



Current state of the forestry and wood processing industries in Northland and Auckland. Te Tai Tokerau/Northland stretches from south-east of Mangawhai across to the Kaipara Harbour and to the most northern part of New Zealand, Cape Rēinga. It is the country's most northern region. Auckland is the most populous city of New Zealand. Auckland lies between the Hauraki Gulf to the east, the Hunua Ranges to the south-east, the Manukau Harbour to the south-west, and the Waitākere Ranges and smaller ranges to the west and north-west.

Northland \$11.2 billion
Auckland \$157 billion

Regional GDP, March 2024
(3% and 38% of national GDP respectively)

Northland \$325 million
Auckland \$379 million

GDP in forestry, fishing and mining, March 2023 (3% and 0.3% of national GDP respectively)

Northland \$54,796
Auckland \$88,355

GDP per capita, March 2024
(national GDP per capita \$78,233)

Northland 194,007
Auckland 1,656,486

Estimated regional population, 2023 Census (4% and 33% of national population respectively)

Northland 835
Auckland 13,939

Number of new dwelling consents for December 2024 (-19.4% and -10% change from 2023 respectively)

Northland 39.9%
Auckland 13.8%

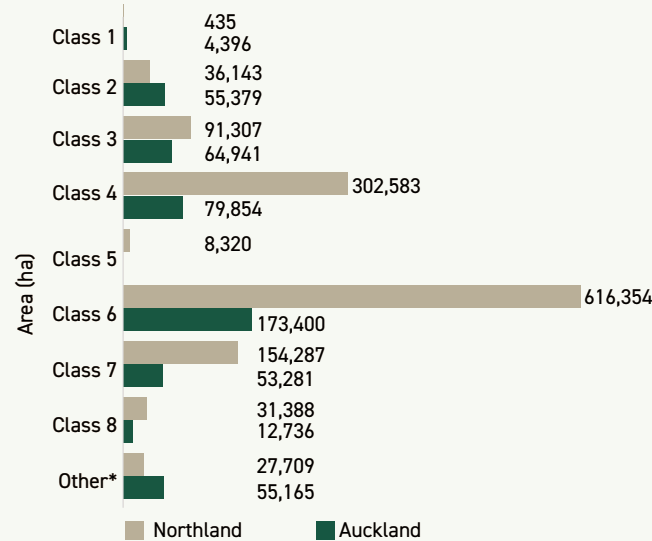
Population that identifies as Māori, 2023 Census (19.6% nationally)

Source: [Gross domestic product \(GDP\) - Stats NZ](#)

Land use capability

The Land Use Capability (LUC) system classifies land into 8 categories based on its ability to support various productive uses over time. The classification considers physical attributes of land such as climate, soil, slope, vegetation and erodibility. Classes 1 to 4 are generally suitable for all ranges of cultivation. Classes 5 to 7 tend to be suitable for pastoral farming and forestry. Class 8 has severe limitations for primary production or forestry use.

Figure 1. Area in hectares (ha) by LUC class. Source: LUC database 2021.



*Other: Estuaries, lakes, quarries, rivers, towns.

Sources: [Our Environment - Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research](#)

Figure 1 shows the LUC classes in Northland and Auckland.

- 33.9% of the land area in Northland, and 41% of the land area in the Auckland region, is classified as LUC 1 to 4.
- 61.4% of the land area in Northland, and 45.4% of the land area in the Auckland region, is classified as LUC 5 to 7.
- 2.5% of the land area in Northland, and 2.6% of the land area in the Auckland region, is classified as LUC 8.

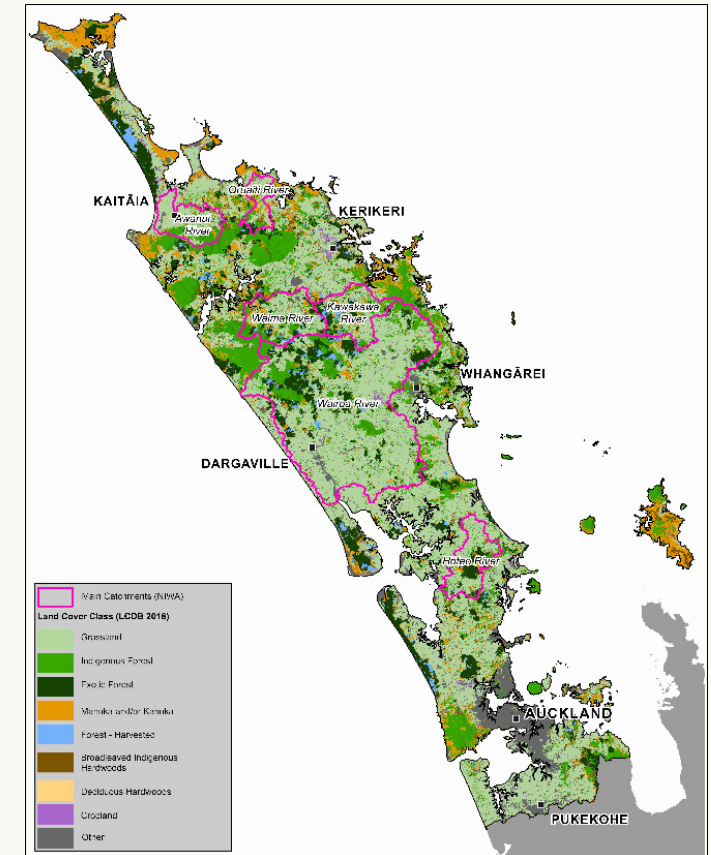
Existing land cover

Northland's total land area is 12,507 km² (1,250,700 hectares (ha)), making up 4.7% of the total area of New Zealand. 48.3% (604,101 ha) of Northland land is grassland, followed by 19.8% (248,122 ha) indigenous forest, and 12.7% (158,261 ha) exotic forest.

Auckland's total land area is 4,940 km² (494,000 ha), making up 2% of the total area of New Zealand. 47.3% (232,691 ha) of the Auckland region's land is grassland, followed by 12.9% (63,397 ha) indigenous forest, and 9.5% (46,785 ha) exotic forest.

Figure 2. Land cover in Northland and Auckland. Source: Land Cover Database (LCDB5) - LRIS.

[View a high-resolution version of the land cover map.](#)

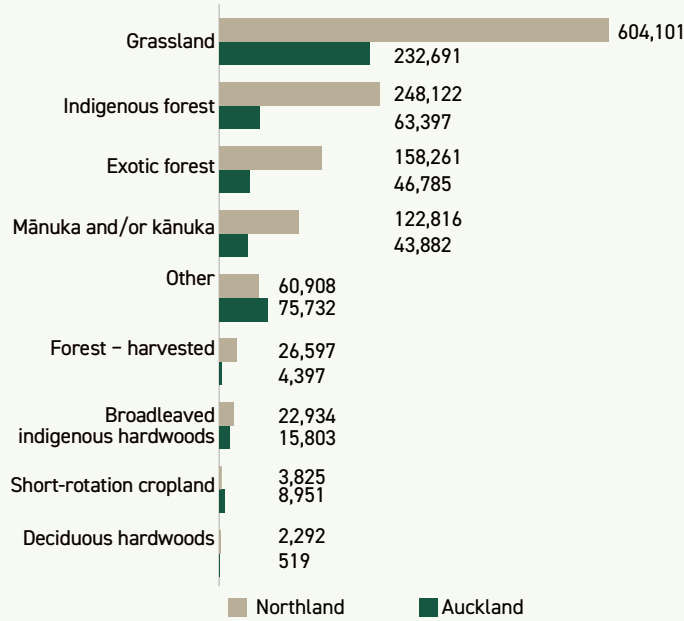


New Zealand's regions are mainly determined by areas of water collection into rivers, known as catchments. The biggest catchment in the Northland region is the Wairoa River catchment (355,637 ha), followed by the Waima River catchment (51,865 ha) and the Kawakawa River catchment (44,315 ha) and Awanui River catchment (36,497 ha). Other catchments in the Northland and Auckland regions cover areas of less than 40,000 ha.

Source: [Geographic boundary viewer - Stats NZ](#)



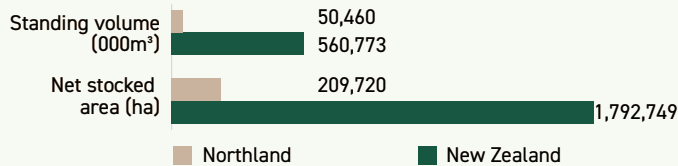
Figure 3. Area (hectares) of different land covers in Northland and Auckland. Source: Land Cover Database (LCDB5)



Forestry in the Northland wood supply region

The wood supply regions are areas grouped by the National Exotic Forest Description (NEFD). The Northland wood supply region includes the Far North District, Whangarei District, Kaipara District and Auckland Council.

Figure 4. Comparing the Northland wood supply region and New Zealand on exotic forestry facts*. Data source: NEFD 2024

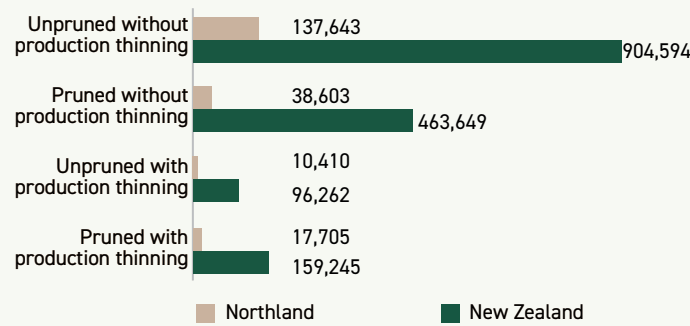


*The 2024 National Exotic Forest Description (NEFD) – MPI provides a detailed description of New Zealand's planted production forest

The average age of the exotic forest in the Northland wood supply region is 17.6 years compared to 18.6 years nationally.

18.8% (39,090 ha) of the total planted area of radiata pine forest in Northland wood supply region is of potentially harvestable age (26-30 years). Compared to 20.8% of the national total planted area that is of potentially harvestable age.

Figure 5. Number of hectares of pruned and unpruned regimes of radiata pine in the Northland wood supply region. Data source NEFD 2024



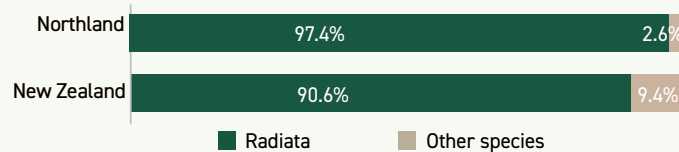
35.8% (75,272 ha) of the region's forests are less than 1,000 ha in size.

The forest area by NEFD forest owner national size class for the region is:

Table 1. Total forest area by national size class. Source: NEFD 2024

	<40 ha	40–99 ha	100–499 ha	500–999 ha	1,000–9,999 ha	10,000+ ha
Area (ha)	35,476	8,332	20,357	11,107	22,251	112,191
Entities	–	130	103	19	9	7

Figure 6. Proportion of exotic forest species in the Northland wood supply region compared to New Zealand. Source: NEFD 2024



The area of radiata pine forest in the Northland wood supply region is 204,364 ha, this is equivalent to 97.4% of the exotic forest species in the region. Other exotic forestry species are: 0.01% Douglas-fir (10 ha), 0.2% cypress (478 ha), 0.4% eucalyptus (824 ha), 0.6% other softwoods such as redwoods (1,186 ha) and 1.4% other hardwoods such as acacia and blackwood (2,853 ha).

High quality durable eucalypt species thrive in Northland's unique subtropical climate. A small hardwood industry, producing around 1,000 tonnes of sawn timber per year, has been operating in Northland for over 30 years. The durable eucalypt, sawn from historical plantings, supplies the hardwood flooring and decking market throughout New Zealand.

Wood Availability Forecast (WAF)

Figure 7. Wood Availability Forecast (WAF) scenario 3 for Northland wood supply region, in 000 cubic metres (m³). Source: WAF 2021.

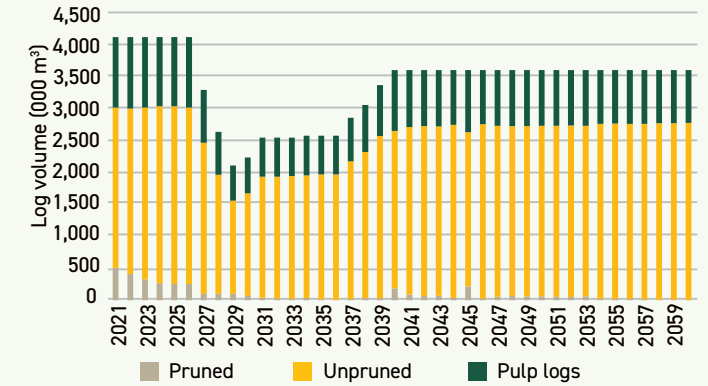
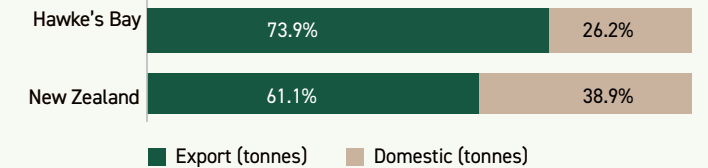


Figure 7 shows the availability of pruned, unpruned and pulp logs between 2021 and 2060, for the region. Wood availability is forecast to drop under 3 million cubic metres per year between 2028 and 2037, with 2029 being the lowest at 2.1 million cubic metres. From 2039 onwards the forecast wood availability is more than 3.3 million cubic metres per year.

Source: WAF August 2021 - Scenario 3 - Canopy

Markets

Figure 8. Export and domestic processing of logs in the Northland wood supply region in 2024. Source: Levy Trust data 2024.



In 2024:

- 1,805,843 (63%) of logs were exported from Northland, and 1,043,025 tonnes (37%) went to sawmills registered in the region. These statistics include Auckland Council.
- The region exported 9.4% of New Zealand's total log exports and contributed 8.6% of the total domestic log volumes.



Forestry and wood processing supply chain

Nurseries

There are at least 4 major nurseries in the Northland wood supply region producing exotic species. Additionally, there are at least 69 nurseries producing exotic species and/or natives.

Wood processing

There are 2 major wood processing plants in the Northland wood supply region with an output between 50,000 cubic metres (m³) and 99,000 m³ per year, producing structural timber. There are at least 20 other wood processors producing veneer, laminated veneer lumber, triboard, sawn timber and chips.

Northland produced 323,923 m³ of **panels** in 2022. This is 20.1% of New Zealand's total sawn timber production for the period.

Northland produced 239,424 m³ of **sawn timber** in 2022. This is 5.4% of New Zealand's total panels production for the period.

Source: Quarterly production statistics MPI. Statistics for calendar year 2022 (Jan-Dec). This data includes only mills that report data quarterly. Data from mills that report annually is not included.

Indigenous forestry

In 2022, tōtara and kauri were the indigenous species with the most volume delivered to mills in the region.

Table 2. Log volumes in cubic metres (m³) delivered to mills in 2022 in Northland. Source: Indigenous Forestry - MPI.

	Volume (m ³)		Volume (m ³)
kahikatea	30.9	rimu	33.1
kauri	108.5	tānekaha	1.5
mātai	6.2	taraire	6
pūriri	9.7	tōtara	510.6
rewarewa	0.6	tōwai	2

Swamp kauri

Kauri trees grow in the warm northern areas of New Zealand including Northland, Auckland, Coromandel and Waikato. Swamp kauri, also known as subfossil kauri, comes from trees that have been buried and preserved in peat swamps for between 800 and 60,000 years. Swamp kauri holds cultural value to New Zealand. Swamp kauri holds scientific value for improving the understanding of our natural history, including analysis of extreme events that lead to the preservation of the trees.

Extracting swamp kauri may require a resource consent under Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA). If the swamp kauri comes from non-indigenous forest land it can be milled after getting a milling statement from MPI in line with the Forests Act 1949.

It has been estimated that 50–70% of the original Northland swamp kauri resources are still available and between 30–50% have been extracted. The estimated available resource could be between about 240,000 m³ to 437,000 m³. The conservative minimum estimate of the remaining volume is about 110,000 m³.

Source: [Swamp kauri - MPI](#)

Tōtara Industry Pilot (TIP)

The Tōtara Industry Pilot was a 2-year study from 2018 to 2020. The study assessed the economic and environmental feasibility of a sustainably managed tōtara industry for high-value products, in Northland.

Many farms in the region have naturally regenerating tōtara, known as farm tōtara. The study showed this tōtara could be made into timber products that provide economic returns for landowners. It also showed that continuous-cover forest management and low-impact harvesting can be applied to tōtara stands.

Estimated value-add to New Zealand after 10 years	Between NZD 5.1 million and NZD 37.7 million of revenue per year
Estimated land area with tōtara-dominant stands	26,500 ha

Farm tōtara can be used for structural applications under the building code using NZS 3603, although research continues to determine its durability in structural applications. Other manufactured uses include wall and ceiling linings, exterior cladding and joinery, flooring, indoor and outdoor furniture.

Sources: [Tōtara Industry Pilot project. Final summary report - Tane's Tree Trust \(PDF, 5.5MB\)](#), [Structural grades - Farm Forestry New Zealand](#)

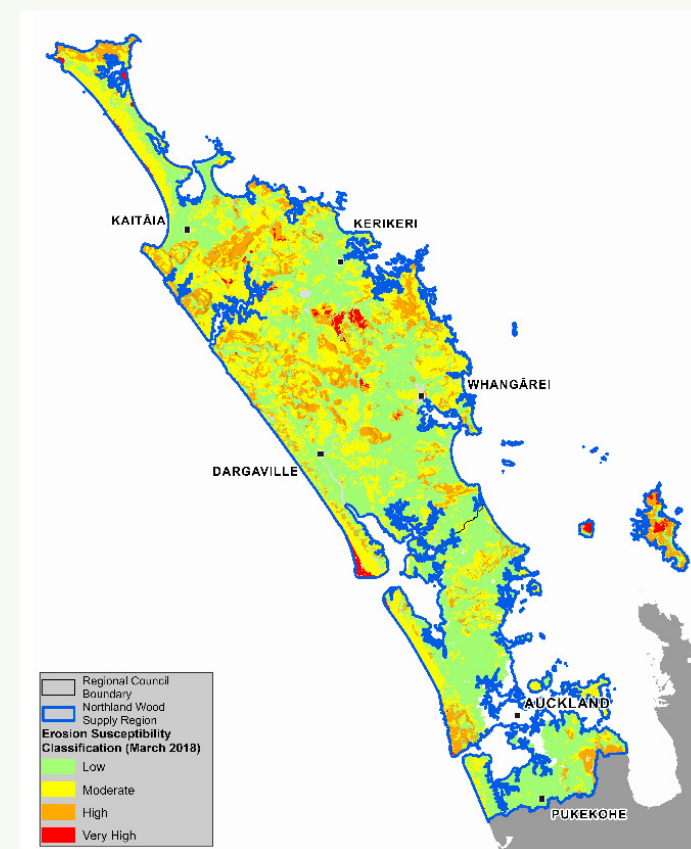
Erosion

Table 3. Number of hectares (ha) and the percentage of the total area in each of the Erosion Susceptibility Classes (ESC) in the Northland and Auckland regions compared to New Zealand.

	Northland (ha)	% of total	Auckland (ha)	% of total	New Zealand (ha)	% of total
Low	534,286	42.9	279,788	57.3	11,127,668	41.9
Moderate	489,718	39.3	101,618	20.8	5,824,733	22.0
High	180,990	14.5	52,039	10.7	5,083,013	19.2
Very high	26,927	2.2	7,510	1.5	3,472,477	13.1
Other	14,498	1.2	47,296	9.7	1,026,649	3.9

Figure 9. Erosion Susceptibility Classification (ESC). Source: MPI.

[View a high-resolution version of the Erosion Susceptibility Classification map.](#)



Government funding

One Billion Trees Programme: As of December 2023, \$20 million in funding has been approved for direct landowner and partnership grants in the region.

The One Billion Trees Fund is closed to new applications. It was part of the One Billion Trees Programme. The programme's goal is to plant a billion trees by 2028.

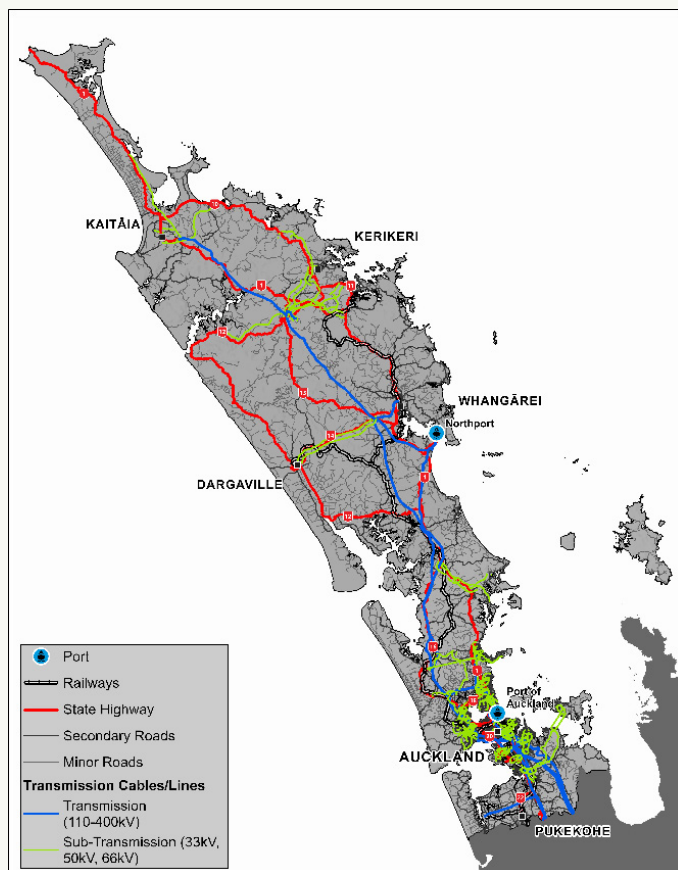
[Progress towards planting one billion trees](#)

Hill Country Erosion (HCE) Programme: As of December 2023, \$6 million in funding has been approved for projects in the region.

The HCE Programme is a partnership between MPI, councils and landowners to support regional erosion-control projects.



Figure 11. Map of key infrastructure across Northland and Auckland. Source: MPI.

[View a high-resolution version of the infrastructure map.](#)

Rail

The main railway in Northland is the North Auckland Line (NAL). It comes from Auckland in the south and crosses Northland up to Otiria via Whangārei. The Dargaville branch connects the NAL to Dargaville in the West.

Currently, Northport is not rail connected. A business case is under development to build the 19km rail line to connect the Port to the NAL at Oakleigh.

Port of Auckland is connected to South Auckland and Waikato inland freight hubs by rail facilitating the movement of goods by rail and reducing road traffic.

Sources: Northland Regional Council website, Transpower website, Top Energy website, Lodestone Energy website, Northpower website, Northport website, Kiwi rail website.

Useful links

Forestry

[The sustainable management of indigenous forests - MPI \(PDF, 3 MB\).](#)

[Tōtara industry pilot](#)

[A practical guide to managing tōtara on private land - Tāne's Tree Trust](#)

[Regional FAQ: Northland - Trees That Count \(PDF, 2.9 MB\)](#)

[New Zealand forest data - MPI](#)

[Plantation forestry best practice for Northland - Northland Regional Council \(PDF, 634KB\)](#)

[Plantation forestry regulations - Northland Regional Council \(PDF, 16MB\)](#)

[Afforestation and deforestation intentions survey 2023 - MPI \(PDF, 943 KB\)](#)

Wood processing and business development

[Tuputupu - Grow Northland initiative - Northland Inc \(PDF, 12 MB\)](#)

[Invest in New Zealand wood processing \(March 2020\) - NZTE](#)

[Tai Tokerau Northland Economic action plan - NorthlandInc.](#)

Regional statistics

[Northland region 2023 Census data - Stats NZ](#)

[Regional Economic Activity Web Tool - Northland - MBIE](#)

[Te Tai Tokerau - Northland - NZTA](#)

[Northland / Te Tai Tokerau - Kānoa](#)

Feedback

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