

Report 2017.94
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Committee Council
Author Davor Bejakovich, Manager, Biosecurity

Review of the GWRC Regional Pest Management Strategy

1. Purpose

To seek Council approval to initiate a full review of the current Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) Regional Pest Management Strategy 2002 - 2022 (Current Strategy).

2. Consideration by Committee

On 22 March 2017, the Environment Committee was asked to make a determination on the consistency between the Current Strategy and the National Policy Direction for Pest Management (NPD) (Report 17.64 refers).

The Committee determined that the Current Strategy is inconsistent with the NPD. The Committee has recommended to Council that it initiate a full review of the Current Strategy in order to rectify the inconsistency.

3. Background

The Current Strategy is known as the GWRC Regional Pest Management Strategy 2002-2022; it provides the strategic and statutory framework for effective pest animal and pest plant management in the Wellington Region. The Current Strategy was reviewed by Council in 2007, and approved for implementation in 2009. The lifespan of the Current Strategy is 2002-2022.

In 2012 the Biosecurity Act 1993 (the Act) was amended. One change was to replace Regional Pest Management Strategies with Regional Pest Management Plans. The Current Strategy is deemed to be a Regional Pest Management Plan.

As a result of the amendments, the Act now provides for national policy directions, which must be made by the responsible Minister. The NPD 2015 was created to guide the review and development process of Regional Pest Management Plans.

In accordance with section 100E of the Act, GWRC was required to determine whether its Regional Pest Management Plans is inconsistent with the NPD within eighteen months of the NPD being approved (i.e. by 24 March 2017).

If a Regional Pest Management Plan is found to be inconsistent with the NPD, it must be amended or reviewed under section 100D, or section 100G of the Act. If the changes required to resolve the inconsistency will not have a significant impact on any person’s rights or obligations, resolution can be made through a minor amendment under section 100G. However, if the changes are likely to have a significant impact, then a full review must be initiated under section 100D.

As set out above, on 22 March 2017, the Environment Committee determined that the Current Strategy was inconsistent with the NPD.

4. Resolving inconsistencies between the RPMP and the NPD

The inconsistencies identified between the Current Strategy and the NPD need to be resolved by initiating a full review of the Current Strategy. The decision to initiate a full review needs to be made by the Council.

As part of the review, the Council must state whether the proposal is to amend, revoke and replace, or leave unchanged the Current Strategy. The Current Strategy will need to be revoked and replaced by a new Regional Pest Management Plan at the end of the review process.

Implementation of the Current Strategy is not affected by finding it to be inconsistent with the NPD. The Current Strategy will stay in place until the new RPMP is adopted.

5. Proposed review process

Programme planning to begin the policy development process is already underway.

Communication will be made with internal departments, iwi of the region, stakeholders and general public that a full review will commence. Communication methods will include internal and external digital communication, newspapers, meetings and workshops.

The table below indicates the proposed review process and timeframes for the development of the Regional Pest Management Plan:

Proposed review process for Regional Pest Management Plan	
Determination on consistency of Regional Pest Management Plan with National Policy Direction	March 2017
Discussion document released and consultation with iwi, key stakeholders and general public, draft discussion document submissions	March 2017 – June 2017
Development of a new Regional Pest Management Plan	July – December 2017
Notify proposed plan, submission process, public hearings, amendments	February 2018 – August 2018

Implementation of Proposed Regional Pest Management Plan	October 2018
Expiry of the current Regional Pest Management Strategy	2022 or upon the implementation of the reviewed Plan

6. Communication

Officers will advise the public that a full review of the Current Strategy has been initiated.

7. The decision-making process and significance

The subject matter of this report is part of a decision-making process that will lead to the Council making a decision of medium significance within the meaning of the Local Government Act 2002. The decision-making process is explicitly prescribed for by the Biosecurity Act 1993.

7.1 Engagement

The following initial engagement processes are proposed.

Engagement will consist of meetings, workshops and one-to-one discussions as determined appropriate to the group and situation.

An initial draft Regional Pest Management Plan discussion document has been released to our iwi partners, with further release of the document to stakeholders and general public to follow. This will include the invitation to submit on the proposed changes.

Upon Council's adoption of the proposed Regional Pest Management Plan, the proposed Regional Pest Management Plan will go out to the groups as described above to invite submissions and review.

8. Recommendations

That the Council:

1. ***Receives the report.***
2. ***Notes the content of the report.***
3. ***Notes that the Regional Pest Management Strategy 2002-2022 is inconsistent with the National Policy Direction for Pest Management 2015.***
4. ***Agrees, in accordance with section 100D of the Biosecurity Act 1993, to commence a review of the Regional Pest Management Strategy 2002-2022.***

Report prepared by:

Davor Bejakovich
Manager, Biosecurity

Report approved by:

Wayne O'Donnell
General Manager,
Catchment Management