5th March 2020

The Honourable David Parker
Minister of the Environment
Parliament Buildings
Wellington

By email to indigenousbiodiversity@mfe.govt.nz

SUBMISSION ON THE PROPOSED NATIONAL POLICY STATEMENT FOR
INDIGENOUS BIODIVERSITY

Introduction

We are making this submission on behalf of the shareholders of the Wairarapa Moana Incorporation (WMI), a large agribusiness Maori Incorporation. WMI own 10,860 contiguous hectares near Mangakino. Our lands boundaries are the Mangakino Stream, the Waikato River and the Waiteti Stream. We have 12 dairy farms totalling 3,940 hectares milking a total of 12,500 cows. We have two dairy support units totalling 540 hectares with a further unit near Rotoroa of 340 hectares. We have 5,800 hectares of forestry.

Our business has 63 family houses on farm and employs 83 staff. We support the local community of Mangakino and both the Tokoroa and Taupo business centres.

Our Whenua

The land will remain in the ownership of the shareholders and their descendants. The land will never be sold and the WMI Board are kaitiaki over the land. The role of kaitiaki is taken seriously and whilst kaitiaki are prepared to listen to ideas the final decision on how Biodiversity is managed should remain with the Board as kaitiaki.

We ask for the following to be a part of the National Policy Statement;

- Firstly, we support protection and restoration of our environment for future generations, and we recognise that we all have a role to play in protecting and improving the state of New Zealand’s indigenous biodiversity. We also support the underpinning concept of Hutia Te Rito and the manner in which it attempts to reflect and articulate a strongly Maori view and understanding of our natural world.
• Central to any meaningful application of Hutia Te Rito and reflection of a Maori view and understanding of our natural world is the concept of relationship. Relationship, not just with the natural world but with each other; and in particular with landowners, councils and kaitiaki.

• Any reliance upon any desk-top or remote identification or categorisation of SNAs without engagement of kaitiaki and landowners will effectively be an anathema to any Maori-based approach to environmental management. As both landowner and kaitiaki, it is vitally important that the process of SNA identification is based upon person-to-person interaction with district and regional council staff in a manner that both enriches and enhances a common understanding of Hutia te Rito. WMI is not receptive to and would object strongly to any attempt by a council-based determining the extent and nature of our kaitiakitanga role without mutual engagement and participation. We do not seek to develop effective partnerships – our values, principles and traditions are much too valuable to be held by remote. Kanohi-ki-te-kanohi engagement is both more accurate and more engaging.

• It is illogical to provide for the provision of customary use of indigenous flora – including customary take – without including indigenous fauna.

• Access to taonga species and taonga areas by people outside our descent group is both a cultural/tikanga matter, a private land/trespass matter, a health and safety matter and a serious biosecurity matter. WMI do not support the NPS providing access on our Maori-owned whenua by any means except express permission.

• We support the target to increase indigenous vegetation cover in rural areas with less than 10% indigenous vegetation cover. We would, however, want such assessment to recognise the contribution already made by those landowners who have already actively planted and protected indigenous vegetation. Those landowners should not have to carry a further additional burden without any recognition of their previous good work.

• Where it makes practical sense and where there are culturally appropriate reasons to do so, landowners should be given the opportunity to share SNAs with the public via the establishment of an ecotourism operation/track both at either a free to view or pay per view basis.

We thank the Ministry of Environment for considering our views.

Yours Sincerely
WAIRARAPA MOANA INCORPORATION

[Signature]

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