause 3.10(2) does not apply, and any adverse effects on an SNA of a new use or development must be managed in accordance with clause 3.10(3) and (4), if:

(a) the new use or development is associated with a single residential dwelling on an allotment created before the commencement date; and

(b) there is no practicable location within the allotment where a single residential dwelling and essential associated on-site infrastructure can be constructed in a manner that avoids the adverse effects specified in clause 3.10(2).

(3) If a new use or development is for the purpose of maintaining or restoring an SNA and does not involve the permanent destruction of significant habitat of indigenous biodiversity, clause 3.10(2) does not apply, and any adverse effects on the SNA must be managed:

(a) in accordance with clause 3.10(3) and (4); or

(b) under any alternative management approach that is consistent with the objectives, policies and methods developed for the purpose of clause 3.21.

(4) Clause 3.10(2) does not apply, and any adverse effects on an SNA of a new use or development must be managed in accordance with clauses 3.10(3) and (4), if the use or development:

(a) is in an area of indigenous vegetation or habitat of indigenous fauna (other than an area managed under the Forests Act 1949) that was established and is managed primarily for a purpose other than the maintenance or restoration of that indigenous biodiversity; and

(b) the loss of indigenous biodiversity values is necessary to meet that purpose.

(5) Clause 3.10(2) does not apply, and any adverse effects on an SNA of a new use or development must be managed in accordance with clause 3.10(3) and (4), if the use or development is an activity associated with the harvest of indigenous tree species from an SNA carried out in accordance with a forest management plan or permit under Part 3A of the Forests Act 1949, such as track clearance or timber storage, but not the harvesting of the trees itself (see clause 3.10(6)(e)).

3.12 SNAs on specified Māori land

(1) SNAs on specified Māori land must be managed in accordance with clause 3.18, except that:

(a) geothermal SNAs on specified Māori land must be managed in accordance with clause 3.13; and

(b) SNAs within plantation forests must be managed in accordance with clause 3.14.

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(2) To avoid doubt, if any specified Māori land ceases to be used for plantation forestry activities, the land must be managed in accordance with clause 3.18, and not under clause 3.14.

3.13 Geothermal SNAs

(1) Every local authority that has a geothermal SNA in its region or district must work in partnership with tangata whenua to make or change its policy statements and plans to include objectives, policies, and methods that, in relation to any new subdivision, use, and development, provide a level of protection of the geothermal SNA that:

(a) either:

(i) reflects the vulnerability of the geothermal SNA to use or development; or

(ii) in the case of a local authority that has, at the commencement date, classified its geothermal systems, is consistent with the geothermal system classification (whether the same or different from the classification at the commencement date) that applies in the region in which the geothermal SNA is located; and

(b) applies, to the extent practicable, the approach in clause 3.10(2) and (3) to the geothermal SNA; and

(c) in the case of a geothermal SNA on specified Māori land, provides for new occupation, use, and development that enables tangata whenua to use and develop geothermal resources in a manner that has regard to the vulnerability of the geothermal SNA to use or development, or is consistent with the geothermal system classification in which the geothermal SNA is located (as applicable), and in accordance with tikanga; and

(d) requires the decision-maker on any resource consent application to:

(i) have particular regard to the adverse effects described in clause 3.10(2) when managing adverse effects on the geothermal SNAs; and

(ii) consider any practicable measures for the restoration of the geothermal SNAs.

(2) Any assessment of the vulnerability of a geothermal SNA must be undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist.

(3) In relation to a geothermal SNA, this clause prevails over any other provision of this National Policy Statement that might apply to the SNA, other than clause 3.15 (about established activities affecting SNAs), which applies to geothermal SNAs in the same way as it applies to other SNAs.

3.14 Plantation forestry activities

(1) Except as provided in subclause (2), the adverse effects of plantation forestry activities in any existing plantation forest on any SNA must be managed in a manner that:

(a) maintains indigenous biodiversity in the SNA as far as practicable; while

(b) providing for plantation forestry activities to continue.

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(2) Despite clause 3.10, any part of an SNA that is within an area of an existing plantation forest that is planted, or is intended to be, replanted in trees for harvest must be managed over the course of consecutive rotations of production in the manner necessary to maintain the long-term populations of any Threatened or At Risk (declining) species present in the area.

(3) Every local authority must make or change its policy statements and plans to be consistent with the requirements of this clause.

3.15 Managing adverse effects of established activities on SNAs

(1) For the purpose of this clause, **established activity** means an activity (including maintenance, operation, and upgrade) that:

(a) is in, or affects, an SNA; and

(b) is not a new subdivision, use, or development.

(2) Local authorities must include objectives, policies, and methods in their policy statements and plans to enable specified established activities, or specified types of established activities, to continue where the effects of the activity on an SNA (including cumulative effects):

(a) are no greater in intensity, scale, or character over time than at the commencement date; and

(b) do not result in the loss of extent, or degradation of ecological integrity, of an SNA.

(3) If an established activity does not meet the requirements of subclause (2), the activity must be managed under clauses 3.10 to 3.14 or clause 3.18 (as relevant) as if it were a new use or development.

(4) To avoid doubt, nothing in this clause affects existing use rights under sections 10 or 20A of the Act.

3.16 Indigenous biodiversity outside SNAs

(1) If a new subdivision, use, or development is outside an SNA and not on specified Māori land, any significant adverse effects of the new subdivision, use, or development on indigenous biodiversity outside the SNA must be managed by applying the effects management hierarchy.

(2) All other adverse effects of any activities that may adversely affect indigenous biodiversity that is outside an SNA (other than indigenous biodiversity on specified Māori land (see clause 3.18)), must be managed to give effect to the objective and policies of this National Policy Statement.

(3) Every local authority must make or change its policy statements and plans to be consistent with the requirements of this clause.

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3.17 Maintenance of improved pasture for farming

(1) This clause applies to the maintenance of improved pasture for farming where it may affect an SNA.

(2) Local authorities must allow the maintenance of improved pasture to continue if:

(a) there is adequate evidence to demonstrate that the maintenance of improved pasture is part of a regular cycle of periodic maintenance of that pasture; and

(b) any adverse effects of the maintenance of improved pasture on an SNA are no greater in intensity, scale, or character than the effects of activities previously undertaken as part of the regular cycle of periodic maintenance of that pasture; and

(c) the improved pasture has not itself become an SNA; and

(d) the land is not an uncultivated depositional landform; and

(e) the maintenance of improved pasture will not adversely affect a Threatened or At Risk (declining) species.

(3) In this clause:

depositional landform means a landform that is alluvial (matter deposited by water, (eg, fans, river flats, and terraces), colluvial (matter deposited by gravity at the base of hillslopes, (eg, talus), or glacial (matter deposited by glaciers, (eg, moraines and outwash)

exotic pasture species means a pasture species identified in the *National List of Exotic Pasture Species* (see clause 1.8)

improved pasture means an area of land where exotic pasture species have been deliberately sown or maintained for the purpose of pasture production, and species composition and growth has been modified and is being managed for livestock grazing

maintenance of improved pasture includes the removal of indigenous vegetation for the purpose of maintaining the improved pasture, whether the removal is by way of cutting, crushing, applying chemicals, draining, burning, cultivating, over-planting, applying seed of exotic pasture species, mob stocking, or making changes to soils, hydrology, or landforms.

SUPERSEDED

Subpart 3 – Specific requirements

3.18 Specified Māori land

(1) Local authorities must work in partnership (which includes acting in good faith) with tangata whenua and owners of specified Māori land to develop, and include in policy statements and plans, objectives, policies, and methods that, to the extent practicable:

(a) maintain and restore indigenous biodiversity on specified Māori land; and

(b) protect SNAs and identified taonga on specified Māori land.

(2) Objectives, policies, and methods developed under this clause must:

(c) enable new occupation, use, and development of specified Māori land to support the social, cultural, and economic wellbeing of tangata whenua; and

(d) enable the provision of new papakāinga, marae and ancillary community facilities, dwellings, and associated infrastructure; and

(e) enable alternative approaches to, or locations for, new occupation, use, and development that avoid, minimise, or remedy adverse effects on SNAs and identified taonga on specified Māori land, and enable options for offsetting and compensation; and

(f) recognise and be responsive to the fact that there may be no or limited alternative locations for tangata whenua to occupy, use, and develop their lands; and

(g) recognise that there are circumstances where development will prevail over indigenous biodiversity; and

(h) recognise and be responsive to any recognised historical barriers tangata whenua have faced in occupying, using, and developing their ancestral lands.

(3) The decision-maker on any resource consent application must, when considering matters affecting specified Māori land, take into account all the matters in subclause (2).

(4) Subclauses (2) and (3) do not apply to specified Māori land to the extent that the land is subject to full or partial legal protection under legislation for the purpose of protecting indigenous biodiversity on that land (such as, for example protection provided by covenants or land classifications under the Reserves Act 1977, the Conservation Act 1987, or the National Parks Act 1980).

(5) Local authorities must consider and realise opportunities to provide incentives for the protection and maintenance of indigenous biodiversity, and the protection of SNAs and identified taonga, on specified Māori land.

(6) Policy statements and plans developed for the purpose of this clause do not prevail over any management strategies or plans developed in the legislation referred to in paragraphs (e) and (f) of the definition of specified Māori land.

(7) In subclause (1), **owners of specified Māori land** include managers of lands referred to in paragraphs (e) and (f) of the definition of specified Māori land, and any trustee of specified Māori land.

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3.19 Acknowledged and Identified taonga

(1) Every territorial authority must work in partnership with tangata whenua of any rohe in their district, using an agreed process, to determine the indigenous species, populations, and ecosystems in that rohe that are taonga (and these are **acknowledged taonga**).

(2) Local authorities must recognise that tangata whenua have the right not to determine the indigenous species, populations and ecosystems in their rohe that are taonga, and to choose the level of detail at which any acknowledged taonga, or their location or values, are described.

(3) If tangata whenua agree, territorial authorities must identify acknowledged taonga in their district plans (and these are **identified taonga**) by:

(a) describing the taonga and, to the extent agreed by tangata whenua, mapping their location and describing their values; and

(b) describing, to the extent agreed by tangata whenua, the historical, cultural, and spiritual relationship of tangata whenua with the taonga.

(4) Local authorities must work in partnership with tangata whenua to protect both acknowledged and identified taonga as far as practicable and to involve tangata whenua (to the extent that they wish to be involved) in the management of identified taonga.

(5) Identified taonga located on specified Māori land must be managed under clause 3.18, but if identified taonga are located within an SNA that is not on specified Māori land:

(a) the identified taonga must be managed in a manner consistent with the management approach applying to the SNA; and

(b) the matters listed in subclause (6) must be taken into account in managing the SNA.

(6) In managing effects on identified taonga, local authorities must recognise that the possible adverse effects on identified taonga include effects on:

(a) the mauri of the taonga:

(b) the values of the taonga as identified by tangata whenua:

(c) the historical, cultural, and spiritual relationship of tangata whenua with the taonga, as identified by tangata whenua.

(7) Local authorities must make or change their policy statements and plans as necessary to ensure that the sustainable customary use of identified taonga by tangata whenua in accordance with tikanga and in a manner consistent with the protection of the identified taonga is provided for.

(8) Before acknowledged taonga are identified in a proposed district plan, the territorial authority must notify the relevant landowner of the presence of the taonga.

(9) To avoid doubt, the following cannot be acknowledged as taonga under this clause:

(a) aquatic species:

(b) populations and ecosystems solely located in waterbodies:

(c) populations and ecosystems in the coastal marine area.

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3.20 Specified highly mobile fauna

(1) Where information about areas used by specified highly mobile fauna is available, every regional council must record areas outside SNAs that are highly mobile fauna areas, by working together with tangata whenua (in the manner required by clause 3.3), any potentially affected landowners, territorial authorities in its region, and the Department of Conservation.

(2) If it will help manage adverse effects on specified highly mobile fauna, regional councils must include in their regional policy statements (where practicable) a map and description of each highly mobile fauna area in the region.

(3) Local authorities must include objectives, policies, or methods in their policy statements and plans for managing the adverse effects of new subdivision, use, and development on highly mobile fauna areas, in order to maintain viable populations of specified highly mobile fauna across their natural range.

(4) Local authorities must provide information to their communities about:

(a) highly mobile fauna and their habitats; and

(b) best practice techniques for managing adverse effects on any specified highly mobile fauna and their habitats in their regions and districts.

3.21 Restoration

(1) Local authorities must include objectives, policies, and methods in their policy statements and plans to promote the restoration of indigenous biodiversity, including through reconstruction of areas.

(2) The objectives, policies, and methods must prioritise all the following for restoration:

(a) SNAs whose ecological integrity is degraded:

(b) threatened and rare ecosystems representative of naturally occurring and formerly present ecosystems:

(c) areas that provide important connectivity or buffering functions:

(d) natural inland wetlands whose ecological integrity is degraded or that no longer retain their indigenous vegetation or habitat for indigenous fauna:

(e) areas of indigenous biodiversity on specified Māori land where restoration is advanced by the Māori landowners:

(f) any other priorities specified in regional biodiversity strategies or any national priorities for indigenous biodiversity restoration.

(3) Local authorities must consider providing incentives for restoration in priority areas referred to in subclause (2), and in particular where those areas are on specified Māori land, in recognition of the opportunity cost of maintaining indigenous biodiversity on that land.

(4) In relation to activities in areas prioritised for restoration, local authorities must consider:

(a) requiring conditions for restoration or enhancement on resource consents that are new or being reviewed; and

(b) recommending conditions on any new designations.

3.22 Increasing indigenous vegetation cover

(1) Every regional council must assess the percentage of indigenous vegetation cover in:

(a) each of its urban environments; and

(b) its non-urban environments.

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(2) The assessment may be done by a desktop analysis, by ground truthing, or both, and must be done in collaboration with relevant territorial authorities, and tangata whenua (to the extent they wish to be involved).

(3) Regional councils must:

(a) set a target of at least 10% indigenous vegetation cover for any urban or non-urban environment that has less than 10% cover of indigenous vegetation; and

(b) consider, in consultation with tangata whenua and territorial authorities, setting higher targets for urban and non-urban environments that already have at least 10% coverage of indigenous vegetation; and

(c) include any indigenous vegetation cover targets in their regional policy statements.

(4) Local authorities must promote the increase of indigenous vegetation cover in their regions and districts through objectives, policies, and methods in their policy statements and plans:

(a) having regard to any targets set under subclause (3) by regional councils; and

(b) giving priority to all the following:

(i) areas referred to in clause 3.21(2):

(ii) ensuring indigenous species richness appropriate to the ecosystem:

(iii) restoration at a landscape scale across the region:

(iv) using species, and seed from species, that are local to the area.

3.23 Regional biodiversity strategies

(1) Every regional council must prepare a regional biodiversity strategy that complies with Appendix 5 in collaboration with territorial authorities, tangata whenua, communities and other identified stakeholders.

(2) Local authorities must have regard to the relevant regional biodiversity strategy when developing restoration objectives, policies, and methods for inclusion in regional policy statements and plans.

3.24 Information requirements

(1) Every local authority must make or change its policy statements and plans to require that, in relation to an application for a resource consent for an activity that would have more than minor adverse effects on indigenous biodiversity, the application is not considered unless it includes a report that:

(a) is prepared by a suitably qualified ecologist and, as required, any other person with suitable expertise, such as someone with expertise in mātauranga Māori; and

(b) complies with subclause (2); and

(c) is commensurate with the scale and significance (to indigenous biodiversity) of the proposal.

(2) The report must:

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(a) include a description of the existing ecological features and values of the site; and

(b) include a description of the adverse effects of the proposal on indigenous biodiversity and how those effects will be managed; and

(c) identify any effects on identified taonga; and

(d) identify the ecosystem services associated with indigenous biodiversity at the site; and

(e) include an assessment of the ecological integrity and connectivity within and beyond the site; and

(f) include mātauranga Māori and tikanga Māori assessment methodology, where relevant; and

(g) if biodiversity offsetting is proposed, set out:

(i) a detailed plan of what is proposed, including a quantified loss and gain calculation, the currency used in the calculation, and the data that informs the calculation and plan; and

(ii) a description of how the relevant principles in Appendix 3 of this National Policy Statement have been addressed; and

(iii) an assessment of the likely success of the plan in achieving a net gain in biodiversity values; and

(h) if biodiversity compensation is proposed, set out:

(i) a detailed plan of what is proposed; and

(ii) a description of how the relevant principles in Appendix 4 of this National Policy Statement have been addressed; and

(iii) an assessment of the likely success of the plan in achieving its outcomes.

3.25 Monitoring by regional councils

(1) Regional councils must work with tangata whenua, territorial authorities, relevant agencies and other relevant stakeholders to develop a monitoring plan for indigenous biodiversity in their regions and each of their districts.

(2) Every monitoring plan must:

(a) establish methods and timeframes for monitoring:

(i) the maintenance of indigenous biodiversity in, and the ecological integrity and physical extent of, SNAs; and

(ii) the maintenance of identified taonga; and

(iii) the achievement of restoration objectives established under clause 3.21; and

(iv) the percentage of indigenous vegetation cover in urban and non-urban environments in its region, as required under clause 3.22.

(b) use best practice methods, or nationally agreed standards or methods, for monitoring areas that allow for comparability; and

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(c) to the extent possible, where tangata whenua agree, use scientific monitoring methods and mātauranga Māori and tikanga Māori monitoring methods equally; and

(d) recognise the importance of long-term trends in monitoring results, and the relationship between results and the overall state of indigenous biodiversity; and

(e) establish methods, such as action plans, for responding to monitoring that indicates the objectives of this National Policy Statement will not be met.

(3) Methods and timeframes may include different methods and timeframes relating to SNAs and identified taonga but, if national monitoring methods are available, must use those methods.

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Part 4: Timing

4.1 Timing generally

(1) Every local authority must give effect to this National Policy Statement as soon as reasonably practicable.

(2) Local authorities must publicly notify any changes to their policy statements and plans that are necessary to give effect to this National Policy Statement within eight years after the commencement date.

4.2 Timing for planning provisions for SNAs

(1) Local authorities must publicly notify any policy statement or plan or changes to these necessary to give effect to clause 3.16 (indigenous biodiversity outside SNAs) and clause 3.24 (Information requirements) within five years after the commencement date.

(2) Local authorities must publicly notify any policy statement or plan or changes to these necessary to give effect to subpart 2 of Part 3 (except clause 3.16) by 31 December 2030.

4.3 Timing for regional biodiversity strategies

(1) A regional council that, at the commencement date, has or is in the process of preparing a regional biodiversity strategy must update or complete the strategy within 10 years after the commencement date.

(2) A regional council that, at the commencement date, has not prepared or begun to prepare a regional biodiversity strategy must initiate preparation of a strategy within three years after the commencement date, and must complete it within 10 years after the commencement date.

4.4 Existing policy statements and plans

(1) To the extent that policy statements and plans already (at the commencement date) give effect to this National Policy Statement, local authorities are not obliged to make changes to wording or terminology merely for consistency with it.

(2) In case of dispute, the onus is on the local authority to show that, despite the different wording or terminology used, their policy statement or plan does implement this National Policy Statement.

(3) However, if a local authority chooses to amend an operative policy statement or plan by merely changing wording or terminology for consistency with this National Policy Statement, the amendment is to be treated as the correction of a minor error (and therefore, under clause 20A of Schedule 1 of the Act, the amendment can be made without using a process in that Schedule).

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Appendix 1: Criteria for identifying areas that qualify as significant natural areas (SNAs)

This appendix sets out the criteria for identifying significant indigenous vegetation or significant habitats of indigenous fauna in a specific area, so that the area qualifies as an SNA.

1 What qualifies as an SNA

(1) An area qualifies as an SNA if it meets any one of the attributes of the following four criteria:

- (a) representativeness:
- (b) diversity and pattern:
- (c) rarity and distinctiveness:
- (d) ecological context.

(2) If an area would qualify as an SNA solely on the grounds that it provides habitat for a single indigenous fauna species that is At Risk (declining), and that species is widespread in at least three other regions, the area does not qualify as an SNA unless:

- (a) the species is rare within the region or ecological district where the area is located; or
- (b) the protection of the species at that location is important for the persistence of the species as a whole.

(3) If an area would qualify as an SNA solely on the grounds that it contains one or more indigenous flora species that are Threatened or At Risk (declining), and those species are widespread in at least three other regions, the area does not qualify as an SNA unless:

- (a) the species is rare within the region or ecological district where the area is located; or
- (b) the protection of the species at that location is important for the persistence of the species as a whole.

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2 Context for assessment

(1) The context for an assessment of an area is:

- (a) its ecological district; and
- (b) for the rarity assessment only, its ecological district, its region and the national context.

3 Manner and form of assessment

(1) Every assessment must include at least:

(a) a map of the area; and

(b) a general description of its significant attributes, with reference to relevant criteria (as specified below); and

(c) a general description of the indigenous vegetation, indigenous fauna, habitat, and ecosystems present; and

(d) additional information, such as the key threats, pressures, and management requirements; and

(e) for SNAs in areas of Crown-owned land referred to in clause 3.8(8), the conservation management strategy or plan or national park management plan that applies to the area.

(2) An assessment under this appendix must be conducted by a suitably qualified ecologist (which, in the case of an assessment of a geothermal ecosystem, requires an ecologist with geothermal expertise).

A Representativeness criterion

(1) Representativeness is the extent to which the indigenous vegetation or habitat of indigenous fauna in an area is typical or characteristic of the indigenous biodiversity of the relevant ecological district.

Key assessment principles

(2) Significant indigenous vegetation has ecological integrity typical of the indigenous vegetation of the ecological district in the present-day environment. It includes seral (regenerating) indigenous vegetation that is recovering following natural or induced disturbance, provided species composition is typical of that type of indigenous vegetation.

(3) Significant indigenous fauna habitat is that which supports the typical suite of indigenous animals that would occur in the present-day environment. Habitat of indigenous fauna may be indigenous or exotic.

(4) Representativeness may include commonplace indigenous vegetation and the habitats of indigenous fauna, which is where most indigenous biodiversity is present. It may also include degraded indigenous vegetation, ecosystems and habitats that are typical of what remains in depleted ecological districts. It is not restricted to the best or most representative examples, and it is not a measure of how well that indigenous vegetation or habitat is protected elsewhere in the ecological district.

(5) When considering the typical character of an ecological district, any highly developed land or built-up areas should be excluded.

(6) The application of this criterion should result in identification of indigenous vegetation and habitats that are representative of the full range and extent of ecological diversity across all environmental gradients in an ecological district, such as climate, altitude, landform, and soil sequences. The ecological character and pattern of the indigenous vegetation in the ecological district should be described by reference to the types of indigenous vegetation and the landforms on which it occurs.

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Attributes of representativeness

(7) An area that qualifies as an SNA under this criterion has at least one of the following attributes:

(a) indigenous vegetation that has ecological integrity that is typical of the character of the ecological district:

(b) habitat that supports a typical suite of indigenous fauna that is characteristic of the habitat type in the ecological district and retains at least a moderate range of species expected for that habitat type in the ecological district.

B Diversity and pattern criterion

(1) Diversity and pattern is the extent to which the expected range of diversity and pattern of biological and physical components within the relevant ecological district is present in an area.

Key assessment principles

(2) **Diversity of biological components** is expressed in the variation of species, communities, and ecosystems. Biological diversity is associated with variation in physical components, such as geology, soils/substrate, aspect/exposure, altitude/depth, temperature, and salinity.

(3) **Pattern** includes changes along environmental and landform gradients, such as ecotones and sequences.

(4) **Natural areas** that have a wider range of species, habitats or communities or wider environmental variation due to ecotones, gradients, and sequences in the context of the ecological district, rate more highly under this criterion.

Attributes of diversity and pattern

(5) An area that qualifies as a significant natural area under this criterion has at least one of the following attributes:

(a) at least a moderate diversity of indigenous species, vegetation, habitats of indigenous fauna or communities in the context of the ecological district:

(b) presence of indigenous ecotones, complete or partial gradients or sequences.

C Rarity and distinctiveness criterion

(1) Rarity and distinctiveness is the presence of rare or distinctive indigenous taxa, habitats of indigenous fauna, indigenous vegetation or ecosystems.

Key assessment principles

(2) **Rarity** is the scarcity (natural or induced) of indigenous elements: species, habitats, vegetation, or ecosystems. Rarity includes elements that are uncommon or threatened.

(3) **The list of Threatened and At Risk species** is regularly updated by the Department of Conservation. Rarity at a regional or ecological district scale is defined by regional or district lists or determined by expert ecological advice. The significance of nationally

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listed Threatened and At Risk species should not be downgraded just because they are common within a region or ecological district.

(4) **Depletion of indigenous vegetation or ecosystems** is assessed using ecological districts and land environments.

(5) **Distinctiveness** includes distribution limits, type localities, local endemism, relict distributions, and special ecological or scientific features.

Attributes of rarity and distinctiveness

(6) An area that qualifies as an SNA under this criterion has at least one of the following attributes:

(a) provides habitat for an indigenous species that is listed as Threatened or At Risk (declining) in the New Zealand Threat Classification System lists:

(b) an indigenous vegetation type or an indigenous species that is uncommon within the region or ecological district:

(c) an indigenous species or plant community at or near its natural distributional limit:

(d) indigenous vegetation that has been reduced to less than 20 per cent of its pre-human extent in the ecological district, region, or land environment:

(e) indigenous vegetation or habitat of indigenous fauna occurring on naturally uncommon ecosystems:

(f) the type locality of an indigenous species:

(g) the presence of a distinctive assemblage or community of indigenous species:

(h) the presence of a special ecological or scientific feature.

D Ecological context criterion

(1) Ecological context is the extent to which the size, shape, and configuration of an area within the wider surrounding landscape contributes to its ability to maintain indigenous biodiversity or affects the ability of the surrounding landscape to maintain its indigenous biodiversity.

Key assessment principles

(2) Ecological context has two main assessment principles:

(a) the characteristics that help maintain indigenous biodiversity (such as size, shape, and configuration) in the area; and

(b) the contribution the area makes to protecting indigenous biodiversity in the wider landscape (such as by linking, connecting to or buffering other natural areas, providing 'stepping stones' of habitat or maintaining ecological integrity).

Attributes of ecological context

(3) An area that qualifies as an SNA under this criterion has at least one of the following attributes:

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(a) at least moderate size and a compact shape, in the context of the relevant ecological district:

(b) well-buffered relative to remaining habitats in the relevant ecological district:

(c) provides an important full or partial buffer to, or link between, one or more important habitats of indigenous fauna or significant natural areas:

(d) important for the natural functioning of an ecosystem relative to remaining habitats in the ecological district.

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Appendix 2: Specified highly mobile fauna

Scientific name	Common name	Ecosystem	Threat category
Anarhynchus frontalis	ngutu parore/wrybill	coastal/riverine	Threatened (Nationally Increasing)
Anas chlorotis	pāteke/brown teal	wetland/riverine	Threatened (Nationally increasing)
Anas superciliosa superciliosa	pārera/grey duck	wetland/riverine	Threatened (Nationally Vulnerable)
Anthus novaeseelandiae novaeseelandiae	pīhoihoi/NZ pipit	forest/open	At Risk (Declining)
Apteryx australis 'northern Fiordland'	northern Fiordland tokoeka	forest/open	Threatened (Nationally Vulnerable)
Apteryx australis australis	southern Fiordland tokoeka	forest/open	Threatened (Nationally Endangered)
Apteryx haastii	roa/great spotted kiwi	forest/open	Threatened (Nationally Vulnerable)
Ardea modesta	kotuku/white heron	wetland/riverine	Threatened (Nationally Critical)
Botaurus poiciloptilus	matuku/bittern	wetland/riverine	Threatened (Nationally Critical)
Bowdleria punctate stewartiana	mātātā/Stewart Island fernbird	wetland/riverine	Threatened (Nationally Vulnerable)
Bowdleria punctata punctata	koroātito/South Island fernbird	wetland/riverine	At Risk (Declining)
Bowdleria punctata vealeae	mātātā/North Island fernbird	wetland/riverine	At Risk (Declining)
Calidris canutus rogersi	huahou/lesser knot	coastal/riverine	At Risk (Declining)
Chalinolobus tuberculatus	pekapeka/long-tailed bat	forest/open	Threatened (Nationally Critical)
Charadrius bicinctus bicinctus	pohowera/banded dotterel	coastal/riverine	At Risk (Declining)
Charadrius obscurus aquilonius	tūtiriwhatu/northern NZ dotterel	coastal/riverine	Threatened (Nationally Increasing)
Charadrius obscurus obscurus	tūtiriwhatu/southern NZ dotterel	coastal/riverine	Threatened (Nationally Critical)
Chlidonias albostriatus	tara pirohe/black-fronted tern	coastal/riverine	Threatened (Nationally Endangered)
Egretta sacra sacra	matuku moana/reef heron	coastal/riverine	Threatened (Nationally Endangered)
Falco novaeseelandiae ferox	kārearea/bush falcon	forest/open	Threatened (Nationally Increasing)
Falco novaeseelandiae novaeseelandiae	kārearea/eastern falcon	forest/open	Threatened (Nationally Vulnerable)

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Scientific name	Common name	Ecosystem	Threat category
Falco novaeseelandiae 'southern'	kārearea/southern falcon	forest/open	Threatened (Nationally Endangered)
Gallirallus australis greyi	North Island weka	forest/open	At Risk (Relict)
Gallirallus philippensis assimilis	moho pererū/banded rail	wetland/riverine	At Risk (Declining)
Haematopus finschi	tōrea/South Island pied oystercatcher	coastal/riverine	At Risk (Declining)
Haematopus unicolor	tōrea tai/variable oystercatcher	coastal/riverine	At Risk (Recovering)
Himantopus novaezelandiae	kakī/black stilt	wetland/riverine	Threatened (Nationally Critical)
Hydroprogne caspia	taranui/Caspian tern	coastal/riverine	Threatened (Nationally Vulnerable)
Hymenolaimus malacorhynchos	whio/blue duck	riverine	Threatened (Nationally Vulnerable)
Larus bulleri	tarāpukā/black-billed gull	coastal/riverine	At Risk (Declining)
Larus novaehollandiae scopulinus	tarāpunga/red-billed gull	coastal/riverine	At Risk (Declining)
Limosa lapponica baueri	kuaka/eastern bar-tailed godwit	coastal/riverine	At Risk (Declining)
Mystacina tuberculata aupourica	pekapeka/northern short-tailed bat	forest/open	Threatened (Nationally Endangered)
Mystacina tuberculata rhyacobia	pekapeka/central short-tailed bat	forest/open	At Risk (Declining)
Mystacina tuberculata tuberculata	pekapeka/southern short-tailed bat	forest/open	At Risk (Recovering)
Nestor meridionalis meridionalis	kākā/South Island kākā	forest/open	Threatened (Nationally Vulnerable)
Nestor meridionalis septentrionalis	kākā/North Island kākā	forest/open	At Risk (Recovering)
Nestor notabilis	kea	forest/open	Threatened (Nationally Endangered)
Petroica australis australis	kakariwai/South Island robin	forest/open	At Risk (Declining)
Phalacrocorax varius varius	kāruhiruhi/pied shag	coastal/riverine	At Risk (Recovering)
Podiceps cristatus australis	kāmana/southern crested grebe	wetland/riverine	Threatened (Nationally Vulnerable)
Poliocephalus rufopectus	weweia/NZ dabchick	wetland/riverine	Threatened (Nationally Increasing)
Porzana pusilla affinis	koitareke/marsh crake	wetland/riverine	At Risk (Declining)
Porzana tabuensis	pūweto/spotless crake	wetland/riverine	At Risk (Declining)
Sterna striata striata	tara/white-fronted tern	coastal/riverine	At Risk (Declining)

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Scientific name	Common name	Ecosystem	Threat category
Sternula nereis davisae	tara iti/NZ fairy tern	coastal/riverine	Threatened (Nationally Critical)
Thinornis novaeseelandiae	tuturuatu/NZ shore plover	coastal/riverine	Threatened (Nationally Critical)
Xenicus gilviventris 'northern'	pīwauwau/northern rock wren	forest/open	Threatened (Nationally Critical)
Xenicus gilviventris 'southern'	pīwauwau/southern rock wren	forest/open	Threatened (Nationally Endangered)

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Appendix 3: Principles for biodiversity offsetting

These principles apply to the use of biodiversity offsets for adverse effects on indigenous biodiversity.

(1) **Adherence to effects management hierarchy:** A biodiversity offset is a commitment to redress more than minor residual adverse effects and should be contemplated only after steps to avoid, minimise, and remedy adverse effects are demonstrated to have been sequentially exhausted.

(2) **When biodiversity offsetting is not appropriate:** Biodiversity offsets are not appropriate in situations where indigenous biodiversity values cannot be offset to achieve a net gain. Examples of an offset not being appropriate include where:

- (a) residual adverse effects cannot be offset because of the irreplaceability or vulnerability of the indigenous biodiversity affected:
- (b) effects on indigenous biodiversity are uncertain, unknown, or little understood, but potential effects are significantly adverse or irreversible:
- (c) there are no technically feasible options by which to secure gains within an acceptable timeframe.

(3) **Net gain:** This principle reflects a standard of acceptability for demonstrating, and then achieving, a net gain in indigenous biodiversity values. Net gain is demonstrated by a like-for-like quantitative loss/gain calculation of the following, and is achieved when the indigenous biodiversity values at the offset site are equivalent to or exceed those being lost at the impact site:

- (a) types of indigenous biodiversity, including when indigenous species depend on introduced species for their persistence; and
- (b) amount; and
- (c) condition (structure and quality).

(4) **Additionality:** A biodiversity offset achieves gains in indigenous biodiversity above and beyond gains that would have occurred in the absence of the offset, such as gains that are additional to any minimisation and remediation undertaken in relation to the adverse effects of the activity.

(5) **Leakage:** Biodiversity offset design and implementation avoids displacing harm to other indigenous biodiversity in the same or any other location.

(6) **Long-term outcomes:** A biodiversity offset is managed to secure outcomes of the activity that last at least as long as the impacts, and preferably in perpetuity. Consideration must be given to long-term issues around funding, location, management and monitoring.

(7) **Landscape context:** Biodiversity offsetting is undertaken where this will result in the best ecological outcome, preferably close to the impact site or within the same ecological district. The action considers the landscape context of both the impact site

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and the offset site, taking into account interactions between species, habitats and ecosystems, spatial connections, and ecosystem function.

(8) **Time lags:** The delay between loss of, or effects on, indigenous biodiversity values at the impact site and the gain or maturity of indigenous biodiversity at the offset site is minimised so that the calculated gains are achieved within the consent period or, as appropriate, a longer period (but not more than 35 years).

(9) **Science and mātauranga Māori:** The design and implementation of a biodiversity offset is a documented process informed by science and mātauranga Māori.

(10) **Tangata whenua and stakeholder participation:** Opportunity for the effective and early participation of tangata whenua and stakeholders is demonstrated when planning biodiversity offsets, including their evaluation, selection, design, implementation, and monitoring.

(11) **Transparency:** The design and implementation of a biodiversity offset, and communication of its results to the public, is undertaken in a transparent and timely manner.

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Appendix 4: Principles for biodiversity compensation

These principles apply to the use of biodiversity compensation for adverse effects on indigenous biodiversity:

(1) **Adherence to effects management hierarchy:** Biodiversity compensation is a commitment to redress more than minor residual adverse effects, and should be contemplated only after steps to avoid, minimise, remedy, and offset adverse effects are demonstrated to have been sequentially exhausted.

(2) **When biodiversity compensation is not appropriate:** Biodiversity compensation is not appropriate where indigenous biodiversity values are not able to be compensated for. Examples of biodiversity compensation not being appropriate include where:

  (a) the indigenous biodiversity affected is irreplaceable or vulnerable;

  (b) effects on indigenous biodiversity are uncertain, unknown, or little understood, but potential effects are significantly adverse or irreversible;

  (c) there are no technically feasible options by which to secure a proposed net gain within acceptable timeframes.

(3) **Scale of biodiversity compensation:** The indigenous biodiversity values lost through the activity to which the biodiversity compensation applies are addressed by positive effects to indigenous biodiversity (including when indigenous species depend on introduced species for their persistence), that outweigh the adverse effects.

(4) **Additionality:** Biodiversity compensation achieves gains in indigenous biodiversity above and beyond gains that would have occurred in the absence of the compensation, such as gains that are additional to any minimisation and remediation or offsetting undertaken in relation to the adverse effects of the activity.

(5) **Leakage:** Biodiversity compensation design and implementation avoids displacing harm to other indigenous biodiversity in the same or any other location.

(6) **Long-term outcomes:** Biodiversity compensation is managed to secure outcomes of the activity that last as least as long as the impacts, and preferably in perpetuity. Consideration must be given to long-term issues around funding, location, management, and monitoring.

(7) **Landscape context:** Biodiversity compensation is undertaken where this will result in the best ecological outcome, preferably close to the impact site or within the same ecological district. The action considers the landscape context of both the impact site and the compensation site, taking into account interactions between species, habitats and ecosystems, spatial connections, and ecosystem function.

(8) **Time lags:** The delay between loss of, or effects on, indigenous biodiversity values at the impact site and the gain or maturity of indigenous biodiversity at the compensation site is minimised so that the calculated gains are achieved within the consent period or, as appropriate, a longer period (but not more than 35 years).

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(9) **Trading up:** When trading up forms part of biodiversity compensation, the proposal demonstrates that the indigenous biodiversity gains are demonstrably greater or higher than those lost. The proposal also shows the values lost are not to Threatened or At Risk (declining) species or to species considered vulnerable or irreplaceable.

(10) **Financial contributions:** A financial contribution is only considered if:

(a) there is no effective option available for delivering biodiversity gains on the ground; and

(b) it directly funds an intended biodiversity gain or benefit that complies with the rest of these principles.

(11) **Science and mātauranga Māori:** The design and implementation of biodiversity compensation is a documented process informed by science, and mātauranga Māori.

(12) **Tangata whenua and stakeholder participation:** Opportunity for the effective and early participation of tangata whenua and stakeholders is demonstrated when planning for biodiversity compensation, including its evaluation, selection, design, implementation, and monitoring.

(13) **Transparency:** The design and implementation of biodiversity compensation, and communication of its results to the public, is undertaken in a transparent and timely manner.

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Appendix 5: Regional biodiversity strategies

(1) The purpose of a regional biodiversity strategy is to promote the landscape-scale restoration of the region's indigenous biodiversity.

(2) To achieve its purpose, every regional biodiversity strategy, either alone or when read with related documents, must:

- (a) set out a landscape-scale vision for the restoration of the region's indigenous biodiversity; and
- (b) provide for resilience to biological and environmental changes, including those associated with climate change; and
- (c) recognise biological and physical connections within, and between, the terrestrial environment, water bodies, and the coastal marine area; and
- (d) support the achievement of any national priorities for indigenous biodiversity protection; and
- (e) record:
  - (i) the actions and methods intended to promote the maintenance and restoration of indigenous biodiversity, and increase in indigenous vegetation cover, in the region; and
  - (ii) actions that will be undertaken by local or central government; and
  - (iii) actions that the community, including tangata whenua, will be supported or encouraged to undertake; and
  - (iv) how those actions will be resourced; and
- (f) specify milestones for achieving the strategy's purpose; and
- (g) specify how progress on achieving the strategy's purpose is to be monitored and reported on and measures to be taken if milestones are not being met.

(3) A regional biodiversity strategy may also:

- (a) include measures that are intended to implement other objectives, such as biosecurity, climate mitigation, amenity, or freshwater outcomes, where those measures also contribute to protection and restoration of indigenous biodiversity; and
- (b) identify areas intended for restoration in accordance with clause 3.21; and
- (c) identify areas in which indigenous vegetation cover is proposed to be increased, in accordance with clause 3.22.

(4) The following must be taken into account when developing a regional biodiversity strategy:

- (a) any National Biodiversity Strategy issued by the Department of Conservation:

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(b) opportunities to engage the community, including tangata whenua, in conservation and, in particular, to connect urban people and communities to indigenous biodiversity:

(c) opportunities for partnerships with the Queen Elizabeth II National Trust, Ngā Whenua Rāhui and others:

(d) considering incentive opportunities specific to specified Māori land:

(e) co-benefits, including for water quality and freshwater habitats, carbon sequestration and hazard mitigation:

(f) alignment with strategies under other legislation.

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Appendix 6: Glossary of ecological terms used in Appendices

For the purpose of this National Policy Statement the following terms have the meaning given:

Ecotone

Ecotone refers to a transition area between two or more ecosystems. Ecotones may be sharp transitions or gradients.

Gradient

Gradient refers to a gradual transition from one ecosystem to another over one or more environmental variables.

Irreplaceability

Irreplaceability is a measure of the uniqueness, replaceability and conservation value of biodiversity and the degree to which the biodiversity value of a given area adds to the value of an overall network of areas. It interacts with vulnerability, complexity and rarity to indicate the biodiversity value and level of risk for a given area.

Land environment

Land environment refers to a land environment identified in the Land Environments of New Zealand (LENZ) Classification System (Leathwick et al., 2003, as maintained by Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research).

Leakage

Leakage, also referred to as environmental leakage, occurs when interventions aimed at reducing adverse environmental impacts at one site may be locally successful, but increase pressures or adverse impacts elsewhere. For example, displacing the causes of biodiversity loss in an offset area to another location.

Like-for-like

Like-for-like is the degree of similarity in biodiversity values between impact and offset sites across; the type of biodiversity; amount of biodiversity; biodiversity condition; equivalence over time; and spatial context. Biodiversity offsets are designed to ensure biodiversity impacts are offset with biodiversity that is very similar to the biodiversity that is being impacted in that it has the same ecosystems, vegetation, habitats and species.

Sequence

Sequence means the change in ecosystem composition along environmental gradients. Sequences can contain many gradients and ecosystem transitions. They can encompass a full range of alpine to coastal ecosystems, including dunes, wetlands and forests.

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Vulnerability

Vulnerability is an estimate of the degree of threat of destruction or degradation that indigenous biodiversity faces from change, use or development. It is the degree to which an ecosystem, habitat or species is likely to be affected by, is susceptible to or able to adapt to harmful impacts or changes. It interacts with the irreplaceability, complexity and rarity to indicate the biodiversity value and level of risk for a given area.

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