



## Guidelines for native plant procurement and ecosourcing

*Ecosourcing protects and enhances biodiversity values by using appropriate plants for an ecological area and the environmental conditions.*

*It requires propagation of native plants from a representative sample of the local wild population for plantings into appropriate habitats.*

Environment Canterbury encourages the use of ecosourced native species for all planting projects, and ecosourcing is a requirement for Environment Canterbury-funded projects.

### What is ecosourcing?

Ecosourced plants are those grown from seeds collected from naturally occurring vegetation in a locality close or appropriate to where you intend to plant them as part of a native planting project. Specifically:

- Plant species shall be known to be native to the local area, either present or past.
- The closer the seed source to the restoration project, the better (in most cases).
- Seed should be collected from a similar ecosystem to the one being restored.
- Planning for planting projects must allow for the timeframes involved in collection and propagation of ecosourced plant material.
- Collection of seeds or propagules should take place from areas of native vegetation which are clearly of natural origin and unlikely to be pollinated by garden origin plants.

## What should you consider for your planting project?

- Decide which native plants can be used for a project.
- Involve Environment Canterbury biodiversity experts at an early stage to advise on appropriate species and where they should be sourced from or review alternatives.
- Establish realistic timeframes for seed collection and propagation.
- Factor in costs and timing for plant propagation (this may require staged payments) into funding arrangements.
- Liaise with iwi in relation to plant collection and intended use, including seeking acknowledgement of whakapapa and cultural practices associated with collection and use of plant material and issues relating to wāhi tapu.
- Ensure you have permission to collect.
- Include clear expectations of ecosourcing requirements in plant procurement – for example:
  - specify plant species and where they should be sourced from in request for proposal;
  - supplier should be able to verify and make available records for audit of plant sourcing; and
  - consider any specific expectations for plant maintenance and weed management.
- Work with your plant provider:
  - Apply the DOC and Waitakere guidelines (ref below) for ecosourcing and seed collection.
  - Adhere to project-specific recommendations for seed sourcing (NB this may differ from the DOC and Waitakere guidelines).
  - Maintain records of seed source location (coordinates), number of plants collected and date to verify plants are correctly sourced.
  - Ensure that the plant species collected is in fact the plant species you believe it to be – for example, it may be necessary to collect some vegetative material to get expert confirmation.



**For more guidance on ecosourcing, please contact any of our biodiversity officers who will be able to help. Phone 0800 324 636 or email [ecinfo@ecan.govt.nz](mailto:ecinfo@ecan.govt.nz).**

### For additional information or resources, see below:

- [Ecodistricts map](#)
- Community organisation support - <https://ecan.govt.nz/get-involved/support/>
- Biodiversity funding - <https://ecan.govt.nz/your-region/your-environment/our-natural-environment/biodiversity-funding/>
- Chris Ferkins, Ecosourcing - Code of Practice and Ethics (2002, published by Waitakere City Council)
- Te Ara Kakariki/Greenway Canterbury Trust - <https://www.kakariki.org.nz/resources/ecosourcing/>
- DOC - <https://www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/run-a-project/restoration-advice/native-plant-restoration/ecosource-seeds>