

EDS News: November 2022

Farmers walk back on *He waka eke noa*

Exotic forestry needs to lift its game

Resource Management Reform finally happens

Native forests still not a priority

Marine habitats proposals underwhelming

Pivot Point 2023

Pākiri Sandmining decisions

Farmers walk back on *He waka eke noa*

The partnership between the farming sector and the Government aimed at developing an emissions reduction tool for agriculture, appears to have disintegrated, with Federated Farmers and others withdrawing previous support. The main area of contention seems to be that Ministers will set the methane levy price instead of farmers, with the farming sector opposing any price on methane emissions they can't set. This shows the sector in a bad light, again. Farmers are very keen to look for government help when there's a flood or a drought but seem unwilling to pay their fair share when it comes to mitigation. Farmers need to start pulling their weight. *He waka eke noa* is, at best, a very light-touch obligation with options for on-farm sequestration available if needed. It is at least a start. EDS's submission on the Government's discussion document is available [here](#).

Exotic forestry needs to lift its game

Plantation exotic forestry in Aotearoa New Zealand is another primary sector grouping unwilling to face up to all of its environmental responsibilities. We are one of few countries in the world where large-scale clear felling on steep, erosion-prone land is still permitted. Sediment and slash controls are weak or non-existent and need tightening. The government's review of the National Environmental Standards for Plantation Forestry (NES PF) is currently too narrow to address this. It is focused on rules for permanent exotic carbon farming which for a number of very good reasons should not be permitted at all. The review is failing to consider urgently needed fundamental changes. We need exotic forestry, but the sector needs to lift its environmental performance. EDS partnered with Pure Advantage to prepare detailed submissions on the NES PF, the final version of which is available [here](#).

Resource Management Reform finally happens

The new legislation to replace the Resource Management Act is being introduced to the House this week and will be referred to a Select Committee for submissions and hearings. The Natural and Built Environment Bill and the Spatial Planning Bill will proceed in tandem through the Parliamentary process and both are due for enactment next year. The two bills pretty much follow the Randerson Panel's recommendations. These were closely based on EDS's earlier work with business partners that looked at how the Resource Management Act could be reformed to deliver better outcomes for the environment. EDS will be preparing a

detailed submission on both bills and is keen to work with others to share ideas and get the best possible legislation enacted.

Native forests still not a priority

The recent decision by Ministers not to ban permanent exotic carbon forests from joining the ETS is just plain wrong. It seems that the reason for the backdown was pressure from Māori foresters. But at a recent Forestry Conference in Wellington, Māori foresters were quite clear that they'd prefer to be creating permanent native forests over exotics any day. As it's presently configured, the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) incentivises fast-growing exotics but fails to properly recognize the longer-term sequestration benefits of natives, let alone their superior biodiversity and climate resilience outcomes. Government officials are working on the matter, but not at pace.

Marine habitats proposals underwhelming

Submissions recently closed on Fisheries NZ's proposals to develop guidance for the identification of habitats of particular significance for fisheries management under the Fisheries Act 1996. The proposals are underwhelming, adopting a very narrow working definition for such habitats, and failing to provide any proactive measures to protect them. Such habitats are critical to the health of our marine environment and are rapidly being degraded due to fishing and other pressures. There is a legal obligation under the Fisheries Act to protect these habitats. Fisheries NZ needs to get on with the job and proactively protect these habitats in the public interest. EDS's submission on the proposals is available [here](#).

Pivot Point 2023

The program for EDS's annual conference, ***Pivot Point: Deep Environmental Change, Auckland, 22-24 March 2023*** has been finalized and is available on the conference website. The event was deferred from December 2022 to the new date because of concern about conference congestion. We're expecting a full house at the Grand Millennium in I. Auckland in March for what is Aotearoa New Zealand's leading environmental summit. Registration is now open [here](#).

Pākiri Sandmining decisions

Decisions on two related applications for sand extractions at Pākiri Beach have been released. The in-shore application has been declined, because of, *inter alia*, effects on the foreshore environment and habitat of tara-iti, the critically endangered Fairy Tern. The mid-shore consent has been granted, but for a significantly reduced period of 10 years. Appeals are expected on both decisions and EDS intends to join. Donations to support these cases and protect the Fairy Tern are welcomed.