



# MANAGEMENT OF SWAMP KAURI

New Zealand's long-held commitment to the sustainable management of our natural resources is central to the laws regarding the extraction, milling and export of swamp kauri. With strong regulatory oversight, swamp kauri and other New Zealand indigenous timbers are carefully managed under the Resource Management Act 1991 and the Forests Act 1949.

Swamp kauri, which has been buried and preserved in what used to be swamps for anywhere between 800 and 60,000 years, is also known as ancient kauri. Responsibility for its extraction rests with councils, whilst the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) enforces the Forests Act 1949 specifically in relation to its milling and export.

## What rules govern the extraction of swamp kauri?

Swamp kauri is excavated from privately-owned land, mainly in the Northland region, but also further south in Auckland and the Bay of Plenty. The extraction of swamp kauri and any effects this has on the environment is managed under the Resource Management Act 1991. This means that in Northland, for example, the Northland Regional Council and the relevant District Councils set the rules and policies that control the activities involved in the extraction process.

In general, extraction of swamp kauri in Northland requires a resource consent when it is being extracted from indigenous wetlands or involves the clearance of indigenous vegetation. In other circumstances, such as on farmland, it is a permitted activity (no consent is required) as long as extraction is undertaken in compliance with the rules specified under the Resource Management Act.

MPI has no responsibility for approving the extraction of swamp kauri and enquiries on these matters should be directed towards the relevant councils.

**If you have any information regarding the potentially illegal milling or export of any New Zealand indigenous timbers, please contact MPI officials. Reports are always taken seriously and acted on by MPI.**

**Information can be reported to a MPI Forestry Officer at 0800 00 83 33**

## How does the Ministry for Primary Industries manage the swamp kauri trade?

The Forests Act 1949 sets out the rules that control the milling and export of swamp kauri. MPI takes its responsibilities for effectively monitoring and enforcing the Forests Act requirements seriously. As well as monitoring and auditing milling and export activities, MPI collects intelligence and undertakes investigations to ensure the Forests Act is being complied with.

MPI works hard to build strong relationships with operators, councils and the New Zealand Customs Service to ensure effective governance under the Forests Act 1949.

## What oversight is there around the milling of swamp kauri?

The Forests Act only allows indigenous timber to be milled at registered sawmills, and such timber must come from an approved source under the Forests Act. The controls on sawmills, which are regularly inspected by MPI, provide a supply chain control point.

All swamp kauri must have an approved 'Milling Statement' from MPI before it can be milled at a registered sawmill. Milling statements verify the timber as having originated from an approved source under the Forests Act. Milling statements can only be issued in specific circumstances. The applicant must demonstrate that the swamp kauri will either:

- » be salvaged from land that is not indigenous forest land; or
- » be salvaged from indigenous forest land and that the natural values of that land will be maintained when the swamp kauri is extracted.

In considering whether to approve a milling statement, MPI may visit and inspect extraction sites in order to confirm the status of the land that the swamp kauri is being extracted from and the volume extracted.

It is a serious offence to mill indigenous timber at an unregistered sawmill, or to mill in the absence of an approved milling statement. Penalties include fines of up to \$200,000 on conviction for breaching these requirements.

Since July 2012, MPI has issued 59 milling statements for swamp kauri. All of these have been for salvaged swamp kauri, extracted from farmland or exotic scrub land. No statements issued in this period were for swamp kauri extracted from indigenous forest land.

### **Are there controls on the export of swamp kauri?**

Swamp kauri can be exported, but only if it is a finished product or whole or sawn swamp kauri stump or roots. The Forests Act clearly defines what constitutes a finished product and what constitutes a stump:

- » Stumps can include that part of the trunk that extends from the ground-line to a point (up the trunk) equal to the maximum diameter of the trunk.
- » A finished or manufactured product is one that is in its final state and ready to be installed for its intended use without any further working or modification.

Other than stump timber, swamp kauri cannot be exported as whole logs, sawn timber or any unfinished products.

There are no restrictions under the Forests Act on the domestic sale of swamp kauri provided the milling requirements have been met.

### **How can you help MPI ensure that swamp kauri milling and trade is effectively monitored?**

If you have any information regarding potentially illegal milling or export of any New Zealand indigenous timbers, please contact MPI officials. Reports are always taken seriously and acted on by MPI.

Information can be reported to a MPI Forestry Officer at 0800 00 83 33.

If you have concerns about the extraction of swamp kauri in your local area, please contact your local council office to report the activity.

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