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Q1

Our Vision is: A district where biodiversity is protected and enhanced from the mountains to the sea (ki uta ki tai) by a community that values and cares for it. Think about what our district, thriving with biodiversity, could look like in 20 years' time. What do you see?

A community that recognises and values native species and natural areas. Where learning about local ecosystems becomes a natural part of school programmes, where any remaining native plants on the plains, particularly, are valued and protected. That we increase the area of native planting on the plains from the current figure of 0.5%. A district that protects vulnerable wetlands, braided rivers and high country lakes from vehicle damage, and the impact of agricultural development.

Q2

Do the goals and objectives of the strategy capture what you see as the key issues facing biodiversity in the district?

Yes,

Please explain::

The objectives are necessarily broad and it will be the details in taking actions to fulfil them that will need to be carefully considered. In this realm, the education and awareness of decision makers becomes critical. Working with other NGOs in this area, eg ECAN, and with volunteer groups is covered to a degree within ADBAG but the increasing formality of recent meetings does not encourage discussion and cooperation as was evident in earlier meetings. The meetings could be held more often. Increasing the number of staff working on biodiversity would be helpful. Selwyn District Council has 3 biodiversity officers. Objective 1.4. Where possible the Council's influence and its participation in the Zone Committee could be used to ameliorate the effects of farm development and the damage being inflicted on high country lakes, particularly, by fertiliser runoff and farm development. Objective 1.1D, undertake ecological assessment of Hinds Drains: A large amount of study in the drains has occurred with the University of Canterbury's CAREX project, involvement from Fish and Game as well as the Hinds Drains Working Committee formed by the Ashburton Zone Committee in 2014. There are other areas of the district that have had little study or input, such as the Foothills Streams, so I would like to see the removal of this specific objective or its broadening to include waterways in other areas.

Q3

What do you see as the top five priorities from the objectives mentioned in the strategy? Tick up to five objectives:

Identify and protect taoka (taonga) species and their habitat

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Properly manage human activity on biodiversity,

Increase indigenous vegetation cover,

Share knowledge on indigenous biodiversity with the community

,

Support community projects that protect and maintain indigenous biodiversity

Q4

We have identified 55 actions to reach the goals in the strategy. You can read about them in the Action Plan on pages 28 - 35 of the draft strategy. Is there any specific action or anything else Council should be doing to support biodiversity in the district? Note – Goals and objectives related to water quality for rivers, lakes and wetlands are regulated via the Canterbury Land and Water Regional Plan and therefore not part of this strategy.

Produce a booklet/webpage listing Ashburton's ecosystem types and the indigenous plants found there to be used by the public and council considering native plantings. REf. Lucas and Associates 'Otautahi Christchurch Indigenous Ecosystems and Planting Guides', where soil types, suitable plant species and vegetation characteristics etc are listed. Such information would be invaluable for this district.

Q5

Do you have any other comments or feedback?

I really appreciate the work being done by BDO Christian Chukwuka. Having such a well qualified and enthusiastic person working within ADC has made a huge difference to the amount and quality of work being done in this area by ADC.

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Q6

Your contact details

Name

Val Clemens

Organisation (if appropriate)

Forest & Bird

Q7

Yes - I wish to present in person

Do you wish to speak in support of your submission at the hearing?
