



Process for Updating the Erosion Susceptibility Classification for the National Environmental Standards for Plantation Forestry

Background

The Erosion Susceptibility Classification (ESC) provides a risk screening tool that contributes to the delivery of improved national consistency in the management of plantation forestry through the National Environmental Standards for Plantation Forestry (NES-PF).

The ESC, at a 1:50,000 scale, provides a screening tool to assess the risk of erosion in particular forest holdings.

The version of the ESC currently¹ incorporated by reference into the NES-PF is derived from the erosion data associated with the New Zealand Land Resource Inventory Survey (NZLRI) and the Land Use Capability (LUC) Extended Legends² that support it. It is recognised that the application of this data, to the specific requirements of the NES-PF, may bring about local issues that require adjustment to the ESC to improve its accuracy.

The NES-PF, with limited exception, requires forest managers to prepare operational plans at a scale of no less than 1:10,000 (see Schedule 3). The ESC mapping tool will provide a basis for the reinterpretation of erosion risk at this operational scale. Forest managers and council land managers with local knowledge and experience will also be key to this reinterpretation.

Reassessment and Adjustment

Requests for reassessment and adjustment to the ESC will potentially include:

- New mapping provided by forest companies, land owners or councils.
- Requests for the reclassification of existing LUC units.
- Definition of new LUC units, and their ESC, recognised at detailed mapping scales.

To ensure the integrity of the ESC, national consistency is required to any and all changes through incorporation by reference and Ministerial approval. New or replaced material will be made available to the public after the Minister approves and authorises a notice in the Gazette.

Process

A five-step process is enabled:

1. **Initiation** – forestry company, land owner or council advises Te Uru Rākau via the info@mpi.govt.nz inbox of an intention to request changes to the ESC.
2. **Field Mapping** – the initiator instructs a suitably competent mapper to document the basis for reclassification of a LUC unit, or to provide detailed LUC/ESC mapping for a designated area.

Detailed mapping would be required to include linework, resource inventory, LUC unit description, potential erosion assessment, ESC class consistent with the guidelines provided in Section 4 of the Lynn et al 2009 LUC Handbook 3rd Edition.

¹ The current version ESC may, subject to the development of an improved methodology, be replaced by Gazette Notice.

² LUC extended legends can be found on the NES-PF ESC website under “ESC and operational planning”:
<https://www.teururakau.govt.nz/growing-and-harvesting/forestry/national-environmental-standards-for-plantation-forestry/erosion-susceptibility-classification/>



While for operational purposes field mapping will likely be completed at a larger scale, proposed revisions to the ESC will require polygonal simplification for application at the 1:50,000 scale.

3. **Quality Assurance** – the detailed mapping is subject to quality assurance by Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research, as custodian of the NZLRI and the LUC Classification System, to ensure all necessary data is supplied and to maintain national consistency and standards in land resource inventory mapping, LUC unit assignment and maintenance of ESC class.
4. **Approval** – subject to satisfactory Quality Assurance, Te Uru Rākau approves the requested changes and adjustments to the ESC.
5. **Incorporation and Gazettal** – Te Uru Rākau actions the incorporation of all approved changes to the ESC. Since the ESC is incorporated by reference, any changes will be notified in the Gazette. Rather than review applications on an on-demand basis, reviews will be aligned through batch processing on an annual basis. Te Uru Rākau will be the administrator and data manager for archiving and publishing of any data and metadata.

Ongoing Development of the Land Use Capability Classification System

Proposed work programmes mandated by the Land Use Capability Classification Strategy Governance Group (LUCCSGG) are directed for further development of the application of LUC within New Zealand.

Developments accruing to these work programmes, including training to improve field mapping capacity, will be included in updates to the process outlined in this paper.

Suitably Competent Mapper

Suitably competent mappers will require a core set of competencies that include experience in LUC mapping and an understanding of erosion processes.

There is currently no publically available register of individuals with these competencies. Work programmes proposed by the LUCCSGG and New Zealand Association of Resource Management (NZARM) address training and certification requirements.

An approved list of suitably competent mappers, reviewed by the New Zealand Association of Resource Management (NZARM), is provided in Appendix 1 to this paper.

Costs

All costs associated with the **Field Mapping** and **Quality Assurance** steps of this process will sit with the initiating party.



Timeline

As outlined in step 5 of the process, any changes to the ESC will be incorporated by reference and notified in the Gazette every May. Applications for reassessment will be annually reviewed and approved by the Minister for the Environment. Therefore, *Te Uru Rākau must receive all applications with a completed field mapping assessment by a suitably competent mapper by 1 January*. Any applications or assessments received after 1 January will be considered for the next year review.





Appendix 1 – Suitably Competent Mappers

Last Name	First Name	Email	Phone	Location
BENN	Doug	doug.a.benn@gmail.com	06 3488199/ 027 739 8540	North and South Island
BLANDFORD	Matene	matene@rata.kiwi	027 443 3327	Gisborne, East Coast
BRAAKSMA	Stan	braaksma@xtra.co.nz	06 3771026/ 027 217 5165	Greater Wellington
CATHCART	Bob	bob.cathcart@agfirst.co.nz	027 435 2761	Northland (Whangarei)
DOUGLAS	John	land.forest@xtra.co.nz	027 307 0388	Whakatane
GLOVER	Neill	nglover@xtra.co.nz	027 2247 639	Otago
GRANT	Lachlan	lachie.grant@gmail.com	021 526 478	North and South Island
HANMORE	Ian	ian.hanmore@agfirst.co.nz	021 201 3441	Whangarei
HARRIS	Murray	murray@landandforestconsultants.co.nz	021 616 605/ 03 476 6251	Dunedin
HILL	Reece	reece@landsystems.co.nz	022 191 3695	Hamilton
HUDSON	Kerry	kerryh@xtra.co.nz	027 300 3621	Gisborne, East Coast
LeCREN	Suzie	suzie.lecren@gmail.com	03 548 0133	North and South Island
TAMEPO	Reina	reinatamepo@gmail.com	027 380 7418	Waikato
UDY	Vince	vinceu@waikatoregion.govt.nz	0800 800 401	Taupo
WETERINGS	Rene	pacfor@xtra.co.nz	07 378 4290	Taupo