

**Before the Auckland Council  
(Hearing Panel)**

**UNDER** the Resource Management Act 1991 (**RMA**)

**IN THE MATTER OF** an application for regional resource consents for the  
Huia Replacement Water Treatment Plant Project  
Woodlands Park Road, Waima.

---

**EVIDENCE OF NICHOLAS WILLIAM WAIPARA**

**In support of Save Our Kauri Trust, Titirangi Protection Group, The Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society of New Zealand, Waitakere Ranges Protection Society, The Tree Council and Titirangi Residents and Ratepayers Association Inc.  
(Kauri Dieback)**

Dated: 12 April 2021

---

**Introduction**

1. My full name is Nicholas William Waipara.
2. My qualifications include a BSc Hons (Botany) and a PhD (Microbiology) at University of Canterbury.
3. Since 2005 I have been specialising in research of *Phytophthora agathidicida*, the causal agent of kauri dieback disease. I am currently undertaking a number of roles which include research related to advancing the science and management of kauri dieback; Senior Scientist and Team Leader at Plant & Food Research, and a Senior Lecturer in the School of Biological Sciences, University of Auckland

4. I have over 25 years of work and research experience in biosecurity science, and applied pest management programmes including soilborne disease management. This includes working as a Scientist specialising in plant pathology at Crown Research Institutes (Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research); and as Principal Advisor of Biosecurity for regional government (Auckland Regional Council, Auckland Council) as well as technical scientist for the Kauri Dieback Programme since its inception in 2009 until 2017.
5. Of specific relevance to this hearing is my scientific and technical expertise of the biology and management of Kauri Dieback (*Phytophthora agathidicida*) and risk and impacts it poses to kauri and the kauri ecosystem. I have used my peer reviewed research to underpin and inform evidence based policies, planning and operational management of kauri dieback. I undertake collaborative studies that advance our collective understanding of kauri dieback, which has led to credible scientific standards for acceptance in published papers in peer-reviewed journals. These publications contribute to how we can improve the management of Kauri Dieback. I am currently a member of the Kauri Dieback Strategic Science Advisory Group (SSAG) that developed New Zealand's Kauri Dieback Science Plan (2018) which was based on the first nationwide stocktake of the current state of knowledge, including Mātauranga (traditional and contemporary Māori knowledge), of kauri dieback in 2017.
6. I am the co-leader of Ngā Rākau Taketake (NRT) within New Zealand's Biological Heritage Science Challenge, <https://bioheritage.nz/research/saving-our-iconic-trees/> which is currently implementing the largest kauri dieback research based programme in New Zealand with a total investment of \$28 million over the next four years. Our work within NRT continues to undertake a regular update and review of new discoveries and knowledge of kauri dieback and its management, which is a current and ongoing activity.
7. I have presented scientific evidence on behalf of Auckland Council for the Auckland Unitary Plan, regarding kauri dieback management
8. I am very familiar with the current situation of kauri dieback and the biosecurity measures required to manage and protect the significant kauri ecosystem of the Waitakere Ranges, and through my roles in the Kauri Dieback Strategic Science Advisory Group and Ngā Rākau Taketake, so can provide an excellent understanding of the current state of knowledge of kauri dieback (12 April 2021)

### **Code of Conduct**

I have read the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses in the Environment Court Practice Note. This evidence has been prepared in accordance with it and I agree to comply with it. I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions expressed. I confirm that the issues addressed in this brief of evidence are within my area of expertise. I have specified where my opinion is based on limited or partial information and identified any assumptions I have made in forming my opinions.

1. My evidence will address the following:
  - a. The impact and risk of kauri dieback in the context of the proposed Huia Water Treatment Plant project and the Waitakere Ranges Kauri Ecosystem.
  - b. My participation in the requested caucusing related to the requested kauri dieback disease testing undertaken on the site and surrounds. I accept the methodology and results provided by the Biosense report. These results show that the site and surrounds are heavily contaminated and that it cannot be assumed that any part of the site is free of the pathogen.
  - c. My participation in Joint Witness Statement with David Havell, and Dr Murray Fea, where we provided an expert assessment that concluded the biosecurity risks of kauri dieback spread will be substantially greater than the status quo.
  - d. I provide a biosecurity based risk assessment as to why the proposed measures described in the current Kauri Dieback Management Plan (including supplementary evidence dated 7 April 2021 kauri dieback management), are insufficient and will not contain the spread of kauri dieback. There are serious technical constraints and a lack of decontamination and hygiene tools that currently impede the operational management of kauri dieback over the entire site.
  - e. The proposed Huia Water Treatment Plant project will directly lead to the infection and death of adjacent kauri and will undermine the future health of the kauri ecosystem, including extremely rare and iconic taonga trees.
  - f. I will provide information that a lack of containment and accelerated spread of kauri dieback as a direct consequence of the proposed Huia Water Treatment Plant project knowingly contributes to the decline of kauri in the context of the species being re-classified as vulnerable and threatened species for the first time in New Zealand.