

The East Coast Forestry Project

What is the East Coast Forestry Project?

The East Coast Forestry Project (ECFP) was introduced in 1992 to address the Gisborne District's erosion problem. The Government reviewed the ECFP in 1998 and 1999 and decided to combine the four previous objectives of the project into one objective. The new objective is to achieve sustainable land management on the worst 60 000 hectares of severely eroding land in the Gisborne District by 2020, by changing current land use.

The aim of the revised ECFP is to control present and potential erosion on 'target' land. The project will do this in any cost-effective way, including planting with radiata pine or other species, gully planting and actively managing the reversion of pastoral land to indigenous scrub/forest. The objective of the ECFP is to achieve effective erosion control on grant areas, with the target land component averaging 50 percent of the total grant area approved in each of the next five tender rounds, when assessed at the 1:50,000 regional mapping scale.

The ECFP provides grants to landholders to enable them to carry out these kinds of activities on sites identified as 'target land', together with any non-target land directly associated with the target land. Rates of grant payments are not fixed. They are determined by the applicants who bid for grants in a competitive tender process.

Existing contracts remain valid.

Erosion Control Treatment Options

Afforestation	Blanket establishment utilising pinus radiata, Douglas fir and/or Poplar.
Farm Gully Planting	The planting of gullies (the whole gully or around the edges but without planting the surrounding land) where on it's own will control erosion.
Reversion	The regeneration of indigenous scrub/forest on pastoral land. The reverting area must be covered by a covenant.
Alternative Treatment	Opportunity to tender a new erosion treatment option. The new treatment must have prior approval from MAF - application for treatment approval should be received by MAF three months before the close of the respective tender pool.

Fencing of indigenous reserves is reimbursed at 100 percent of costs. Mandatory gully planting in afforested areas is also reimbursed at 100 percent of costs.

Payment schedule of afforestation and farm gully planting is 70 percent on establishment and 30 percent on final thinning. Reversion is paid at 50 percent in year one and 50 percent in year five.

Who is eligible?

Landholders with target land within the Gisborne District are eligible to submit a tender application. Applications can be submitted by any landholder, or other people who have an interest in the land proposed for treatment. Multiple owners should be represented by a trust or incorporation.

For all erosion control treatments, the minimum grant area eligible for tender is 5 hectares. The approved grant areas may also consist of one block or a number of different blocks. For reversion treatments, the minimum areas considered are 2 hectares within a forestry treatment and 5 hectares if the surrounding land is farmed. A minimum of two hectares is required for a single gully under the farm gully option. Therefore, several gullies may be required to be submitted to achieve the overall five-hectare minimum.



What is Target Land?

Following the recent review of the ECFP, 'target land' had been redefined as Category 3b, 3c and some category 4 land. This is land vulnerable to erosion by gullyng, slumping or earthflows. More specifically, 'target land' consists of the following Land Use Capability units VIIe 18,19,21,22,23,24,25; and VIIIe 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. These units are described in NZ Land Resource Inventory (NZLRI) 22nd edition 1999 (Landcare Research Report No. 28)

ECFP target land is further defined as land that does not have either vegetation cover providing effective erosion control, or vegetation cover capable of doing so in the near future. Target land will generally be bare or in pasture, and perhaps include areas of scattered or stunted scrub. The area of target land remaining in the Gisborne District is estimated at 60 000 hectares. Applicants may get estimated target land area maps for their proposals by referring to the 1:50,000 scale.

It is expected that most grant areas being tendered for will also include some non-target land that is directly associated with target land and is within practical boundaries. This associated land will usually shed water run-off onto the target land and contribute to its erosion.

Tenders that include higher proportions of target land will be favoured by a 'weighting system' used in evaluating and selecting competitive tenders. Land on which existing vegetation is providing effective erosion control, or is capable of doing so, will not be counted as target land and will not be eligible for inclusion in a grant area.

How do I apply?

Landowners must apply for a grant by preparing a tender application. The ECFP has specific requirements that are set out in the application forms. The tender process requires landholders to show that their application meets these requirements.

All tender applications need to include:

- a certificate of title or a description of the legal interest in the land;
- a description of the legal status of the land the application refers to;
- a land use capability assessment/plan for the grant area which will be a recent aerial photograph, or a clear laser print copy (scale between 1:4,000 and 1:16,000); and
- land use certification.

Depending on the erosion control treatment chosen by the applicant, other certifications will also be required. Generally landholders will need to employ a landuse and/or forestry consultant to prepare their tender application. A list of approved consultants is available from MAF, Gisborne Office.

How much is the Grant Payment?

The ECFP provides a financial incentive to encourage sustainable land use. It is up to the applicant to determine the level of grant to apply for. There is no set pay out and each application is assessed on a case by case basis, according to how well it will control soil erosion, and it's cost-effectiveness compared to other applications.

Submitting an application does not automatically mean a grant will be approved. The ECFP operates through a tender process and applicants are required to submit a competitive tender. Each year there are limited funds available for grants, and that means the number of grants allocated is restricted. All applications are weighted and ranked to determine which give the best value for money.

Where do I get more information?

MAF administers the project through its Gisborne office.
For further information or application forms contact:

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