



Takaka Hill Biodiversity Group Trust

Response to Climate Change Consultation Document

The Takaka Hill Biodiversity Group Trust manages biodiversity protection and enhancement on the privately-held Takaka Hill lands of its members, as well as, by agreement with the Department of Conservation, on PCL lands adjacent - some land-locked by private properties. Located in sub-montane karst-country between two national parks (Abel Tasman NP and Kahurangi NP) the THBGT is acutely aware of its 'land bridge' status and the risks of allowing predator species and pest-plants to establish and re-infest conserved land, unless properly managed. Trust members undertake trapping; feral pest animal control; pest-plant eradication, including wilding conifer control; native plant seed collection, propagation and replanting; maintenance of public-access Reserve lands, and monitoring and care of the many underground cave systems used for public recreation and educational purposes.

Overall, the Trust endorses the Climate Change policy provisions, with particular approval of

its recognition of community-based expertise;

its intention to promote behavioural change in addressing its goals;

its long-term, intergenerational emphasis;

its all-of-Government and bi-partisan emphasis, including local Government collaboration;

its 'paced' elaboration of step-by-step progress, and its admission that 'resilience' and the capacity to adapt as things change is a necessary feature of planning.

Rural communities are used to considering their own energy needs and waste-management systems. Our own planning is already halfway towards alignment with the proposals contained in the Policy document. We will therefore limit ourselves to responding to just 3 of the 24 Questions:

Question 17 New Native Forest planting or reversion

In alignment with the recognition of local community expertise and involvement, and long-term planning, we urge the 'support' systems which will grow around a large-scale national re-vegetation operation, to consider the need to also localise native seed collection and propagation.

An 'industrialised,' centralised native-plant nursery system will expose the venture to wasted effort and many planting failures. Native species are highly variable, even within a species, and need 'hardening off' exposure to local conditions - something we know well as karst-country owner-occupiers.

Small-scale, localised operations will help small-business ventures and adaptive change, their visibility promoting behavioral adaptation and strengthening small communities. Voluntary input is likely to be popular.

We are especially pleased to see the importance of smaller-scale, on-property native forest blocks recognised, and costs such as fencing supported. This may need to extend to water-use in the propagation and planting-out phases, since rural owners supply their own water, some from rainwater collection, and cannot always allocate a scarce resource away from farm or household use in a dry season.

Question 3 Energy

In moving towards electricity as a renewable energy resource, some rural households and enterprises can be left vulnerable. Not all households or small road-side businesses can afford solar and especially storage-battery technologies, and rural electricity is subject to very regular outages - several times per year. Further: they are often the last to receive repair services. The incidence of outages may increase, with climate-change based extreme weather events. Rural residents may therefore need exemption for ongoing use of small-scale bottled gas, and fuel generators, for emergency use - at least until improved renewable energy systems can equip to the domestic level.

Question 5 Public transport

The document limits its vision to city-based systems.

The much smaller rural community has few if any public transport options - although two relatively simple changes could offer solutions:

the opening-up of use of School Bus services, many operating with marginal numbers, to paying adult customers;

an electronic/phone-app 'request-stop' at remote locations for long-distance 'city to city' bus services.

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These options would give occasional transport access to rural residents, and also allow young workers more mobility to access the worksites for the land-change activities outlined in the document - including for instance new native forest establishment and its associated activities.