

16.0 Undesirable Plants and Animals

16.1 Introduction

Undesirable plants and animals invade and damage natural resources and their spread can result in adverse effects on other resources and people. Plant pests adversely affect both indigenous and production land ecosystems. Plant pests invade indigenous ecosystems often harming native habitats and altering whole landscapes.

The uncontrolled spread of plant pests can seriously undermine the production base of land used for productive purposes.

Animal pests likewise have an adverse effect by competing with livestock for pastoral habitat, contributing to soil erosion and destroying indigenous fauna and flora. While it is impractical to eradicate all undesirable plants and animals, their adverse effects can be mitigated through control measures and land management practices.

16.2 Issue

Undesirable plants and animals invading or damaging land and water ecosystems.

The Wairau/Awatere has a wide variety of ecological communities and species present. A large variety of sensitive indigenous species, and productive exotic species occur within these ecosystems.

Undesirable plants and animals threaten the characteristics which give value to ecosystems, or directly affect the survival or health of important species and/or communities. For example, wilding pines can establish in open communities such as tussock land, possums browse indigenous trees, pigs forage for native snails and spartina can block estuarine areas. Some species also run the risk of escape or accidental transfer by vehicles to conservation lands, such as goats and deer and plant pests. These examples all relate to the maintenance of indigenous ecosystems. Undesirable plants and animals also affect primary production ecosystems. For example, possums spread diseases in cattle and deer herds, gorse and broom invade forest lands, and unpalatable species invade pastures.

16.3 Objectives and Policies

Objective 1	The protection of land and water ecosystems from the adverse effects of plants and animal pests.
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Policy 1.1	Prepare and maintain Regional Pest and Plant Management Strategies in accordance with the provisions of the Biosecurity Act 1993.
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Policy 1.2	Provide for agreed methods of pest control by enabling the implementation of National and Regional Pest Management Strategies.
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Policy 1.3	Permit the controlled application of pest controls (eg; 1080) subject to discharge conditions (see 1.7.6 Rural Zones, 1.3.4 Conservation Zone, Volume Two).
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The spread of undesirable plants and animals have the potential to seriously reduce the intrinsic, conservation, cultural, and economic values placed on the natural and physical resources of the Wairau/Awatere Plan Area.

The enactment of the Biosecurity Act in 1993 requires that pest management be carried out in accordance with either a National or Regional Pest Management Strategy. The development of these strategies is subject to public consultation and submission procedures. Thus, it forms the basis for the provisions relating to undesirable plants and animals in this Plan.

16.4 Methods of Implementation

Rules	Permit the deposition, application or administration of such chemicals, biological controls, poisons and hazardous substances necessary for the control of plant and animal pests as provided for within an approved National or Regional Pest Management Strategy.
Education	Refer to education provisions of the Regional Pest and Plant Management Strategies.
Monitoring	Refer to monitoring provisions of the Regional Pest and Plant Management Strategies.

The formulation of a Regional Pest and Plant Management Strategies will allow for adequate public debate on control methods. It is therefore not intended to repeat the exercise during the preparation of this Plan.

16.5 Anticipated Environmental Results

Implementation of the policies and methods relating to undesirable plants and animals will result in:

- A reduction in the adverse effects caused by the spread of plant and animal pests and promotion of the sustainable management of the land and water resources of the Wairau/Awatere area; and
- Protection of indigenous vegetation through control of undesirable plants and animals.