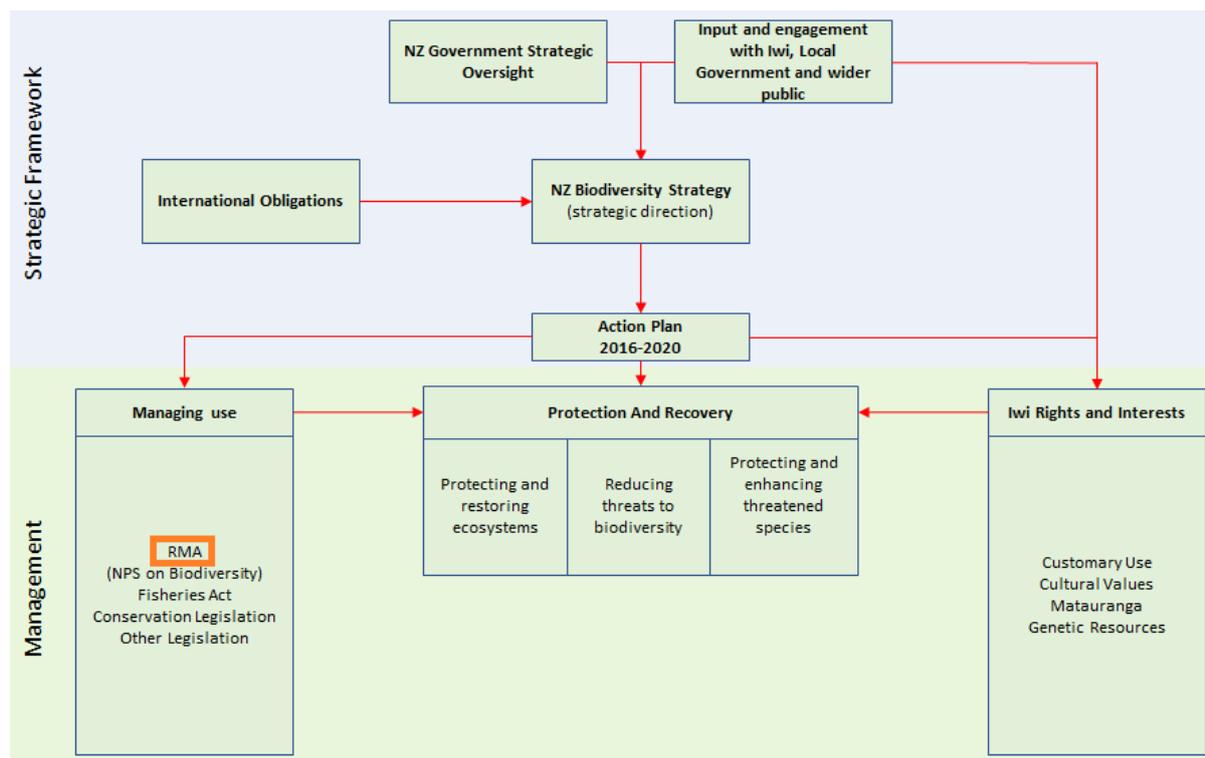


Where an NPS fits in New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy

Purpose: This document addresses the question “where does an NPS for indigenous biodiversity fit within the New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy?” by mapping New Zealand’s biodiversity management system against the Strategy, and making links from the Strategy to the RMA, and specifically an NPS.

Map of New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy

To illustrate the strategic context for biodiversity management and the Biodiversity Strategy, the following draft diagram is useful:



Management of Biodiversity across Domains

Biodiversity responsibilities sit across a number of agencies and domains, with habitat loss being the main biodiversity issue the RMA can influence. An NPS will guide the management and exercise of functions in relation to biodiversity.

The following table sets out the responsibilities of biodiversity management, with light blue being the areas an NPS under the RMA can direct:

Biodiversity responsibilities	Marine	Coastal (to 12 nautical miles)	Public conservation land (PCL)	Other land	Freshwater
MfE – Sets framework for others through RMA and EEZ	EEZ Act – activities in Marine area	RMA	RMA for activities on PCL	RMA	RMA and NPS for Freshwater Management
Regional councils – Implement the RMA (function to maintain)		RMA - Habitat of fauna and vegetation, activities	RMA - Some responsibility for activities on PCL	RMA - Habitat of fauna and vegetation, activities	RMA - Habitat of fauna and vegetation, activities
City/District councils – Implement the RMA (function to maintain)		RMA - Habitat of fauna and vegetation, activities	RMA - Some responsibility for activities on PCL	RMA - Habitat of fauna and vegetation, activities	
EPA – National consenting under the RMA, and managing the environmental effects of activities in the EEZ	Impact from human activities/major developments	Impact from human activities/major developments	Impact from human activities/major developments	Impact from human activities/major developments	
DOC – Manage protected wildlife, manage PCL and advocacy on private land	Marine Protected Areas,, and wildlife	NZCPS, ecosystem, species and wildlife	Ecosystem, species, wildlife, activities, bio-threats	Wildlife, advocacy for biodiversity	Ecosystem, species, wildlife, and fisheries
MPI – Manage fisheries, offer programmes relating to primary industries and land use, including incentives	Fisheries	Fisheries	Bio-threats	Bio-threats Incentives relating to land use (such as forestry and agriculture)	Fisheries

Biodiversity Strategy, Action Plan and the RMA

New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy

The New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy 2000-2012¹ was published in February 2000 to fulfil New Zealand’s obligations under the Convention on Biological Diversity, taking on the goal on halting the decline of New Zealand’s indigenous biodiversity.

The Strategy notes in its summary of issues for protecting ecosystems and habitats:²

Many distinctive natural habitats and ecosystems are under-represented in New Zealand’s protected area network, including lowland and coastal forest remnants,

¹ <http://www.doc.govt.nz/nature/biodiversity/nz-biodiversity-strategy-and-action-plan/new-zealand-biodiversity-strategy-2000-2020/>.

² At 37.

dunelands, natural shrublands, wetlands, and lowland tussocklands. Many of these habitats are scarce, located on private land and vulnerable to further loss.

- There is a need for the consistent identification of significant remnant natural habitats through enhanced survey and assessment programmes and coordinated databases, to determine relative biodiversity value and therefore national and local protection priorities.
- Resource Management Act (RMA) provisions to promote the protection of significant indigenous vegetation and habitats have not been effectively implemented across New Zealand. This is due to: difficulties in defining the meaning of “significant”; the lack of clarity over values to be protected; uncertainty over the right mix of rules and non-regulatory methods; ineffective consultation with landowners; resourcing problems in local authorities; and unresolved issues relating to private property rights, community benefit and cost sharing.
- Regulation alone is not a preferred option to protect remnant natural areas on private land. Many landowners actively manage remnant habitats now and want to be acknowledged for, and assisted in, what they are doing. Landowners generally don’t react positively to being told what to do on their land, therefore regulation is likely to be counterproductive and also risks losing many private “conservators” across the country. Nor is it possible to monitor and enforce a regulation-based regime on the scale that would be necessary. Securing the willing and active participation of landowners is therefore pivotal to sustaining indigenous biodiversity on private land.
- The use of incentives to facilitate voluntary protection of indigenous biodiversity on private land has not been fully explored or tapped, despite the significant progress made through the Nature Heritage Fund, Nga Whenua Rahui, the Queen Elizabeth II (QEII) Trust, and regional initiatives such as the Taranaki Tree Trust.
- Existing funding cannot meet current demands on the Nature Heritage Fund, Nga Whenua Rahui and QEII Trust, nor provide assistance for ongoing pest management to maintain biodiversity values in areas protected through these mechanisms.
- Unsustainable logging of indigenous forests on Crown-managed land may be inconsistent with goals to conserve and sustainably use indigenous biodiversity.

It goes on to say that to sustain indigenous biodiversity in privately managed areas and in freshwater environments:³

Although regulation can only provide part of the answer, clear national guidance through a national policy statement on biodiversity under the RMA and linked to current sustainable land and freshwater management initiatives, will better enable councils to contribute to national priorities for biodiversity conservation.

³ At 129.

NOT GOVERNMENT POLICY: prepared to inform discussions of the Biodiversity Collaborative Group

New Zealand Biodiversity Action Plan 2016-2020

The New Zealand Biodiversity Action Plan 2016-2020⁴ was published in 2016 as an update for the last four years of the Biodiversity Strategy.

It contains one action relevant to the RMA, recommending an NPS at Action 7.1: “By 2020, a National Policy Statement on Indigenous Biodiversity will provide national direction to councils on managing biodiversity under the Resource Management Act 1991.”

⁴ <http://www.doc.govt.nz/nature/biodiversity/nz-biodiversity-strategy-and-action-plan/new-zealand-biodiversity-action-plan/>.