

RURAL WOMEN NEW ZEALAND

DRAFT NATIONAL POLICY STATEMENT – INDIGENOUS BIODIVERSITY

Introduction

- i. Rural Women New Zealand (RWNZ) Ngā Wāhine Taiwhenua o Aotearoa welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission on the National Policy Statement Indigenous Biodiversity.
- ii. RWNZ values the opportunity for a more consistent approach across New Zealand, while still valuing the need for local variation.
- iii. Many food and fibre producers care about biodiversity on their properties and are improving indigenous biodiversity in and around their properties.
- iv. Rural communities and landowners must be part of the process of identifying SNA's because they have intricate knowledge of their properties, the surrounding areas and the communities in which they live, work and play.
- v. RWNZ believes the process of identifying SNA's and taonga needs to be a collaborative, inclusive, transparent and positive experience for all stakeholders. We particularly like the example given in the discussion document regarding Auckland Council.
- vi. RWNZ would not like to see this NPS leading to an adverse effect on the financial viability of land-based businesses, or the living standards of those who live rurally, which will lead to an adverse effect on the economic and social viability of rural communities.
- vii. RWNZ believes that guardianship/kaitiakitanga of the environment is important and would like to see an understanding of how enacting this NPS will impact on the work programmes of Councils and the primary sector and all others connected to their rural community. We would not like to see an increase in costs to rural communities disproportionate to urban communities when work programmes are needed to affect changes proposed by this NPS.
- viii. RWNZ would like to see processes that are inclusive of tangata whenua and those living in local communities, who each contribute to environmental stewardship and are to be acknowledged for their skill and expertise in managing resources and monitoring ecosystems through a long history and connection with the land.

Specific Comments

- ix. RWNZ requests that both a gender and rural impact analysis be carried out on the draft National Policy Statement for Indigenous Diversity so that there is assurance that there are no adverse impacts of this NPS on rural communities.
- x. RWNZ asks that food and fibre producers who care about biodiversity on their properties and are improving indigenous biodiversity in and around their properties are consulted on best practice in finalising this draft NPS. Good examples of these are winners of farm environment awards such as the Ballance-Agri set, organic and regenerative farmers, farmers who are involved with such organisations as New Zealand Landcare Trust, those with QEII Trusts on their properties and iwi farming groups.
- xi. RWNZ would like to see more clearly defined criteria for 'Potential Habitat for Mobile Fauna' and a requirement for evidence of a presence especially where 'likely to be' is used as a reason for protection. Evidence could be in the form of dated photographs, videos, and drone footage. Providing evidence is more likely to encourage rural communities working with councils to protect a suitable area, as long as it does not severely impact on the operation of their food and fibre production.
- xii. RWNZ would like to see respect shown to food and fibre producers in the size of the buffer strips proposed around SNAs and Potential Habitat for Mobile Fauna. Buffer strips need to be reasonable and respectful of any rural community and their ability to operate their food or fibre producing business.
- xiii. RWNZ would like funding to be made available to support food and fibre producers to improve indigenous biodiversity where changes in production practices have to be made to enable such improvements. Especially where these changes lead to an increase in costs of production particularly compliance costs or changes that cause a significant decrease in production income.
- xiv. RWNZ would also like to see funding available to support the propagation and supply of suitable plants for the planting regimes that might be required under the NPS.
- xv. RWNZ seeks assurance that sufficient suitably qualified people are available for the work this NPS will generate, particularly those who understand the policy and regulatory needs that this NPS requires, with rural and regional experience and knowledge and where possible, a connection to mana whenua.

About RWNZ

- xvi. Rural Women New Zealand (RWNZ) is a not-for-profit, member-based organisation that reaches into all rural communities and has an authoritative, respected voice on rural environment, health, education, technology, business and social issues.
- xvii. RWNZ strives to ensure that all rural residents, workers and families/whanau have equitable access to services, inequalities are addressed by Government, and the wellbeing of rural communities is considered from the beginning of all policy and legislative development.
- xviii. RWNZ is affiliated to the Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW) and as such upholds all remits of ACWW as well as United Nations, ILO and WHO conventions and outcome statements as they relate to women and rural women in particular.
- xix. RWNZ would like to draw particular attention to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 15, Life on the Land: Sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss.

Yours sincerely



Liz Pennington
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Rural Women New Zealand
Ngā wāhine taiwhenua o Aotearoa

