

DRAFT ST. HELENA ENDEMIC AND NATIVE PLANT PROPAGATION AND DISTRIBUTION POLICY

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Based on outcomes of a workshop held at ANRD on 12th October 2012 attended by Nikki Chapman (Lead / facilitator), Lourens Malan and Vanessa Thomas (Technical preparation), Adam Wolfe (SHNT), Ross Towers (SHNT) Phillip Lambdon (SHNT), Derek Henry (Private nursery operator), Mikko Paajanen (Private nursery operator), Darrell Leo (ANRD), Andrew Darlow (SNCG). Rebecca Cairns-wicks (Independent), Gareth Johnson (EMD).

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Updated at follow-up workshop (17th April 2013): Vanessa Thomas (EMD); Derek Henry (Private nursery operator); Shayla Ellick (EMD), Mikko Paajanen (SHNT); Ross Towers (SHNT); Lourens Malan (EMD); Darrell Leo (EMD); David Higgins (EMD); Melvyn Robinson (EMD); Tara Pelembe (EMD)

BACKGROUND

- Effective management of the environment is a National Goal under the Sustainable Development Plan. Strategic Objective 6.2 states: St Helena's environment, both terrestrial and marine, safeguarded for future generations through effective environmental management.
- The National Environmental Management Plan (NEMP) has been created to implement this national goal.
- This (draft) policy will provide the framework for the development of endemic and native plant species action plans (NEMP target 15.3). It will also directly address Objective D of the plan specifically the clause '... through improving the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity.'
- A key asset of St. Helena's terrestrial environment is its endemic and native plants. There are an estimated 45 endemic and between 31 and 43 native plants, many of which are threatened with extinction.
- There are a growing number of different individuals and organisations working to conserve, propagate and sometimes sell St. Helena's endemic and native plants.
- To ensure effective management of this resource, a transparent, managed programme of species propagation and reintroduction is required.
- Within the landscape of activity, there needs to be a clear policy that sets out parameters within which activities can happen to ensure that human intervention enhances rather than threatens the existence of endemic and native plant species.
- This policy provides these parameters.

POLICY PREPARATION.

- Preparatory work has been done over a long period of time with key stakeholders which has provided a sound foundation for the development of this policy.
- This preparatory work was consolidated in a set of reintroduction guidelines produced in 2010¹ outlining information for propagating endemics, introducing the concept of provenance, and categorising plant species into ones that can and can't be grown by commercial nurseries.
- The reintroduction guidelines were never formally 'signed off' and therefore were and can only be used as indicative guidelines.
- With the change in the economic climate on St. Helena and the drive towards SHG divestment, inward investment and promotion of the private sector, the creation and development of commercial nurseries selling endemic and native plants for gardening and landscaping is likely to increase.
- In light of this emerging new working landscape, it is necessary to create a policy to formalise processes and systems for endemic and native plant seed collection and propagation to ensure the long term survival of these species by addressing hybridisation and wild species removal threats.

FOLLOWING THE SHG POLICY MANAGEMENT PROCESS:

STAGE 1: IDENTIFYING THE ISSUE THAT REQUIRES A POLICY CHANGE: SOURCES OF IDEAS CLEAR DESCRIPTION OF THE ISSUE

Points to cover	Outline of how this is covered
Council Committee Decision	This (draft) policy will provide the framework for the development of endemic and native plant species action plans (NEMP target 15.3). It will also directly address Objective D of the plan specifically the clause '... through improving the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity.' – the NEMP has been signed off by NRDEC and Exco
Existing policy agenda	As above'
Directorate experience and advice	<i>As this is a very specific issue assume this can this go to NRDEC for approval to proceed?</i>

Comment [DSPP1]: It is clearly an operational issue, suggest it goes to the ENRC for approval, if members feel otherwise then the next steps can be reviewed.

¹ Malan, L.J and Herian, K (2010) Where to plant what. Reintroduction guidelines. A guide to the safe and appropriate planting of St. Helena's endemic plants to ensure the long term survival of these special and rare plants. Draft.

Public consultation

A stakeholder workshop to undertake an audit of who was doing what where with which plant species was coordinated by EMD on the 14th September 2012. It was agreed at this workshop that a second event focussing on what should be included in a propagation and reintroduction policy was required.

A second stakeholder workshop to do this was held on the 12th October 2012 at ANRD, which was open to the public². It was attended by Nikki Chapman (Lead / facilitator), Lourens Malan and Vanessa Thomas (Technical preparation), Adam Wolfe (SHNT), Ross Towers (SHNT) Phillip Lambdon (SHNT), Derek Henry (Private nursery operator), Mikko Paajanen (Private nursery operator), Darrell Leo (ANRD), Andrew Darlow (SNCG), Rebecca Cairns-wicks (Independent), Gareth Johnson (EMD). The outcomes of the workshop provide the basis of this draft policy.

A third stakeholder workshop was held on 17th April 2013 as a follow-up to the second workshop, all participants of the second workshop were invited to take part. It was attended by Vanessa Thomas (EMD); Derek Henry (Private nursery operator); Shayla Ellick (EMD), Mikko Paajanen (SHNT); Ross Towers (SHNT); Lourens Malan (EMD); Darrell Leo (EMD); David Higgins (EMD); Melvyn Robinson (EMD); Tara Pelembe (EMD)

Policy reviews

There has been an environmental review of all existing policy, and this is a gap area.

CLEAR DESCRIPTION OF THE ISSUE:

The main problem that this policy is aimed at addressing is the threat of extinction of endemic and native plant species. There are number of threats to extinction including competition from invasive plant species, predation by introduced mammals, hybridisation and removal of seed. This policy has been created to address the latter two threats only.

STAGE 1A: COHERENCY CHECKS:

² It was announced on the radio, with a particular focus on individuals owning/interested in creating nurseries.

Points to cover	Outline of how this is covered
Can the legislative programme accommodate the change?	This will be built into the Environmental legislation which is already on the legislative programme.
Is this covered by existing policy priority framework?	This (draft) policy will provide the framework for the development of endemic and native plant species action plans (NEMP target 15.3). It will also directly address Objective D of the plan specifically the clause '... through improving the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity.'
Draft Exco memo seeking approval to proceed	As this is a very specific issue assume this can this go to NRDEC for approval to proceed?

STAGE 2: IDENTIFYING THE POLICY AIMS:

Points to cover	Outline of how this is covered
Consultation	See previous section
Define intended outcomes	Minimize threat of extinction of endemic and native plant species. Enable commercial nurseries to grow endemic and native plant species.
Council Committee	Draft paper going to ENRC November 2013

STAGE 3: OPTION GENERATION

Points to cover	Outline of how this is covered
In house research	Significant background research done by ANRD to prepare the 'reintroduction guidelines' upon which this policy is based.

Collect evidence	As above
Consultation	Stakeholder workshops with on island experts held to develop the policy statements and species lists.
Seek external advice	Kew Gardens contacted to review the policy proposal
Problem Tree	Concept covered under the workshop consultations
Brainstorming	concept

OPTIONS – 4 MAIN OPTIONS GENERATED.

- (1) Do nothing
- (2) Don't allow commercial nurseries to grow endemic plants
- (3) Allow commercial nurseries to grow all endemic plants
- (4) Allow commercial nurseries to grow some 'safe' endemic plants

Options (1) and (2) and (3) would not enable the required outcomes and therefore won't be considered in depth. Option 4 will be appraised in more depth.

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STAGE 4: OPTION APPRAISAL.

Point to be considered	Key points for option 3: Allow commercial nurseries to grow all endemic plants	Key points for option 4: Allow commercial nurseries to grow some 'safe' endemic plants
Feasible	Yes i.e. this can happen	Yes : i.e. this can happen
Practicable	Yes i.e. this can happen	Yes i.e. this can happen
Effective	No: wont address minimizing extinction risk as hybridisation can still occur	Yes: will address outcomes (1) and (2)
Risky	Yes – wont address minimizing extinction risk as hybridisation can still occur	Yes, but measures can be put in place to minimize the risk.
Legal advice		
Timely	Yes: There are 2 major developments that require endemic and native plants for landscaping.	Yes: There are 2 major developments that require endemic and native plants for landscaping.
Acceptable	No: species will be threatened with extinction	Yes: reduced extinction risk and commercial nurseries have a framework within which they can grow endemic plants.
Social impact		

Environmental impact ³	Negative – increased risk of extinction.	+ve (with licensing regime) – increased numbers of particular endemic and native plant species
Regulatory impact		
Economic impact		
Policy coherency		
Affordable VFM	<p>There will not be a requirement for additional spend. This will be covered by current work force. Some additional time will have to get re-allocated to components of this process, but that should come from savings in reduced requirements to propagate species that can be grown commercially.</p> <p>Potential (minor) increase in revenue from seed and mother stock sales</p>	<p>There will not be a requirement for additional spend. This will be covered by current work force. Some additional time will have to get re-allocated to components of this process, but that should come from savings in reduced requirements to propagate species that can be grown commercially.</p> <p>Potential (minor) increase in revenue from seed and mother stock sales</p>

Most likely option is option 4: Allow commercial nurseries to grow some 'safe' endemic plants.

³ See annex 1 for more in depth environmental appraisal.

STAGE 5: FINAL CONSULTATION

Key stakeholders have inputted into the creation and drafting of the policy. Once the policy is approved in principle by NRDEC it will go out to public consultation for 3 weeks to enable the public to input into the process and comment on the proposal. The final version, including the public feedback will then go to stage 6 – Policy Decision.

Time frame

ENRC – approval in principle (open meeting)	November 2013
Public consultation	November 2013
Public consultation closes	December 2013
NRDEC final decision	December 2013

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ANNEX 1: ENVIRONMENTAL APPRAISAL

Option 4

Will the policy option have any impacts on these areas?	What will those impacts be?	What can be done to mitigate against those impacts (if negative)
Biodiversity (Plants and animals)		
Terrestrial (Land)		
Marine (sea)		
Freshwater		
Natural resources		
Terrestrial – soils and geology, land use, coastline, waste deposition		
Freshwater – aquifers, watercourses, water quality/resources		
Marine – ocean, coastal waters, seabed, defined marine coastal zone		
Human Environment and Nuisance		
Waste		
Energy		
Noise and vibration		
Traffic pollution		

Light		
Radiation		
Storage of polluting materials		
Other		
Air and Climate – quality and emissions; incl GHG emissions		
Landscape and Visual Amenity		
Cultural Heritage and Archaeology		

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