

Date 9 October 2013

About

## KAURI DIEBACK PROGRAMME INDEPENDENT REVIEW - SUMMARY REPORT



---

### Key points

- ➔ It is time for the programme to shift gear, and move from being a 'shared service' assisting the agencies, to a **fully collaborative approach** with an over-arching plan, standardised processes, peer review, and system-wide performance reporting.
- ➔ The greatest challenge in the next phase is to help manage PTA on private land. Support, incentives and regulation will be required. A **nationally consistent approach** is necessary.
- ➔ The programme attempts to work in **partnership with tangata whenua and communities**. But, for a number of reasons, this does not always translate into consistent action on the ground.
- ➔ Current **resources** are struggling to meet current activities. And they will be inadequate to meet the challenges of regulating PTA on private land or co-funding long-term research.
- ➔ Stronger **planning** and practical business **systems** are urgently required.
- ➔ The current programme provides a commendable basis for the next stage of work. **Doing more of the same will continue to produce results. But not at the pace required to adequately protect our kauri forests.**

---

### Background

- 1 The Kauri Dieback Programme was established in 2009 following the discovery of *Phytophthora taxon Agathis* (PTA). It has been governed by a Leadership Team chaired by MPI and with representation from the tangata Whenua Roopu and MPI, DoC, Northland Auckland, Waikato and Bay of Plenty regional councils ('the delivery partners'). Government and regional councils allocated a total of all the requested resources (\$12.6 m).<sup>a b</sup>
- 2 This independent review was funded the Tindall Foundation. It aimed to provide "a credible, independent view of the progress the programme has made, opportunities for improvement and suggested direction for the future". Although the contract for this assignment was managed through MPI, this review has been conducted independently of all the parties to the programme.

---

### Review findings

#### Achievements

- 3 The programme has made steady progress in a number of areas:
  - Momentum is most visible in publicly owned areas where regional councils and DoC own the land and directly control its access and use. In significant parts of the public estate hygiene measures have been instituted and tracks upgraded to reduce the risk of PTA transmission. A few areas have been closed to the public.
  - Mapping and surveillance activities are progressing, albeit much slower than planned. Knowledge about the distribution of PTA is slowly improving. Risk assessments are being conducted and site management plans are gradually being implemented on sites that have tested positive for PTA.
  - Scientists are learning more about PTA, its genetics, and its relationship to other phytophthora. They have developed diagnostic methods and surveillance resources, hygiene methods, and are trialling one treatment method to determine the best dosage and application regime.
  - TWR has established strong networks with tāngata whenua across 'kaurilands'. The TWR has representatives who are partners in governing the programme, and many of its members are active contributors to the workstreams. Mātauranga is valued alongside Western science.
  - Iwi and community engagement is building. There is increasing awareness of kauri dieback.

- 4 But progress has not always been smooth. It took far longer than planned to establish the surveillance and mapping work. The transition from 'response' to 'long-term management' was disjointed. The lead researcher died, and the science programme faltered. And resourcing has been tight.
- 5 While there is still considerable uncertainty about PTA and its control, there is a real sense of confidence that, while it cannot be eradicated, it can be successfully contained and managed. While the programme's participants are optimistic, its current resourcing and informal approaches are not sufficient to deliver long-term success.

### **Improvements**

- 6 The review found that, while the approach has worked until now, it is not sufficient for the future:
  - The people involved in the programme have been pragmatic and have focused on getting things done. Better planning is now required to get the best long-term impact from the available resources.
  - Those people are enthusiastic and hardworking, but this is not sustainable. The programme would face difficulties if key people left. The review recommends investment in better systems as well as more resources.
  - Delivery partners should also implement a structured peer review process to constructively challenge and support each other.
  - To date research resources have been targeted at immediate problems. PTA requires longer-term research across a wider front: the PTA organism, kauri biology, and the kauri forest environment and social research.
- 7 The review observed that while the programme aims to be collaborative and system wide it currently operates more as a set of shared services that support the participating organisations. The review recommends that the programme fully embrace a collaborative approach where
  - clear long-term and annual plans are prepared across the programme (not just the 'shared services team')
  - key processes are standardised, and successes and lessons in each of the participating organisations would help improve knowledge and practice
  - structured peer review between the organisations to recognise achievement and promote good practice
  - the programme reports on system-wide achievements and performance.
- 8 When the initial business case was approved, \$12.6 m seemed a reasonable starting point. \$0.5m was lost to the programme due to timing problems. Delivery partners have provided some cash, but have committed significant in-kind resources from biosecurity staff in regional councils and scientists in CRIs and universities. The review recommends that the programme be benchmarked against international phytophthora management efforts. It is likely that more work will be necessary to successfully contain PTA, and more resources will be required.
- 9 Although progress is being made on public land controlled by DoC and regional councils, a systematic approach is needed for the containment of PTA on private land. This will require a mix of advice, supports, incentives and regulation. While solutions will need to be tailored to the risks in each area, and the circumstances of each landowner, a nationally consistent approach is required, whether through a National Pest Management Plan or a pan-regional approach.
- 10 The programme has successfully engaged tangata whenua and community groups in area assessments and public awareness activities. Tangata whenua often have detailed knowledge of their areas, and are well placed to assist with planning and monitoring. They certainly need to be involved in agreeing to a rahui (closure) or to restricting land use. The programme's approach has not always been consistent. At times it has adopted a community development model where it works with tangata whenua to use their local knowledge, and build their expertise. But at other times the willingness around the leadership team has not translated into action on the ground through the 6 delivery partners. The review recommends that, wherever practicable, the programme adopt a partnership model, and monitor 'on the ground' practice. <sup>c</sup>
- 11 The programme has benefits far wider than kauri. The programme is extending New Zealand's ability to manage other phytophthora - this in turn contributes to exports. The programme is also mobilising the knowledge and energy of tāngata whenua and community organisations. This reduces the burden for delivery partners. And the programme can also contribute to our knowledge and protection of native ecosystems.

---

a The allocation (over 6 years) was \$5.5 m in cash, \$6.1 m for pest control and track upgrades, and approximately \$1.0 m in staff related costs. The approximate share between the partners was: Auckland Council \$4.6 m, Northland RC \$0.3 m, Waikato RC \$0.2 m, Bay of Plenty RC \$ 0.1 m, MAF / MPI \$4.5 m, DoC \$3.0 m. The bulk of Auckland Council and DoC expenditure was on pest control and track upgrades. Due to timing problems only \$4.0m of the MAF allocation was drawn down from the allocation.

b Inconsistent figures have been provided by MPI and this review is based on the latest financial information supplied.

c However the review also points out that this will not work with all community organisations and tangata whenua groups.