

## Appendix 2: Criteria for Determining Significance of Indigenous Biodiversity

- (a) These are derived from section 11A of the Waikato Regional Policy Statement. This material is reprinted here to assist plan users to access the text. For full context, it is necessary to refer to the Waikato Regional Policy Statement.
- (b) The following criteria are to be used to identify areas of significant indigenous biodiversity and their characteristics as they exist at the time the criteria are being applied. Criteria may be specific to a habitat type including water, land or airspace, or be more inclusive to address connectivity, or movement of species across habitat types.
- (c) To be identified as significant, an area needs to meet one or more of the criteria identified in the table below.

Areas of significant indigenous biodiversity shall not include areas that have been created and subsequently maintained for or in connection with:

- artificial structures (unless they have been created specifically or primarily for the purpose of protecting or enhancing biodiversity), or
- beach nourishment and coastal planting (unless they have been created specifically or primarily for the purpose of protecting or enhancing biodiversity).

1.	It is indigenous vegetation or habitat for indigenous fauna that is currently, or is recommended to be, set aside by statute or covenant or by the Nature Heritage Fund, or Ngaa Whenua Raahui committees, or the Queen Elizabeth the Second National Trust Board of Directors, specifically for the protection of biodiversity, and meets at least one of criteria 3-11.
2.	In the Coastal Marine Area, it is indigenous vegetation or habitat for indigenous fauna that has reduced in extent or degraded due to historic or present anthropogenic activity to a level where the ecological sustainability of the ecosystem is threatened.
3.	It is vegetation or habitat that is currently habitat for indigenous species or associations of indigenous species that are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• classed as threatened or at risk, or</li> <li>• endemic to the Waikato region, or</li> <li>• at the limit of their natural range.</li> </ul>
4.	It is indigenous vegetation, habitat or ecosystem type that is under-represented (20% or less of its known or likely original extent remaining) in an Ecological District, or Ecological Region, or nationally.
5.	It is indigenous vegetation or habitat that is, and prior to human settlement was, nationally uncommon such as geothermal, chenier plain, or karst ecosystems, hydrothermal vents or cold seeps.
6.	It is wetland habitat for indigenous plant communities and/or indigenous fauna communities

	<p>(excluding exotic rush/pasture communities) that has not been created and subsequently maintained for or in connection with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• waste treatment;</li> <li>• wastewater renovation;</li> <li>• hydroelectric power lakes (excluding Lake Taupō);</li> <li>• water storage for irrigation; or</li> <li>• water supply storage;</li> <li>• unless in those instances they meet the criteria in Whaley et al. (1995).</li> </ul>
7.	It is an area of indigenous vegetation or naturally-occurring habitat that is large relative to other examples in the Waikato region of similar habitat types, and which contains all or almost all indigenous species typical of that habitat type. Note this criterion is not intended to select the largest example, only in the Waikato region of any habitat type.
8.	It is aquatic habitat (excluding artificial waterbodies, except for those created for the maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity or as mitigation as part of a consented activity) that is within a stream, river, lake, groundwater system, wetland, intertidal mudflat or estuary, or any other part of the coastal marine area and their margins, that is critical to the self sustainability of an indigenous species within a catchment of the Waikato region, or within the coastal marine area. In this context “critical” means essential for a specific component of the life cycle and includes breeding and spawning grounds, juvenile nursery areas, important feeding areas and migratory and dispersal pathways of an indigenous species. This includes areas that maintain connectivity between habitats.
9.	It is an area of indigenous vegetation or habitat that is a healthy and representative example of its type because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• its structure, composition, and ecological processes are largely intact; and</li> <li>• if protected from the adverse effects of plant and animal pests and of adjacent land and water use (e.g. stock, discharges, erosion, sediment disturbance), can maintain its ecological sustainability over time.</li> </ul>
10.	It is an area of indigenous vegetation or habitat that forms part of an ecological sequence, that is either not common in the Waikato region or an ecological district, or is an exceptional, representative example of its type. Role in protecting ecologically-significant area.
11.	It is an area of indigenous vegetation or habitat for indigenous species (which habitat is either naturally occurring or has been established as a mitigation measure) that forms, either on its own or in combination with other similar areas, an ecological buffer, linkage or corridor and which is necessary to protect any site identified as significant under criteria 1-10 from external adverse effects.