

Main amendments to the Proposed Regional Pest Management Strategy 2002 – 2022 Five-Year Review

1. Introduction

The following amendments are recommended to the proposed Regional Pest Management Strategy (RPMS) following the formal submission process. The amendments have been listed under their relevant categories in the RPMS. All statements in *italics* are amendments or new additions to the RPMS.

Many of the additional requests put forward in the submission process were already covered within the proposed strategy. Clarification to the submitter, rather than further amendments to the actual document, will be required.

2. Strategy Responsibilities and Obligations

2.1 Both the Ministry of Agriculture & Forestry and Biosecurity New Zealand (MAF BNZ) recommended that animal welfare should be referenced in section 3.3 of the RPMS document. Section 3.3 'on the marketing overseas of New Zealand products' had the following statement added; *'Greater Wellington also recognises the growing international concerns surrounding animal welfare'*.

2.2 MAF BNZ recommended that the term 'unwanted organism' be removed from Section '3.4 The Biosecurity Act 1993' to avoid confusion with the official definition of an unwanted organism. This has been amended in the RPMS to simply state *'organism'*.

3. Surveillance

3.1 MAF BNZ noted that section '5.2 pest management policies for phases of infestation' was confusing. It was re-written to read:

'Phase 2: Pest species known to be in the region and more research is needed

During this phase data will be collected to understand how the species became established in the area, what the area of infestation is through delimit survey and what resources and period of time would be needed to control the species. This information is for inclusion in CBA and species management reporting.

Not all surveillance species will be classified as Total Control. Species in the NPPA selection of plants may have previously been sold and are already established and spread throughout the region. Some species may have been established for a long period of time prior to discovery and the infestation size too large to gain Total Control.'

This expanded explanation better explains Phase 2 of the management policy for pest species.

- 3.2 Upon recommendation by a private landowner, Indian Hawthorn (*Raphiolepis delacouri*) was added to the list of weeds that are noted when GW staff undertake surveillance for pest plants. If *Raphiolepis delacouri* becomes an obvious threat on a wider scale, it will be considered as an addition to the RPMS document at the next review.
- 3.3 GW received a number of requests to include didymo (*Didymosphenia geminata*) in the Surveillance pest category. The following description has been added to the Regional Surveillance pest plant category:

'Didymo (Didymosphenia geminata)

Description and reason for inclusion

Fresh water alga which can form massive blooms on the bottom of streams, rivers and lakes. It attaches itself to the stream bed by stalks and can form a thick brown layer that smothers rocks and submerged plants. Unwanted organism species currently contained to the South Island.'

- 3.4 Victoria University of Wellington School of Biology (VUW) questioned sections 4.2.5 and 4.5 of the proposed RPMS. This stated that all species identified in the RPMS and National Pest Plant Accord are banned from distribution, propagation or sale. With some species listed this was not the intent of the strategy.

The first sentence of section 4.2.5 (now 3.2.5) was amended to read *'All National Pest Plant Accord 2008 (NPPA) species are banned from sale, propagation or distribution. Pests identified in the RPMS are banned from sale or distribution unless specifically exempt by a strategy rule'*.

Section 4.5 (now 3.5) was amended to read *'Pursuant to Section 52 and 53 of the Biosecurity Act 1993 (the Act) all organisms identified in the National Pest Plant Accord (NPPA) or listed as a pest in an RPMS (species are detailed in Part 2) are banned from distribution, propagation and sale. Pests in the RPMS may be exempt if specifically stated by a strategy rule'*.

This will allow private ownership of species listed in the strategy, if they are specifically exempt by the strategy rules.

- 3.5 VUW requested clarification of the strategy rules for red-eared slider turtles. The current 'explanation of strategy rules' reads 'Rule b) imposes a ban on

the sale, breeding or distribution of red-eared slider turtles in the Wellington region.’ This was incorrect, and did not correspond with strategy rule b) for the species. It was amended to read *‘Rule b) imposes a ban on the sale and breeding of red-eared slider turtles for the purpose of liberation in the Wellington region. This rule also bans the act of liberation’*.

3.6 MAF BNZ recommended that Rainbow Lorikeet was included in the Surveillance species list of MAF BNZ national programme species. This species was added.

3.7 The Department of Conservation (DOC) expressed concern that there are no known means of control for rainbow skinks. GW added *‘Investigate the feasibility of eradication of rainbow skinks should an incursion be detected’* to the means of achievement for rainbow skinks.

4. Total Control

4.1 There were several recommendations to remove the repetition in the strategy rules for the relevant Total Control species to shorten and clarify the document. A general explanation of the strategy rules was created for the 11 Total Control pest plant species.

5. Containment

5.1 At the request of Wellington City Council (WCC), GW altered the containment zone for boneseed to include the south coast of Wellington to the Owhiro quarry. This is intended to assist WCC with the eradication of boneseed on the south coast.

6. Site-Led

6.1 GW removed the reference to cats as the ‘ultimate predator’ in the Feral and Unwanted Cats category, as this statement is debatable. The original statement came from GW’s popular information pamphlet ‘Feral and Unwanted Cats’ from the ‘Pest Animals - Everyone’s Responsibility’ publication series.

6.2 At the request of Hutt City Council (HCC) the following statements were added to the RPMS for old man’s beard, banana passion fruit and cathedral bells:

Strategy rules for landowners/occupiers of land within the Hutt City TLA boundary only

c) Hutt City Council shall destroy by way of service delivery all XXXX on land within the Hutt City TLA boundary.

d) Hutt City Council will choose the appropriate method of control for XXXX based on best industry practices. Where landowners/occupiers do not consider this applicable to their situation they shall pay all additional expenses for alternative control methods used. The alternative control methods used shall be to a standard acceptable to Hutt City Council.

e) Landowners/occupiers who do not comply with rules c) or d) shall destroy all XXXX on any land they own or occupy following a complaint to Greater Wellington by Hutt City Council. A breach of these rules will create an offence under Section 154(r) of the Act.

Explanation of strategy rules:

Rule c) Requires Hutt City Council to control all XXXX on land within the Hutt City TLA boundary.

Rule d) Allows Hutt City Council to choose the most appropriate method of control for XXXX and the cost of all additional expenses for alternative control will be paid by the landowner/occupier. Alternative control methods must achieve a standard of control acceptable to Hutt City Council.

Rule e) Requires landowners/occupiers within the Hutt City TLA boundary to control all XXXX species on any land they own or occupy if they do not allow Hutt City Council to undertake direct control of these species. Requires Greater Wellington to act on complaints to ensure landowner/ occupier compliance on any land they own or occupy within the Hutt City TLA boundary.

This alteration is intended to assist HCC to achieve Total Control on these species in the Hutt City boundaries.

- 6.3 HCC questioned the Key Native Ecosystem and Reserves rules which stated ‘no person shall cause or permit the disposal of green waste plant material in a Key Native Ecosystem/Reserve’. This concern was based on the grounds that it may prohibit pest plant material being left on site following control.

These were amended to state:

‘Strategy Rules:

b) No person shall cause or permit the disposal of green waste plant material in a Key Native Ecosystem. Note: Authorised vegetation clearance within the Key Native Ecosystem is exempt.

Explanation of Strategy Rules:

Rule b) prohibits any person from dumping green waste from external sources into any site included in the Key Native Ecosystem programme. Authorised

vegetation clearance within the Key Native Ecosystem is exempt, although all viable pest plant material must be removed.'

7. Administrative Provisions

- 7.1 DOC and WCC requested expanded information on the education and information provided by GW. Sections 16.1 Education and Information, and 4.2.6 Information, Education and Advice of the final strategy document were expanded.