

Memorandum of Understanding between Biosecurity New Zealand, Department of Conservation and Te Uru Kahika – Regional and Unitary Councils Aotearoa

Context

Biosecurity is the exclusion, eradication or management of pests and diseases that pose a risk to economic, environmental, cultural, social and human health (zoonotic diseases and disease vectors, such as mosquitos and ticks) values. The biosecurity system spans offshore, border and domestic activities across all domains (terrestrial, freshwater, and marine environments).

Signatories to this MOU have:

- Critical roles to play in mitigating and managing biosecurity risks.
- Common interest in ensuring biosecurity activities are delivered efficiently and effectively and that opportunities for coordination and collaboration are acted upon.
- Different biosecurity mandates and drivers, and financial and stakeholder considerations.

Effective trust-based working relationships are essential for success.

Scope

Domestic biosecurity relationships and activities (including diagnostics, surveillance, investigation, readiness, response, long-term management) and the transitions to and from the different states along this continuum.

Relationship principles and collaborative work planning, prioritisation and delivery to address issues and opportunities in planned and reactive work in a timely manner.

Note: Signatories are also expected to work collaboratively with others (e.g., other government agencies, Māori and Government Industry Agreement industry signatories) where biosecurity roles, accountabilities and interests overlap. DOC and Te Uru Kahika have a separate MOU covering bilateral working arrangements. This three-way MOU with BNZ takes precedent for **biosecurity-related** working arrangements.

Purpose

To provide an overarching collaborative framework for Biosecurity New Zealand (BNZ), Department of Conservation (DOC) and Te Uru Kahika to work together on biosecurity matters.

Principles

Foundation

1. Communicate and share information in a regular, open and honest manner, and in line with confidentiality requirements. Proactively and constructively work through disagreements or conflict.
2. Work together co-operatively to establish an interactive, effective, efficient and positive relationship.
3. Recognise the statutory functions, mandates, drivers, regulatory powers and duties of each Signatory.
4. Make best use of collective strengths, capability and resources in managing biosecurity risks.

Decision-making

These principles encompass the broad spectrum of decisions within the scope of this MOU including for identification and management of biosecurity risks, resourcing and prioritisation.

Decisions impacting core responsibilities of Signatories will follow an agreed framework or process to ensure:

- A Treaty grounded approach.
- Appropriate involvement of MOU Signatories (and others) where their accountabilities or responsibilities are affected.
- Decisions are timely, transparent, and communicated to those affected.
- Support fair and reasonable allocation of costs, both financial and non-financial.
- Decisions are informed by the best information available at the time, with uncertainty treated explicitly, so decisions are not prevented or delayed.
- People making decisions have the authority from their organisation and decisions will be upheld.

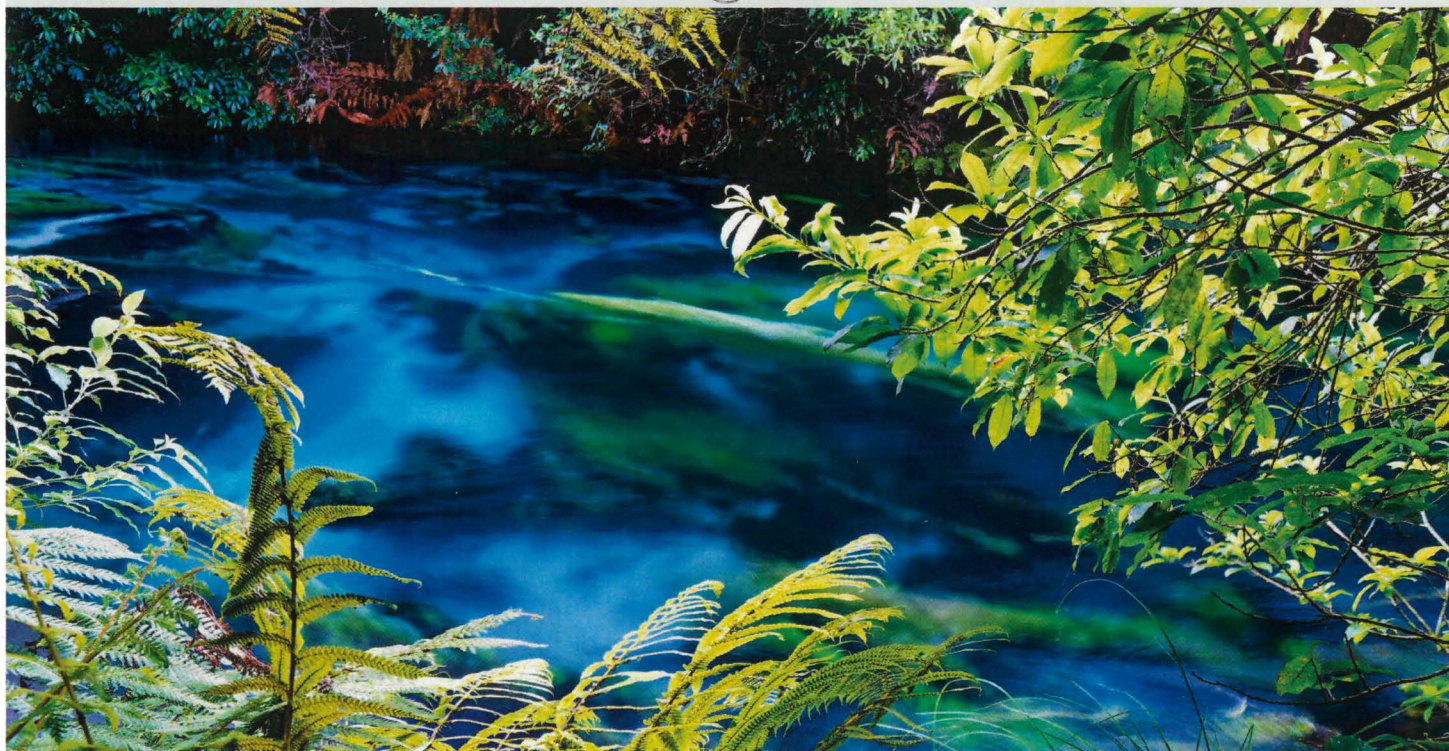
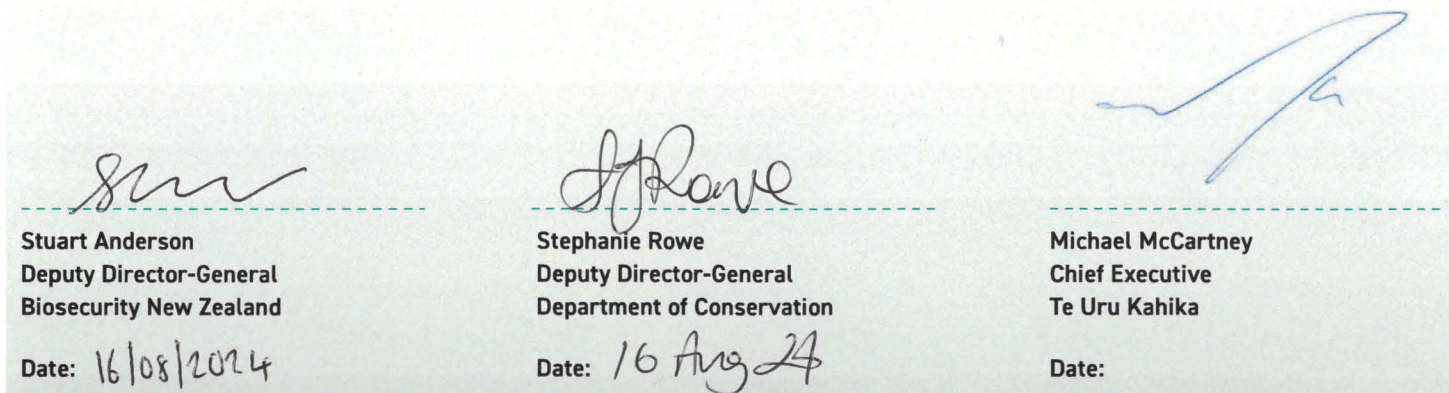
Oversight and Implementation

Signatories to this MOU commit to:

- Keep the MOU current and fit-for-purpose through regular review, monitoring and reporting.
- Develop, resource and implement a collaborative and prioritised work plan aimed at continuous improvement in systems and relationships, and to address operational issues and opportunities.
- Embed improved ways of working into BAU systems, processes and procedures and monitor to ensure they are having the desired impact.
- Maintain a record of MOU oversight and implementation documents in a shared-access repository.

Oversight and implementation of the MOU will be provided by:

- Bi-annual meetings of the three MOU Signatories.
- A nominated MOU implementation sub-group to:
 - drive joint work planning and delivery, and
 - report annually to Signatories on MOU performance.



Guiding documents

The foundation for this MOU is set through the following strategy, policy and guidance documents, which should be referred to for more detailed information about the biosecurity system, including roles, responsibilities and expectations of agencies and other system participants:

- [Draft Biosecurity System Strategy](#) and Actions (sets national direction for the system and a foundation to unite and empower participants to manage biosecurity risks in their spheres of influence).
- [Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy – Te Mana o Te Taiao, 2020](#) (sets national direction for biodiversity) and Implementation Plans (sets out priority actions for achieving outcomes and objectives).

- [New Zealand Government Biosecurity Response Guide, 2018](#). High level information on how responses work and roles and responsibilities of participants.
- [MAF Risk Organism Response Policy, 2008](#). Sets expectations for MPI readiness and response, including roles and responsibilities of different parties. Includes a biosecurity response decisions framework.
- [Pest Management National Plan of Action, 2011](#). Includes decision principles and guidance on roles responsibilities for pest management programmes.
- [National Policy Direction for Pest Management, 2015](#) (under review). Supports alignment of pest management programmes across New Zealand.
- National and Regional Pest/Pathway Management Plans.