

Appendix 6: Biodiversity Offsetting

1 Introduction

The following sets out a framework for the use of biodiversity offsets. Any biodiversity offset is to be consistent with this framework.

2 Biodiversity offsetting framework

1. Restoration, enhancement and protection actions will only be considered a biodiversity offset where they are used to offset the anticipated reasonably-measurable residual effects of activities after appropriate avoidance, remediation and mitigation actions have occurred in accordance with Policy 3.2.3 (i.e. not in situations where they are used to mitigate the adverse effects of activities).
2. A proposed biodiversity offset will contain an assessment of losses and gains commensurate with the scale of effects of the activity, and should demonstrate the manner in which no net loss can be achieved.
3. A biodiversity offset will recognise the limits to offsets due to irreplaceable and vulnerable biodiversity (including effects that must be avoided in accordance with Policy 11(a) of the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010), and its design and implementation will include provisions for addressing sources of uncertainty and risk of failure of the delivery of no net loss.
4. Restoration, enhancement and protection actions undertaken as a biodiversity offset are demonstrably additional to what otherwise would occur, including that they are additional to any remediation or mitigation undertaken in relation to the adverse effects of the activity.
5. In relation to an SNA, offset actions will be undertaken within the SNA as a first priority, or where this is not practicable, as close as possible to the location of development within the same ecological district as a second priority.
6. Offset actions will prioritise protection and enhancement of existing areas of biodiversity where those actions produce additional biodiversity gains commensurate with the biodiversity values lost.
7. The values to be lost through the activity to which the offset applies are counterbalanced by the proposed offsetting activity which is at least commensurate with the residual adverse effects on indigenous biodiversity, so that the overall result is no net loss.
8. The offset will be applied so that the ecological values being achieved through the offset are the same or similar to those being lost, unless an alternative ecosystem or habitat will provide a net gain for indigenous biodiversity, and the values lost are not irreplaceable or highly vulnerable.
9. There is a strong likelihood that the positive ecological outcomes of the offset last at least as long as the impact of the activity, and preferably in perpetuity. Adaptive management responses should be incorporated into the design of the biodiversity offset, as required, to ensure that the positive ecological outcomes are maintained over time.
10. The biodiversity offset will be designed and implemented in a landscape context – i.e. with an understanding of both the donor and recipient sites' roles, or potential roles, in the ecological context of the area.

11. Any application that intends to utilise a biodiversity offset will include a biodiversity offset management plan commensurate with the scale of the effects of the activity that:
- a) sets out baseline information on indigenous biodiversity that is potentially impacted by the proposal at both the donor and recipient sites;
 - b) demonstrates how the requirements of the framework set out in this appendix will be addressed; and
 - c) identifies the monitoring approach that will be used to demonstrate how the matters set out in this framework have been addressed, over an appropriate timeframe.