



SFFF Project 21156: Transitioning Exotic Forest to Native (2022-2027)

Project Partners Update – August 2025

Kia ora koutou,

Welcome to another update for the Tāne's Tree Trust Transitioning Exotic Forest to Native project. This is a 5-year research project supported by MPI's Sustainable Food and Fibre Futures fund and our forestry partners. The different research workstreams are:

1. LUCAS analysis - Analyse existing Land Use Carbon Analysis System (LUCAS) data to assess native understory development and forest characteristics within plantation forests to better understand these forests and necessary management to encourage a transition.
2. Tairāwhiti surveys - Undertake targeted plot surveys to determine what management actions are required to support a pine to native forest transition in Tairāwhiti.
3. Bioclimatic surveys - Undertake plot surveys to gain information about bioclimatic effects on native understory characteristics around the country.
4. Transition trials - Establish a nationally relevant network of permanent sample plots to inform carbon and biodiversity forestry models and to empirically refine management practices.
5. Forest modelling - Model the dynamics of transitional forest for a range of contexts and management objectives (e.g., growth, biodiversity/successional change, and carbon profiles).
6. Best-practice guidelines - Produce guidelines to manage transitions from exotic pine to native forest highlighting the key factors to address and interventions necessary. Recommendations for best-practice transitional forestry and monitoring.

The project started in mid-2022 with the project team focused on setting up the different workstreams and getting field work underway and progressed through 2023. Work in 2024 to mid-2025 has concentrated on completing workstreams 1-3.

Progress 2025:

- A paper based on the LUCAS data findings is being sent out for review before being submitted to the NZ Journal of Forestry for publication.
- A report on the Tairāwhiti plot surveys has been finalised.
- A report on the national bioclimatic survey results has also been finalised.
- The second yearly resurvey of the Whangapoua trial and first yearly resurvey of the Omahuta and Maitai trials have been completed.

- Long term carbon modelling based on the LUCAS and Tairāwhiti data as well as other available regenerating native model for native forest stands is being finalised. The modelling covers different scenarios with/without browser control and nearby native seed sources, and with varying levels of disturbance (e.g. storm events causing wind throw).
- All of this available data is being synthesized into drafting preliminary transition guidelines. These will go out for feedback from interested parties before being finalised. These preliminary guidelines will then be updated at the end of the research project in 2027 to incorporate the trial data and any new findings.

If you are interested in reading more about any of these workstreams, please visit the [TTT transitioning project website page](#) which includes links to available project reports, a video and TTT newsletter updates.

We thank everyone who has assisted Tāne's Tree Trust so far including –

<i>Summit Forests</i>	<i>Ngati Porou Forestry</i>	<i>Ernslaw One Ltd</i>
<i>Aratu Forests Ltd</i>	<i>Manulife Forest Management NZ Ltd</i>	<i>Pan Pac Forest Products Ltd</i>
<i>Rayonier Matariki Forests</i>	<i>City Forests</i>	<i>Juken NZ Ltd</i>
<i>Tasman Pine Forests Ltd</i>	<i>Ngai Tahu Forestry</i>	<i>OneFourtyOne</i>
<i>Gisborne District Council</i>	<i>Nelson City Council</i>	<i>Hawke's Bay Regional Council</i>
<i>Northland Department of Conservation</i>	<i>Ministry for Environment</i>	

Please get in touch if you have any feedback or questions about this research programme.

Ngā mihi nui | kind regards
the Tāne's Tree Trust team

Contacts:

Meg Graeme | Project Manager | meg@ecologist.nz

Mel Ruffell | TTT CEO | office@tanestrees.org.nz