

DRAFT NEW ZEALAND FARM ASSURANCE PROGRAMME “PLUS”

NZFAP Plus

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Version 4.5.2

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Introduction

Purpose

The purpose of NZFAP Plus is to:

- Create more sustainable and prosperous farming businesses through understanding resources and continuous improvement through more appropriate practices.
- Demonstrate to the New Zealand community that the red meat sector is farming sustainably and ethically.
- Provide confidence to red meat customers and consumers that our products are produced in the manner they expect.
- Verify meaningful standards and good practice, thereby increase the value of farm products.

A key function of NZFAP Plus is to develop a culture of continuous improvement within the red meat sector, which is driven by farmer knowledge and understanding, rather than compliance and regulation. The outcomes will be farm businesses that:

- Match the farm system and management with the underlying resources to deliver sustainable outcomes for the air, the water, the soil, the indigenous biodiversity, the animals, the people and communities; and
- Are attractive and preferred workplaces;
- Meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs through practices that protect and enhance natural capital (farm and eco-system resources) and communities.

Scope

NZFAP Plus is a voluntary assurance programme for sheep, beef and deer farms. It aims to protect and enhance all resources, while limiting the effect of practices on receiving environment and communities. The on-farm practices include the management of:

- People;
- Farm resources and receiving environments; and
- Biosecurity.

NZFAP Plus builds on NZFAP which covers the foundation assurance, audit and certification of sheep, beef and deer production with respect to:

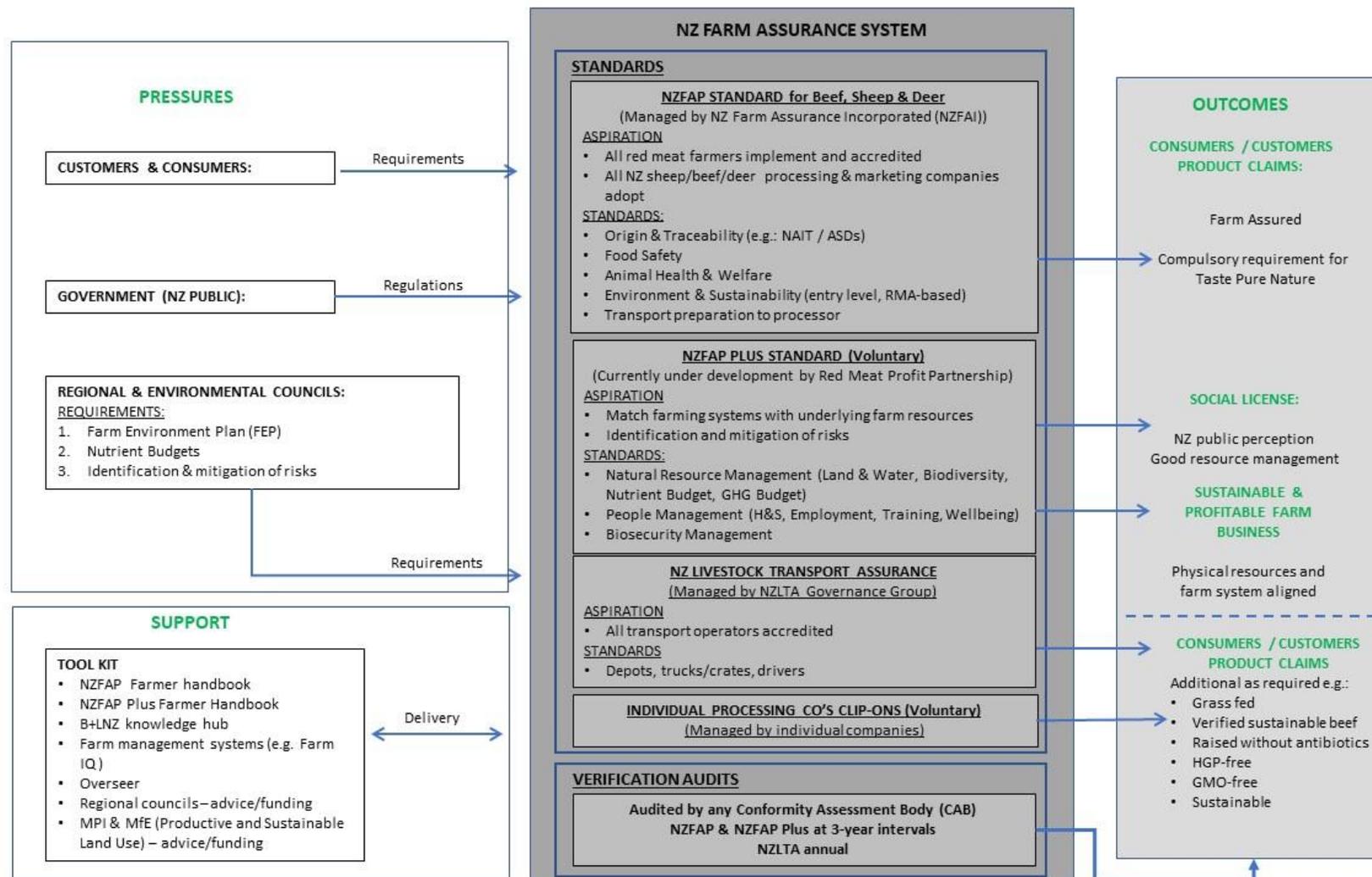
- Food safety;
- Animal health, welfare and production; and
- Traceability.

To be eligible to apply for NZFAP Plus certification, a farmer must already have completed NZFAP certification.

The NZFAP Plus Standard must be read in conjunction with the NZFAP Standard: (available at <https://www.rmpp.co.nz/page/nz-farm-assurance/>).

NZFAP Plus is part of the broader New Zealand Farm Assurance System.

New Zealand Farm Assurance System



Auditing

The assurance programme will be audited independently by a Conformity Assessment Body (CAB).

The initial accreditation audit will occur within 12 months of registration. Intermediate audits may be carried out in person or via remote verification.

During an audit, evidence must be provided that all requirements of the assurance programme are being met including:

- The documentation of plans.
- That the actions identified within documented plans have been put in practice and in accordance with the timeframes documented. If there are deviations from the plan, document the reasons for the deviation(s), and update the plan.
- Actions must be documented and available at audit. For example, time stamped photographs of the native bush, wintering system before, during and after, are useful measures to document requirements.

Audits will occur on a three-yearly cycle.

Terms

Requirement – Farm assurance is contingent upon achieving the prescribed standard or outcome.

Recommendation – Achievement of the standard is not compulsory though considered important. Some recommended standards are likely to become required in the future.

1. Farm Plan and Records

Requirements

- 1.1. Plans must be developed, and records collected for the management of the following resources within the manager's control or influence:
 - People
 - Farm resources and receiving environments
 - Biosecurity
- 1.2. Plans may be documented in either hard copy or electronic form and must include specific, measurable, achievable and timebound actions based on a SWOT assessment and prioritisation.
- 1.3. Plans must be reviewed at least annually, records updated, and any revisions made that are relevant to managing the business in a sustainable manner and to demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement.
- 1.4. All plans and records must be retained for a minimum of five years and have a five-year planning horizon

2. People management

2.1. Policies and documentation

Requirements

- 2.1.1. The business shall comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act (2015), the Employment Relations Act 2000, Minimum Wage Act (1983), Immigration Act (2009) and Holidays Act (2003).
- 2.1.2. People management policies for the farm business must include:
 - a. Employment relations
 - b. Health and safety
 - c. Training and development
 - d. Sources of information and advice
 - e. Wellbeing

2.2. Employment Relations

Requirements

- 2.2.1. All employees shall:
 - a. Have valid documents proving the right to work in the country;
 - b. Have a signed copy of their employment agreement that they understand;
 - c. Receive documentation that details how their wages/salary is calculated for that work period and any deductions made in a format they understand;
 - d. Receive at least the Minimum Wage rates as set by the Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE);
 - e. Work less than 50 hours per week for at least 40 weeks per year;
 - f. Work 10 hours per day or less and no more than 6 days per week;
 - g. Have a 10-minute break within each 4 hours of work and a 30-minute meal break after 6-8 hours of work.
 - h. Receive 4 weeks paid annual leave, and all other holiday and leave entitlements as detailed in the Holidays Act 2003 and any subsequent amendments.
- 2.2.2. All employees shall not be required to make deposits of money or valuable items to secure work or in return for any work-related items including passport or ID documents.

Recommendations

- All employees should after two years, be paid at least, the living wage. Employers should become Living Wage Employer Accredited.

- Employers should maintain an external, independent whistle-blowing service that is communicated to all workers.

2.3. Health and Safety

Requirements

- 2.3.1. The farm business shall have a Health & Safety Policy signed by the business owner that is accessible to all people working in the business and visitors. It shall include:
 - a. Hazard Register and how identified hazards are to be managed;
 - b. Method by which hazards are identified, assessed and managed;
 - c. Who is responsible for the management of this process;
 - d. Where all necessary safety clothing, devices, equipment and material are kept, and when they shall be used;
 - e. The location of first aid boxes and fire extinguishers; and
 - f. List of Emergency contacts which shall be available in farm buildings and vehicles.
- 2.3.2. All people working in the business shall receive health and safety training relevant to their job and this training shall be clearly documented.
- 2.3.3. All people working in the business shall be provided with and use personal protective equipment (PPE, e.g. clothing, shoes, gloves, hearing protection, eye protection, dust masks) that is appropriate for the work they do.
- 2.3.4. No deductions shall be made from wages for such PPE.
- 2.3.5. All accidents, injuries and near misses shall be recorded in a formal accident log.
- 2.3.6. Material safety data sheets (MSDS) must be printed or in a mobile application and be immediately available, and risk assessments carried out for each chemical used.

2.4. Training and Development

Requirements

- 2.4.1. Competency of all people working in the business must be assessed, and training and development needs must be identified on a regular basis and in advance of undertaking any new tasks on their own for the first time. Training may include, but is not limited to, the requirements in this programme.
- 2.4.2. Record the training that has been undertaken and document the training which is planned for all people working in the business.
 - a. Record all training all people working in the business have undertaken at the time it is completed.

- b. Detail the training planned for all people working in the business in the next 12 months.

2.5. Sources of Information and Advice

Requirement

- 2.5.1. Maintain a contact list of trusted advisors and contractors including roles and contact details, which is accessible to the farm team for use in emergencies, breakdowns or when support is required.

2.6. Wellbeing

Requirement

- 2.6.1. Record all community involvement activities held on farm.

Recommendations

- Record community involvement activities people from within the farm business are involved with off the farm.
- Farm business managers/owners should take time away from the farm to relax and recharge.
- All people working in the business should pursue interests outside the farm to refresh their minds and make other social connections.
- All people working in the business should consider being involved in clubs or organisations outside the farm business, e.g. sports clubs, school groups, church etc. in order to ensure the health and vitality of their local community.
- All people working in the business should consider supporting or being involved in initiatives that promote a positive image of agriculture such as community catchment initiatives or hosting non-farming people onto their properties.

3. Farm resources and receiving environment

3.1. Planning and documentation

Requirements

3.1.1. The Farm Plan will hold the following elements:

- a. Farm Infrastructure Map
- b. Natural Resource Information and Map
- c. Land and Freshwater Management Plan
- d. Nutrient Budget
- e. Indigenous Biodiversity Management Plan
- f. Greenhouse Gas Budget

Recommendations

- That a farmer work with a recognised land management advisor/farm planner and nutrient management advisor to develop the maps and plans and to undertake the risk assessment and prioritisation.
- Certification and/or experience of these advisors and their preparedness to involve the farmer in the process should be checked before commissioning work.

3.2. Farm Infrastructure Map

Requirements

3.2.1. The Farm Infrastructure Map must identify and show the following land features and resources:

- a. Property boundaries
- b. Fencing infrastructure (e.g., paddocks, raceways, riparian)
- c. Water takes and irrigation infrastructure and zones
- d. Tracks and races
- e. Yards, animal holding areas
- f. Stock crossing structures (e.g., bridges and consented culverts)
- g. Nutrient storage sites such as fertiliser or compost bins, worm farms
- h. Offal pits
- i. Sewage disposal systems
- j. Waste disposal sites
- k. Effluent storage
- l. Effluent application areas
- m. Tile drains

- n. Silage pits
- o. Feed pads and feed lots
- p. Contaminated sites (e.g. old sheep dips or farm dumps)
- q. Fuel storage sites
- r. Sediment traps and bunds, debris dams, soil conservation flumes and other built structures for resource protection

3.3. Natural Resource Information and Map

Requirements

- 3.3.1. The farm must have information presented as a map (or maps) of the underlying Natural Resources on the farm at a scale appropriate for farm management (farm scale maps are typically at 1:10,000 or 1:15,000, and for more intensive land use the scale should be higher e.g. 1:5,000) and include the following:
- a. Soil type
 - b. Slope
 - c. Aspect (optional)
 - d. Elevation (optional)
 - e. Rock type
 - f. Waterways
 - g. Waterbodies (wetlands, lakes, etc.)
 - h. Vegetation cover:
 - Pastures and forages
 - Sites of indigenous vegetation habitat
 - Exotic forestry plantations and woodlots, shelterbelts
 - Soil conservation plantings on slopes and in gullies
 - i. Critical source areas (CSA)
 - j. Erosion prone areas
 - k. Actively eroding areas, including river and stream banks

Recommendation

- There are two recommended options to collate and interpret information on the above resources once they are determined:
 - Land Use Capability (LUC) or
 - Land management units (LMUs)

Either LUC units or LMUs should be displayed as part of the Natural Resource Information and Map.

3.4. Land and Water Management Plan

Requirements¹

- 3.4.1. Develop and implement a land and water management plan:
 - Step 1: Using the Natural Resource Information and Map conduct a strengths, weaknesses, opportunity and threats analysis (SWOT analysis) for the farm.
 - Step 2: Use SWOT analysis of the farm's resources to undertake an assessment of the farm's existing management policies and practices and identify opportunities for improvement and create a Land and Freshwater Management Plan. This plan must also address threats identified in the Nutrient Budget (3.5).
- 3.4.2. Implementation of the Land and Freshwater Management Plan must be demonstrated through appropriate records such as photographs, maps and other documentation.
- 3.4.3. Undertake an assessment of soil health using the Visual Soil Assessment at least once every three years and whenever land use is changed (e.g., establishing a crop or pasture renewal) for each soil type or LUC unit. Changes in soil health status must be used to guide land management planning.
- 3.4.4. Waterway ecosystem health and/or quality is assessed regularly, at least annually, at identified Waterway Health Monitoring Point/s to ensure changes in water health and/or quality status are used to guide land management planning. These Monitoring Points must be marked on the Natural Resource Map. Waterway health and quality assessments must include the following:
 - a. Nitrogen
 - b. Phosphorous (Dissolved Reactive Phosphorus (DRP))
 - c. Suspended sediment (visual clarity/turbidity)
 - d. Deposited sediment
 - e. Temperature
 - f. E. coli
 - g. Macroinvertebrate health (MCI Index)
 - h. Fish presence and abundance
- 3.4.5. The Land and Water Management Plan, where relevant based on 3.4.3, and 3.4.4, must include actions and timeframes that:

¹ The requirements outlined in this draft NZFAP Plus standard mirror the government's new essential freshwater regulatory requirements/rules announced on 5 August 2020.

- a. Prevent and/or mitigate direct discharge of pathogens, nutrients or sediment from built infrastructure, stock camps or CSAs into waterways/bodies.
 - b. Protect land against erosion by reducing the risk of erosion through a rolling ten year works programme.
 - c. Ensure vegetative cover is maintained on permanent pasture/ forage to enhance and protect soil health.
 - d. Cattle and deer must be excluded from waterways and waterbodies to minimise the risk of streambank/bed erosion and contamination:
 - From 1 July 2023 (regardless of slope) all dairy cattle must be excluded from lakes and rivers more than 1 metre wide and all dairy support from 2025.
 - From 1 July 2023 (regardless of slope) all cattle and deer must be excluded from lakes and rivers more than 1 metre wide, where land is used for fodder-cropping, break-feeding or grazing on irrigated pasture.
 - On land mapped by Ministry for the Environment as low slope (“less than 10 degrees slope”) beef cattle and deer must be excluded from lakes and rivers more than 1 metre wide by 1 July 2025.
 - The exclusion setback for all animals from the edge of any lake or river must be 3m (unless the permanent fence had been erected before 3 September 2020, in which case the existing fence does not need to be moved).
 - All cattle must not cross a 1m wide waterway more than twice within 1 month and must be managed while doing so.
 - Wetlands (regardless of slope) *identified* in a regional or district plan as of 3 September 2020 must have cattle, deer and pigs excluded by 1 July 2023. Otherwise, cattle, deer and pigs must be excluded by 1 July 2025. *Identified* wetlands are those greater than 500m², or specifically identified and mapped by a regional or district council. Any wetland supporting a population of threatened species must have cattle, deer and pigs excluded by 1 July 2025.
- 3.4.6. A consent must be held where required due to land use change from less intensive uses to more intensive uses (e.g., forestry to pasture, irrigation).
- 3.4.7. For land that is to be cropped, the paddock must be assessed for soil type, slope and erosion risk and a plan developed covering:
- a. Pre-crop establishment;
 - b. Cultivation techniques (if cultivated);
 - c. Grazing management; and
 - d. Post-crop management.
- 3.4.8. Management of land being grazed during the winter months must meet the following:

- a. The area being intensively grazed during winter must be no more than either 50ha or 10% of the property, whichever is the greatest.
 - b. Any paddock being cropped for winter grazing must have a mean slope of 10 degrees or less.
 - c. An un-grazed buffer zone of vegetation must be left from waterways and wetlands. The setback distance of the buffer zone should be dependent on slope, soil, activity, and manage the risk of losses of sediment, nutrients, and pathogens to the waterbody. Any crop must be set back at least 5m.
 - d. CSAs must have permanent vegetative cover at all times; and must not be cultivated mechanically. If cropped, CSA may be grazed last if safe.
 - e. When winter forage cropping on a slope, grazing must protect waterways and waterbodies, i.e., start grazing from the top of a hill or from the part of the paddock furthest from any waterways/bodies.
 - f. Land that is used for winter forage crop grazing must be replanted as soon as practicable after livestock have grazed the land's annual forage crop.
 - g. Where and when soil structure damage (e.g., pugging) is a risk, animals must be moved. If pugging does occur it shall not be deeper than 20cm or cover more than 50% of a paddock, regardless of depth.
 - h. Sacrifice paddocks must be more than 50 metres from a waterway.
 - i. Grazing winter crops *in situ* to bare soil must demonstrate mitigation of surface runoff and/or leaching where carried out on:
 - gravel or peat soils;
 - areas with sub-soil drainage; or
 - areas over shallow aquifers.
 - j. Continuous fodder cropping (i.e., annual crop establishment for more than 5 years) must not occur on slopes greater than 15°.
- 3.4.9. Management of all grazed land during winter months must be documented with photographs
- 3.4.10. Paddock grazing records must be kept for winter forage crops.
- 3.4.11. Feedlots or feed pads where livestock are fed in confinement *in situ*, regardless of what feed is being fed must be certified through a certified freshwater plan or have:
- (a) the base sealed to a minimum permeability standard of 10⁻⁹ m/s; and
 - (b) effluent expelled in the feedlot being collected, stored, and disposed of in accordance with a rule in a regional or district plan, or a resource consent; and
 - (c) be at least 50 m away from any water body, any water abstraction bore, any drain, and the coastal marine area.
- 3.4.12. Supplementary feed must be fed out away from any waterways/bodies or CSAs.

- 3.4.13. Irrigation systems must be designed, calibrated and operated to minimise the amount of water used and minimise the risks of leaching and/or run-off.
- 3.4.14. Irrigation application or other water take of more than 5L/second must be recorded, including reasons for water take and metered volume of the water take, must be kept. Specific dates and reporting to council apply with different rates of water take.

Recommendations

- The soil testing transect should be recorded by GPS and used for each successive soil test.
- Water troughs should be located away from any waterways/bodies or CSAs to ensure no direct run-off.
- Feeding troughs/holders should be shifted regularly to prevent pugging and nutrient build up.
- Pugging should be no deeper than the depth of the ankle joint (fetlock) of the animal class being grazed.
- Join a water catchment management group.

3.5. Nutrient Budget & Management

Requirements

- 3.5.1. Complete a nutrient budget once every three years or when substantive farm system changes are made.
- 3.5.2. Quantify the risk to surface and ground water from N leaching and P losses respectively.
- 3.5.3. Use less than 190 kg N/ha/year across the property².
- 3.5.4. Undertake macronutrient soil tests at least once every three years and whenever land use is changed (e.g., establishing a crop or pasture renewal) to assist nutrient management and to ensure adequate nutrients are available for plant and animal production.
- 3.5.5. Undertake a soil cadmium test. If cadmium levels exceed 1 ppm within the top 150 mm, fertilisers containing high cadmium must not be used on that land.
- 3.5.6. Have records to provide evidence of nutrient application consistent with soil tests and plant/animal requirements and any nutrient budget constraints.

Recommendation

- Soil nutrient status should be maintained at optimum agronomic levels specific to the soil types present.

² This requirement mirrors the government's new synthetic nitrogen fertiliser cap announced on 5 August 2020.

3.6. Indigenous Biodiversity Plan

Requirements

- 3.6.1. The farm must identify/map habitat relating to:
 - a. Native plants, birds, reptiles, mammals and insects; and
 - b. Native fish, reptiles and insects.
- 3.6.2. The farm must have an indigenous biodiversity plan that identifies opportunities to protect or enhance biodiversity on the farm and/or sub-catchment or catchment.
- 3.6.3. For those sites/habitats that are rare, threatened or at risk complete an ecological assessment to provide a future management approach.
- 3.6.4. Establish biodiversity outcome monitoring, where required.
- 3.6.5. Have records and evidence available to demonstrate those plans have been implemented and progress made.

Recommendations

- Join a coordinated programme for predator or notified pest plant control.
- Join a coordinated programme for protection of at-risk species or habitat restoration.

3.7. Greenhouse Gas Budget

Requirements

- 3.7.1. The farm must complete a greenhouse gas budget that includes methane and nitrous oxide emissions from livestock, carbon dioxide emissions from the farm's operating activities and sequestration by vegetation on the farm by 2025.

Recommendation

- Investigate and implement methods to reduce and mitigate or offset greenhouse gas emissions from your farm business.
- Investigate and implement climate change adaptation opportunities for your farm business.

4 Biosecurity

4.1 Planning and documentation

Requirements

- 4.1.1 Identify the key biosecurity risks and risk vectors for the farm. Risks must be assessed based on the likelihood, and impact on the business. Vectors may include animals, people (family, workers, recreational users, contractors), vehicles and machinery, and brought in feed.
- 4.1.2 The farm must have a biosecurity policy which includes processes to manage or minimise the risks of introducing:
- pests,
 - weeds and
 - diseases
- to your farm.
- 4.1.3 The farm must have a biosecurity policy which includes processes to manage or minimise the existing:
- pests,
 - weeds and
 - diseases
- on your farm.

Definitions (Natural Resource Management)

Bare soil – A soil surface devoid of any plant material.

Biodiversity monitoring point – A point at which biodiversity monitoring is recorded. This point may be chosen because it represents a particular Land Management Unit, a significant change in vegetative cover or a separate waterway/body.

Critical Source Area (CSA) - a landscape feature like a gully, swale or a depression that accumulates runoff from adjacent flats and slopes and delivers it to waterways such as streams, rivers and open drains and waterbodies such as lakes and wetlands, or field tiles and other sub-soil drainage systems.

Employee – A person, including family members, who has agreed to be employed to work for some form of payment under a contract of service. Employees include:

- permanent employees (full-time and part-time),
- fixed-term employees (full-time and part-time),
- casual employees, and
- seasonal employees.

Erosion - The process of eroding or being eroded by wind, water, frost, or another natural agent

Expert - A person who is very knowledgeable about or skilful in a particular subject; this may include professionals and appropriately experienced farmers.

Feedlot – Area where livestock are confined in pasture-free areas and provided (mechanically or by hand) with feed, for more than 80 days in a six-month period. This includes both covered and uncovered areas.

Feed pad – Area where livestock are confined in pasture-free areas and provided with feed for more than 30 days in a year or for more than 10 consecutive days.

Land Management Unit (LMU) - Areas of land that can be farmed or managed in a similar way because of underlying physical similarities such as slope, soil type, aspect, vegetation. They represent how land could be used if all physical limitations and opportunities were recognised and managed.

Land Use Capability (LUC) – A system used in New Zealand to help achieve sustainable land development and management on individual farms, in whole catchments, and at the district, region, and the national level. The LUC system has two key components. Firstly, Land Resource Inventory (LRI) is compiled as an assessment of physical factors considered to be critical for long-term land use and management. Secondly, the inventory is used for LUC Classification, whereby land is categorised into eight classes according to its long-term capability to sustain one or more productive uses.

People working in the business – Any employee, contractor, manager/owner, or any other person working in the business.

Pugging - The penetration of soil by hooves of grazing livestock

Sacrifice paddock – An area on which (a) cattle are repeatedly, but temporarily, contained (typically during extended periods of wet weather); and (b) the resulting damage caused to the soil by pugging is so severe as to require re-sowing with pasture species.

Soil testing transect – is a mapped (often by GPS) path used for routinely sampling and monitoring soil fertility.

Stockholding area— An area for holding cattle at a density that means pasture or other vegetative ground cover cannot be maintained (for example, feed pads, winter pads, standoff pads, and loafing pads); but does not include an area used for pastoral purposes that is in the nature of a stockyard, milking shed, wintering barn, or sacrifice paddock.

Stream Health assessment – An assessment of the health of a waterway considering physical characteristics, land management in the catchment, and the biology present in the waterway. It is an assessment of the ecosystem health.

Sustainability – being able to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Visual Soil Assessment (VSA) – A visual assessment of the key soil state and plant performance indicators of soil quality. By looking at both soil and plant indicators, VSA links the natural resource (soil) with plant performance and subsequently farm profitability.

Waterbody – Any waterbody that continually contains surface water such as lakes, wetlands, estuaries, harbours or dams.

Waterway – Any waterway that continually contains flowing water such as rivers, streams or open drains.

Waterway Health Monitoring Point – A point in a stream, river or other significant waterway at which regular monitoring of stream health is undertaken.

Winter Forage Crop – An annual forage plant which is sown in the summer-autumn period for the purposes of grazing livestock during the winter.