Department	Board
Policy #	
Title	Kauri Dieback Disease
Last Reviewed	May 2020

Forest & Bird

TE REO O TE TAIAO | *Giving Nature a Voice*

Kauri Dieback Disease Policy

Policy Purpose

Kauri trees are a common component of our northern native forests and are keystone species that play significant ecosystem roles impacting on soil chemistry and the forests' biodiversity. There are many native species (e.g. at least 17 native plants) that only occur in association with kauri. It is therefore crucial that the spread of Kauri Dieback Disease; Phytophthora agathidicida (PA), which is a soil borne pathogen spread by water and any vectors that move soil, including animals and people, is slowed and contained, and that areas free of the disease are fully protected and remain healthy.

As humans are a significant vector for PA an important part of preventing its spread must be to prevent human spread of PA within infected forests and the introduction of PA into uninfected forests. The use of forest closures is an important tool.

Forest & Bird is a key stakeholder representing a community interest in protecting kauri and is a landowner of kauri forest. We have advocated for strong measures to protect kauri from PA and have closed all our reserves with kauri (while ensuring pest control can be safely carried on by certified people) in order to provide protection to them. This policy applies to Forest & Bird reserves as well as public and private land.

Feral/wild introduced animals such as pigs, deer, goats and possibly possums as well as wallabies (in the Bay of Plenty) are potential vectors of PA. Therefore, an important part of protecting kauri forests is resourcing of introduced mammalian pest control in all areas of kauri forest and in all areas adjacent to kauri forests. Pest control overall helps support a healthy forest ecosystem and while it needs to be carefully managed to prevent the spread or introduction of PA, it does significantly contribute to protecting kauri.

Forest & Bird believes that phytosanitary stations will not prevent the spread of PA because:

- people seldom have perfectly clean shoes
- current chemicals do not kill PA oospores
- many people do not use these stations, or do not use them properly
- unless tracks are constructed to a dry foot standard PA can still be moved along the track
- the measures do not prevent the spread of PA within those forests

Even where adherence with phytosanitary measures at forest entry-exit points is achieved it will not prevent spread within a forest if PA is already present.

PA will spread within forests due to natural spread of the disease through soil movement in water courses, as well as across the soil surface and through root to root contact.

It is likely that many other species are also at risk of PA. There has been limited research on the host range to date, but this has indicated that tanekaha and rewarewa are affected by PA.

Climate change impacts including temperature rise and drought will increase stress and therefore the threat to kauri, although PA kills healthy trees, so other stresses are not a necessary precursor to the threat posed by PA.

There is a strong desire for recreation in forests which makes exclusion unpalatable but threatens to “kill the things we love”.

Policy

In its advocacy to central, regional and local government and to the public on effective implementation measures to deal with PA, Forest & Bird promotes:

- the use of forest closure, including supporting iwi and hapu-led rāhui with legal closure and enforcement, until the National Kauri Dieback Track Standard is met, and effective phytosanitary measures are in place that prevents further disease spread
- that all Regional Pest Management Plans should apply to all land tenures (including land under DOC management) and include:
- the requirement and resources for introduced mammalian pest control in all areas of kauri forest and in all areas adjacent to kauri forests. This pest control in kauri forests must be carried out using techniques that minimise the possibility of disease spread and prevent disease introduction to healthy forests.
- 'kauri dieback disease exclusion zones' for areas known to be disease-free in order to have in place measures, including forest closures, to keep the disease out of these areas.
- measures that allow for native biodiversity management operations including pest control in areas closed to the public, subject to appropriate hygiene protocols and techniques that minimise the possibility of disease spread.
- controls and restrictions on dog and stock access to kauri forests or reserves with kauri trees.
- effective compliance and enforcement measures, including appropriate training of pest control personnel
- regular and independent auditing of all agencies, staff, contractors, concessionaires, volunteers and public to assess compliance to all hygiene standard operating procedures and other biosecurity measures that are in place to stop the spread of PA and protect healthy kauri
- regular and robust surveillance of disease status.
- that regional and local councils will restrict and manage all earthworks, including development, tracks, roading, mining, etc. within kauri forests to minimise the possibility of disease spread and prevent disease introduction to healthy forests.
- a significant investment in regular surveillance and monitoring of the distribution and spread of PA.
- research into the impacts of PA on kauri and other forests and related flora and fauna and the effectiveness of PA control tools and introduced animal pest control operations in kauri and adjacent forests.
- the application of research results and mātauranga maori to all aspects of kauri dieback management.
- protection of high value kauri germplasm and planting of kauri trees with reduced susceptibility to PA in uninfected areas.

- introduction of a biosecurity accreditation system for all nurseries and plant producers supplying native plants (including but not limited to kauri) for revegetation, restoration and consent planting programmes to minimise spread of PA through nursery and planting activities.
- that no more kauri should be consented to be logged under 'sustainable' kauri logging permits.
- that research be adequately resourced into techniques to protect, treat and if possible, cure kauri that has been infected by PA.

Approval

Function	Role
Forest & Bird Governance	Forest & Bird Board
Forest & Bird Policy Owner	Forest & Bird Board
Contact Person	Richard Hursthouse (Forest & Bird Board Member)

Record of Reviews/Updates of this Policy

Date	Nature of Amendment
Approved May 2020 **Date for review TBC**	

Signed

Richard Hursthouse
Board member, Forest & Bird

Date: ____ /____/_____