

## **EDS News: August 2022**

### **Permanent Forests**

At a recent meeting with the Prime Minister and Ministers, EDS and fellow environmental groups raised serious concerns about the decision to defer removing permanent exotic forests from the Emissions Trading Scheme. The consequence of this, if the deferral becomes final, is that there will be thousands of hectares of farmland and Māori land put into monoculture exotics long-term when the imperative should be to restore our lost indigenous forests. This is a classic case of siloed thinking where we have price incentives for storing carbon but no incentives for restoring native forests – which will store more carbon over time and provide superior biodiversity outcomes as well. Our contention is that government should address the climate and biodiversity crises together and shift away from siloed thinking. EDS is working on an improved incentive package to shift afforestation firmly towards natives. We welcome support from interested stakeholders.

### **Stewardship Land Review**

EDS recently persuaded the Minister of Conservation to extend the time allowed for submissions on the West Coast Stewardship Land Review, which was the minimum 40 working days, by an additional 20 working days. Submissions on the 504 recommendations are now due on 23 August. We also sought to persuade the Department of Conservation to put in place a fair and accessible hearings process. EDS is intending to make extensive submissions and has engaged an independent expert ecologist and a public law expert to assist. Initial feedback from our ecologist indicate that around 80% of the recommendations are wrong and propose an inadequate level of protected status. We are very determined to see good outcomes from this review and are seeking donations of \$15,000 to cover the costs of our experts, which can be made [here](#).

### **EDS Conference**

EDS is planning its next environmental summit which is scheduled for 30 November – 1 December at the Millennium Hotel in Auckland. **Pivot Point: Deep Environmental Change** will examine the extraordinarily challenging task of protecting and restoring our damaged natural environment at a time when the world seems to be losing its collective mind. For the first time, we'll look at how geopolitical events including wars are impacting on our ability to improve environmental outcomes. We will profile the resource management reforms (anticipating the introduction of the Natural and Built Environments Bill and the Spatial Planning Bill by then). We will also be looking to the next term of government with prospective oceans and conservation law reform. The website and program will go live later this month.

### **National Policy Statement on Indigenous Biodiversity**

EDS has made an extensive submission on the NPS IB which can be seen [here](#). This National Policy Statement has been many years in gestation. After several false starts a collaborative process was set up by then Environment Minister Hon Dr Nick Smith which continued under the subsequent Labour-led government. EDS was represented on the group along with members from Federated Farmers, the Iwi Leaders Group, forestry interests and infrastructure providers. It reached agreement and produced a draft NPS IB along with a range of suggested complementary measures that would sit alongside the new regulations. The Ministry for the Environment then produced a final exposure draft which was released for public feedback. We understand that there have been

more than 3000 submissions opposing the NPS IB from Groundswell. We hope that Government will hold the line on this: biodiversity on private land is demonstrably going backwards and these measures should have been put in place 30 years ago.

### **Briefing to the Incoming Minister of Conservation**

EDS provided a comprehensive briefing statement to the new Minister of Conservation, Hon Poto Williams. The BIM traversed the major reform projects we have underway including a review of the Wildlife Act and the second phases of the Conservation Law Reform and Oceans Reform projects. A copy of the BIM is available [here](#).

### **Science for Policy**

EDS has completed its investigation into the role science played in the development of the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020. The project undertook a national and international literature review, scrutinised the documents sitting behind the policy development process, and undertook in-depth interviews with 35 people directly involved in the process. The report, which is due for release on 22 August, provides a rare 'behind the scenes' look into how policy is developed in Aotearoa New Zealand and how science and mātauranga Māori can help support more robust responses. It reveals how economic considerations can trump environmental ones because of the way the regulatory impact statement process works.

### **Wildlife Act reform**

EDS is nearing completion of its review of the Wildlife Act. Key issues identified include that the Act does not give effect to the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, that it has significant gaps in protection and that it lacks a specific framework for protecting threatened species. EDS's report will provide some initial recommendations on possible reform. The report forms part of EDS's wider review of the Conservation system.

### **Pakiri sand mining**

EDS presented to the Independent Hearings Panel earlier this month opposing McCallum Bro Ltd's application for consents to continue extracting sand at Pakiri Beach. Sand mining there risks altering the coastal geomorphology, which in turn could significantly impact on the habitat of the New Zealand Fairy Tern (Tara iti), New Zealand's most threatened bird. Given that the total Tara iti population is approximately 37 birds, this is an unacceptable risk. If granted, the applications will be contrary to the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement which requires avoidance of adverse effects on specified indigenous biodiversity values, and the adoption of the precautionary approach.

### **Staff changes**

Shay Schlaepfer has been appointed Chief Operating Officer. Tracey Turner has left to work at Simpson Grierson. Olivia Grainger (who has been part-time) is relocating to Queenstown Lakes. We have contracted 2 new fulltime staff members: Fernanda Caballero (who is a lawyer); and Ben Tombs who has just completed a PhD in law on managed retreat and will be working on the Climate Adaptation Act project. We also have 2 interns assisting us in the second half of the year and over summer.



### **Donations please!**

We are not very good at asking for donations for EDS. Unlike other environmental groups we do not have dedicated fundraisers and prefer to focus on quality outputs which hopefully will attract support on their merits. Here is a brief summary of our current research projects for which donations are very welcome and can be made [here](#):

- Conservation law reform
- Environmental advocacy in the new resource management system
- Local government reform through an environmental lens
- EPA reform
- Climate change adaptation and managed retreat
- Oceans reform
- Tourism in Westland
- Resource management reform