



Report 07.684
Date 21 September 2007
File ENV/12/07/12

Committee Policy, Finance and Strategy Subcommittee
Author Tim Porteous Biodiversity Co-ordinator

Biodiversity: Full Year Review to 30 June 2007

1. Purpose

To inform the Committee of a selected range of biodiversity projects undertaken by Council in the last financial year.

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

Biodiversity is a core function of Greater Wellington reflecting our functions under the Resource Management Act 1991. Although delivered by a number of departments, and frequently by cross-departmental groups, the Council's biodiversity activities are treated as components of one programme.

In 2001 the Biodiversity Co-ordinating Group (BCG) was established to facilitate the co-ordination of projects and programmes. The BCG has proved to be successful in achieving its objectives and provides a model that could be used for other cross-departmental activities of council. In 2006/07 the group started reporting the aggregated biodiversity activities of Council to the Executive Management Team (EMT) in the same format as quarterly divisional reports.

At their meeting of 17 September 2007, EMT received the Biodiversity report for the year ending 30 June 2007 and recommended that it be tabled at the next Policy, Finance and Strategy meeting for the information of Councillors. The report is appended. It should be noted that the section "Significant biodiversity projects" does not cover all the Council's biodiversity programmes.

4. Comment

The Council's biodiversity programmes operate on Greater Wellington owned land, some territorial authority lands and privately owned land.

The report highlights the following successes on private land:

- In the three and a half years since its launch, the Wetlands Incentive Programme has engaged with 109 private landowners. These landowners receive advice and, in some cases financial assistance, to restore their wetlands.
- A further 350 hectares of lowland indigenous forest or wetlands have been legally protected through the joint Greater Wellington/ QEII National Trust covenant programme. All the areas protected fall within Priority One of the Government's "National Priorities for Biodiversity on Private Land" released in April this year.
- The Pauatahanui Catchment Programme has resulted in 1,560 hectares of private land in the catchment being subject to voluntary farm plans this year aimed at improving land management to reduce contaminants and sediment entering Pauatahanui Inlet. The appointment of a full-time Catchment Co-ordinator this year will boost this project considerably.

5. Communication

Private landowners do not always want publicity about activities on their land. However notwithstanding this general constraint, every opportunity is taken to publicise the overall successes of Greater Wellington's private land biodiversity programmes. For instance, the QEII covenanting programme is highlighted in the latest issue of "Elements".

6. Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the content of the report.*

Report prepared by:

Report approved by:

Report approved by:

Tim Porteous
Biodiversity Co-ordinator

Nicola Shorten
Manager Environmental
Policy

Nigel Corry
Divisional Manager
Environment Division

Attachment 1: Biodiversity Full Year Review