

SUBMISSION TO PROPOSED INDIGENOUS FOREST AND BIODIVERSITY VARIATION 1, STRATFORD DISTRICT PLAN ROLLING REVIEW PART I



To: The Chief Executive
Stratford District Council
PO Box 320
STRATFORD 4352

From: Horizons Regional Council
Private Bag 11 025
Manawatu Mail Centre
PALMERSTON NORTH 4442

Horizons Regional Council (Horizons) thanks Stratford District Council for the opportunity to make a submission on the Rolling Review Part I of the Stratford District Plan, proposed Indigenous Forest and Biodiversity Variation 1.

Horizons wishes to be heard in support of this submission.

1. Background

Indigenous forest / biodiversity review

Horizons supports the changes proposed to the Plan in principle. As a result of our preliminary assessment, we consider that while the changes take a different approach to that taken by Horizons in the *Proposed One Plan as Amended by Decisions* (August 2010), it would provide a similar level of protection for indigenous biological diversity.

Horizons' interests

Horizons' interests in the review stem from the Resource Management Act 1991 requirement that territorial authorities "give effect" to the Regional Policy Statement (section 75(3) (c)), and "have regard to" any proposed regional policy statement (section 74(2)(a)). The policy direction in the *Proposed One Plan as Amended by Decisions* provides for Horizons to have the primary role in the protection of indigenous biological diversity, but at the same time we recognise that the area covered by the Stratford District Plan is possibly the most difficult part of the region for our staff to access.

Our two councils have a responsibility to ensure that there is a clear, consistent approach to these activities in the area common to Stratford District and Horizons Region to provide certainty for both our councils and the landowners in the area. Accordingly, we recognise that a co-operative arrangement to implementation is likely to be the most practical solution.

2. **Decision sought**

We submit that Stratford District Council and Horizons need to determine how the implementation of indigenous biological diversity protection rules will be carried out in practice.

We propose that such a regime could involve Stratford District having primary responsibility for implementing the planning regime, with Horizons providing secondary support including scientific or technical advice. We acknowledge that we will need to come to agreement on a pragmatic solution which provides clarity and certainty, and fits within the legal requirements of the Resource Management Act 1991 that appropriate effect or regard is given to the Horizons' regional policy statement documents.

Accordingly, we seek to meet with Stratford District to discuss these matters further.

3. **Summary**

- Horizons supports in principle the proposed Indigenous Forest and Biodiversity Proposed Variation 1.
- Horizons requests that Stratford District Council joins with us in developing a practical, consistent and legally robust approach to managing activities involving indigenous forest and biodiversity in the area common to both councils.
- Horizons wishes to be heard in support of its submission.

Greg Carlyon
GROUP MANAGER REGIONAL PLANNING AND REGULATORY