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Committee Environment Committee
Author Davor Bejakovich, Manager, Biosecurity

Consistency between the GWRC Regional Pest Management Strategy and the National Policy Direction for Pest Management

1. Purpose

For the Committee to make a determination on the consistency between the current Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) Regional Pest Management Strategy and the National Policy Direction for Pest Management.

2. Background

The GWRC Regional Pest Management Strategy 2002-2022 (RPMS) provides the strategic and statutory framework for effective pest animal and pest plant management in the Wellington Region. The current version of the RPMS was reviewed in 2007 and approved for implementation in 2009. The lifespan of the RPMS is 2002-2022.

To respond to changing national biosecurity requirements, the Biosecurity Law Reform Act 2012 was introduced. In particular, amendments have been made to Part 5 of the Biosecurity Act 1993 (the Act) 'Pest Management', which legislates for regional pest management.

The subsequent amendments to the Act led to the development of a National Policy Direction for Pest Management 2015 (the NPD) to guide the review and development process of what are now known as Regional Pest Management Plans (RPMP).

In accordance section 100E of the Act, GWRC must determine whether its RPMS (which is deemed to be RPMP) is inconsistent with the NPD within eighteen months of the NPD being approved (i.e. by 24 March 2017).

If the RPMS is inconsistent 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 they are likely to have significant impact, then a full review must be initiated under section 100D.

3. Determination of consistency

3.1 Intermediate outcomes and programme description

The NPD requires the intermediate outcomes the plan is seeking to achieve include one or more of the following categories/programmes: exclusion, eradication, progressive containment, sustained control and protecting values in places.

The intermediate outcomes, and relevant programmes, the RPMS is seeking to achieve do not match the NPD intermediate outcomes as shown in the table below:

Current RPMS intermediate outcomes/programmes	NPD intermediate outcomes/programmes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regional Surveillance,• Total Control• Containment• Suppression• Site led	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exclusion• Eradication• Progressive containment• Sustained Control• Protecting values in places

Due to these differences the RPMS is inconsistent with the NPD.

3.2 Geographic areas

The NPD requires a statement on the geographic area to which the outcome applies or the criteria by which this geographic area is defined. A statement on the extent and period to which the outcome will be achieved is also required.

The RPMS, in some cases, does not consistently include the necessary statements on geographic areas and/or periods over which outcomes will be achieved for all species and, therefore, is inconsistent with the NPD.

4. Statement on consistency and resolving inconsistencies

By making a determination on consistency between the existing RPMS and the NPD, GWRC is meeting its obligations under section 100E of the Biosecurity Act.

Based on the analysis undertaken by staff and summarised in section 3 above, the recommended determination is that the RPMS is inconsistent with the NPD. The inconsistencies identified between the RPMS and the NPD need to be resolved by initiating a full review of the RPMS. The decision to initiate a full review needs to be made by the Council.

As part of the review, Council must state whether the proposal is to amend, revoke and replace, or leave unchanged the RPMS. The current RPMS will

need to be revoked and replaced by a new Regional Pest Management Plan at the end of the review process.

Implementation of the existing RPMS will not be affected if it is found to be inconsistent with the NPD, and it will stay in place until the new RPMP is developed.

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	March 2017 – May 2017
Development of a new Regional Pest Management Plan	June – November 2017
Notify proposed plan, submission process, hearings, amendments	December 2017 – June 2018
Implementation of Proposed Regional Pest Management Plan	August 2018
Expiry of the current Regional Pest Management Strategy	2022 or upon the implementation of the reviewed Plan

6. Communication

On the basis that the Committee, determines that the RPMS is inconsistent with the NPD, the Council will be asked to determine that the inconsistency will be resolved by initiating a full review.

7. The decision-making process and significance

Officers recognise that the matters referenced in this report will be of importance to affected or interested parties.

The matters requiring decision in this report have been considered by officers against the requirements of Part 6 of the Local Government Act 2002 (the Act). Part 6 sets out the obligations of local authorities in relation to the making of decisions.

7.1 Significance of the decision

Part 6 requires Greater Wellington Regional Council to consider the significance of the decision. The term ‘significance’ has a statutory definition set out in the Act.

Officers have considered the significance of the matter, taking the Council's significance and engagement policy and decision-making guidelines into account. Officers recommend that the matter be considered to have low significance.

Officers do not consider that a formal record outlining consideration of the decision-making process is required in this instance.

7.2 Engagement

The following initial engagement processes are proposed. Upon determination of inconsistency, the consultation process will continue, seeking engagement with iwi partners, stakeholders and the general public.

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

The draft RPMP 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 RPMP, the proposed RPMP will go out to the groups as described above to invite submissions and review.

8. Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. ***Receives the report.***
2. ***Notes the content of the report.***
3. ***Determines, as required in accordance with section 100E of the Biosecurity Act 1993, that the Regional Pest Management Plan is inconsistent with the National Policy Direction.***
4. ***Notes that the inconsistency between the Regional Pest Management Plan and the National Policy Direction will be resolved by a full review initiated under section 100D of the Biosecurity Act 1993.***

Report prepared by:

Davor Bejakovich
Manager, Biosecurity

Report approved by:

Wayne O'Donnell
General Manager,
Catchment Management