

NZ Native Forests Restoration Trust

STRATEGIC PLAN

2014-2016

18th December 2013



New Zealand Native Forests
Restoration Trust

Operating Environment

At the time the NZ Native Forests Restoration Trust was founded in 1980 wholesale destruction of native forests was common and there was an urgent need to protect what was left. The rate of forest logging and clearance has since slowed as more people have become aware of the value of conserving New Zealand's natural heritage and legislation changes have reflected that.

The Resource management Act enacted in 1991 placed more restrictions on the use of natural resources. New Zealand pledged to play its part to halt the decline of global biodiversity at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992. The State of New Zealand's Environment report published in 1997 warned that biodiversity decline was our "most pervasive environmental issue". The New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy published in 2000 committed governments to support communities to take responsibility for conserving and sustainably using biodiversity. Large scale destruction of native forest is no longer considered acceptable but it is still legal to remove up to 2 hectares of native forest on private land each year and so although clearance has slowed there is still a risk that scarce high value habitats will continue to decline, especially where cattle and other farmed stock are permitted unrestricted access.

Since 1992 there has been a growing trend of organisations and individuals following the example of NZNFRT in protecting forest, planting trees, clearing weeds and trapping pests. These organisations have been supported from a wide range of funding sources from private trusts to ministerial funds such as the Nature Heritage Fund and the Biodiversity Condition and Advice Funds. However the statistics on biodiversity decline are still alarming with nearly 3000 species listed as threatened or deficient in data and not enough funding available to protect them from continued habitat loss.

NZNFRT, as one of the larger private conservation land owners in the country and with a track record of acquiring, protecting and restoring land of high biodiversity value, is in a unique position to promote community responsibility for conservation, to forge partnerships with other organisations and individuals working in restoration activities and to continue to lead by example.

Issues and objectives

The core problem that NZNFRT is trying to solve is:

The continued loss of biodiversity through habitat destruction and high numbers of non-native predators and invasive plants.

Core strengths of NZNFRT

Independence
Commitment
Knowledge
Experience
Achievements

Vision

New Zealand's indigenous habitats are universally valued and restored so that all native flora and fauna are flourishing in self sustaining environments

Mission

NZNFRT is a land-holding trust that encourages and undertakes native habitat restoration and preservation.

Objectives

- To acquire land of biodiversity value and reduce loss of native habitats
- To protect and enhance biodiversity values on Trust owned land
- To support other community initiatives which contribute to Trust objectives

Key functions and values

NZNFRT Trustees come from diverse backgrounds and work in an atmosphere of co-operation and consensus. The Trust operates in an environment based on trust, generosity, openness, inclusiveness and perseverance. Everyone recognises each others commitment to the Trust's work and the value of each individual's contribution.

Strategic result areas

NZNFRT has three strategic result areas. These are as follows:

1. Acquiring and protecting land of biodiversity value
2. Managing and restoring this land
3. Supporting other community initiatives which contribute to Trust objectives.

The following are the steps required to achieve these results.

1. Acquire and protect

Objective:- To acquire land of biodiversity value and reduce loss of native habitats.

Actions:

- Validate the purchase criteria to ensure that they meet the above objective
- Focus on habitats that are nationally or regionally recognised as having high priority for protection and take a strategic approach to purchases.

For each land purchase decision, trustees will:

- Provide sufficient information for making decisions based on purchase criteria
- Ensure that acquisitions meet the Trust's purchase criteria
- Compare and prioritise proposals based on agreed process
- Determine available funds
- Develop a fundraising plan
- Have a process to allow for quick decisions when opportunities arise.

2. Manage and restore

Objective:- To protect and enhance biodiversity on Trust owned land.

Actions:

- Ensure that land under the Trust's control demonstrates good examples of best management practice
- Develop management categories to address the biodiversity value and accessibility issues for each reserve (eg A high biodiversity value/local community group B mid biodiversity value adjacent to DOC land, C very remote and difficult access)
- Assign a management category for each reserve
- Based on this assignment, complete management plans for all reserves
- Secure active honorary rangers for each reserve
- Draw up annual maintenance plans and a process of reporting on progress
- Determine budget for labour and materials required to implement plans
- Determine staff levels required (includes staff, contractors and volunteers)
- Develop a general communications and promotional plan to encourage local involvement and support, both financial and practical
- Develop partnerships with local organisations
- Develop plans to fund implementation
- Implement plans

3. Support

Objective: Support other community initiatives which contribute to Trust objectives

- Provide financial or logistic support for initiatives by other organisations which contribute to Trust objectives.

Purchase criteria

1. Ecological significance: paucity of the original ecosystem protected in the region.
2. Environmental values: importance as wildlife habitat, soil and water conservation, water quality.
3. Urgency of threat: degree of threat from planned land clearance, plantation forest, subdivision.
4. Funding prospects: suitability for funding assistance without compromising other Trust priorities.
5. Restoration potential: suitability for restoration either active or passive including prevention of weed and animal invasion from adjacent land.
6. Local support: suitability for enlisting public support, ease of access, management committee and/or honorary ranger possibilities.
7. Size and connectivity: extent to which size and shape protect the remnant from edge effects such as plant or animal pest invasion or exposure to light and wind and its contribution to the overall sustainability of the ecosystem.
8. Educational value: potential educational or scientific use.

Monitoring

Monitoring and evaluation are critical components of the strategic plan. This section defines a number of outcomes (or Key Performance Indicators) the achievement of which will clearly demonstrate how well this strategic plan has been implemented.

Outcomes by end of 2016

Objective 1. Acquire land of biodiversity value and reduce loss of native habitat

Outcomes -

- The Trust has increased the area of protected land
- All acquisitions have been made through the Trust acquisitions criteria
- Risks and opportunities have been responded to

Objective 2. To protect and enhance biodiversity on Trust owned land

Outcomes -

- There has been a positive and measurable impact on biodiversity values of Trust property
- Management plans are in place for all reserves
- Reserve management information and monitoring system is in place

Objective 3. Support other community initiatives which contribute to Trust objectives

Outcome

- Support from the Trust has assisted other organisations to carry out activities that advance the trusts objectives