

NPS – Indigenous Biodiversity

Implementation planning needs to include more project funding for iwi & hapū

Allowance for more project funding for iwi in year 1 of the implementation phase of the NPS-IB will enable iwi to start their own projects to gather information to prepare for NPS-IB planning and consultation processes and/or any co- or joint management agreements

An exposure draft of the NPS for indigenous biodiversity has been released for comment. The accompanying text from the Ministry for the Environment (MfE) says that this is not a full consultation process because the policy for this NPS is now relatively settled; however MfE is specifically seeking feedback from RMA practitioners, iwi/Māori and other stakeholders who can help ensure the exposure draft of the NPS is workable.

Mechanisms being prioritised in the NPS-IB include enabling iwi to proactively identify and protect taonga species, populations and/or ecosystems if they wish (e.g. see section 3.19 of NPS-IB). This can potentially also include taonga species that are highly mobile fauna and move between rohe pōtae.

Other parts of the NPS-IB also require Councils to seek input from tangata whenua on geothermal SNA's, SNAs on Māori lands, methods to provide for exercise of kaitiakitanga, and there is an expectation that Councils will take all reasonable steps to incorporate mātauranga māori in implementing the NPS. The NPS also appears to want to drive Councils toward taking up more options for co- or joint management agreements.

To help with understanding the proposed implementation process for this NPS, including all of these measures, MfE has also released a draft implementation plan with information about proposed

timeframes and proposed supports for putting these proposals in place.

Some of the new support measures being proposed includes funding and training to develop capacity and expertise within iwi participating in these processes. However given some of the mechanisms being proposed in the NPS-IB and the suggested timelines (for example Councils will need to be commencing consultations with iwi and hapū inside the next 1-2 years), the type of direct supports for iwi/Māori detailed in the draft implementation plan appear to be insufficient at the moment.

Councils are being required to compile and develop their strategies and SNA mapping within relatively short timeframes. To enable Councils to do this, the implementation plan states that there will be specific funding for Councils to assist with SNA mapping and identification.

It would be beneficial if the implementation plan also included provision for similar project funding to what is being provided for Councils, so that iwi will also be able to consider and consolidate information to support the upcoming NPS-IB processes, including potentially considering the use of some of the enabling mechanisms that might allow for iwi to seek strong protections for identified taonga species.

There is a chance at the moment for iwi to give input about how the draft implementation plan for the NPS-IB can be expanded to include better implementation strategies and appropriate project funding for iwi and hapū to commence their own NPS-IB mapping and planning projects if they wish. Feedback is due by **21 July 2022**.

Want to know more?

For any further information on the NPS-IB exposure draft please contact [Shelley Chadwick](#).