

Auckland Conservation Board

Submission on National Policy Statement on Indigenous Biodiversity

14 March 2020

Overall position

Support

Introduction section: Overview of the National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity (NPSIB)

Overall thoughts about the introduction section and the need for an NPSIB:

We completely endorse the need for an NPSIB to stop the loss of biodiversity resulting from human impacts and development that are especially prevalent in the Auckland region.

Question 1: Do you agree a NPSIB is needed to strengthen requirements for protecting our native plants, animals and ecosystems under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA)? Why/why not?

We agree – currently the regional and local authorities in the Auckland region are not fulfilling their obligations under the RMA to maintain indigenous biodiversity. This is resulting in low levels of compliance and all biodiversity measures are declining except on uninhabited pest free islands. Tree cover has decreased markedly across the Auckland region with associated loss of ecosystem services and ecological function. Wetland and coastal ecosystems are particularly diminished. Auckland has experienced some of the greatest losses of biodiversity in Aotearoa. A mandatory NPS is required to reverse this trend.

Question 2: The scope of the proposed NPSIB focuses on the terrestrial environment and the restoration and enhancement of wetlands. Do you think there is a role for the NPSIB within coastal marine and freshwater environments? Why/why not?

This is critical. Ecological outcomes occur at an ecosystem level – a catchment and ki uta ki tai/mountains to sea pathway. Any location in the region is never far from a body of water. The Auckland region is growing in population and spatial footprint faster than any other. There are numerous examples of sediment and other discharges polluting waterways – most famously into the Okura Marine Reserve. There is inadequate oversight of cumulative effects on a catchment and inadequate oversight of compliance with consent conditions eg around loss of material from excavations, let alone prosecution. Freshwater environments are poorly monitored, highly degraded and the 3 major harbours are filled with sediment and similarly degraded. Many sites are unswimmable after rain and shellfish and fish stocks are a shadow of former populations. The recent 20 year State of our Gulf report clearly outlines the huge coastal marine biodiversity protection task. It is within the remit of the regional authority Auckland Council to change spatial plans to protect biodiversity eg by creating no take areas, partial take areas or banning commercial fishing. Sediment and nitrogen loads flowing into the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park must be dramatically reduced if ecological collapse of the Firth of Thames is to be avoided. This terrestrial policy is overdue but it relies on equally stringent freshwater and coastal protections, which we would argue do not currently measure up to the task. We expect a revision of the NPS Freshwater biodiversity protection provisions in line with this policy, and also the Coastal plan, which is not in step with the climate and growth pressures facing the Auckland region.

Question 3: Do you agree with the objectives of the proposed NPSIB? (see Part 2.1 of the proposed NPSIB) Why/why not?

In general yes, we agree but with some caveats as follows. Some of the objectives are contradictory. You cannot, by definition, have objectives that aim to maintain, and restore at the same time. This is fundamental - either the policy looks to restore previous abundance of species and ecosystem function or health, or it is saying that maintaining the status quo is OK. The status quo is very definitely not OK - under Te Tiriti or in the opinion of this organisation and our communities. If what is meant by objective 1 "to Maintain indigenous biodiversity" is in fact to prevent further biodiversity loss and to arrest biodiversity declines, then this first objective needs to be worded to reflect that. The current wording is unacceptable.

Objective 3 "Hutia te rito" is not sufficiently clear for a policy statement. Does this objective intend to highlight the need for sustainability in our interactions with terrestrial biodiversity? If so, this needs to be stated explicitly, alongside the te reo concept, to ensure accurate interpretation. 3.2 is a clearer definition than 1.7.1. It needs to be reworded to make the intent clearer.

Section A: Recognising te ao Māori and the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi (pgs 23 - 30)

Overall thoughts about Section A:

This is necessary to give effect to the treaty. Te ao Maori includes principles that if widely adopted would ensure the protection and restoration of indigenous biodiversity. They are a powerful addition to the NPSIB.

Question 4: Hutia te Rito recognises that the health and well-being of nature is vital to our own health and wellbeing. This will be the underlying concept of the proposed NPSIB. Do you agree? Why/why not?

Yes

Notes There is a well documented connection between human wellbeing and connection to and health of the natural environment. This is implicit in Hutia te Rito. Humans are part of the ecology and have an enormous impact on biodiversity, so sustainable human impact must form part of the NPS.

Question 5: Does the proposed NPSIB provide enough information on Hutia te Rito and how it should be implemented? Is there anything else that should be added to reflect te ao Māori in managing indigenous biodiversity?

Yes

Notes It appears to, but this is a question for resolution with tangata whenua.

Question 6: Do you think the proposed NPSIB appropriately takes into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi? Why/why not?

Unsure

Notes We note that this question should primarily be put to tangata whenua.

Question 7: What opportunities and challenges do you see for the way in which councils would be required to work with tangata whenua when managing indigenous biodiversity? What information and resources would support the enhanced role of tangata whenua in indigenous biodiversity management? Please explain

Notes Many iwi may not be adequately resourced to provide the kind of input to biodiversity management that the policy outlines. The rohe may be large and the pool of people with the required knowledge may be small. It would be a poor outcome if iwi capacity became a constraint to implementation. Supporting iwi to develop rohe based biodiversity plans (which are likely to encompass freshwater and coastal marine habitats) will be an important implementation task. This support may be consultancy, project funding etc. Rohe boundaries frequently overlap, and different interests need to be recognised. Subject to iwi approval, if such plans could be developed, the important knowledge within them could be made available in GIS layers to ensure iwi requirements in particular areas are transparent. This could not of course, include all knowledge but there could be a balance sought between knowledge sharing for planning purposes (eg by regional and local authorities, landowners and developers) and deep consultation, which would still be required for projects to proceed. “Pou” roles funded by regional authorities for different rohe or spatial areas may be needed to facilitate appropriate information sharing. Other mechanisms such as iwi forums may need to be introduced to decision making processes.

Question 8: Local authorities will need to consider opportunities for tangata whenua to exercise kaitiakitanga over indigenous biodiversity, including by allowing for sustainable customary use of indigenous flora. Do you think the NPSIB appropriately provides for customary use? Please explain

Unsure

Notes We note that this question should primarily be put to tangata whenua.

Question 9: What specific information, support or resources would help to implement the provisions in this section? (Section A)

See above. National sharing of learnings, information tools, knowledge bases and best practice by regional authorities would be productive in this area.

Section B: Identifying important biodiversity and taonga (pgs 31 - 41)

Overall thoughts about Section B:

Notes This is a very necessary data set to develop and make available to all those with land use interests so that better decisions may be made in the development and consenting process in particular.

Question 10: Territorial authorities will need to identify, map and schedule Significant Natural Areas (SNAs) in partnership with tangata whenua, landowners and communities. What logistical issues do you see with mapping SNAs, and what has been limiting this mapping from happening?

In Auckland there is one authority, and existing SEAs and new BFAs (Biodiversity Focus Areas) which have been mapped - if not implemented. While this may not be complete or ground truthed yet it is a start and should be implemented immediately as the start point in order to have any chance of meeting the “Maintain indigenous biodiversity” RMA obligation, let alone the intent of this policy to restore it.

Working completely separately from this process is the Regulatory function of Auckland Council. It is arguable whether the current SEAs are effectively policed by them. There are many examples of consents being issued on SEAs which lead to modification of SEAs for example. The mapping itself will not change anything on the ground unless the consenting process gives effect to the NPSIB. In addition, if landowners and some developers decide to act now to clear and develop land there will

likely be unintended consequences and loss of some biodiversity areas as people try to get in projects and consents before the plan change.

Question 11: Of the following three options, who do you think should be responsible for identifying, mapping and scheduling SNAs? Why?

A collaborative exercise between Territorial Authorities and Regional Councils

Notes In Auckland there is only one unitary authority. See above.

Question 12: Do you consider the ecological significance criteria in Appendix 1 of the proposed NPSIB appropriate for identifying SNAs? Why/why not?

Yes

Notes They cover the key issues

Question 13: Do you agree with the principles and approaches territorial authorities must consider when identifying and mapping SNAs? (see part 3.8(2) of the proposed NPSIB) Why/why not?

Yes

Notes They cover the key issues

Question 14: The NPSIB proposes SNAs are scheduled in a district plan. Which of the following council plans should include SNA schedules? Why?

Combination

Notes Auckland is a unitary authority with one spatial plan. The Gulf islands are being brought into this plan over time. A risk to biodiversity on the Gulf islands is that the Unitary Plan provisions may not be adequate to protect island biodiversity, which includes significant wetland, freshwater and coastal marine ecological areas. .

Question 15: We have proposed a timeframe of five years for the identification and mapping of SNAs and six years for scheduling SNAs in a district plan. Is this reasonable? What do you think is a reasonable timeframe and why?

No

Notes This timeframe is too long. Implementation needs to happen more urgently to match the scale of the problem as outlined in the introduction. In Auckland this timeframe is too short. As noted above a degree of mapping has been done and this needs to be the start point and implemented in the Unitary Plan immediately. In other regions there may be similar quality mapping available. MfE should require those councils with high levels of readiness to implement quickly – within a year in some cases. These councils like Auckland can take longer to update and improve mapping but the focus should be on compliance, enforcement and monitoring. There is simply too much risk to biodiversity now to leave five years for implementation of mapping and scheduling. Consider for example the tree cover loss that will occur, based on current rates of tree removal, if better tree protection is not required as per the NPSIB?

Question 16: Do you agree with the proposed approach to the identification and management of taonga species and ecosystems? (see Part 3.14 of the proposed NPSIB) Why/why not?

Yes

Notes It covers all the key issues

Question 17: Part 3.15 of the proposed NPSIB requires regional councils and territorial authorities to work together to identify and manage highly mobile fauna outside of SNAs. Do you agree with this approach? Why/why not?

Yes

Notes Auckland has one unitary authority so this is less about working together and more about effective management of habitats and corridors that these fauna use. An example is seabirds – which are of key concern in Auckland and highly mobile between sometimes 3 different regional authorities – Northland, Auckland and Waikato. Light pollution is a major issue for many species and there are inadequate provisions in all 3 regional plans to limit light projecting up into the sky – for example from cruise ships, large plants and motorway networks. Identification of the key species types to be managed eg seabirds, and the risks they face is an urgent implementation step.

Question 18: What specific information, support or resources would help you implement the provisions in this section? (Section B)

N/A

Section C: Managing adverse effects on biodiversity from activities (pgs 42 - 67)

Overall thoughts about Section C:

We support the level of detail in the policy here. However in theory the effects hierarchy permits any activity to occur, as long as offsets can be made or compensation paid. This is not the intent but given the policy context of biodiversity loss the policy needs to be more directive. eg Losses are not permitted except under circumstances of nationally significant infrastructure. Further, cumulative effects may require existing uses to desist over time (eg due to climate or changes in the surrounding land use). In general, if the intent is to restore biodiversity then the policy needs to ensure that it supports behaviour change in land use. As such, exceptions should be few, and tools such as a precautionary approach, vegetation targets and a cumulative effects hierarchy (new) are essential elements to include. Urban trees/tree cover and mobile fauna need more protection in the Auckland region so effects outside SNAs are very important to recognise.

Question 19: Do you think the proposed NPSIB provides the appropriate level of protection of SNAs? (see Part 3.9 of the proposed NPSIB) Why/why not?

Somewhat

Notes As noted above, it hinges on fast and effective implementation, compliance and enforcement by the territorial authorities in the Auckland region.

Question 20: Do you agree with the use of the effects management hierarchy as proposed to address adverse effects on indigenous biodiversity instead of the outcomes-based approach recommended by the Biodiversity Collaborative Group? Why/why not?

Somewhat

It is difficult to support an exception for mineral and aggregate extraction unless the supply of the materials extracted is in the national interests (as opposed to purely commercial interest). This exception should therefore be changed.

Question 21: Are there any other adverse effects that should be added to Part 1.7(4), to be considered within and outside SNAs? Please explain.

Not specified

Question 22: Do you agree with the distinction between high- and medium-value SNAs as the way to ensure SNAs are protected while providing for new activities? If no, do you have an alternative suggestion? Please explain

Not specified

Question 23: Do you agree with the new activities the proposed NPSIB provides for and the parameters within which they are provided for? (See part 3.9(2)-(4) of the proposed NPSIB) Why/why not?

Yes

Question 24: Do you agree with the proposed definition for nationally significant infrastructure? Why/why not?

Yes

Question 25: Do you agree with the proposed approach to managing significant indigenous biodiversity within plantation forests, including that the specific management responses are dealt with in the National Environmental Standards for Plantation Forestry? (see Part 3.10 of the NPSIB) Why/why not?

Not specified

Question 26: Do you agree with managing existing activities and land uses, including pastoral farming, proposed in Part 3.12 of the NPSIB? Why/why not?

Somewhat

Notes Need to make allowance for cumulative effects and future climate effects. There will be cases where continued use leads to degradation of the local ecosystem as a whole or where changes to the area around the site mean degradation or loss occurs over time . There needs to be a cumulative effects hierarchy for this section of the policy similar to the other effects hierarchy. This could be used to establish some thresholds for this. For example if the activity can be stopped or moved to another location and restoration can occur eg to revegetate to prevent erosion and increase tree cover, then this should be a required option.

Question 27: Does the proposed NPSIB provide the appropriate level of protection for indigenous biodiversity outside SNAs, with enough flexibility to allow other community outcomes to be met? Why/why not?

Somewhat

Notes In Auckland region tree losses have accelerated since 2010. With the changes in climate forecast to intensify, this must be reversed. If a tree is not scheduled – and few are, then it is not protected. This is problematic in the case of Kauri in particular. There is a case for non-disturbance of any kauri forest because of the increased rates of disease we are seeing and the probably increase in disease as droughts become more frequent. Some specifications around the conditions for tree

removal need to be included, similar to the protections that used to exist prior to the changes in the current Unitary plan coming into effect.

Question 28: Do you think it is appropriate to consider both biodiversity offsets and biodiversity compensation (instead of considering them sequentially) for managing adverse effects on indigenous biodiversity outside of SNAs? Why/why not?

Somewhat

Notes it is not clear from the document how this would work in practice or the problem that is being solved. We also restate the importance of these tools only being used in the case of nationally significant infrastructure or the small number of exceptions noted for Maori land.

Question 29: Do you think the proposed NPSIB adequately provides for the development of Māori land? Why/why not?

Unsure

Notes This is a question for tangata whenua

Question 30: Part 3.5 of the proposed NPSIB requires territorial authorities and regional councils to promote the resilience of indigenous biodiversity to climate change. Do you agree with this provision? Why/why not?

Yes

Notes The negative effects are likely to be significant for some species and proactive measures are required now to mitigate this if possible. Again consider seabirds or kauri as examples. This could be ecosystem (eg forests or wetlands) or species level (eg Fairy tern). Note that shorebirds are very vulnerable to dogs and vehicles on beaches as well as sea level rise and this needs to be addressed across the region and nationwide in areas of relevant important habitat. Seabirds are already impacted by predation at their colonies or former colonies and lack of food due to overfishing. Provisions need to be made in the coastal plan to reduce inshore commercial fishing of small fish and to eradicate predators from former mainland breeding areas. This is required to restore both seabird populations and the health of mainland forests.

Question 31: Do you think the inclusion of the precautionary approach in the proposed NPSIB is appropriate? (see Part 3.6 of the proposed NPSIB) Why/why not?

Yes

Notes The balance between development of land and biodiversity protection in the Auckland region has had a net negative effect over time on our key ecosystems. It is therefore appropriate that the precautionary approach be explicit. It is also mitigating against the permanent loss of biodiversity that occurs if caution is not adopted in some development.

Question 32: What is your preferred option for managing geothermal ecosystems? Please explain

Not specified

Question 33: We consider geothermal ecosystems to include geothermally influenced habitat, thermo-tolerant fauna (including microorganisms) and associated indigenous biodiversity. Do you agree? Why/why not?

Not specified

Notes

Question 34: Do you agree with the framework for biodiversity offsets set out in Appendix 3 of the proposed NPSIB? Why/why not?

Somewhat

Notes Offsets should only apply if the development is nationally or locally significant infrastructure. The framework suggests it is still possible to develop or use land in a way that adversely affects biodiversity. The intent of the NPSIB as stated in the objectives is that it is not. This needs to be more clearly stated in the framework and policy draft.

Question 35: Do you agree with the framework for biodiversity compensation set out in Appendix 4 of the proposed NPSIB? Why/why not? Include an explanation if you consider the limits on the use of biodiversity compensation as set out in the Environment Court decision: Oceania Gold (New Zealand) Limited v Otago Regional Council as a better alternative.

Unsure

Question 36: What level of residual adverse effect do you think biodiversity offsets and biodiversity compensation should apply to?

All residual adverse effects

Notes A long term behaviour change over land use is required for this policy to be effective in reversing biodiversity decline. There should not be any suggestion in the policy that any level of biodiversity loss is acceptable other than for nationally significant infrastructure.

Question 37: What specific information, support or resources would help you implement the provisions in this section? (Section C)

Not applicable

Section D: Restoration and enhancement of biodiversity (pgs 68 - 76)

Overall thoughts about Section D:

Notes We support this section of the policy in full, with the exception of the vegetation targets (not aggressive enough) and the timeframes for implementation (also not aggressive enough). These need to be more ambitious especially in the Auckland region. It is possible to implement region wide plan changes within 12 months. Given the declines we are seeing and the rates of development, delays will simply lead to a worsening of current trends, especially around indigenous tree cover and loss of biodiversity on private land. To implement in Auckland with immediate effect sends a clear signal to the territorial authorities, private landowners and developers about the standards required and why they are required. Softly softly will result in more degradation and probably unintended consequences as people try to get consents through before changes take effect. The NPSIB is ahead of the NPSFW and Coastal and these need to be brought up to the same standards as the NPSIB in terms of biodiversity restoration and protection. The Biosecurity act and related policies must also support IB outcomes – they are not an end in themselves.

Question 38: The proposed NPSIB promotes the restoration and enhancement of three priority areas: degraded SNAs; areas that provide important connectivity or buffering functions; and wetlands. (See Part 3.16 of the proposed NPSIB). Do you agree with these priorities? Why/why not?

Yes

Notes We endorse these priorities wholeheartedly. They are necessary to maintain and restore biodiversity and to mitigate against climate effects.

Question 39: Do you see any challenges in wetland protection and management being driven through the Government's Action for Healthy Waterways package while wetland restoration occurs through the NPSIB? Please explain

Notes The outcome required in both cases is restoration of ecosystem function and biodiversity abundance. If one or other directive has to prevail, surely it should be the one that has the higher test for activities in terms of those outcomes? Logically this should be the NPSIB.

Question 40: Part 3.17 of the proposed NPSIB requires regional councils to establish a 10 per cent target for urban indigenous vegetation cover and separate indigenous vegetation targets for non-urban areas. Do you agree with this approach? Why/why not?

Somewhat.

Notes Yes targets should be set. But they need to be place-specific. For example this 10% target is too low in many areas of Auckland which would be classified as within the urban area. Targets should be set relative to the existing tree cover, whether in an urban or a rural area. In either case the objective should be to increase ITC through restoration and prevent loss of existing trees through severely restricting the situations in which they can be removed. Targets therefore need to be paired with appropriate restrictions on the removal of indigenous trees.

Question 41: Do you think regional biodiversity strategies should be required under the proposed NPSIB or promoted under the New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy? Please explain

Yes absolutely they should be required under the NPSIB. Strategies alone without mandatory implementation directives will achieve little for biodiversity outcomes. The existing Auckland Regional Indigenous Biodiversity Strategy was created in 2012 and only partially implemented. Land use and growth impacts were not dealt with and the plan has been in place while tree cover and biodiversity in the region has markedly declined in all but a few areas. Regional strategies must be evaluated as fit for purpose and there must be oversight of implementation as well as the development of it or revision of any existing strategy.

Question 42: Do you agree with the proposed principles for regional biodiversity strategies set out in Appendix 5 of the proposed NPSIB? Why/why not?

Yes

Notes What is the criteria that will be set for whether these strategies are fit for purpose? What is the evaluation criteria? Who would do this? What will the consequences be if the strategy or implementation is inadequate to meet the required outcomes? See above and below re the need for more aggressive timing.

Question 43: Do you think the proposed regional biodiversity strategy has a role in promoting other outcomes (eg, predator control or preventing the spread of pests and pathogens)? Please explain

Notes Yes clearly it does. It is not possible to restore or protect indigenous biodiversity without these things occurring. The NPSIB should be the overriding directive since it provides the context and rationale for biosecurity in relation to indigenous biodiversity. There is a role for an outcomes

scorecard by region that combines IB measures and outcomes with predator control, biosecurity and other land use outcomes to give an overall picture of cause and effect for use by decision makers.

Question 44: Do you agree with the timeframes for initiating and completing the development of a regional biodiversity strategy? (see Part 3.18 of the proposed NPSIB) Why/why not?

No

Notes The timeframes are not aggressive enough as noted above. There is no excuse for the absence of an up to date strategy for indigenous biodiversity in the Auckland region. This was recommended in early 2019 and could be delivered by the end of 2020 if Auckland Council was directed to do so. In Auckland and in many other regions this is not a blank slate. Plan wording changes as recommended in the policy could be implemented with immediate effect. The timeframes also need to reflect the fact that there are some mature regions where revisions are the priority and some regions where developing a strategy has never happened. The NPSIB must cover the low and high maturity areas not just cater for the lowest common denominator. Implementation is more of a problem than development of an IB strategy per se. In Auckland this has not been in any way adequate under the existing strategy. Implementation plans and implementation milestones need to form part of the policy and should be reported on annually to MfE.

Question 45: What specific information, support or resources would help you implement the provisions in this section? (Section D)

N/A

Section E: Monitoring and implementation (pgs 77 - 88)

Overall thoughts about Section E:

Notes This is essential. However there is an urgent need to baseline some ecosystems and species. This can't wait 3 years in Auckland, where development is occurring so quickly and region wide. Implementation pace is key – tools here must include more than actions places. There is a need for transparent national and regional reporting on this and on key indicators of IB health relevant to each region and local authority area. Further, some system effects of existing practices are already in train and delays in baseline measures and reporting to decision makers increases the risk of irreversible losses. Reporting must be timely and locally relevant to support more effective decision making for biodiversity outcomes in regions and districts. All parties will require clear plain English guidance on the implications of the NPSIB including the overriding principles to restore and retain IB in all domains, and the rationale for doing so. There will be resistance to this change and the implementation plan from MfE needs to provide for this in terms of stakeholder engagement resourcing and communications in particular.

Question 46: Do you agree with the requirement for regional councils to develop a monitoring plan for indigenous biodiversity in its region and each of its districts, including requirements for what this monitoring plan should contain? (see Part 3.20 of the proposed NPSIB) Why/why not?

Yes

Notes This part of the policy should also require reporting to MfE and the relevant governance bodies as well as publication of results in a timely fashion. Lag indicators reported years after data collection are not helpful for decision makers to assume accountability for or looking to change biodiversity outcomes. There have been instances of results in Auckland for freshwater having been withheld. Presumably this is due to the negative effects and declines the data is showing.

Transparency of outcomes and timely data provided to decision makers is a key element of successful implementation of this NPSIB. Such requirements should also be specified.

Question 47: Part 4.1 requires the Ministry for the Environment to undertake an effectiveness review of the NPSIB. Do you agree with the requirements of this effectiveness review? Why/why not?

Somewhat

Notes To implement this within 10 years is too long. MfE should be requiring annual implementation progress reports, as well as monitoring data on key indicators. This is not a “set and forget” exercise. Policy effectiveness is dependent on implementation so it follows that this must be closely managed and supported by MfE. It is a significant change in mindset for some in local government, for landowners and developers. There will be resistance and delay tactics. This is foreseeable and should be proactively managed by MfE, and appropriately resourced.

Question 48: Do you agree with the proposed additional information requirements within Assessments of Environmental Effects (AEES) for activities that impact on indigenous biodiversity? (see Part 3.19 of the proposed NPSIB) Why/why not?

Yes

Notes Yes, but plan wording changes can be implemented with immediate effect. This sends the appropriate signal given the dire state of IB in Auckland, and also heads off unintended consequences of landowners for example clearing land prior to plan changes coming into effect.

Question 49: Which option for implementation of the proposed NPSIB do you prefer? Please explain

Implementation as soon as reasonably practicable

Notes See previous comments. Delays are likely in the Auckland region due to resistance from some Auckland Council departments, some landowners and developers. Effectively, the practical changes are straightforward eg plan changes, communication of new standards, application of new standards. Assessment capacity may be a constraint. Working constructively on rapid implementation should be a focus for MfE in Auckland.

Question 50: Do you agree with the implementation timeframes in the proposed NPSIB, including the proposed requirement to refresh SNA schedules in plans every two years? Why/why not?

Somewhat

Notes See above comments re more aggressive implementation timeframes and rationale for these in Auckland.

Question 51: Which of the three options to identify and map SNAs on Public Conservation Land (PCL) do you prefer? Please explain

Public conservation land deemed as SNAs

Notes Public conservation land is by definition likely to be significant. In the rare case that this is not so, provision should be made to reassess the land in question in partnership with iwi and DOC.

Question 52: What do you think of the approach for identifying and mapping SNAs on other public land that is not public conservation land?

In Auckland this work has largely been done – former SEAs and now Biodiversity Focus Areas are already mapped. It is not likely to present a significant extra cost.

Question 53: Part 3.4 requires local authorities to manage indigenous biodiversity and the effects on it of subdivision, use and development, in an integrated way. Do you agree with this provision? Why/why not?

Yes

Notes This is absolutely essential to preserve the function of most of Auckland's key ecosystems. Ecosystem based planning including catchment plans, harbour management plans, corridor plans will be important tools for regional and territorial authorities to use. It also gives effect to ki uta ki tai/mountains to sea and is essential to support the protection of highly mobile fauna. A further example could be the need for a light management regional policy in Auckland and nationally to reduce light pollution and reduce the impact of light on seabirds and other biodiversity.

Question 54: If the proposed NPSIB is implemented, then two pieces of National Direction – the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement (NZCPS) and NPSIB – would apply in the landward-coastal environment. Part 1.6 of the proposed NPSIB states that if there is a conflict between instruments the NZCPS prevails. Do you think the proposals in the NPSIB are clear enough for regional councils and territorial authorities to adequately identify and protect SNAs in the landward coastal environment? Why/why not?

Unsure

Notes As the NPSIB is newer, and reflects recent data on biodiversity threats, it follows that the NPSIB should prevail. The NSCPS may no longer be fit for purpose in Auckland where coastal climate effects, pressure from housing growth and treaty redress have changed the context since this policy came into effect.

Question 55: The indicative costs and benefits of the proposed NPSIB for landowners, tangata whenua, councils, stakeholders and central government are set out in the Section 32 Report and Cost Benefit Analysis. Do you think these costs and benefits are accurate? Please explain, and provide examples of costs/benefits if these proposals will affect you or your work.

Not applicable

Question 56: Do you think the proposed NPSIB should include a provision on the use of transferable development rights? Why/why not?

Unsure

Notes In Auckland where development pressure is high, it is always a concern when there are proposals to trade off indigenous biodiversity value. Biodiversity is rarely the winner and this culture has to change. What would be the circumstances under which this could occur? Why would this be permitted when the overall goal is to restore and retain IB? Who would decide whether this could occur or not?

Question 57: What specific information, support or resources would help you implement the provisions in this section? (Section E)

Not applicable

Question 58: What support in general would you require to implement the proposed NPSIB? Please detail.

Other

Notes The Auckland Conservation Board advises DOC on public conservation land matters. The most important tool/support will be a clear communication describing in plain English the changes that the NPSIB requires of Auckland Council, landowners, developers, infrastructure managers and iwi. If this is provided then this enables us to advocate for the policy and its implementation in whatever settings we encounter in the future.

Section F: Statutory frameworks (pgs 89 - 93)

Overall thoughts about Section F:

It is good to see the wide ranging revision of the range of policies outlined in this section with the objective of reversing biodiversity declines and increasing resilience to climate effects. In Auckland it is particularly important that the freshwater, coastal and marine national directives are fit for purpose. The pressure that all indigenous ecosystems are under from growth is unparalleled in New Zealand. There will be significant resistance to change in the Auckland Region and within the territorial authority. Implementation timeframes and monitoring of these milestones will be as important as the policy and planning directives themselves.

Question 59: Do you think a planning standard is needed to support the consistent implementation of some proposals in the proposed NPSIB? If yes, what specific provisions do you consider are effectively delivered via a planning standard tool?

Yes – there should be some national IB “bottom lines” to clearly signal what is appropriate in the NZ context in future.

Question 60: Do you think there are potential areas of tension or confusion between the proposed NPSIB and other National Direction? Why/why not?

Yes

Notes There is and will continue to be tension between biodiversity requirements and infrastructure and housing growth in Auckland. Land use changes have not been managed with biodiversity impacts in mind, which has led us to the current situation of widespread declines. Consider Drury South and its impact on the Manukau harbour, or the impact of farming, development and infrastructure on the Kaipara and northern east coast habitats of Auckland. It would be helpful for the transport, water and housing infrastructure direction to require authorities and other relevant entities to reflect SNAs and biodiversity effects in design decisions.

Question 61: Do you think it is useful for RMA plans to address activities that exacerbate the spread of pests and diseases threatening biodiversity, in conjunction with appropriate national or regional pest plan rules under the Biosecurity Act 1993? Why/why not?

Yes

Notes It is crucial that these two pieces of legislation work together to make it clear to territorial authorities what the expectation is around biosecurity threats to biodiversity.

PLANNED FUTURE EXPENDITURE ON ENVIRONMENTAL AND CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES
(Prior to NPSIB and Action for Healthy Waterways)

Conservation Activity Costs 2020-2025

	Mar-May 2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Pest Animal Control				
Possum Control	\$ 3,800.00	\$ 5,780.00	\$ 1,980.00	\$ 1,980.00
Rat control	\$ 390.00	\$ 3,120.00	\$ 3,120.00	\$ 3,120.00
Mustelid Predator Control		\$ 11,500.00	\$ 11,500.00	\$ 2,500.00
Sub-Total	\$ 4,190.00	\$ 20,400.00	\$ 16,600.00	\$ 7,600.00
Pest Plant Control				
Bush Weed Control	\$ 2,246.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
Waterway Weed Control	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 8,000.00
Sub-Total	\$ 6,246.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
Regeneration				
Plants		\$ 6,500.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
Personnel	\$ 14,250.00	\$ 59,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 62,000.00
Total	\$ 24,686.00	\$ 95,900.00	\$ 92,600.00	\$ 84,600.00

2023-2024	2024-2025	Totals
\$ 5,780.00	\$ 1,980.00	\$ 21,300.00
\$ 3,120.00	\$ 3,120.00	\$ 15,990.00
\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 30,500.00
\$ 11,400.00	\$ 7,600.00	\$ 67,790.00
\$ 2,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 14,246.00
\$ 8,000.00	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 44,000.00
\$ 10,000.00	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 58,246.00
\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 26,500.00
\$ 63,000.00	\$ 65,000.00	\$ 323,250.00
\$ 89,400.00	\$ 88,600.00	\$ 475,786.00
		\$ 475,786.00

PLANNED FUTURE EXPENDITURE ON ENVIRONMENTAL AND CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES
(Prior to NPSIB and Action for Healthy Waterways)

Native Bush Stock Exclusion Costs 2020 – 2025

		Mar-Apr 2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Dairy Farm 1	Kahikateas	\$	40,000.00		
KH	Done Jan-Feb	\$	27,281.38		
	Contingency				
Dairy Farm 2	Kahikateas		\$ 27,000.00		
Aic	Bush			\$ 20,000.00	
	Bush				
	Done Jan-Feb	\$	24,159.58		
	Contingency				
Dairy Farm 3	Kahikateas			\$ 13,500.00	
Ara	Bush			\$ 14,000.00	\$ 35,000.00
	Done Jan-Feb	\$	2,602.00		
	Contingency				
Drystock	Kahikateas		\$ 40,000.00		
	Done Jan-Feb	\$	2,122.78		
	Contingency				
Total		\$	96,165.74	\$	67,000.00
				\$	47,500.00
					\$ 35,000.00

2023-2024	2024-2025	Totals
		\$ 67,281.38 Dairy Farm 1
	\$ -	
		\$ 121,159.58 Dairy Farm 2
\$ 40,000.00		
	\$ 10,000.00	
		\$ 85,102.00 Dairy Farm 3
	\$ 20,000.00	
		\$ 52,122.78 Drystock
	\$ 10,000.00	
\$ 40,000.00	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 325,665.74

3. Conservation Animal and Weed Pest Control

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	29/02/2020	Total
Baits, Stations & Lures	\$ 488	\$ -	\$ 252	\$ 1,337	\$ 2,451	\$ 3,007	\$ 7,536
Sprays	\$ 1,419	\$ 1,346	\$ 217	\$ 522	\$ 1,350	\$ 1,103	\$ 5,956
Ammunition	\$ 1,254	\$ 258	\$ -	\$ 608	\$ 418	\$ -	\$ 2,538
Contractors - Glyceria & Bush	\$ -	\$ 1,538	\$ -	\$ 10,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 4,353	\$ 30,890
Contractors - Possums & Rats				\$ 12,000	\$ 20,000	\$ -	\$ 32,000
Total	\$ 3,161	\$ 3,142	\$ 469	\$ 24,467	\$ 39,219		\$ 78,921
					Weed		\$ 36,847
					Pest		\$ 42,074

4. Drystock Water Reticulation

	YE13	YE14	YE15	YE16	YE17	YE18	YE19	TOTAL
Materials	\$ 22,402	\$ 14,495	\$ 1,028			\$ 14,851	\$ 1,116	\$ 53,893
Pipe Laying	\$ 18,690	\$ 31,975	\$ 2,928			\$ 5,630		\$ 59,223
TOTAL	\$ 41,092	\$ 46,471	\$ 3,955	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20,481	\$ 1,116	\$ 113,116

(iv) ESTIMATED COSTS of ESSENTIAL WATERWAYS FENCING PROPOSAL

	Timing	Dairy Farm 1	Dairy Farm 2	Dairy Farm 3	Dry Stock Farm	Total Costs
New fencing kilometres		4.83	2.525	0.481	17.378	25.214
Proposed New Waterways Fencing by 1/7/21	Summer 2020/21	\$ 86,360	\$ 45,147	\$ 8,600	\$ 86,473	\$ 226,580.61
Proposed New Waterways Fencing by 1/7/23	Summer 2021/22	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 112,415	\$ 112,414.81
	Summer 2022/23	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 233,477	\$ 233,476.91
Total Cost Proposed New Waterways Fencing		\$ 86,360	\$ 45,147	\$ 8,600	\$ 432,365	\$ 572,472
Existing Fencing kilometres to replace		5.1875	5.427	4.968	4.447	20.0295
Removal of Existing Non-Compliant Fencing	Summer 2023/24	\$ 7,781	\$ 8,141			\$ 15,922
Replacing Existing Waterways Fencing by 1/7/25	Summer 2023/24	\$ 92,753	\$ 97,035			\$ 189,787
Removal of Existing Non-Compliant Fencing	Summer 2024/25			\$ 7,452	\$ 6,671	\$ 14,123
Replacing Existing Waterways Fencing by 1/7/25	Summer 2024/25			\$ 88,828	\$ 110,641	\$ 199,469
Total Cost of Replacing Existing Fencing		\$ 100,534	\$ 105,175	\$ 96,280	\$ 117,312	\$ 419,301
Total Cost All Waterways Fencing		\$ 186,894	\$ 150,322	\$ 104,880	\$ 549,677	\$ 991,773
Riparian Planting \$5.50/ plant 4,500/ha	Winter 2021	\$ 119,543	\$ 62,494	\$ 11,905	\$ 86,021	\$ 279,962.10
	Winter 2022	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 111,827	\$ 111,827.43
	Winter 2023	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 232,257	\$ 232,256.97
	Winter 2024	\$ 128,391	\$ 134,318	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 262,708.88
	Winter 2025	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 122,958	\$ 110,063	\$ 233,021.25
Total Cost Riparian Planting Waterway Areas		\$ 247,933	\$ 196,812	\$ 134,863	\$ 540,169	\$ 1,119,777
ESTIMATE OF TOTAL PHYSICAL COSTS		\$ 434,827	\$ 347,134	\$ 239,743	\$ 1,089,845	\$ 2,111,550
CASHFLOW IMPLICATIONS						
Estimated Total Costs by Financial Year	Summer 2020/21	\$ 86,360	\$ 45,147	\$ 8,600	\$ 86,473	\$ 226,581
	FY2022 Winter 2021	\$ 119,543	\$ 62,494	\$ 11,905	\$ 86,021	\$ 279,962
	FY2022 Summer 2021/22	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 112,415	\$ 392,377
	FY2023 Winter 2022	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 111,827	\$ 111,827
	FY2023 Summer 2022/23	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 233,477	\$ 345,304
	FY2024 Winter 2023	\$ 128,391	\$ 134,318	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 262,709
	FY2024 Summer 2023/24	\$ 92,753	\$ 97,035	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 452,496
	FY2025 Winter 2024	\$ 128,391	\$ 134,318	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 262,709
	FY2025 Summer 2024/25	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 88,828	\$ 110,641	\$ 462,178
	FY2026 Winter 2025	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 122,958	\$ 110,063	\$ 233,021
ADDITIONAL LOSSES						
Lost Income from Retirement of Productive Land		\$ 49,810	\$ 39,540	\$ 27,095	\$ 108,525	\$ 224,970
		\$ 484,637	\$ 386,674	\$ 266,838	\$ 1,198,370	\$ 2,336,520
Lost Land Value in Non-Productive Land		\$ 300,525	\$ 238,560	\$ 163,470	\$ 436,500	\$ 1,139,055
		\$ 785,162	\$ 625,234	\$ 430,308	\$ 1,634,870	\$ 3,475,575
Devalued Land Value		\$ 100,175	\$ 79,520	\$ 54,490	\$ 218,250	\$ 452,435
Lost Fencing Asset Value		\$ 34,776	\$ 25,344	\$ 112,468	\$ 20,767	\$ 193,356

2. Wetland and Waterway Stock Exclusion

	DAIRY FARM 2	DAIRY FARM 3	DAIRY FARM 1	DRYSTOCK	TOTAL
Major WW - Stock Excluded	0	4.417	3.262	10.552	18.231
Minor WW - Stock Excluded	5.427	0.551	4.372	4.447	14.797
Total Stock Excluded - kilometres	5.427	4.968	7.634	14.999	33.028
Major WW - Not Stock Excluded	0	0	0	17.378	17.378
Minor WW - Not Stock Excluded	2.525	0.481	4.83		7.836
Total Not Stock Excluded - kilometres	2.525	0.481	4.83	17.378	25.214
Total Waterways - kilometres	10.477	5.93	17.294	49.755	58.242

Cost Estimate of Fencing Completed

	DAIRY FARM 2	DAIRY FARM 3	DAIRY FARM 1	DRYSTOCK	TOTAL
Conventional Wire & Batten	\$ -	\$ 109,894.96	\$ 19,542.84	\$ -	\$ 129,437.80
2 wire electric	\$ 25,344.09	\$ 2,573.17	\$ 15,233.54	\$ 20,767.49	\$ 63,918.29
Total Cost	\$ 25,344.09	\$ 112,468.13	\$ 34,776.38	\$ 20,767.49	\$ 193,356.09

Note: Major stock exclusion kms include those waterways in fenced native bush

Fencing cost excludes costs of native bush fencing

(iii) COST OF SUBMITTERS' ON-FARM ENVIRONMENTAL AND CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES

1. Native Bush Stock Exclusion Costs 2011 - 2020 (end February)

Dairy Farm 1	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Labour	\$ 18,046	\$ 40,325	\$ 3,671	\$ 1,220		\$ 1,320				\$ 7,425
Tractor	\$ 345	\$ 1,531	\$ 788	\$ 525		\$ 960				\$ 5,178
Materials	\$ 15,522	\$ 22,705	\$ 7,263			\$ 1,179				\$ 14,679
Total	\$ 33,913	\$ 64,561	\$ 11,721	\$ 1,745		\$ 3,459	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 27,281
Dry Stock Farm										
Labour				\$ 26,478	\$ 35,860	\$ 19,276	\$ 24,550	\$ 21,848	\$ 17,725	\$ -
Tractor				\$ 12,413	\$ 9,831	\$ 9,328	\$ 9,988	\$ 9,520	\$ 14,288	\$ -
Earthmoving				\$ 2,290	\$ 3,220	\$ 5,666	\$ 4,155	\$ 3,295	\$ 3,067	\$ -
Materials				\$ 26,991	\$ 19,696	\$ 11,600	\$ 19,351	\$ 31,598	\$ 32,074	\$ 2,123
Fence Posts							\$ 6,309			
Total			\$ -	\$ 68,171	\$ 68,607	\$ 45,870	\$ 64,352	\$ 66,260	\$ 67,154	\$ 2,123
Dairy Farm 2										
Labour				\$ 3,620		\$ 2,380			\$ 34,350	\$ 14,275
Tractor				\$ 1,988		\$ 960			\$ 19,760	\$ 9,738
Materials				\$ 1,179		\$ 11,059	\$ 623		\$ 5,376	\$ 147
Total				\$ 6,786	\$ -	\$ 14,399	\$ 623	\$ -	\$ 59,486	\$ 24,160
Dairy Farm 3										
Labour			\$ 44,779	\$ 9,602						
Tractor			\$ 10,290	\$ 2,138						
Digger			\$ 1,050	\$ -						
Materials			\$ 26,754	\$ 8,033					\$ 4,566	\$ 2,602
Total			\$ 82,873	\$ 19,772	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,566	\$ 2,602
Total	\$ 33,913	\$ 64,561	\$ 94,594	\$ 96,474	\$ 68,607	\$ 63,728	\$ 64,976	\$ 66,260	\$ 131,205	\$ 56,166

Total

\$ 72,007
\$ 9,326
\$ 61,348
\$ 142,681 \$ 142,681

\$ 145,736
\$ 65,366
\$ 21,693
\$ 143,433
\$ 6,309
\$ 382,537 \$ 382,537

\$ 54,625
\$ 32,445
\$ 18,383
\$ 105,453 \$ 105,453

\$ 54,381
\$ 12,427
\$ 1,050
\$ 41,955
\$ 109,813 \$ 109,813

\$ 740,484 \$ 740,484