

Hierarchy of Plant Designations

Source: Auckland Regional Pest Management Pest Management Strategy 2002-2007

Total Control Pest Plants

Total Control Pest Plants are those pest plants that are of limited distribution or density within the Auckland region, or defined areas of the region, for which the ARC shall assume responsibility for funding and implementing appropriate management programmes.

The aim is to eradicate these plants from the region or defined areas of the Region, over a period of time, which may exceed the life of this RPMS. The reasons for the ARC assuming responsibility for the control of these plants are that:

- a) These plants require specialist expertise in identification and control; and/or
- b) It is more cost-effective for the ARC to control the plant than to enforce occupier control.

Plants will be treated by a recognized method, at intervals that will ensure the infestations are controlled, reduced and eventually eradicated. Total Control Pest Plants are banned from sale, propagation and distribution and landowners/occupiers will be encouraged to notify the ARC of their presence. The ARC will also disseminate technical information on these plants.

Containment Pest Plants

Containment Pest Plants are those that are abundant in certain habitats or areas in the region, and for which landowners/occupiers are required to treat whenever they appear on their land – either to completely remove the pest plant or maintain clearance to an ‘appropriate distance’ (specified for each species) from a property boundary. The objective for complete removal is to minimize the impacts of these pest plants on the environment or people’s health and/or activities by ensuring that sites (within the defined area of the Region or throughout the region) are treated adequately. For some of these species, eradication from parts of the region may be achievable in the long term. For boundary control, the objective is to reduce the impacts of any infestation on neighboring properties. Boundary complaints may be made by genuinely affected parties (where their property is cleared or being cleared of the pest plant infestation), or action initiated by a Biosecurity staff member.

Plants need to be treated by a recognized method at intervals that will ensure the population is controlled and the number of plants reduced by preventing seeding. Further to this requirement, Containment Pest Plants are banned from sale, propagation and distribution. The ARC will also disseminate technical information on control methods and the ecology of these plants.

Surveillance Pest Plants

Surveillance Pest Plants have been identified as being of potential high risk to the Auckland region. People will be encouraged to protect the environment by removing them from their property. Community initiatives to control these pest plants will also be promoted and supported by Council. The Regional Council will also seek to prevent their establishment or spread by prohibiting their sale, propagation and distribution. This will be achieved by authorized persons regularly monitoring plant retail and wholesale outlets for these pest plants.

The ARC will also disseminate technical information on control methods and the ecology of these plants, and fund research into biological control options. Research into their distribution and environmental impacts may also be carried out during the life of the Strategy. There is, however, no legal requirement for landowners/occupiers to control established infestations.

National Pest Plant Accord (NPPA) List

There is also a National Pest Plant Accord (NPPA) list and all plant species on it have the same status as Surveillance Pest Plants in the region. The NPPA came into effect on 1 October 2001, and is a co-operative agreement between regional councils and government departments with biosecurity responsibilities (e.g. Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Department of Conservation). Under the accord, all signatory regional councils will undertake surveillance to prevent the commercial propagation, sale and/or distribution of an agreed list of pest plants. The NPPA list is dynamic, with additions made periodically via consultation with a technical advisory group (to check for updates refer to the internet).

Community Initiative Programmes (Plants)

Community Initiative Programmes have been introduced to allow groups of landowners/occupiers to control nominated pest plants collaboratively. Most of the pest plants included in this category are widely distributed throughout the region and did not meet the cost benefit criteria required to implement a full-scale regulatory regime under the Strategy. However, most of these weeds have a high public profile and many submissions asked that some form of management be available (for a full list refer section 9.1 of this document). This new category has been introduced to provide this option.

In addition, any community group will be encouraged to control any pest plants that are widespread in the region. The Strategy objectives are to provide advice and information on control methods, and promote voluntary control led by community groups.

Research Organisms (Plants)

This category includes organisms for which research is needed in order to clearly determine their impacts on the environment, the most effective means of control, appropriate management regimes, and to allow for more consultation with all affected parties. Many of the organisms in this category are currently being sold and some form a valuable part of the retail plant industry. Placing of organisms in this category does not necessarily mean that they will be designated a pest in the future, but flags that there are concerns about their impacts. Research projects on them will be initiated over the life of the Strategy.