SUBMISSION
Draft National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity

G.5 Consultation questions
Q1 Yes, because so much indigenous biodiversity which is Aotearoa’s natural capital, a crucial source of ecosystem services, has been lost nation-wide since the RMA became law in 1991. This has compounded the losses since human settlement began c. 800 years ago. The RMA has proved to be woefully inadequate in this role so many agencies implementing it have thus often been unable to stop the degradation of our natural capital and the losses of the crucial ecosystem services which it provides.

Ecosystem services include carbon sequestration, climate control, erosion control, water supply, etc. These benefits are crucial to our indigenous biodiversity, agricultural and horticultural biodiversity, human communities and all other forms of life.

Q2 Yes, because terrestrial, aquatic and marine ecosystems are intimately linked. Actions degrading terrestrial ecosystems often have ‘spill-over’ effects on the streams and rivers flowing to the coast, and so may degrade aquatic and marine ecosystems.

Examples include wind-blown litter, rubber dust from tyres, asbestos and copper from brakes, spills of fuels and lubricants, sewage spills, leachate from landfills and industries, timber-preservation chemicals, smoke from domestic fires and industrial furnaces, zinc from corrugated iron roofs, agrichemicals, stock urine and faeces, sediment from erosion of the banks of streams and rivers, etc.

Q3 Yes, if Objective 1 and Objective 5 are combined thus: “to maintain indigenous biodiversity where it has not declined, and where it has declined, to enable its restoration by natural processes”:

Q4 Nature and humans are inter-dependent. If the translation of Hutia Te Rito is “What is the greatest thing in the world – It is people, it is people it is people” it is anthropocentric. It could be read as ignoring all other life forms. Could it be replaced with a statement which states that nature in all its forms “...is the greatest thing in the world”?

A Dictionary of the Māori Language, H.W. Williams M.A., 1975, while not a dictionary of proverbs, gives the meaning of ‘hutia’ as ‘hoist, haul up, plucked up’, and of ‘rito’ as ‘central shoot or heart of a monocotyledonous plant’.

Q5 Can a Te Reo Māori proverb be found to replace Hutia Te Rito so that the concern noted in my response to Q4 is resolved?

Q6 Yes, because it provides for co-management of natural areas by tangata whenua. In Te Urewera, tangata whenua must receive funding from central government so that iwi responsible for the large area of the former Te Urewera National Park are able to do the work necessary for the management of the whenua to the standard it was when the Department of Conservation managed the land. That this is not the case now has been mentioned in the news media.
Q7  The biggest challenges for councils and tangata whenua working together to manage indigenous biodiversity will be for all parties to acquire profound understanding of indigenous species, and the ecological processes in indigenous terrestrial, aquatic and marine ecosystems.

Q8  Yes. Note: Local authorities must NOT widen this customary use to include indigenous fauna, e.g., kererū, other land birds and sea birds, except tītī/mutton bird/sooty shearwater/ Puffinus griseum.

Q9  All government agencies, regional councils, district councils, territorial local authorities, tangata whenua and community groups will need profound understanding of indigenous species, and the ecological processes in indigenous, terrestrial, aquatic and marine ecosystems. This will require a blend of scientific and traditional knowledge.

Q10 Territorial authorities will need to employ botanists, mycologists, herpetologists, ornithologists, invertebrate specialists, etc., to identify likely SNAs, and will need to employ surveyors to map their boundaries. This work will cost large amounts of money, so may be prone to delays year after year unless territorial authorities are able to obtain funding from central government.

Q11 11c, because combining the skills of these agencies for this purpose would improve the chances of the work being done with the necessary accuracy, and also enable more pressure to be put on central government to contribute to funding some of the work.

Q12 No. Direction on approach:
2. Amend to read “A significant natural area will meet any one or more of the following four criteria:”
4c. Amend to read “... including lists of species of flora and lists of species of fauna”.

Q13 (2)d If access is not given by a landowner, the indigenous ecosystem could be photographed from a drone, light aircraft or helicopter.

Q14 SNAs should be scheduled in both the regional plan and the district plans for a region. This will ensure that the regional authority knows about the SNAs in all the TLAs in its area of responsibility.

Q15 Yes, these periods would be reasonable if central government is able to help with funding some of the work to be done by those regional and district councils with small rating bases.

Q16 Yes. The proposed approach is reasonable and fair.

Q17 Yes. The mobility of those species does not reduce their ecological value. On the contrary it may increase their value as distributors of seed and/or pollen.

I may choose to answer more questions when speaking in support of my submission during the hearings process.

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Relevant background
1. 1980-present: Member, Wellington Botanical Society. Co-leader of field trips, co-compiler of plant-species lists, committee member and newsletter editor 1993 to present;
2. 1980-present: Member, Tararua Tramping Club, Co-leader of native plant identification trips; appointed Life Member 2019.
3. 2001-2004: Contractor to GWRC. Filling c. 270 possum-bait stations in six WCC reserves from Karori Park to Johnsonville;
4. 1998-2016: Co-contractor to WCC maintaining Makara Foreshore Reserve on Wellington’s west coast.
5. 1961-62: Member, Forest & Range Experiment Station field parties gathering ecosystem information in the high country in the Craigieburn Range and Takitimu and Eyre Mountains to enable the preparation of maps showing indigenous ecosystem information.
6. 1958-59 and 1959-60: Member, Forest Research Institute (Scion) Ecological Forest Survey field parties, gathering ecosystem information in North Island axial ranges from Te Urewera to Ruahine Range to enable the preparation of maps showing indigenous forest types.
When hearings are held, I would like to speak in support of my submission.

Yours sincerely