

Catherine Ongko

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Cc: Nikki McRobie
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Categories: Catherine

Kia ora Koutou

As requested.

lease see my responses to the questions raised by the panel.

Kind regards

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1. **Whether or not you accept the Definition of wilderness as put forward in the Section 42 A report? (section 4.2.43 through ...**

I would like to refer the Panel to Pg 102 of Te Tangi a Taurira, Ngāi Tahu Ki Murihiku Iwi Management Plan.

“The European concept of wilderness often infers that humans are separate from nature, and that human use of nature is inconsistent with the protection of wilderness. The cultures of Indigenous peoples, however, have evolved within these wild lands, based on hunting and gathering. Their life-styles and very existence have been dependent upon a sustained harvest of resources from the land without altering nature. Although conservation of wilderness in Fiordland today is a goal of both Ngāi Tahu and the Department of Conservation, increased understanding of culturally based differences in perceptions of wilderness and customary use is necessary if mutually acceptable conservation efforts and management of human activities are to succeed.

Ngāi Tahu ki Murihiku support the concept of wilderness. It is of utmost importance that we protect the natural character of Fiordland as a largely undeveloped land. This is why we have to be so careful about infrastructure and human activities. However, our concepts of protecting wilderness incorporate our role as kaitiaki, which includes use as part of protection and management. We want to restore the forest life of Fiordland, so that future generations of Ngāi Tahu can once again experience the relationship with these lands and waters as

expressed through mahinga kai. Our resource management revolves around sustainable use. Our vision is long term."

The Section 42A proposes to insert a definition of Wilderness into the Regional Coastal Plan;

Wilderness: Is an environment that is predominantly absent of people and human modification. The following conditions are generally experienced in Fiordland's wilderness environments:

- *an extremely high probability of experiencing remoteness;*
- *an extremely high probability of experiencing naturalness;*
- *minimal human presence;*
- *expansive landform scale;*
- *natural quiet;*
- *aesthetic appreciation; and*
- *conservation-related activity.*

As you will see from the reference of Ngāi Tahu Ki Murihiku Iwi Management plan and the definition provided in the section 42A report, there are differing world views. One being a Te Ao Māori world view and one being a western framed world view. The proposed definition does not take account of these diverging world views, in particular, provide inclusion of the Te Ao Māori world view.

I note that Lindis Consulting – *Wilderness and Remoteness Values of Fiordland Waters – 2022*, also picks up on these divergent world views, and notes other references to wilderness values that include indigenous peoples, and practices and the importance of indigenous, cultural and spiritual values (3.4.4 Cultural Values as a part of Wilderness).

Given the Te Ao Māori world view is not reflected adequately in the definition of Wilderness, there is some discomfort with the current wording. However I acknowledge and appreciate the approach the inclusion of the definition is trying to achieve.

Should recognition of Ngāi Tahu presence in the landscape be recognised and Ngāi Tahu values rights and interests be included in the definition, then there would be comfort with this approach to defining wilderness.

2. **Non-complying aspect of the Plan Change 5 expiring after 5 years, and reverting to discretionary.**

While I would really like to think this is achievable, should the Plan Review not have been undertaken in five years, this leaves us in a precarious position, and no better off than where we are now. Whilst I agree that the Coastal Plan Review should be completed within five years, from time to time set backs do occur. For example none of us had foreseen the COVID pandemic etc. For that reason, I don't feel comfortable with this plan change lapsing after 5 years. I think we should hope for the best, but also take a precautionary approach, and therefore not put a sunset date on this plan change – rather it would be superseded by the Coastal Plan Review provisions. *IF* you were after a date, 10 years from becoming operative at a minimum, being the lifetime of a plan – which should hopefully be enough time to accommodate the RMA reform transition.

3. **Answer to Minute 2 re: site visit**

TAMI Thank you for your invitation to respond to Minute 2 for Plan Change 5, outlining that during the hearing, Real NZ offered the Panel the opportunity to undertake a multi-night site visit aboard one of its vessels into Tāmatea/Dusky Sound and Pātea/Doubtful Sound in August to inform The Panel's decision making, and requesting our view. TAMI do not see the value in the Hearing Panel taking this offer up for the following reasons;

- a) Our understanding is that many operators are either away on survey or around Rakiura at this time, thus under representing the usual vessels in the Fiordland Area
- b) This timing of the year is traditionally the quietest time of the year for visitors, and therefore we feel the panel may get an impression that is under representative of the issue that has brought about the plan change.

- c) We are confident that the Panel are Good Decision Makers, accredited under the Making Good Decisions Course, that they understand the Plan change, and would have requested a site visit should they have felt like they required this.
- d) A site visit has the potential to further delay this plan change, that has already been a year in the making.

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