

# Immediate issues

## Pending Decisions and Actions

### BIOSECURITY

1. Pending decisions and actions relating to biosecurity include:

#### Biosecurity strategy

2. A Biosecurity Strategy for New Zealand is being developed, led by the Biosecurity Council. This document aims to set national priorities for biosecurity and ensure consistency and co-ordination across all agencies involved in biosecurity. A draft strategy is expected to be submitted to the Minister for Biosecurity and an ad hoc group of ministers for approval for release for public comment later this year.

#### Painted apple moth

3. Since 1999 an attempt has been underway in West Auckland to eradicate the painted apple moth. MAF has been directed to report to the first Cabinet meeting of the incoming government on the future management of painted apple moth. A decision on its future management relates to three primary factors, each of which involves significant uncertainties. These factors are:

- the likely economic and environmental impact arising from the spread of painted apple moth in New Zealand;
- the costs of various eradication or control strategies; and
- the likely effectiveness of each of those strategies.

4. The response options available to government are:

Option	Description
	<i>Control or adaptation</i>
1	Undertake no further control of painted apple moth
2	Establish a programme to prepare for long-term management of painted apple moth aimed at controlling its economic and environmental impacts
	<i>Eradication</i>
3	Pursue eradication by aerial spraying of all known larval infestations (up to 12,000 hectares)

#### TB strategy review

5. A board of inquiry is underway to inquire into the Animal Health Board's proposal for an amendment to the bovine tuberculosis national pest management strategy. The Minister

of Agriculture will need to consider the report of the board of inquiry and a report from the Director-General of MAF before deciding whether to recommend making the amendment to the strategy. The board of inquiry's report is due by the end of July 2002.

### **Review of dairy industry funding for TB strategy**

6. The dairy industry has historically provided its share of funding for the bovine TB national pest management strategy by means of a grant. The cattle and deer industries have provided their funding through levies on products sold. A levy on milk sales appears an appropriate means of securing funding for the dairy industry share. The Minister of Agriculture may need to deal with this funding issue and may wish to consider recommending the making of a levy under the Biosecurity Act on milksolids, to provide the dairy industry share of funding.

### **Specific issues affecting Fisheries**

7. The Ministry of Fisheries (MFish) is the lead agency for marine biosecurity and the Department of Conservation (DoC) also plays an important supporting role. Key issues requiring Ministerial decisions or action in the coming months include:

#### ***Ballast water***

8. New Zealand is actively working to promote development of internationally consistent regulations on ballast water management through the International Maritime Organisation (IMO). A conference of parties is expected in 2003 at which agreement will be sought to details of such controls. The Minister for Biosecurity is expected to seek approval for New Zealand's negotiating position prior to the IMO meeting in October 2002, and for subsequent meetings as they are held.

#### ***Hull fouling***

9. Fouling on vessel hulls can lead to the introduction of marine pests into New Zealand waters. Surveillance programmes are being implemented to monitor high-risk areas such as ports. Following a consultative process MFish is developing proposals to require all vessels (including recreational vessels) to be cleaned in facilities that are compliant with discharge requirements.
10. MFish intends to report to the Minister for Biosecurity and provide advice on measures to mitigate the risks associated with hull fouling and cleaning by 30 September 2002.

#### ***Undaria vector control plan***

11. A vector management programme is underway to control the further spread of the exotic marine species undaria (*Undaria pinnatifida*, or Japanese kelp). The Department of Conservation is also undertaking an undaria eradication programme at Big Glory Bay in Stewart Island and in Bluff Harbour.
12. The undaria vector management programme is funded until June 2003. At this time, the programme will be assessed by MFish and a decision will need to be made by Cabinet on

ongoing management options. The decision by Cabinet will need to include consideration of DOC's eradication programme, funding for which has now largely come to an end.

### **Auditor-General's report on biosecurity**

13. The Auditor-General has undertaken a significant review of biosecurity focusing, among other things, on MAF's activities and on the management of specific incursion responses. A report is expected to be tabled in Parliament soon after the election. It is expected that MAF and the Minister will need to address a number of significant issues raised in the Auditor-General's review.