

IN THE MATTER OF hearing by the Horizon's Regional Council under the Resource Management Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER OF submission on the Proposed One Plan Chapter 7 –Living Heritage.

SUPPLEMENTARY EVIDENCE OF FEDERATED FARMERS OF NEW ZEALAND

INTRODUCTION

1. This supplementary evidence has been formulated in order to provide clarification on a number of comments that were made in regards to Chapter 7 of the Proposed One Plan during submissions of evidence on the 1 December 2008.
2. In our hearing evidence, points 36 and point 37 noted that other Council's had more widely accepted policy approaches for protecting indigenous biodiversity in their region. A question was subsequently raised in regards to what was it that other Council's, particularly the Taranaki Regional Council, were doing.
3. Federated Farmers would therefore like to submit this evidence to help provide the Commissioners with some clarification on these issues and provide some assistance with your deliberations.
4. Following are some examples from the Taranaki Regional and the Tasman District Council's where policy approaches are such that landowners have engaged willingly and accepted the processes for enhancing and maintaining indigenous biodiversity.

TARANAKI REGIONAL COUNCIL

5. The Taranaki Regional Council is nearing the adoption of its 2nd generation Regional Policy Statement. The statutory process for the RPS adoption has been such that no hearing process was required as all matters and issues were addressed with each individual submitter via individual pre-hearing meetings. As

such, no submitters required a hearing.

6. The Taranaki Regional Council's approach for producing a RPS is to focus on the-

"RMA's promotion of integrated management of resources and the environment. This means managing the use, development and protection of natural and physical resources by considering:

- a) The effects of the use of one natural resource on other natural and physical resources or on other parts of the environment recognising that such effects may occur across space and time*
- b) The need for cooperation and coordination in relation to the statutory roles and responsibilities of other agencies in respect of the management of natural and physical resources or other management responsibilities that could effect those resources.*
- c) The effect of other statutory documents prepared by the Taranaki Regional Council and others with functions and responsibilities under the Act that address the issues relating to the management of natural and physical resources*
- d) The social and economic objectives and interests of the community, recognising that natural and physical resources cannot be managed without having regard to social, economic and cultural factors."*

7. Federated Farmers considers that the Taranaki Regional Council is very successful in promoting this integrated approach. In part it is achieved by the intentions underlining the objectives, policies and methods of the RPS to create positive working relationships with stakeholder groups. Very rarely do the objectives, policies and methods rely on rules for implementation. The Council instead promotes a non regulatory and cooperative approach. These intentions are made clear by including words such as 'promote', 'encourage', 'participate' and 'work with'.

8. The Taranaki Regional Council fully appreciates that landowners have an important role to play in enhancing and maintaining indigenous biodiversity. They recognise that facilitating landowner 'buy-in' can be achieved though the tone of the document; an opportunity which is often lost by other councils. It may be surprising how much the tone of a document determines stakeholders'

response.

9. With a view to meeting their RMA responsibilities, the Taranaki Regional Council has an objective to:

“Maintain and enhance the indigenous biodiversity of the Taranaki region, with a priority on ecosystems, habitats and areas that have significant indigenous biodiversity values.”

- 10.

The policies which coincide with this objective require adverse effects to be avoided, remedied or mitigated as far as practicable. Once areas have been identified as significant, consideration is also given to the sustainability of the area to continue to be significant into the future. This consideration is given when deciding what action, if any, should be taken to reasonably protect the values of the area.

TASMAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

- 11.

Tasman District Council is coordinating a district-wide survey of native vegetation, wetlands and habitats on private land and public land outside the conservation estate. The project was developed by an Oversight Group comprising representatives of Federated Farmers, Queen Elizabeth II National Trust, Royal Forest and Bird Society, Fish and Game, Friends of Nelson Haven and Tasman Bay, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and the Department of Conservation following an Environment Court order. This group will continue to oversee the project.

- 12.

A survey of the natural areas on each property will be undertaken if a landowner wishes to participate in the project. Landowners who agree to a survey will receive a free property report on the ecological significance of these areas and will have the opportunity to comment on a draft report before it is finalised. Areas found to be ecologically significant will be considered for the Landowners Assistance Programme; which includes funding for fencing, possible rates relief and weed and pest control. Tradeable development rights or other incentives are

also being considered.

13.

The information gained from the surveys will provide an overview of native ecosystems in Tasman District. This will be presented in a series of public reports, one for each of the 16 distinct ecological districts. Individual properties will not be identified in these overview reports.

14.

Council needs up-to-date information to determine whether it is doing enough to protect indigenous biodiversity. It is looking for the support of landowners to achieve this through a voluntary approach and is committed to working in partnership with landowners to maintain and enhance native ecosystems.

CONCLUSION

15.

In summary, the two aforementioned Council's have created an overall culture which has been embraced by stakeholders and the community.

16.

I hope that this supplementary evidence has been of some assistance in pointing out policy approaches undertaken by other Councils which both achieve their RMA obligations and are widely accepted by the community.

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