

PROJECT UPDATE

April 2018

The Northland Tōtara Industry Pilot is now underway. Its purpose is to test the business case for a new regional industry based on the sustainable management of regenerating forests of totara. This is not just about timber production. It is about encouraging an appropriate and sustainable land use for all the many environmental, economic, social and cultural benefits that can come along with it.

Who are we?

The project partners, Te Uru Rākau (MPI), Scion, Northland Inc., Tane's Tree Trust and Te Taitokerau Māori Forests Inc, have a vision and a kaupapa:

*"He tōtara tuturu - He iwi tū tonu – Sturdy tōtara - Sustainable communities
Kei te tohunga te whakaaro – The carver brings the life to the wood"*

The TIP initiative is looking to re-establish the mana of tōtara for all and ensure that this iconic native species is valued again. There would be a whole range of future prospects and shared aspirations for the Northland community. This is a cycle of regeneration - the carver brings the wood to life and the wood brings the carver to life. The regenerating tōtara is both a vehicle and a metaphor, for growth and resilience in Northland.

What are we doing?

The pilot project will establish whether a tōtara wood products industry in Northland is viable, the size of the opportunity and how that opportunity could be realised. It involves the harvesting, processing of 500 m³ (log volume) and market testing of farm-tōtara timber products at a commercial scale, something never done before. It has a total budget of \$1million dollars over a two-year period.

The pilot project will run for two years and will be split into workstreams that will focus on addressing key information gaps and a range of objectives:

- Finding out the availability and characteristics of the tōtara resource
- Seeing if we can deliver high-quality timber from farm-tōtara economically
- Understanding what others think about this potential new industry
Working out how to make it happen and benefit the community

On completion of the project, a functional supply-chain will have been established, products sold, markets 'seeded' and a small timber supply arranged to enable a continuation following the successful completion of the project.



The Tōtara Industry Pilot Steering Group who oversees the project and longer term initiative (L to R: Pita Tipene, Elizabeth Dunningham (TIP project manager), Ramona Radford, Peter Berg (chair), Mark Hollis, Paul Quinlan, Julian Elder and David Wilson (absent: Vaughan Cooper and Rawson Wright). Photo: Gareth Mauchline