

1. INTRODUCTION

This document replaces the Northland Regional Pest Management Strategies adopted on the 15th April 1988 under the Biosecurity Act 1993.

1.1. PURPOSE OF STRATEGIES

The purpose of the Regional Pest Management Strategies (RPMS) is to provide a strategic and statutory framework for efficient and effective management of pest plants and pest animals in the Northland Region.

1.2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STRATEGIES

The primary objective of the Strategies is to achieve comprehensive and integrated management of pests that the Strategies identify as requiring community intervention. The objectives of pest animal and pest plant management, as stated in the Regional Policy Statement, are:

"The avoidance, remedying or mitigation of the adverse effects of pest plants and pest animals on the use of land, including its potential for primary production and natural ecosystems".

Long-term management of pests extends far beyond simply controlling those that currently infest the Region and includes management of the land to reduce its susceptibility to infestation by pests, to manage the land following control operations to prevent reinvasion and to control the mechanisms by which pests enter and are distributed within the Region.

In association with the Council's policy of empowering local people to assume ownership of local problems and the solutions to those problems, the Council will promote integrated pest management operations by way of "Community Pest Control Areas".

1.3. STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

Legislative Background

Under the Biosecurity Act, Regional Councils are the agencies responsible for processing and approving Regional Pest Management Strategies. Regional Councils have no statutory obligation to undertake pest management, although most have significant roles in this field.

The Biosecurity Act prescribes the process to be followed in preparation, subsequent implementation and review of Pest Management Strategies. Following the notification of a proposed Strategy and hearings of submitters, the Regional Council can approve and make the final Strategy, subject to any appeals by submitters to the Environment Court.

In addition to the above, Regional Councils can also:

- i) Prepare a proposal for an RPMS (under section 71); and/or
- ii) Be a management agency appointed to implement an RPMS. The requirements of pest management agencies are set out in section 84, which include preparing operational plans.

sections 72(1)(a), (b) and (ba) state that a Regional Council shall notify a proposal for a Regional Pest Management Strategy only if it is of the opinion that:

- a) The benefits of having a Regional Pest Management Strategy in relation to each organism to which the Strategy would apply outweigh the costs, after taking account of the likely consequences of inaction or alternative courses of action; and
- b) The net benefits of Regional intervention exceed the net benefits of an individual's intervention; and
- ba) Where funding proposals for the Strategy require persons to meet directly the costs of implementing the Strategy:
 - i) The benefits that will accrue to those persons as a group will outweigh the costs; or
 - ii) Those persons contribute to the creation, continuance, or exacerbation of the problems proposed to be resolved by the Strategy; ”

section 72(a), (b) and (ba) require Regional Councils to assess whether public action is appropriate and necessary, whilst considering whether an RPMS is appropriate. Furthermore, section 72(c) of the Biosecurity Act 1993 directs that prior to proposing a Regional Pest Management Strategy, a Regional Council must demonstrate that:

- b) Each organism in respect of which the Strategy is under consideration is capable of causing at some time a serious adverse and unintended effect in relation to the Region on one or more of the following:
 - i) Economic wellbeing; or
 - ii) the viability of threatened species of organisms, the survival and distribution of indigenous plants or animals, or the sustainability of natural and developed ecosystems, ecological processes, and biological diversity; or
 - iii) soil resources or water quality; or
 - iv) human health or enjoyment of the recreational value of the natural environment; or
 - v) the relationship of Maori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, waters, sites, waahi tapu, and taonga.