

**Speaking Notes for Elizabeth Williams, Te Papa Atawhai Department of Conservation
Proposed Timaru District Hearing A: Overarching Matters, Part 1 and Strategic
Directions, 9 May 2024**

Kia Ora, my name is Elizabeth (Liz) Williams, and I am a RMA Planner at *Te Papa Atawhai*, the Department of Conservation. Thank you for hearing me today and allowing me to join the hearing remotely.

The D-Gs submission sought amendments to a number of definitions and to the Strategic Direction on the *Natural and Historic Environment* (SD-02). Overall, my evidence generally supports the s42A Officer's Report recommendations in relation to these submission points.

Today, I will cover the points that have been raised at the hearing yesterday including the definition of Conservation Activity and Strategic Direction SD-02. In addition, I make some comments on the amendments to SD-02 proposed by Transpower in their evidence.

In regard to the definition of *Conservation Activity*, my original suggestion for a definition was intended to provide clarity to users of the plan. In my evidence, I accepted the Council Officers s42a report explanation that for this proposed plan a definition is not required given the way that the permitted activity rules for conservation activities list what is included. I take the point as further explained at the hearing by Ms Hollier that conservation activities will be managed by the specific zone rules and therefore will work in combination with the public access provisions. I also understand the point with regards to the wording used in my proposed definition of conservation activity and limit to only *indigenous vegetation and fauna and their habitats*. It is noted that within the relevant rules for conservation activities it provides for land, buildings and structures used for the '*..preservation, protection, restoration of indigenous species or habitats of indigenous fauna*' as well as other activities such as conservation education, observation or surveying, walking tracks etc which may not necessarily be for the purposes of indigenous vegetation and fauna and their habitat. Overall, I support the proposal that given the way the permitted activity provisions are set out, a definition is not required for this proposed plan.

As noted in Ms Rachael Pull's planning evidence on behalf of Ngāi Tahu yesterday, I have discussed the proposed amendments to SD-02 with Ms Pull. I support the amendments Ms Pull has tabled in her evidence at yesterday's hearing for SD-02.

I will now comment on the proposed amendments to SD-02 proposed in the planning evidence provided by Ms Ainsley McLeod on behalf of Transpower (para 43-45). I acknowledge that the NPS IB does not apply to the development, operation, maintenance or upgrade of National Grid assets and activities (or Renewable Energy Generation) and I agree that this is guided by the relevant provisions in the RMA, NPSET, NZCPS and CRPS. However, in my opinion I consider that the addition of the proposed clause (x) confuses the direction of SD-02. SD-02 sets out the overarching direction at a district wide level. It does not refer to how the National Grid or any other activities are to be managed in regard to effects on indigenous biodiversity as this is appropriately dealt with in the more specific objectives and policies set out in the Energy and Infrastructure and ECO chapter. Further SD-08 sets out the clear direction to enable *regionally significant infrastructure* (including the National Grid) while managing adverse effects appropriately. Again, specific guidance to how this is achieved is set out in the Energy and Infrastructure chapter.

I am happy to take any questions.

For reference:

Example of the Permitted activity wording for Conservation Activities (set out at GRUZ-R10):

Land, buildings and structures are used for:

- *preservation, protection, restoration, promulgation or enhancement of indigenous species or habitats of indigenous fauna; or*
- *pest control; or*
- *conservation education; or*
- *observation or surveying; or*
- *walking tracks, board walks, pedestrian bridge.*

SD-02: The natural and historic environment (as amended in Ms Pull's evidence dated 8 May 2024).

The District's natural and historic environment is managed so that:

1. *the health and wellbeings of the community are recognised as being linked to the natural environment;*
2. *an integrated management approach is adopted that recognises that all parts of the environment are interdependent (Ki uta ki tai);*

3. *the natural character of the coastal environment, wetlands and waterbodies is preserved and protected from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development;*
- 4 *the values of important landscapes and features are protected from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development;*
5. *indigenous biodiversity ~~and access to it~~, is maintained and enhanced and restored where necessary so that there is at least no overall loss;*
6. *significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna are identified and their values (including taoka and wāhi taoka) recognised, protected and where appropriate, enhanced ~~and used~~, and where ecological integrity is degraded, restored;*
- 7 *the life-supporting capacity of ecosystems and resources is safeguarded for future generations; and*
- 8 *the important contribution of historic heritage to the District's character and identity is recognised, and significant historic heritage and its values are protected from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development.*

Proposed Timaru District Plan explanation of the wording for taoka and wāhi taoka MW2.1.7:

MW2.1.7 Taoka/ wāhi taoka

All natural resources – water, air, land and indigenous biodiversity – are part of te ao tūroa and are treated as taoka. Taoka are treasures, things highly prized and important to Kāi Tahu, derived from the atua (gods or deities) and left by the tīpuna to provide and sustain life. All taoka are part of the cultural and tribal identity of an iwi.

Wāhi taoka are places that are treasured due to their high intrinsic values and the critical role they have in maintaining a balanced and robust ecosystem (such as wetlands, freshwater springs and nesting sites for birds) and/or their capacity to shape and sustain the quality of life and provide for the needs of present and future generations. Wāhi taoka include sites and resources such as mahika mātaītai and other sites for gathering food and cultural resources.

To ensure taoka are available for future generations, resource management decision-making processes need to recognise tikaka and have the conservation and sustainability of resources as their focus.

“ Mō tātou, a, mō kā uri a muri ake nei - For us and our children after us.