

Report 11.563
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Committee Environmental Wellbeing Committee
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Regional Pest Management Strategy 2002-2022: Operational Plan Report 2010/11

1. Purpose

To report on the performance of the 2010/11 Operational Plan for implementation of the Regional Pest Management Strategy 2002-2022 (RPMS 2022-2022).

2. The decision-making process and significance

The matter requiring decision in this report has been considered by officers against the requirements of Part 6 of the Local Government Act 2002.

2.1 Significance of the decision

Officers have considered the significance of the matter, taking the Council's significance policy and decision making guidelines into account. Officers recommend that the matter is considered to have low significance.

Officers do not consider that a formal record outlining consideration of the decision making process is required in this instance.

3. Background

As the Management Agency that has approved the RPMS 2002-2022, the Council is required to prepare an annual Operational Plan under Section 85 of the Biosecurity Act 1993. Furthermore, the Management Agency must prepare a report on the plan and its implementation no later than five months after the end of each financial year. The report is to be made available to the public and a copy forwarded to the relevant Minister(s).

The Council approved the current RPMS 2002-2022 on 17 September 2002. The statutory five year review of the RPMS 2002-2022 was approved by Council on 12 June 2009. The reviewed RPMS is based on current knowledge of the targeted plant and animal pest species biology and contemporary pest control methods available.

The Biosecurity Act does provide for an option to use the Annual Plan reporting process to provide details on performance against the RPMS Operational Plan objectives. However, Greater Wellington (GW) considered it more transparent to use a separate reporting process where greater detail can be included on performance, trends, issues and expenditure for scrutiny by ratepayers.

4. The Operational Plan Report - Highlights

The proposed Operational Plan Report 2010/11 is enclosed separately as Attachment 1. This is the ninth progress report detailing performance against the objectives in the RPMS 2002-2022 and the second report on the progress of the reviewed RPMS.

During 2010/11, resources continued to be focused on Total Control and Site-Led species. Great advances have occurred in the effective management of a wide variety of pests. This has consequently resulted in enhanced biodiversity values over large parts of the region. The work has been supported by landowners, care groups and territorial authorities (TAs).

Staff continued with intensive field surveys around Total Control pest sites. The delimiting survey effort, covering 890 properties, resulted in increased numbers of new pest plant infestations being recorded, together with a corresponding increase in awareness of these pests by affected landowners.

Relationships with key stakeholders continue to be strengthened. Work with TAs in Key Native Ecosystems (KNE) and reserves was expanded, but is now restricted by funding availability.

Joint work programmes continued with the Department of Conservation and Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

The rook control programme was very successful this year with favourable weather patterns able to be utilised. It was encouraging that rabbits remain at low levels generally, with the rabbit calicivirus disease (RCD) continuing to cycle.

Responsibility for pest control outside of KNEs and TA reserves remains largely with landowners and occupiers, making education and communication an essential part of the control programme. GW has a duty to ensure these parties are aware of their responsibilities and have the appropriate knowledge and skills to address biosecurity risks. Staff continued to encourage public awareness about biosecurity matters through various communication initiatives including numerous newspaper articles, presentations and attendance at A&P shows and field days. Staff also continued to update a suite of GW publications and the GW website on pest species.

A well informed public is essential for the achievement of both national and regional biosecurity objectives. Biosecurity agencies simply do not have enough resources to detect all potential pest incursions and pest spread in a timely manner. New areas of control such as invertebrates, marine and aquatic

organisms are placing further pressure on staff and resources. Increased public knowledge is contributing to an increased number of new pest infestations being notified. This necessitates an ongoing need to reprioritise national and regional work programmes to ensure adequate control is maintained on key species.

Responding to client enquiries is a major function of GW staff under the RPMS 2002-2022. In 2010/11, staff responded to 1166 individual enquiries from the public. Many of these involved site visits and the supply of advice and equipment.

The attached 2010/11 RPMS Operational Plan Report contains separate Pest Animal and Pest Plant sections with an outline of performance against key activity objectives, an overview of major strategy issues encountered during the year, details on biodiversity support programmes, and ecological and trend monitoring activities.

5. Communication

Public notices will be issued to inform the public that the RPMS Operational Plan Report 2010/11 is available for inspection.

Copies will be forwarded to the appropriate Ministers for their review and comment.

6. Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. ***Approves the Operational Plan Report 2010/11 (Attachment 1) for the Regional Pest Management Strategy 2002-2022.***
2. ***Notes that a copy of the Operational Plan Report 2010/11 will be forwarded to the relevant Ministers.***
3. ***Notes that the Operational Plan Report 2010/11 will be made available for public inspection.***

Report prepared by:

Report approved by:



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Wayne O'Donnell
General Manager, Catchment Management

Attachment 1: Operational Plan Report 2010/11 for the Regional Pest Management Strategy 2002-2022 (enclosed separately)