

## 5. Guiding principles

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### **We will build on our natural capital**

This strategy will help to build and enhance Wellington's natural capital. We will respect the importance of indigenous biodiversity to New Zealand and its intrinsic right to exist. The Council's work to protect and restore Wellington's indigenous biodiversity will recognise this. We will protect the high value areas, and restore other areas that allow the city's biodiversity as a whole to thrive.

### **We will work within our city context**

Wellington's natural environment has been heavily modified and consists of a complex mixture of species and habitats across urban, suburban and rural areas. While some introduced species pose a threat to native ecosystems, many do not and are part of Wellington's rich cultural heritage. This strategy acknowledges this and our biodiversity management will work within these novel ecosystems. We will focus on the function provided by species and recognise that ecological function can sit across a range of different land uses.

### **We will weave biodiversity through our city's DNA**

Our indigenous biodiversity is part of our local economy and its conservation is an investment that will yield benefits for present and future generations. Everything we do will seek to bring the importance of nature into mainstream thinking. We will do this by telling the stories of the city's natural and cultural heritage, celebrating and sharing success, and promoting the role of biodiversity in creating a unique identity and sense of place for Wellington, in New Zealand and in the world.

### **We will provide direction and leadership**

As a city, Wellington will provide leadership in highlighting the value of incorporating indigenous biodiversity in urban sustainable development, and will promote the importance of cities that have a connection with and respect for nature. The Council will provide leadership that reflects these values through our policies, strategies and management plans.

### **We will work collaboratively**

The Council is committed to working with iwi, government, agencies, landowners, businesses, researchers and the community. We recognise that we need to share knowledge, costs and benefits, to be clear about our different roles and responsibilities, and to have the capability and resources to contribute.

### **We will recognise the significance of people's connection with nature**

We will recognise the importance of public awareness and education for ensuring the conservation of biodiversity. All Wellingtonians engage with nature at some point in their daily lives and we will acknowledge and build on these experiences. We will promote and enhance people's awareness of and connection to nature. We recognise that these experiences actively contribute to people's sense of health and wellbeing.

### **We will learn from the relationship between Māori and biodiversity**

Matauranga Māori and the wealth of traditional knowledge in the conservation, management and sustainable use of biodiversity will be recognised, promoted and used with the involvement of those who possess this knowledge. We will learn from the principles of manaakitanga, wairua, and kaitiakitanga and include these in everything we do.

### **We will actively engage with research**

The actions in Our Natural Capital will be evidence-based and monitored, informed by research where this exists. We recognise that we do not fully understand the complex interactions between the urban environment, introduced species of plants and animals and native ecosystem functioning. We will not avoid action because of a lack of knowledge, but will instead use this as an opportunity to increase our knowledge. We will be adaptive and aim for continual improvement as new knowledge is gained, and we will actively seek and share this knowledge.



