

## **Tōtara Industry Pilot – Forestry driving value and growth in Northland**

Northland's economy could see significant future economic and environmental gains from harvesting, and the potential commercial use, of tōtara.

Phase one of the Tōtara Industry Pilot has shown there is enough Totara on private and Māori-owned land in the region to develop a strong productive economy, worth an estimated \$30 million a year to the local and national economies.

The Pilot is a partnership between Te Uru Rākau, Scion, Taitokerau Māori Forestry Inc, and Tane's Tree Trust, along with other government agencies and private landowners.

It was launched two years ago to test how sustainable regeneration and cultivation of tōtara can deliver commercial opportunities for local industries, businesses and communities, including Māori.

Tōtara grows quickly in Northland, compared to other wood species, due to the region's climate. Up until now it has been an underutilised resource and many tōtara trees in the region have matured to where they can be harvested.

Manufactured tōtara products can include wall and ceiling linings, carved gifts, household items, and souvenirs. These can be also made in Northland, using wood processed and kiln dried cost-effectively at existing commercial sawmills and factories.

There is growing interest from landowners in diversifying their land for utilising tōtara, which can be harvested and milled under the Forests Act. As part of our regulatory responsibility, Te Uru Rākau is providing guidance on developing Sustainable Forest Management plans and compliance with the Act so the resource is sustainably managed.

The potential for Northland and New Zealand includes creating jobs, new businesses and increasing environmental sustainability through encouraging the regeneration and planting of native forest.

With the first phase complete, next steps will be Māori-led to ensure local communities' benefit and will include landowners, wood processors, iwi and manufacturers collaborating on developing commercialisation plans and identifying new markets.

Initiatives such as the Tōtara Industry Pilot support future opportunities and value for local communities. Te Uru Rākau is proud to be part of the project as another way of ensuring forestry plays a key role in delivering economic and environmental growth for New Zealand.

For more information go to <https://www.totaraindustry.co.nz/>