



WHAT WE HEARD

SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK ON THE
FUTURE MANAGEMENT OF KAURI
DIEBACK DISEASE





Between 25 June and 16 July 2018, the Kauri Dieback Management Programme¹ asked for ideas to protect kauri through the future management of kauri dieback disease. We received more than 80 pieces of written feedback and over 500 pieces of verbal feedback from the seven public hui held across kauri lands.

Several themes have emerged from the feedback received. This has given us a big picture view that we'll use to refresh New Zealand's strategy for managing kauri dieback disease.

¹ The programme is a partnership between Biosecurity New Zealand (part of Ministry for Primary Industries), Department of Conservation, Auckland Council, Waikato Regional Council, Northland Regional Council, Bay of Plenty Regional Council, Te Roroa (tangata whenua for Waipoua Forest), and Tangata Whenua Roopu (representative body for iwi/hapu with an interest in kauri lands).

THE BIG PICTURE

What you told us:

- Managing kauri dieback disease is a complex and urgent problem requiring a long-term solution. Climate change and whole of forest health were repeatedly raised and many spoke strongly about the response to kauri dieback needing to embrace a broader, more holistic understanding of what causes dieback and the kind of responses needed.
 - Many people told us that urgent action is needed to protect kauri. They want the opportunity to be involved and were frustrated by a perceived lack of action to manage kauri dieback.
 - Kauri forest management is the biggest concern for the public. There was no general agreement about how this should be done. Making good decisions about how forests are to be managed and developing standard operating protocols for people using the land, including, for example, the mandatory use of hygiene stations, was important for many.
 - Management of kauri dieback disease involves many different people – from hapu/whanau and community groups, to local councils and central government. We were told all these people and groups need to be included in the response, information needs to be shared between them, and they need to be given a voice when making decisions about how we respond to the disease. There was strong desire for local solutions and local leadership in responding to the disease.
 - Western science and matauranga Māori need to work hand-in-hand to address gaps in our knowledge about kauri dieback. We need to communicate it better, we need to look at how we can apply the science to practical solutions, how we can use matauranga Māori better and to make this an inclusive part of the learning process. And that social and behavioural science is as important as the 'hard' science.
 - There is a lot of good work going on, a lot of good will out there and a lot of philanthropic interest in protecting kauri. These resources, both human and financial, need to be tapped and used in a way that builds greater capabilities and capacity on the ground. The future body that is ultimately responsible for looking after the kauri dieback response will need to be well-placed to tap into these resources to bring together communities of people and interests for the good of kauri.
-

- Increased and sustained public awareness raising and education campaigns are required about kauri dieback, including up-to-date information about the science, matauranga Māori, affected forests, aerial surveillance, funding opportunities, and activities on the ground.
- Community education and engagement are key, and the community should be driving the programme with a much stronger focus on community at the centre. You told us to use what we learn and create resources that can be used by people to share their knowledge. And to create a community of active learning that includes matauranga Māori, 'hard' science, and practical solutions.



RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS ASKED DURING CONSULTATION

What has worked well?

We heard many of you say that the recent media coverage of kauri dieback is positive, bringing much needed attention to kauri dieback. Some independent organisations were seen to be working well with communities to identify solutions. Track upgrades and introduction of new and improved hygiene stations were also well received, as were the public education materials, especially those produced for schools. There was also support for national branding and the efforts made to work across the sector, bringing in different partners including those that are part of the programme.

What needs to be done differently to protect kauri?

Funding was an issue raised by many – there needs to be more of it and available regularly, and it needs to be accounted for publicly. Many identified science (including behavioural and social science) as being a funding priority, and many saw funding for matauranga Māori as important. There was also recognition that more money was needed for operational activities (such as track upgrades to get them reopened to the public as soon as possible) and also to support community engagement, and the work that many community groups are currently doing voluntarily.

Vectors – humans, pigs, and pests generally – and how we manage them is the issue that drew the most feedback. Pest control in particular was a consistent theme across all kauri regions. Many highlighted the need to widen the pool of people we are talking to and include tramping clubs, farmers, and other people working with and in the forests with kauri. There was a general sentiment that there was huge untapped resource in people who live and work in the forests and have intimate engagement with the land. In this sense, iwi and hapu engagement was seen as an area that needs a stronger focus to ensure engagement is consistent and representative and opportunities of matauranga Māori are fully realised.

Similarly there were comments that communication about the programme could be improved. Lastly, there was a feeling that private land owners had been ignored and that many were desperate to protect their currently dieback-free kauri but were being offered little support.

Where are the gaps?

Consistently, there was feedback that the programme had not engaged well with Māori and this remains a gap. Greater involvement of Māori and community in managing kauri dieback was expressed by many as both a gap and an opportunity. There were many things that communities – both individuals and groups – could be involved in. Community involvement in scientific monitoring was also raised as a gap.

Science, again, came through strongly, especially science that could be used to inform practical situations that communities could adopt and innovate on.

Private land is currently being overlooked and landowners want solutions for how to manage kauri dieback disease on their land. Better coordination between the Department of Conservation (DOC) and local councils in particular, but also Biosecurity New Zealand (part of the Ministry for Primary Industries) and other programme partners, was raised as well.

Other points raised was the need to broaden our understanding of kauri dieback ecology, to focus on compliance (especially at hygiene stations), to look at international learnings, to have stronger leadership and direction, and a stronger social media presence.

What are the practical actions you think need to happen first?

A strong theme was the need to give some immediate support and options to private landowners.

Many called for the closure of all tracks with an expedited track upgrade and reopening schedule. Closure of all kauri forests – at least until the science catches up – is considered by some people to be the only way of eliminating the risk of kauri extinction. This involves changing behaviour, using social science to appeal to the ‘hearts and minds’ of people, and establishing alternative forest walkways. Other people were opposed to closing kauri forests, speaking to the importance of maintaining high-quality opportunities for recreation and interaction with kauri forests.

More and better information at each park and track entrance, more public education and more pest control were all things that people said needed to happen now. Protocols for nurseries, particularly community ones, were needed as well as cheaper options for predator proof fencing. The creation of sanctuaries or exclusion areas for currently kauri dieback free areas was important, especially to those that currently owned or managed land where this was the case. Supporting enviro-school teachers and investing in educational materials and learning programmes, such as a guided tour by DOC through kauri lands, could be used to build an emotional connection to the forest (something many felt might be lost if the tracks remained closed for too long).

Are the vision and goals for managing kauri dieback disease still relevant?

Most felt that the vision was still relevant but that the goals and outcomes needed to be tightened up, made less “woolly” and more specific, and that they needed to be measurable.

If the problem of kauri dieback disease isn't solved, how will it impact your community?

The sentiment was consistent across the board – loss, sadness, disappointment, loss of knowledge, devastation - not just locally but globally. There was a strong acknowledgement that kauri is a cornerstone species upon which so many other species depend on for their existence.

WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

We're using what we heard during this first consultation round to draft a refreshed strategy for managing kauri dieback disease. This will inform how the National Pest Management Plan can best support the work to protect kauri.

There are two more rounds of consultation this year to hear what you have to say. In August, we'll ask for feedback on:

- the refreshed draft strategy
 - what you think should be in the National Pest Management Plan, including high level options for the management agency that will implement the Plan
 - delivery of the National Pest Management Plan.
-

