

8 April 2019
Media Release



Changes to regulatory settings proposed for plantation forestry to better protect environment

The Environmental Defence Society (EDS) and Forest & Bird have released an analysis of the current regulations governing plantation forestry in New Zealand. The analysis calls for a fundamental reset of the rules to better protect the environment.

The report *A Review of the Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Plantation Forestry Regulations 2017)* was co-authored by Madeleine Wright, Sally Gepp and Dr David Hall and is available as a PDF [here](#).

The report has been published today and is designed to provide input into the Government's own review of the National Environmental Standard for Plantation Forestry 2017 (NES-PF) which is underway, led by the Ministry for Primary Industries.

"EDS and Forest and Bird decided to jointly prepare this report because of increasing public concern about the impacts of commercial forestry in light of events like the Tolaga Bay devastation," said co-author Sally Gepp.

"The concerns focused on the sense that the current regulatory approach was light-touch which was inappropriate for such a high-risk sector. The industry is high-risk in terms of worker safety but also environmental impacts especially from slash and sediment.

"We make three key observations in our report.

"First, the NESPF's approach to afforestation and replanting is too permissive and needs to be re-examined. Greater stringency needs to be applied. This is especially the case if we are to plant a billion trees.

"Secondly, the NESPF's presumption that plantation forestry activities should be a permitted activity needs to be revisited. This is fundamental if we are to ensure appropriate oversight of the sector

"Thirdly, in most instances, the adverse environmental impacts of clear-fell harvesting are significant. Therefore policy needs to be developed to facilitate a transition to more sustainable methods. Slash and sediment must be better controlled and that may require staged harvesting rather than present methods.

"Forest & Bird and EDS would welcome ongoing engagement with stakeholders on our Report," Sally Gepp concluded.

Download the report [here](#).