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Media release

EDS welcomes Discussion Document on a proposed National Policy Statement on Indigenous Biodiversity

The Environmental Defence Society (EDS) welcomes the release of *He Kura Koiora I hokia*: A discussion document on a proposed National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity (NPS-IB).

“New Zealand’s indigenous biodiversity is facing a crisis. If we fail to halt the decline our native plants and animals will face further extinctions,” says EDS CEO Gary Taylor.

“The NPS-IB seeks to address this crisis by providing national direction on how to maintain indigenous biodiversity under the RMA. It sets out a requirement for councils to identify significant vegetation and habitats of indigenous fauna and manage their protection through plans and resource consent processes. This will apply to all land tenures: public conservation land, Maori land and private land.

“This process will provide clarity to the way we manage biodiversity in decision-making, reducing the likelihood of repetitive litigation. It will also encourage councils to work closely with tangata whenua, landowners and communities.

“The document is the result of a two-year collaborative process led by the Biodiversity Collaborative Group. EDS was pleased to have been a member of that group and to have contributed to the outcome. We congratulate other participants especially Forest & Bird and Federated Farmers for their constructive roles in leading the process.

“It represents a near-consensus of those involved as to the starting point for addressing biodiversity decline in New Zealand.

“The proposed NPS-IB is an important new tool to protect indigenous biodiversity. It has been a focus of discussions for nearly 20 years, and EDS considers that the outcome of the Biodiversity Collaborative Group’s work represents a very positive way forward for our precious natural heritage,” Mr Taylor concluded.

Submissions on the document are due on 14 March 2020.

The Discussion Document is available [here](#).