

“WHOLE FARM PLANNING TO DELIVER INTEGRATED SOLUTIONS”

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There is an increasing recognition that farm planning needs to evolve beyond singular focus of either production or soil conservation to take a wider, more holistic view. This broader assessment needs to account for impacts of the farm system on receiving environments, as well as include consideration of the services provided by agricultural landscapes beyond food and fibre. Embedding farm-planning within a natural capital ecosystems approach provides the pathway to operationalise this shift.

It is still common for soil or biodiversity conservation to be dealt with in isolation from each other, both at the policy and farm scales, which narrows the opportunities to increase farm sustainability and resilience. With a considerable proportion of remaining indigenous biodiversity occurs on farmland in private ownership outside of the public conservation estate, coordinated actions on-farm is required to increase the opportunities to achieve biodiversity outcomes across a wider landscape and in parallel contribute to greater farm sustainability and resilience.

New approaches are needed to achieve these wider outcomes on-farm and beyond. These bring together business, environment and cultural goals and in doing so allows for social, cultural, environmental and production values to be recognised and enhanced, while focusing on farm performance. One key requirement for this integration to succeed is for current land evaluation and farm planning processes to recognise indigenous species as a mechanism for also increasing the sustainability and resilience of the farm business. Learning from and applying Mātauranga Māori is pivotal to achieving this. Our approach recognises that indigenous biodiversity contributes to a wide range of benefits including cultural, environmental, social, and economic values, of which conservation is just one, albeit an important, outcome. In this paper, we demonstrate through two case studies, the potential contribution of indigenous biodiversity to economic, environmental, cultural and social outcomes on and beyond the farm through advanced farm planning.

Editor’s Note: An extended manuscript has not been submitted for this presentation.