



Te Uru Rākau

Forestry New Zealand

One Billion Trees Fund: Six month monitoring and evaluation report

**A monitoring and evaluation report on the state of the One Billion
Trees Fund to 30 June 2019**

ISBN No: 978-1-99-001792-6 (online)

December 2019

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1 Foreword

The Government has developed the One Billion Trees Programme to increase tree planting across New Zealand. The goal is to plant one billion trees by 2028.

As part of this programme, the One Billion Tree fund supports landowners integrating trees into their land use. The focus is on making it easier to plant the right tree, in the right place, for the right purpose. We want to see trees that complement and diversify our existing land uses and we want to see innovative ideas, research and sector development that will improve the way we plant and grow trees.

I'm pleased to present the first One Billion Trees Fund Six Month Report. Covering the period from 1 January to 30 June 2019, this report shows how the Fund is helping achieve economic, environmental, and social benefits for all New Zealanders. This report is based on the 6 month monitoring and evaluation briefing provided to Ministers in September 2019.

Since this report was finalised further progress has been made. In fact, by the end of October 14,172,042 trees have been funded through One Billion Trees grants and partnerships projects. Forty-one One Billion Trees partnerships have been approved, worth \$42.5 million, with six further partnerships totalling \$13.5 million in the review process before approval, and 202 grants have been approved for \$18.2 million, totalling 8,956 hectares¹. Of the trees funded 58% are indigenous and 42% are exotic, with this ratio expected to more closely align with the two-thirds indigenous target over the duration of the Fund.

It's important to note that as this report is the first reviewing the One Billion Trees Fund, it partly covers the setup period when the scheme was being developed and promoted, and before any applications were received (in March). This limits its comprehensiveness compared to future reports, which will make use of additional data collected as partnerships and grants are implemented.

I look forward to seeing the trends and analyses included in the 12 month report, which will be completed in early 2020.

¹ Grant areas range from 1 to 750ha. Although the typical maximum area that can be funded with a grant is 300ha, larger applications can be approved if they will provide wider social, cultural, environmental or economic benefits.

2 Executive summary

1. Te Uru Rākau has developed a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for the One Billion Trees Fund (the Fund), to ensure the Fund achieves its intended benefits. Forestry Ministers are regularly receiving formal reports about the Fund – namely its grants and partnerships components – including weekly progress reports, fortnightly operational updates, six-monthly reports, and an annual report. This six month monitoring and evaluation report provides an interim update on progress to 30 June 2019.
2. As of 30 June 2019, the Fund has approved \$7.6 million in landowner grants, and \$35 million in partnership projects. It's expected this will result in 4,090 hectares of land being planted – or around 4,580,000 trees in the ground. Approximately one third of these trees will be indigenous, which is what we'd expect at this point in the programme. The ratio of indigenous to exotic trees planted is anticipated to improve over time as capacity for indigenous planting grows.
3. Of the landowner grants approved, seven are for work on Māori land. Of the 24 partnership projects approved, four are for Māori landowners. We've made significant progress since 30 June. As at 31 August, 150 One Billion Trees grant applications have been approved, totalling \$ 14.5million and 7,103.01 hectares. What's more, 33 partnership applications have been approved, totalling \$37.7 million. Fund grants are expected to provide 171 new jobs, including 79 trainee roles.
4. We've engaged and outreached through regional workshops for regional councils and rural professionals, and hui for Māori landowners. These were well-received, and we were able to incorporate feedback we gathered into operational policy development and implementation.
5. The Fund is not subsidising whole farm conversions. The Fund provides grants to support landowners – particularly farmers and Māori landowners – to integrate trees into existing land-use.

3 Background

6. The Fund is designed to get the right tree in the right place, delivering a range of benefits including regional economic development, erosion control, ecological and landscape restoration, climate change mitigation, and skills and workforce development.
7. On 13 August 2018 and subject to decisions from delegated Ministers, Cabinet agreed to establish:
 - a new tree planting grants scheme operating over three years and targeting approximately two-thirds of planting in indigenous species; and
 - a partnership fund operating over three years to provide financial support for key activities that enable planting [CAB-18-Min-0379.01].
8. Cabinet agreed to establish a tagged contingency of \$234.373 million to fund the grants scheme and partnership fund, and authorised delegated Ministers (the Forestry, Finance, Environment, and Climate Change Ministers) to draw down the contingency when the operational design has been agreed.
9. Forestry Ministers agreed to the proposed policy design of the Fund in November 2018, as described in the Report on Policy and Design Recommendations (B18-0862 refers). In that briefing, Te Uru Rākau informed Ministers that we would develop a framework to monitor investment outputs and outcomes, so we can ensure accountability with public money and make sure the fund's intended benefits are being achieved.
10. As noted, in March 2019 Forestry Ministers agreed to a monitoring and evaluation framework for the Fund. This includes reporting at weekly, six-monthly, and annual intervals, as well as specific reports on initiatives and activities relating to the broader One Billion Trees Programme. The monitoring and evaluation framework establishes what's to be covered in these reports.

4 Six Month Monitoring and evaluation

11. The purpose of this six month report is to provide interim information about the Fund's progress, which can be further expanded in the annual report. The following information is included in this report:

- the number of funding agreements signed in relation to grants, including information about applicants and expected results of those grants (number of trees planted, species, location);
- the number of funding agreements signed in relation to partnerships, including:
 - o research which has been commissioned and funded;
 - o labour and workforce capacity and capability initiatives supported;
 - o plant production/ supply partnerships; and
 - o catchment level projects.
- Māori participation in the Fund, including the number of Māori entities granted funding and hectares of Māori land to be planted;
- estimates of numbers of direct jobs and training positions created through partnership projects; and
- information about how we're engaging with and outreaching to communities, and the extent to which these efforts are successful, as indicated by the trends in grants and partnership inquiries, expressions of interest, and applications.

12. Twelve months from the launch of the Fund, Te Uru Rākau will report on:

- information about the successful establishment of trees in line with funding agreements, including a break down by region, tree type, species, and types of planting;
- information about the current and potential carbon sequestration of the trees funded and established;
- the extent to which science priorities have been funded that will contribute towards providing useful, accessible information to establish trees;
- Māori participation in the Fund, including the number of hectares of Māori land planted and Māori entities granted funding;
- forestry-related workforce impacts of the fund, including the number of jobs created in each region and the results of efforts to upskill the sector in terms of the number of individuals trained; and
- the number of catchment projects funded, and the progress made to plant trees in those catchments.

4.1 FUNDING AGREEMENTS

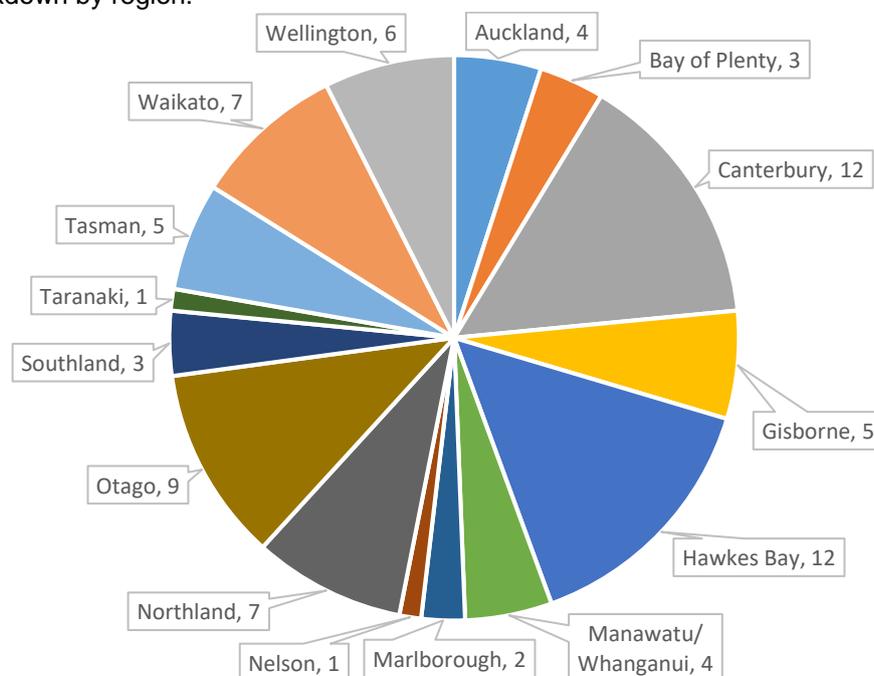
Landowner grants

13. Landowner grants provide simple and accessible direct grants to landowners. The grants contribute to the cost of planting and establishing trees and fostering indigenous regeneration. The Fund has set funding grant rates to encourage planting of native trees, trees for erosion control, and environment-focused planting. The One Billion Trees Programme is focused on successfully establishing trees – to achieve this, we need appropriate land preparation and ongoing maintenance (including weed and pest control).

14. As at 30 June **81 direct landowner grant applications were approved**, with 15 agreements finalised. Of the 81:

- seven applications are taking place on Māori freehold land
- Three are charities, 22 are companies, 52 are individuals and four are Māori landowners
- Funding ranges from \$4,320 to \$1,291,305 and totals \$7,631,500

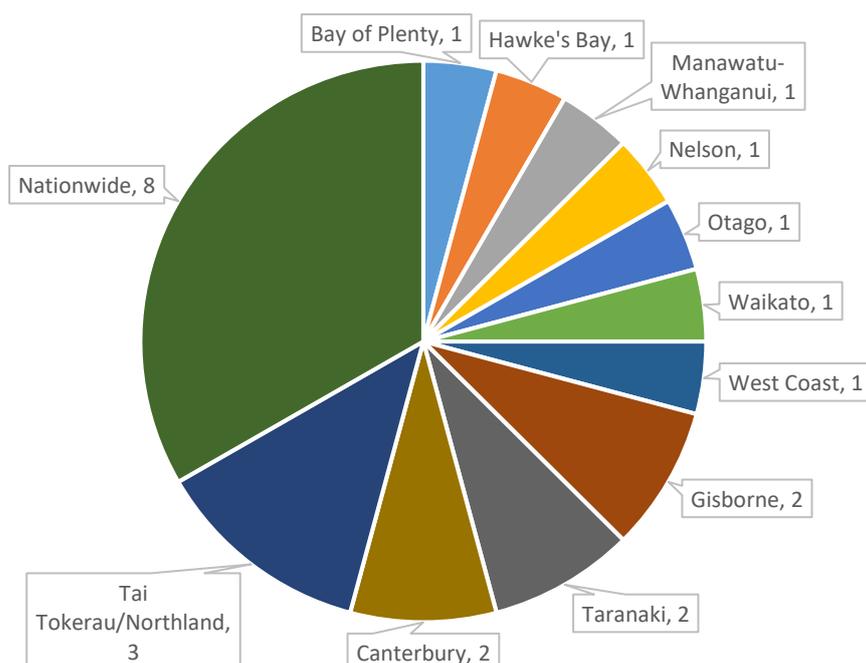
- 74 applications (91.4%) include planting in 2019
- Two are large-scale restoration projects
- Areas for planting range from one hectare to 750 hectares, and total 3,897.8 hectares
- **61** included native planting. This represents 1,275 hectares (or 1,649,639 trees) and 33 included exotics representing 2,815 hectares (or 2,932,298 trees). The split of the number of grants involving native/exotic planting doesn't sum to 81 as applicants may plant a mixture of both. 31% of the land and 36% of the trees approved were indigenous.
- Breakdown by region:



Partnership grants

- Partnership grants focus on addressing barriers to tree planting and achieving landscape restoration level outcomes. To achieve this, partnerships create an even closer working relationship with partners from regional councils, sector organisations, non-government organisations (NGOs), researchers, training organisations, Māori landowners, and community groups. Te Uru Rākau works with partners such as regional councils, sector organisations, environmental non-governmental organisations, researchers, training organisations, Māori entities, community groups, and key government agencies to approve these projects.
- As at 30 June, **24 partnership projects were approved**, with 12 signed agreements. Of the 24:
 - 3,294,000 indigenous trees were funded
 - Funding ranges from \$39,500 to \$6,650,000 and totals \$35,146,818 as at 30 June
 - Three are charities, five are companies, seven are government organisations, four are Māori landowners, and five are non-government organisations
 - Of the 12 partnership agreements:
 - eight involve funded and commissioned research
 - seven include labour and workforce initiatives
 - six involve plant production/supply partnerships
 - one is a catchment-level project
 - Six of the partnerships are for large-scale restoration projects
 - Partnerships involve projects that provide science and innovation projects, training programmes and workforce development, advice and support for landowners, large-scale tree planting, and restoration and seedling production.
 - A list of Partnership projects is included in Annex 1

- Regional breakdown:



Expected results

17. The Fund aims to encourage planting of up to 60 million trees over three years, with two thirds of these being indigenous species. The number of trees planted as a result of the direct landowner grants approved can be seen in this table:

Region	Indigenous hectares	Exotic hectares	Indigenous trees	Exotic trees
Auckland	53	0	67,650	0
Bay of Plenty	12	38	30,250	31,150
Canterbury	114	1,154	12,700	1,133,007
Gisborne	86	253	137,380	312,671
Hawkes Bay	379	462	573,945	465,700
Manawatu/Whanganui	187	14	238,276	13,684
Marlborough	137	38	149,819	30,160
Nelson	1		3,000	0
Northland	102	114	118,344	157,360
Otago	31	231	11,430	270,357
Southland	2	13	3,500	16,770
Taranaki	13		21,120	0
Tasman	27	327	42,830	326,500
Waikato	27	67	64,775	61,200
Wellington	105	105	174,620	113,740
Total	1,276	2,816	1,649,639	2,932,299
	4,092		4,581,938	

18. This data shows 31% of planting is indigenous in terms of hectares planted, and 36% of planting is indigenous in terms of number of plants in the ground. This is less than the two-thirds ratio of indigenous planting expected under the Fund, but this is as expected for year one, because grants that enabled planting in 2019 were prioritised – most of which were exotic because of the existing infrastructure for exotic planting. We expect this ratio to improve and meet the two-thirds

goal by the two-year mark, as capacity for indigenous planting increases in response to demand and more applications for indigenous planting are processed.

19. It's important to note that these numbers don't include grants for reversion, because reversion activities don't involve planting many trees, but instead provide many established trees over time as the land reverts to indigenous forest. Land approved for a reversion grant is assessed for 'stocking rate' (of 750 stems per hectare) at the end of the grant, to make sure it meets the criteria of the grant rather than at the beginning. As of 30 June 2019, there have been 100.1 hectares of land approved for reversion grants across six applications.
20. Significant progress has been made since 30 June. As at 31 August, 150 One Billion Trees grant applications have been approved, totalling \$14,543,043.25 and 7,103.01 hectares. 33 partnership applications have been approved, totalling \$37,733,087.70. Sixteen of the approved partnership applications have been completely contracted. An additional seven partnership applications are recommended for approval or are currently being reviewed, totalling an additional \$13,697,270.

Afforestation grant scheme comparison

21. As the Afforestation Grant Scheme (AGS) and the Fund are administered quite differently, we have provided a very simple analysis comparing planting which has occurred under the AGS from 2016 until today, with grants approved under the Fund to 30 June.

	AGS (2016-present)			One Billion Trees (June 2018-Present)		
	Hectares planted	Value of funded planting	% of total ha	Hectares funded	Value of approved funding	% of total ha
Pinus radiata	2,047.5	\$ 2,689,551	33%	2,691.1	\$4,117,975	66%
Mixed exotic	1,118.3	\$ 1,457,656	18%	123.6	\$202,015	3%
Mānuka	1,650.9	\$ 2,197,587	27%	835	\$1,710,172	20%
Mixed Indigenous	1,331.7	\$ 1,731,249	22%	440.5	\$1,581,338	11%
Total	6,148.4	\$ 8,076,043		4,090.2	\$7,631,500	

22. It's not possible to make any direct comparison between the two funds given the timing of the report back. For example, the Fund has approved over 4,000 hectares of funding in year one vs. 6,000 hectares planted since 2016 under AGS. The AGS has also funded more mixed indigenous than the Fund, but the proportion of indigenous planting is set to increase as mentioned above, with grants being prioritised for exotic planting in 2019, and more grants for indigenous planting to be approved as infrastructure develops to support them.

4.2 MĀORI PARTICIPATION

23. A key outcome the Fund aims to achieve is Māori development. This means supporting Māori aspirations for development of their lands, including through broader economic development, and recognising the role and importance of indigenous species.
24. Uptake of Fund partnerships and grants for Māori development has been lower than expected at this point. The initiatives included in the fund to increase Māori participation have not delivered the expected results so far. Improving uptake for Māori will be a focus of the engagement strategy for the 2019/20 year.

Landowner grants for Māori land

25. As of 30 June 2019 there are seven approved landowner grants approved for afforestation of Māori land, with a combined value of \$1,734,362 and an area 926.7 ha. There are also nine applications for Māori freehold land that are either awaiting assessment, in assessment, or awaiting further information from the applicant. These applications represent a further 2,033.4 hectares of land for planting, and another \$2,764,550 in grant money.
26. As at August 31 2019 there are now 11 applications for Māori Freehold Land active grant applications still being processed, totalling 2,839 hectares and approximately \$5.8 million.

Partnership grants for Māori led projects

27. As of 30 June 2019 there are four approved partnership grants, combining for a total of \$13,012,965 in grant money. The objectives of these grants are divided into:
- 2x labour workforce development;
 - 1x seedling production & labour workforce development; and
 - 1x tree planting and restoration.

4.3 INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT (JOBS)

28. We expect 171 jobs to be created as a result of the partnership projects funded through the Fund, with 79 of these being trainee roles. More comprehensive analysis on job creation will be provided in the 12 month report back.

4.4 DEVELOPMENT OF OPERATIONAL POLICY

29. Since the Fund was launched, operational policy and guidance has been developed in tandem with implementation of the Fund. Development of the operational policy was informed by engagement and outreach with stakeholders that was conducted in February 2019. This allowed stakeholder feedback to be incorporated directly into the operational policy before it was finalised and implemented.
30. Operational policy/guidance papers have been developed since January 2019 for the following:
- Minimum stocking rates
 - Top-ups
 - Milestone payment schedule
 - Assessing applications >300 hectares
 - Applying discretion to the 5-year forest land criteria
 - Complex projects (multiyear planting and mixed blocks)
 - Revised ecological restoration top-up
 - Riparian planting
 - Aligning with the NESPF
 - Applying discretion to the 5-year forest land criteria
 - Reversion
 - Applying NESPF requirements
 - Permission to plant

- Applying the ecological restoration top-up
- Mitigating risk of negative impacts on native biodiversity
- Applying additionality
- Additional legal protection.

4.5 ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH

31. The Fund's engagement plan has several goals:

- Achieve the One Billion Trees target by promoting the Fund to landowners and community groups.
- Engage with and get uptake from the right people with the right land or project which promotes growing trees: right tree, right place, right purpose.
- Have a relationship-based approach focused on understanding the needs and aspirations of those we're working with, built on mutual co-operation, trust and good faith.
- Engage as appropriate to advise, inform, involve, partner, or consult.
- Utilise MPI's network of primary industry experts to help Māori & other priority landowners make informed decisions about developing their land.

32. To facilitate this, engagement and outreach workshops were conducted in the areas of these territorial authorities:

- Northland Regional Council
- Waikato Regional Council
- Bay of Plenty Regional Council
- Gisborne District Council
- Hawke's Bay Regional Council
- Taranaki Regional Council
- Horizons Regional Council (Whanganui/Manawatū)
- Greater Wellington Regional Council
- Northern South Island (Marlborough/Nelson/Tasman)
- Environment Canterbury
- Environment Southland

The workshops consisted of an initial session with the regional council, and then a second day working with industry bodies, chairs of iwi groups, CRI representatives and other stakeholders.

33. A series of 20 hui with Māori landowners and iwi have been conducted. These hui covered:

- Māori land and One Billion Trees funding opportunities;
- MAPIP – Land use options;
- Crown Forestry Joint Ventures;
- Tree planting grants; and
- Partnership funding.

4.6 WHOLE FARM CONVERSION

34. Whole farm conversions of land purchased by investment funds for establishment of commercial crops are clearly not the focus of the fund. However, there may be cases where the risks associated with whole-farm conversion are outweighed by the environmental and economic benefits. For example, a Māori land trust seeking to achieve their land management aspirations by converting highly erodible land to forest.

35. The Fund is not subsidising whole farm conversions. The Fund provides grants to support landowners – particularly farmers and Māori landowners – to integrate trees into existing land-use. To target planting towards trees integrated on-farms, there is a maximum limit of 300 hectares per property unless in exceptional circumstances, higher payments for native trees (\$4,000 per hectare) and for planting on the most erodible land. In addition, the growth assessment process actively screens applications to ensure the fund is not incentivising whole farm conversions.
36. Market drivers, especially the economic prospects for commercial forestry, high log price and high carbon price, are likely to be the key drivers of whole-farm conversion rather than the One Billion Trees grant funding. Other factors are affecting rural communities too, like existing trends towards farm consolidation, urbanisation, and mechanisation.

Emerging patterns

37. The Fund has approved funding for planting on 56 farms (2,843 hectares) and nine lifestyle blocks (22.9 hectares). Thirty nine of the approved applications have been for areas of under 10 hectares, while only two applications have been approved for areas greater than 300 ha.
38. Some Class 1-4 land (land that is most suitable for high production farming) has been approved for One Billion Trees funding. 53 applications with Class 1-4 land have been approved, totalling 455 hectares.
39. Of the applications that are primarily afforesting Class 1-4 land, most are for small lifestyle blocks and don't represent large farms being converted to forestry. These applications are typically to retire marginal areas like slopes, restore areas to provide ecosystem services including wetlands and riparian margins, to diversify land use, such as through Mānuka plantations, and to grow shelter belts.

5 Next steps

40. Te Uru Rākau will provide a 12 month review in the first quarter of 2020 covering the period from 1 Dec 2018 to 31 Dec 2019. It will include an update on the content of this six-month report, as well as longer-term Fund performance measures. The 12 month review will provide advice on whether grant rates and policy settings are driving the kind of planting desired by the Fund, and highlight any changes needed to ensure the Fund meets its goals.

Annex 1: Approved Partnerships at 30 June

Partnership	Region	Approved	Description
Manuka Farming NZ Ltd	Multi-Region	\$1,716,050	To plant and establish up to 1.8 million mānuka seedlings to develop mānuka plantations.
Matariki Tu Rākau	Multi-Region	\$5,544,000	350,000 trees planted across the country. Plantings will be permanent, publically accessible, with a preference to native trees. Will be about supporting communities, enabling people to come together in recognition of those who have served.
Minginui Nursery	Bay of Plenty	\$5,800,000	1.8m seedlings to MPI.
Ngati Hine Manuka / Training Project	Tai Tokerau / Northland	\$1,894,965	Increasing the productivity of the nursery to 1m native seedlings per year.
Horizons Regional Afforestation Initiative Stage 1	Manawatū-Whanganui	\$970,600	Increase in employment (from 9 to 90 local staff), community renewal, and development of expertise and capacity.
Trees That Count	Multi-Region	\$6,650,000	Upscale this programme to deliver increased numbers of Master Planters, planting projects, the amount of corporate investment and public investment. To count all indigenous trees in NZ each year. Increase in the total of Indigenous Trees counted on the TTC Counter.
ManaiaSAFE Forestry School Pilot	Gisborne	\$301,209	11 trainees put through a 20-week cable-logging programme of study. Increased employment opportunities, with increased skill and safety awareness post-graduation. Increased social inclusion and participation through education participation and reduced incidents and/or accidents associated with new or recently qualified forestry workers.
Punakaiki Coastal Restoration Project (DoC)	West Coast	\$1,209,000	Plant 179,000 trees and shrubs, improve the local environment and economy through tree planting.
Ngati Rēhia Kauri Sanctuary Feasibility	Tai Tokerau / Northland	\$288,000	The Ngati Rēhia site is assessed and its suitability as a Kauri Sanctuary.
Te Waihora Restoration (DoC)	Canterbury	\$1,059,332	Plant 68,000 trees and shrubs, improve the local environment and economy through planting.
Te Uru Rākau Forestry Scholarships	Multi-Region	\$1,139,000	Increase numbers of Māori and women studying towards professional forestry qualifications.
Scion Totara Industry Pilot	Tai Tokerau / Northland	\$450,000	Establish whether the creation of a totara wood products industry in Northland is viable in practice and if so, the size of the opportunity and how it can be realised.
HBRC Right Tree Right Place Afforestation Project Development Phase	Hawke's Bay	\$235,000.00	Right Tree, Right Place Afforestation Project – Development Phase. Request for funding to develop a plan on how best to reforest 100,000 hectares of erosion prone land over the next decade, reducing soil loss and sedimentation of waterways levels dramatically, while driving the region toward carbon neutrality. The Regional Council has allocated \$30m in the 2018-2028 Long Term Plan for Erosion Control Scheme grants, as well as doubling staff resources for landowner engagement, and has indicated that it would be willing to allocate up to \$100 million of Council's capital investment to commercial afforestation activity.
NZPPI 1BT Native Tree Nursery Capability Building	Nationwide	\$100,000.00	Funding is sought to engage a consultant to develop a sector action plan for native tree nurseries to address six critical capability issues (as identified by plant producers and plant buyers on 3 December 2018) that will affect the success of seedling production in the IBT programme.

Canterbury University Restoration Ambassador	Canterbury	\$98,875.00	A Restoration Ambassador to provide ecological restoration advice particularly to areas with limited access to information and high demand i.e. East Coast and Far North.
QEII Ngā Kākano Whakahau Native Seed Planting Trial	Otago	\$825,997.00	Ngā Kākano Whakahau (NKW) project aims to establish large tracts of native forest using tree seeds inoculated with beneficial native fungi; the funding is for planting trials.
TET - Waimea Inlet Restoration	Nelson	\$1,092,000.00	The NKW research consortium comprises expertise from QEII, University of Otago, Taeye Engineering, and DOC.
Permanent Forests NZ Nursery Practice Guidelines Project	Nationwide	\$39,500.00	Project is about recovering expertise via workshops with highly experienced expert forest nurserymen about how to best grow large volumes of native tree seedlings (open ground, bare-root) that are robust and low cost. Stage 1: workshops with nurserymen and scientists. Stage 2: Report and magazine articles
Scion Re-measurement of selected enrichment/assisted reversion trials	Nationwide	\$97,000.00	During the development of the 1BT Science Plan, MPI Science asked Scion if there were any old trials that could re-visited, he provided a preliminary proposal – this formed the basis of the fourth science priority: re-initiation of indigenous and mixed-forest trials from the 1980s to provide information on optimal planting regimes.
KDL Silviculture training program	Waikato	\$90,007	A training program to fill gap in staffing for high volume planting season in 2019.
TreeMachine, Ngāti Maru, NIT training program	Taranaki	\$85,420	A 17 week NZQA training course for 10 trainees (rangatahi) delivered by Tree Machine and partnering with NIT and Ngāti Maru.
Tane's Tree Trust Cost-Effective Planting EOI	Nationwide	\$155,863.00	Upscaling cost-effective planting and reversion of native forest for 1BT, for 1BT to have the maximum impact, and especially to deliver establishment of native forestry across marginal pastoral hill country at scale, a range of site-specific, low-cost planting and regeneration scenarios are urgently required.
Whakaoratia Te Mana o Te Waiapu	Gisborne	\$5,030,000.00	A programme of work seeking to address significant erosion and sediment issues facing the river, catchment, and alluvial plains of the Waiapu River. Four projects are 1. Debris dams, 2. River Corridor, 3. Nursery, and 4. Employee capability
Taranaki Regional Council - Business guide to tree planting on Taranaki hill country farms	Taranaki	\$275,000.00	Provide landowners with information for incorporating trees into their business models. The project will develop an easy to use digital platform with all information provided in one location.
		\$35,146,818	