

**Farmer Submission on the *Draft National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity***

**We are writing this submission as a sheep and beef farmers on the [REDACTED]**

**We farm [REDACTED] of flat to steep hill country. [REDACTED] of the area into 4 separate QE 2 covenants, the largest of which is [REDACTED] of regenerating native bush. Two of the other blocks are smaller taking in further regenerating bush, a unique stand of Totara forest alongside a huge [REDACTED]. The third block is a Category One wetland with a stand of [REDACTED]**

**On the balance of the land we have significant stands of native bush and a few areas of wetlands, some of which we are gradually fencing off. We need the balance of our farmed area to generate income and would become uneconomic if we were asked to forfeit more land from production.**

**We have done a huge amount, voluntarily for Biodiversity on our property and are immensely proud of our efforts. This has all been achieved over 30 years of farming out of income in the post subsidy era for farming- an era we fully support despite the financial pain of the eighties. Under these proposals our farm would be expected to fence off our additional bush areas whilst on the neighbouring properties with stands of exotic trees as shelter belts and no native biodiversity would not have any additional rules or expenses added to their farming operation. This reinforces our belief that those who have done the most to date will have greater cost imposed upon them with this proposed legislation.**

**Our message to central Government is please leave us alone to continue to treasure our own Biodiversity. Competitions such as the Ballance Farm Environment Awards alongside industry led guidelines and Farm Environment Plans will lead to the desired outcomes on farms without the need for regulatory rules and expenses associated with on farm audits from personnel who know far less about our property than we do.**

**In response to our market for lamb we have become a GAP4 accredited meat producer. This requires us to adhere to a strict management code allowing our customers the confidence to know that the meat they consume has been ethically farmed. Within this audit process is a requirement to show respect for the Biodiversity of our farming environment. It is much easier to get compliance through market forces than through regulation- let the market decide and direct on farm practices.**

**We have real concern that the industry, be it Regional Councils or Central Government do not have the qualified staff either now nor in the immediate future to provide the required administrative structure that is being proposed. Regional Councils around New Zealand are all noting that their older staff are retiring and taking the institutional knowledge with them whilst the younger staff may only be in their employment for a maximum of three to five years. My understanding is that the**

administration of Biodiversity is actually undertaken by District Councils and this is an even scarier thought due to a severe lack of expertise in this space.

Please leave the Regional Councils to be part of our business in assisting with on farm planning and do not turn them into the police by making them work in a testing regulatory environment.

We are not sure how widely read this will be, having submitted on the Freshwater proposals as well and have had no feedback that our submission was either received or read. Because we are passionate about our natural landscape and the ongoing need for our meat to be sold internationally showcasing the wonderful natural environment our animals spend their time we are continuing to make submissions.

We invite anyone to come and look at our farm business, the environment we work in and have robust conversation about the financial impact that could be placed on our business should these proposals continue in their current state.

Our greatest hope is that common sense will prevail, market forces will reward our efforts and regulations will not rule our right to farm.



10 year old plantings

[REDACTED], fenced 1987

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

