NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS FOR PLANTATION FORESTRY

Te Uru Rākau
Forestry New Zealand

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TE URU RĀKAU (FORESTRY NEW ZEALAND)

PART 1

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

CASE FOR CHANGE

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Regional & district plans ("rules") change at least every 10 years

Forestry investment long-term

Plantations often cover multiple Regional &/or District Plan areas

Rules across Regional and District Plans often vary without reason

Controls in rules often not proportionate to risk

Operational & economic uncertainty, & unnecessary costs

Uncertain environmental outcomes

RMA PURPOSE (s 5)

Use, development & protection of natural & physical resources...

...that provides for:

Economic
Social
Cultural

Wellbeing

While:

Safeguarding Ecosystems

Meeting future generation's needs

Avoiding, mitigating, or remedying adverse effects

OBJECTIVES OF THE NES-PF

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ARE TO

Maintain or improve environmental outcomes associated with plantation forestry activities

AND

Increase the efficiency

Improve certainty

...in how plantation forests are managed

All objectives achieved by:

Removing unwarranted variation in regional and district plan rules

Providing fit-for-purpose forestry regulations to manage effects

Permitting activities if efficient + no significant adverse effects

Allowing more stringent plan rules in certain circumstances to protect locally significant and sensitive environments

NES-PF OVERVIEW

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SINGLE NATIONAL SET OF REGULATIONS TAILORED TO FORESTRY

REPLACES EXISTING REGIONAL & DISTRICT PLAN FORESTRY RULES

NES-PF REGULATIONS APPLY TO FORESTRY THAT IS:
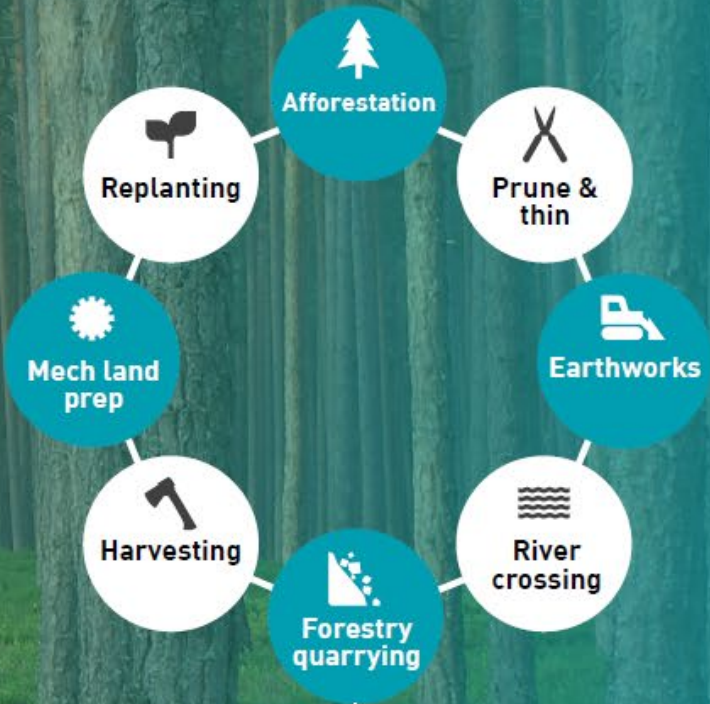
Planted for commercial purposes

At least 1 hectare plus

To be harvested

IT ALSO APPLIES TO ALL ASSOCIATED FORESTRY INFRASTRUCTURE

REGULATES EIGHT ACTIVITIES

- Afforestation
- Prune & thin
- Earthworks
- River crossing
- Forestry quarrying
- Harvesting
- Mech land prep
- Replanting

THAT REPRESENT THE PLANTATION FORESTRY LIFECYCLE

NES-PF RULES ARE BASED ON

Regional & district plans

Good forestry management practices

NES-PF TAKES A RISK-BASED APPROACH WHERE

Risk assessment tools used to identify risk levels

Foresters identify & manage high-risk activities

Councils monitor compliance

FORESTRY ACTIVITIES CLASSIFIED AS EITHER

PERMITTED

Majority of activities nationally

WITH CONDITIONS

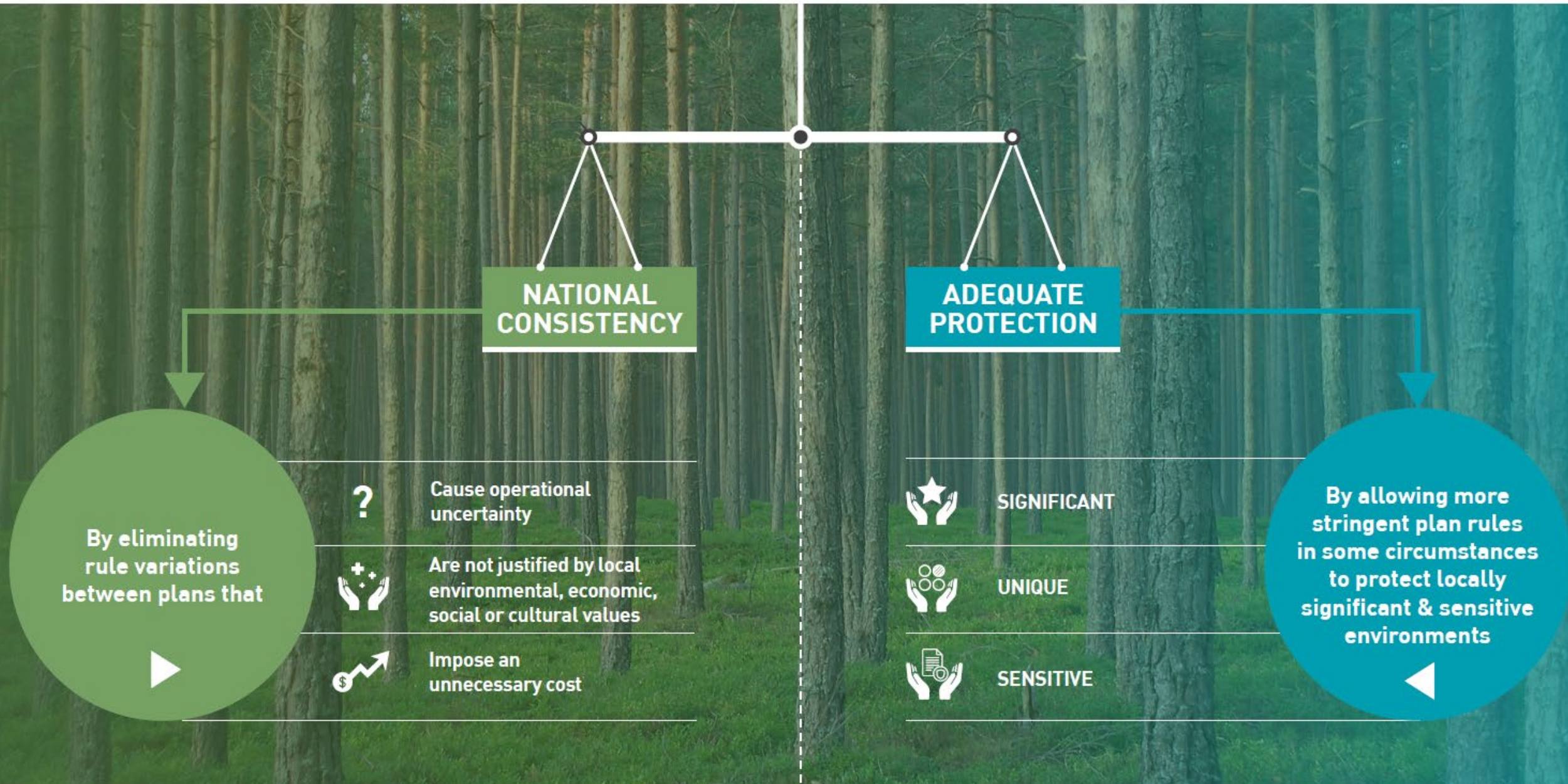CONTROLLED

RESTRICTED DISCRETIONARY

DISCRETIONARY

PART 2

BALANCING NATIONAL CONSISTENCY WITH LOCAL PROTECTION

WHEN PLAN RULES MAY BE MORE STRINGENT: Balancing consistency & protection

NATIONAL CONSISTENCY

By eliminating rule variations between plans that

? Cause operational uncertainty

Are not justified by local environmental, economic, social or cultural values

Impose an unnecessary cost

ADEQUATE PROTECTION

SIGNIFICANT

UNIQUE

SENSITIVE

By allowing more stringent plan rules in some circumstances to protect locally significant & sensitive environments

NES-PF PROVIDES ADEQUATE PROTECTION

NATIONAL CONSISTENCY

ADEQUATE PROTECTION

BY ALLOWING PLAN RULES TO BE MORE STRINGENT IN CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES

TO PROTECT MATTERS OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE, NAMELY:

"Outstanding natural features & landscapes"

"Significant natural areas"

ACHIEVE OTHER NATIONAL INSTRUMENT OBJECTIVES

FW objectives to give effect to FW-NPS

NZCPS policies 11, 13, 15 & 22

PROTECT UNIQUE AND SENSITIVE ENVIRONMENTS

Separation granite point soils

Geothermal areas and karst geology

Certain human drinking water sources

PART 3

NES-PF's
RISK-BASED
REGULATORY
APPROACH

OVERVIEW OF NES-PF'S RISK ASSESSMENT TOOLS

INTRODUCES THREE RISK ASSESSMENT TOOLS

1. Erosion Susceptibility Classification — **EROSION & SEDIMENT RISK**

2. Wilding Tree Risk Calculator — **RISK OF WILDING CONIFER SPREAD**

3. Fish Spawning Indicator — **RISK OF FISH & HABITAT DISTURBANCE**

TOOLS BASED ON LOCAL GEOPHYSICAL, BIOLOGICAL AND ECOLOGICAL DATA

+

UPDATED AS NEW INFO AND TECHNOLOGY BECOMES AVAILABLE

TOOLS TAILORED TO IDENTIFIED FORESTRY-SPECIFIC RISKS

THUS, CAN MORE ACCURATELY DETECT & GAUGE FORESTRY EFFECTS

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WHAT DOES THE ESC DO?

The ESC is a spatial database tool that allows foresters and councils to

IDENTIFY the land erosion risk **6 of the 8 plantation forestry activities present** when conducted on forest land across New Zealand.

Replanting

Afforestation

Prune & thin

Mech land prep

Earthworks

Harvesting

River crossings

Forestry quarrying

The ESC enables a targeted approach to managing risk as the

level of ESC identified erosion risk associated with a given location

+

each plantation forestry activity's propensity to cause erosion

together determine if a plantation forestry activity is subject to specific permitted activity conditions or require a resource consent under the NES-PF.

HOW DOES THE ESC WORK?

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The ESC achieves this targeted risk identification and management

by using data regarding the following environmental factors to identify the erosion susceptibility on site:

- Dominant erosion process
- Rock type
- Topography

Assessed land is then classified into 4 colour-coded categories

that reflect the identified level of erosion susceptibility risk that each unit of assessed land is subject to:

Low Risk	Land less likely to erode
Mod Risk	Plantation forestry activities are permitted if conditions are met
High Risk	Land more likely to erode
Very High Risk	Plantation forestry activities more tightly controlled and may need resource consent

NES-PF requires resource consent in certain circumstances

for the following plantation forestry activities need resource consent when conducted on red and orange zoned land (in certain circumstances):

- Afforestation
- Earthworks
- Forestry quarrying
- Replanting
- Mech land prep
- Harvesting

HOW DOES THE FSI WORK?

The FSI achieves this targeted risk identification and management

by using up-to-date scientific data and knowledge to let councils and foresters know:

Data behind the FSI will be reviewed annually

by the Fish Spawning Indicator Governance Group, factoring in new data findings and developments in technology

Which fish species are threatened or sensitive to habitat disturbance during spawning times

Where the fish species spawn in freshwaters

Which of the two risk classes (based on level of sensitivity) that the identified fish species falls into

The specific times during the year that these fish species are spawning

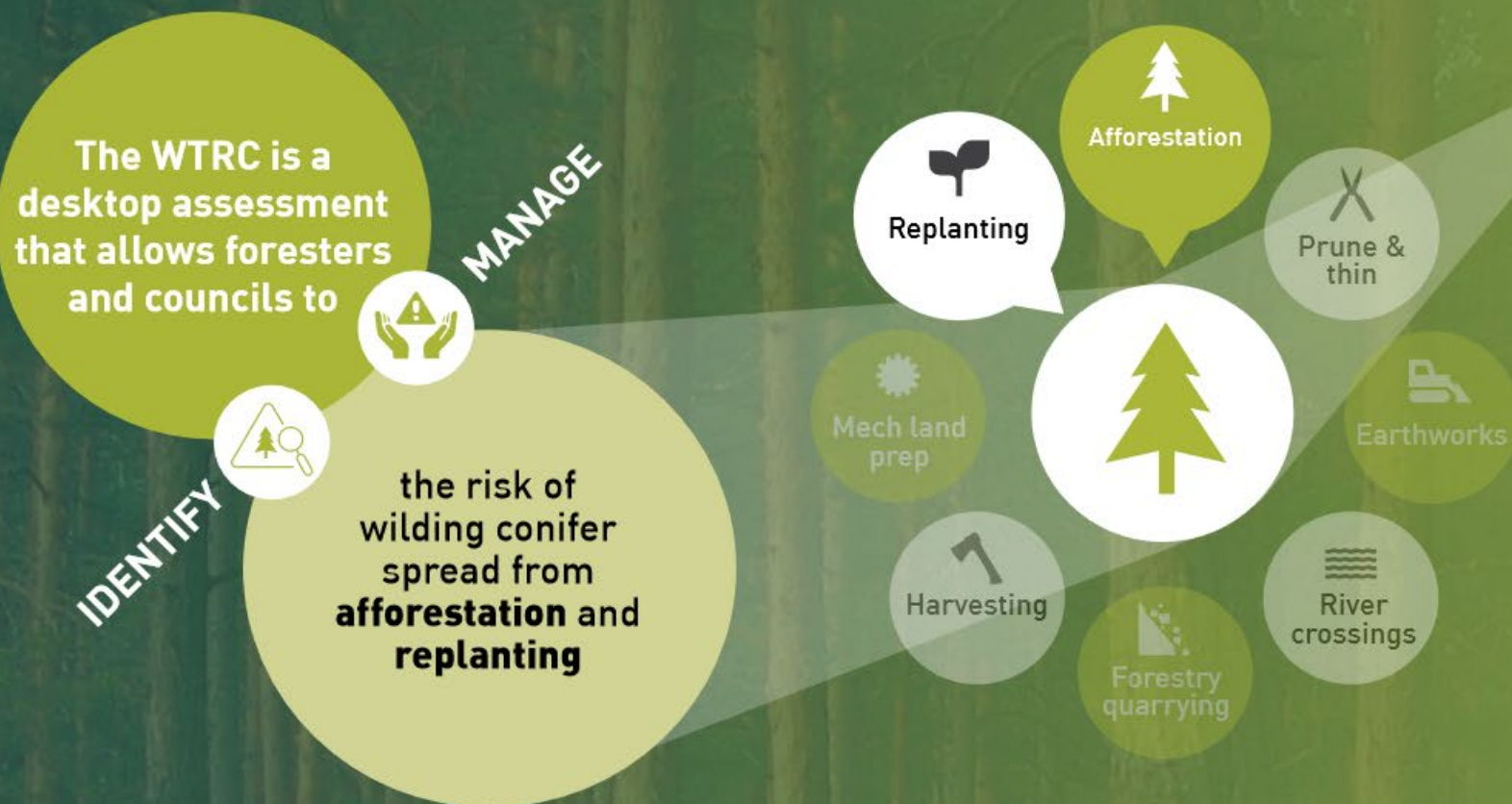**The NES-PF requires foresters obtain a resource consent**

if a plantation forestry activity will disturb the spawning habitat of an identified fish species during spawning periods

The NES-PF specifies the restrictions imposed when this is the case

The FSI was developed for NES-PF specific use, and its application elsewhere needs to be carefully considered

WHAT DOES THE WTRC DO?

The WTRC is a desktop assessment that allows foresters and councils to

MANAGE

IDENTIFY

the risk of wilding conifer spread from afforestation and replanting

Replanting

Afforestation

Prune & thin

Mech land prep

Earthworks

Harvesting

Forestry quarrying

River crossings

It also takes a targeted approach to managing risk

by ensuring the controls imposed by NES-PF to manage the wilding conifer spread risk caused by **afforestation** and **replanting** are **proportionate** to the specific risk presented

By the specific conifer species to be planted

When planting in a specific location in New Zealand

HOW DOES THE WTRC WORK?

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The WTRC achieves targeted risk identification and management

by using **SIX** indicators to ascertain the level of wilding conifer spread risk associated with planting conifer species on a specific site:

A points system is used to determine the level of risk

Specifically, the WTRC assigns risk points for each indicator to gauge the risk of wilding conifer spread

Spread vigour of tree species

Conifer species palatability to livestock

Topographical placement of the site to be planted

The receiving sites land-use characteristics

Surrounding vegetation

Wind conditions

The NES-PF specifies the afforestation and replanting scores that trigger the need to obtain a resource consent

The WTRC must be used before afforestation and before an area is replanted in a species different to that which was most recently harvested from the land

The WTRC must be used by a person with

silviculture and forest ecology tertiary qualifications and 2+ years' silviculture experience

OR

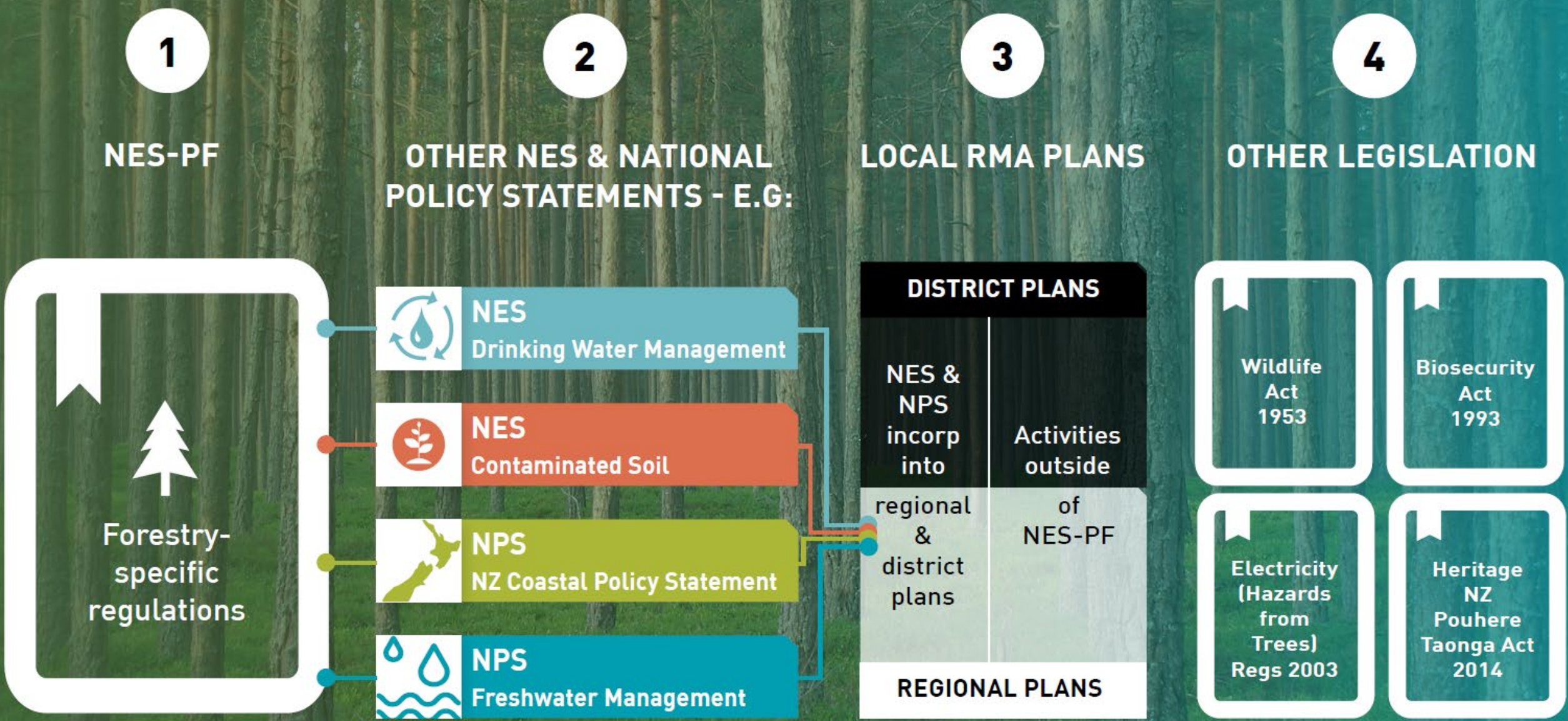at least 5 years' experience in silviculture that includes forest establishment

PART 4

IMPROVED ALIGNMENT WITH THE RMA

FULL PLANTATION FORESTRY REGULATORY LANDSCAPE

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1 NES-PF

Forestry-specific regulations

2 OTHER NES & NATIONAL POLICY STATEMENTS - E.G:

NES Drinking Water Management

NES Contaminated Soil

NPS NZ Coastal Policy Statement

NPS Freshwater Management

3 LOCAL RMA PLANS

DISTRICT PLANS

NES & NPS incorp into	Activities outside
regional & district plans	of NES-PF

REGIONAL PLANS

4 OTHER LEGISLATION

Wildlife Act 1953

Biosecurity Act 1993

Electricity (Hazards from Trees) Regs 2003

Heritage NZ Pouhere Taonga Act 2014

NES-PF IMPLEMENTATION

- Prior to the NES-PF coming into effect, we conducted a series of workshops with councils

- We also partnered with NZIF and held a series of workshops with their members

- We have done some targeted plan alignment workshops with councils following commencement, and continue to run a helpline and dedicated email address to answer queries on the regulations

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PART 5

WHAT'S AHEAD?

NES-PF REVIEW

- Review and evaluation scheduled to ensure the NES-PF is able to meet its objectives. An initial review will take place after 1 year (mid 2019), followed by reviews at the three and five year mark and every five years thereafter.

- The one year review will look at feedback received since commencement and we will be seeking information from councils and foresters about how they are implementing the NES-PF.

- Quantitative and qualitative data will be limited after one year, though we can get quantitative data on consent numbers and plan changes through MfE's National Monitoring System (NMS).

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MONITORING

- Meaningful national environmental monitoring data is difficult to collect

  Developing national framework for determining effectiveness of NESPF

- In the meantime using compliance with the NES-PF as a proxy for good outcomes and seeking to gather compliance information from councils.

- Identifying compliant operations to use as a baseline for future monitoring

- Looking at existing monitoring information to see what monitoring tools can be applied to forestry operations over a full plantation lifecycle

QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

Contact: Elizabeth.heeg@mpi.govt.nz

More info @ https://www.teururakau.govt.nz/growing-and-harvesting/forestry/national-environmental-standards-for-plantation-forestry

DATA BEHIND THE WTRC

The data relied on by the WTRC to ascertain risk levels is taken from

WTRC is an evolving tool

Wilding conifer spread has been researched for decades by Scion (NZ Forest Research Institute Ltd; a Crown Research Institute; Ledgard; University of Canterbury School of Forestry et al., 1999)

The 'Wilding Tree Risk Guidelines' that support the WTRC were published in June 2015. The NES-PF incorporates these guidelines and WTRC by reference so that they both have legal effect

The WTRC will be reviewed during the NES-PF monitoring and evaluation process that occurs at the end the first, third and fifth year of NES-PF's operation

The WTRC has two calculators: one for **new plantings** (DSS1); and one for assessing a sites wilding conifer invasion risk (DSS2). The above guidelines relate to **DSS1 only**