



Moutere Station
RD3
Alexandra 9393

Moutere Station is an 8,000ha extensive Merino Sheep & Beef property located in Central Otago and has been in the Jopp family for over 100 years. The property is comprised of developed lowlands (140m) rising to improved steep hill country with the highest point being 1700m. We take pride in our property and want to see its values and biodiversity protected for generations to come.

We support the governments recognition of the value of our natural environment and indigenous biodiversity and believe that with the right management and pest control farming of the land can help enhance the natural biodiversity and work in harmony with our indigenous species.

The Station is run as a low intensity operation and despite farming in one of the lowest rainfall areas in New Zealand we operate a balanced, resilient and environmentally sustainable business. The key to this is utilizing different classes of land throughout the year allowing areas of the property to be spelled and regenerate naturally.

We are a ZQ accredited property which means we meet high standards for wool fibre quality, animal health & welfare, care for the environment and social responsibility. The way in which we manage our environment by removing invasive pests and weeds, fencing in a manner that creates natural shelter and protects sensitive areas and utilising different areas of land for different purposes, along with a balanced stocking approach is critical to ensuring the wellbeing of our environment, and our business.

After considering the huge amount of information and complexity of the documents presented by government, we outline some examples of how parts of the proposals will not only affect our business but also our environment and community.

- 1) We oppose the provisions which seek to 'lock up indigenous biodiversity' and in doing so penalise those landowners who have done the most to protect indigenous biodiversity. We seek changes to the policy to ensure that indigenous biodiversity can be integrated within pastoral based land uses and recognise these can co-exist for mutual benefit. The provisions for SNA's and areas identified as being important to the protection of SNA's or highly mobile species could be interpreted as precluding the ongoing grazing of domesticated animals adjacent to and within these areas. This means that those that have done the most to protect indigenous habitat and species within their farming businesses could shoulder the greatest costs including restrictions to their operation. This could severely affect their ability to run a profitable business and reinvest in their environment. Where indigenous species including those at-risk and threatened species are identified we believe that any initial changes such as fencing off the area, stopping the current grazing regime and stopping fertilizer applications should initially be allowed to continue as normal as any changes could have unknown detrimental effects on those indigenous species.
- 2) Subtle but significant changes are required to the NPSIB to ensure that past and current conservation efforts are rewarded. Those that have put time, effort and money into monitoring and protecting the biodiversity on their land should be supported and incentivised to continue rather than have strong regulatory provisions imposed. This stick approach could undermine current and future conservation efforts.

- 3) We are concerned that New Zealand does not currently have the range of technical expertise required to assist councils to identify SNA's and mobile species across their territorial areas in a comprehensive manner and that the timeframes do not allow for long term monitoring. The timeframes should ensure that the identification of these habitats and species is robust and is undertaken in way which engages with landowners and communities and builds a picture of the environment overtime.

The Central Otago climate is very variable both within and across years. The effect that this has on the natural environment means that areas of indigenous biodiversity may look better or worse depending on the time of year or type of season (e.g. a dry or wet summer or a very cold winter). Timeframes need to allow for monitoring overtime so trendlines to be created to understand the changes in biodiversity from season to season and year to year.

- 4) The process of identifying SNAs should include provisions for the current management of the land. For example, in Central Otago pest species, such as goats and deer but in particular rabbits, have had a huge impact on the biodiversity and habitat for indigenous species. Those that put a considerable effort into the control of these pests will have considerably more biodiversity and a higher number of at-risk or threatened species. This means areas of these properties may be classed as an SNA and will have regulatory restrictions put on them. Properties where there is no biodiversity as the land has been decimated by rabbits are able to continue to operate as they do currently.

The unintended consequences of the current government proposals will end up having a detrimental effect on our indigenous biodiversity and it's value to New Zealand. The tight restrictions proposed on areas of significance will not allow us to farm our land in a manner that works with the environment, while the cost associated would have a huge detrimental effect on our business. This will mean less money available for our current level of spending on environmental activities, on our business and in the community.

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