

NZFOA newsletter

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Welcome to the first fancy edition of the FOA PineNet newsletter

This newsletter is aimed at key biosecurity
staff in the forest growing sector

September 2019



Forest Biosecurity Committee sets priorities for next five years

The FBC commissioned two reviews in 2018/19, one to review the operational aspects of the committee's work, and the most recent, to review the strategic direction of the forest biosecurity system as a whole. Both reports made recommendations regarding how to optimise the committee, and gave advice on how to determine work, research, and operational priorities.

The committee, plus officials from MPI, Scion, and FOA recently had a strategic planning workshop. The aim of the workshop was to nail down the purpose, goals,

terms of reference, and priorities for the committee, and the wider forest biosecurity sector as a whole. A summary A3 of the strategic plan will be developed, similar to those developed by other sectors. The strategy will be our guiding document for the next three to five years, and will help note achievements and progress, and guide work activities and funding. Once the strategy is completed it will be circulated.



Biosecurity New Zealand and FOA to debrief on possible new to New Zealand find

Under the GIA partnership, which has been operating since 2015, FOA and MPI share decision-making and costs for any incursions that may affect the commercial plantation forest estate. A recent discovery of an organism in a commercial forest in the Central North Island prompted an investigation phase to determine if it was new to New Zealand. After a thorough investigation, the organism was determined not to be a threat to forestry, and the investigation was closed. However, MPI, Scion, and FOA members have taken a number of lessons away about the investigation, particularly regarding timing of communications, and which organisations and boards are notified about a potential incursion. MPI is hosting a debrief in late October and will use the exercise to create clear lines of notification during an investigation and potential incursion.



Review of the Biosecurity Act

MPI is tasked with reviewing the Biosecurity Act – they are calling it an overhaul, <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/law-and-policy/legal-overviews/biosecurity/biosecurity-act-1993-overhaul/> which indicates the likely extent of the proposed changes. Two FOA staff attended a stakeholder workshop in July and took part in discussions on the purpose of the Act, what it aims to achieve, and the need to develop principles. The principle of ‘urgency’ was again raised by FOA, as the Act does not have a sense of speed associated with responding to incursions that could negatively affect the primary sector if not handled with urgency.

Other aspects of the Act that FOA strongly advocated for included the need for integration across all sectors to understand priorities, so that sectors work together and not in silos. A good example of this is the need for a strategic national surveillance programme which would cover all sectors.

In addition, FOA strongly advocated for a focus on readiness and preparedness, as the balance of effort is currently aimed at responses. This could take the form of strategic research, development of over-arching surveillance programmes, and other innovations.

Discussions also focused on governance and agencies that should oversee the act, the grey area between investigation and response, and the role of Treaty partners, as well as funding mechanisms.

The overhaul is scheduled to take place over the next two years and the Terms of Reference are online.

<https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/36057-terms-of-reference-biosecurity-act-1993-overhaul>



Report on phytophthora symposium

Approximately 140 people attended the Phytophthora Symposium in Auckland on 12 August to hear from four international experts and approximately two dozen locals about their experiences with phytophthora and would could be done to manage this group of plant pathogens.

Phytophthora species are rapidly spreading around the world, more are being discovered every year, and many appear to be jumping hosts. New Zealand is facing serious phytophthora threats particularly in kauri forests but also plantation forestry and the horticultural sectors recognise that phytophthora are also an issue for them that they need to prepare to respond to should new ones emerge. Solutions to phytophthora are very difficult to find as chemicals are often not that effective and breeding solutions in many situations are not practical because are generally too long-term.

There is some exciting science being done in New Zealand and elsewhere that could lead to solutions but there are no solutions to kauri dieback on the immediate horizon. However, a key message from the symposium was that we can greatly reduce the spread of phytophthora by better understanding the organisms and developing and implementing strategies to slow the spread. We can also enhance the resilience of trees but much more research is needed in this area to provide assurances that we can take steps to both manage phytophthora and improve resilience

Plant Biosecurity Symposium Points to Innovation Need

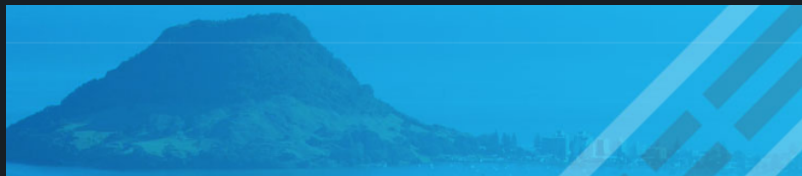
Two hundred representatives from Australia and New Zealand were told at the Plant Biosecurity Symposium in Brisbane in August that innovations in biosecurity are a vital response to the predicted doubling of the container cargo within six years.

Lyn O'Connell, Deputy Secretary Biosecurity Australia said that tripling investment in biosecurity would not keep up with risk, so the only answer is to invest in innovation.

Fellow speaker, Lois Ransom, Senior Executive in the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, said that plant health is more difficult than human and animal health.

Humans can catch about 80 diseases, many in common with a small range of domesticated animals, whereas there are huge numbers of plant species with vast numbers of different plant diseases.

"We need to be outcomes driven. Know what you are trying to achieve and work out a process to get there. It's all about protecting global plant resources and facilitating safe trade – at country and at property level."



Tauranga Moana Biosecurity Capital sponsorship for 2019

Tauranga Moana Biosecurity Capital (TMBC) is a collaboration that has its roots in a collective effort to build a biosecurity team of 4.7 million New Zealanders – to shift how we, as New Zealanders, think about biosecurity, how it connects to our everyday lives, and how people can get involved.

TMBC brings together a coalition of the willing and establishes Tauranga Moana iwi at the centre of our regional biosecurity team in a broad collaboration between iwi, industry, community groups, businesses, agencies, educators, scientists and others striving to achieve biosecurity excellence. With our 30+ members

we are highly committed to working together to continue to achieve biosecurity excellence and joining forces to collaborate and facilitate and advocate for better biosecurity education.

A large number of sectors contribute to the programme and FOA has also contributed this year as an ongoing sponsor.

<http://www.tmbiosecurity.co.nz/>

The Biological Heritage Challenge

The Biological Heritage is one of 11 National Science Challenges underway in New Zealand, funded by MBIE. This challenge is the most relevant to forest biosecurity as its mission is to reduce the decline of New Zealand's biodiversity with a focus on both biodiversity and biosecurity and both the natural estate and the primary sectors. The Challenge has taken a radical approach to its second round of funding and has formed teams of stakeholders to work through a process to determine priorities for research investment. Three of these workstreams are particularly relevant to forestry: (1) emerging threats, (2) biosecurity surveillance, and (3) tools and strategies to deal with key threats. The intention is to develop investment prospectus for key areas and then look to focus funding, not just from the Challenge but from other sources as well, on the key priorities.

<https://bioheritage.nz>

Congratulations to Ian Hood who has been named an Emeritus Scientist

Ian has 50 years' research experience, 45 of those at Scion and the former Forest Research Institute. He specialised in research of diseases of radiata pine, eucalypts, Douglas-fir, and cypresses, as well as diagnosis of urban tree pathogens.

His research has taken him around the world, with stints in Australia (Queensland Forest Research Institute), Canada (Pacific Forestry Research Centre), Sweden (Swedish Agricultural University), the United States (University of California), and Fiji (Fiji Pine Commission).

Ian has extensive experience with tree decay fungi, which he has investigated in different parts of the world. He used this knowledge to study the community biodiversity of basidiomycete decay fungi in indigenous forests in New Zealand in relation to decomposition and carbon release. He also researched decay and stain fungi in pine plantations in relation to wood deterioration following storm damage.

Ian was the recipient of a New Zealand National Research Advisory Council Fellowship in 1981 and was at one time the editor of Forest Health News. He is a Fellow of the Australasian Plant Pathology Society and was a member of the New Zealand Plant Protection Society, Australasian Mycological Society, New Zealand Botanical Society, Queensland Mycological Society and Rotorua Botanical Society. Ian was also the secretary for several years of Research Working Group 7 (Forest Pathology) of the Australian Standing Committee on Forestry.

With 65 peer-reviewed articles to his name, Ian was awarded a prestigious Doctor of Science degree from the University of Auckland in 2014. The DSc acknowledges people whose published research has achieved international eminence in their field.

Looking to the future, Ian will be utilising his Emeritus status to support Scion's Forest Pathology group, "especially in regard to disease diagnosis, I still wish to maintain my interest in mycology and forest pathology". He will also be "gradually spreading my sights in other directions".

Interesting videos and online news

[Evaluating the costs and benefits of managing new and existing biosecurity threats to Australia's plantation industry.](#)

The Biosecurity Award finalists and dinner tickets sales were announced on 24 September, [see finalists on this website.](#)

Phytophthora planning underway ([KVH Bulletin](#)).

[Stinkbugs](#) - be afraid, very afraid - Newsroom article



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