

APPENDIX Y - FARM BIODIVERSITY PLAN FRAMEWORK

Introduction

The purpose of a Farm Biodiversity Plan is to facilitate the maintenance or enhancement of indigenous biodiversity for a farming operation.

Development of a Farm Biodiversity Plan

A Farm Biodiversity Plan can be developed through a collaborative process between the Council and the landowner / land manager, but is only authorised by the Council through the resource consent process.

Framework

The following sets out the framework for development of a Farm Biodiversity Plan.

1. A Farm Biodiversity Plan can be provided in one of the following formats:
 - a) as a separate stand-alone Farm Biodiversity Plan; or
 - b) as an additional section to a farm environment plan prepared according to an industry template such as the Beef and Lamb New Zealand Canterbury Farm Biodiversity Plan or a plan prepared to meet Schedule 7 of the Canterbury Land and Water Regional Plan.

Note: Where an industry farm biodiversity plan template is used, the Council is only concerned with the sections of that plan which address the matters outlined in this Appendix Y.

2. A Farm Biodiversity Plan shall apply to a farming operation.
3. A Farm Biodiversity Plan must contain as a minimum the matters contained in Parts A, B, C and D that follow.

A Description of the property and its features:

1. Physical address;
2. Description of the ownership and name of a contact person;
3. Legal description of the land used for the farming operation; and
4. A map(s) or aerial photograph at a scale that clearly shows, where relevant:
 - a) The boundaries of the farming operation;
 - b) The boundaries of the main land management units within the farming operation;
 - c) The location of all water bodies, including wetlands and riparian vegetation;
 - d) Constructed features including buildings, tracks and any fencing to protect indigenous biodiversity values (including around riparian areas);
 - e) The location of any areas within or adjoining the farming operation that have been identified as areas of significant indigenous vegetation or significant habitats of indigenous fauna or are legally protected by way of covenant;
 - f) The location of any areas within or adjoining the farming operation that have been identified as an Outstanding Natural Landscape or Feature, a geopreservation site, Area of High Visual Vulnerability or Scenic Grassland Area;

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- g) The location of any Farm Base Areas;
- h) Areas of improved pasture;
- i) Areas of retired land; and
- j) Location of any proposed developments, including intensification of production, new tracks or buildings and areas to be cleared.

B Development Areas and Farming Operation Activities:

The purpose of this section of the Farm Biodiversity Plan is to understand how the land has been managed, what the future management will be, and how this will affect the indigenous biodiversity. The Farm Biodiversity Plan shall:

1. Describe historic and current land use management, including stocking policy, water supply, grazing regimes, improved pasture, and indigenous biodiversity management,
2. Describe any proposed land use management or activities to be undertaken that would require the clearance or disturbance of indigenous biodiversity and the time frames over which these activities are proposed to occur. Such activities may include construction of new farm tracks or buildings, intensification of land use, indigenous vegetation clearance within previously undisturbed areas, earthworks or cultivation.

C Description of existing indigenous biodiversity and its intended management:

The purpose of this section of the Farm Biodiversity Plan is to describe the indigenous biodiversity of the farming operation and how it will be managed.

1. An assessment of existing indigenous biodiversity values shall be undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist, including the identification of areas of significant indigenous vegetation or significant habitats of indigenous fauna.
2. The assessment shall contain:
 - a) Recommendations to achieve maintenance and, where appropriate, enhancement of indigenous biodiversity outside significant areas.
 - b) Recommended actions to achieve these outcomes which may include:
 - i. Formal legal protection;
 - ii. Pest or weed control;
 - iii. Grazing regimes;
 - iv. Fencing;
 - v. Restoration planting or other restoration measures;
 - vi. Confirmation of which area/s will not be subject to future land use change or development;
 - vii. Confirmation that the tools and methods will endure beyond any fragmentation of the farming operation e.g. as a result of changes in ownership.
 - c) Recommendations for monitoring and review of progress in achieving the outcomes.

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D Monitoring and Reporting on actions:

The Farm Biodiversity Plan shall include a description of how the recommendations in Part C (2) will be monitored and reviewed.

Note: The review described in D above does not supersede the requirement to apply for a change of condition(s) to any resource consent associated with the Farm Biodiversity Plan that may be necessary as a result of the review. It is also separate to any review of consent conditions that the Council may initiate under section 128 of the Resource Management Act 1991.