



**Report**                    **06.297**  
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**Committee**            **Environment Committee**  
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## **Use of Biodiversity Condition and Advice Funds in the Wellington region**

### **1. Purpose**

To inform the Committee of the successful use of the Biodiversity Condition and Advice Funds to assist private landowners in managing biodiversity on their land in the region.

### **2. Significance of the decision**

The matters for decision in this report do not trigger the significance policy of the Council or otherwise trigger section 76(3)(b) of the Local Government Act 2002.

### **3. Background**

In 2002 the government established a number of programmes to assist implementation of the New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy, including two contestable funds – the Biodiversity Condition Fund and the Biodiversity Advice Fund. These funds arose directly from the extensive consultation undertaken with private landowners in the preceding year. The consultation revealed a willingness by landowners to undertake management tasks to enhance biodiversity on their land, particularly if part of the cost could be shared with the community in recognition of the public good that would accrue.

The Biodiversity Condition Fund aims to improve and maintain the condition of areas of indigenous vegetation, species and habitats (including wetlands and water bodies). Projects that include contributions from other parties, including the landowner, are preferred. Only projects that enhance biodiversity on private land, and particularly areas under legal protection can be funded.

The Biodiversity Advice Fund supports the provision of information and advice to land managers to assist them in managing indigenous biodiversity. It funds projects that inspire landholders or groups to improve the condition of indigenous biodiversity.

Both funds have been successful. The findings of a report commissioned by the Department of Conservation to determine how well the projects funded by the Biodiversity Condition Fund were aligned with current biodiversity priorities were released recently. Using the Ecological Threat Classifications developed by Landcare Research (which we are currently assessing for use in biodiversity State of the Environment reporting) it was found that, nationally, about 80% of all projects were in the “threatened” categories. The Wellington region fitted this national picture, demonstrating that the use of this funding is well targeted.

#### **4. Funding secured for the Wellington region**

Greater Wellington facilitates the Wellington/Wairarapa Land Protection Forum, an association of representatives of various agencies involved in private land such as Federated Farmers of New Zealand, Department of Conservation, Queen Elizabeth II National Trust and some territorial authorities. The Forum has made applications to the funds on behalf of the Department of Conservation (for work on private land), Greater Wellington, Queen Elizabeth II National Trust and individual landowners with much success. Since the funds were established, a total of \$256,000 has been sourced for projects within the region, \$50,318 of this in the 2005/06 year.

Work funded includes pest plant and animal control, fencing, restoration planting and the production of a series of biodiversity booklets for landowners.

Details of the 32 projects are given in Attachments 1 and 2.

#### **5. Communication**

A number of the projects have featured in local newspapers. However, the majority of these projects are on land owned by private individuals and the opportunities for publicity are limited.

## 6. Recommendations

*That the Committee:*

1. **Receive the report; and**
2. **Note the contents.**

Report prepared by:

Report approved by:

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**Attachment 1: Wellington region Biodiversity Condition Fund projects**

**Attachment 2: Wellington region Biodiversity Advice Fund projects**