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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?

Native birds as the most obvious ecological indicator of good healthy thriving native habitats. We would have a much higher number of native birds and a much greater variety of species over a much greater area because the food sources and habitat for them would have grown in area and would be flourishing. Podocarps would be returned to the landscapes they formerly inhabited, providing enormous food sources for many native birds. We would see and hear tui, kereru, korimako, piwakawaka, riroriro, kingfisher, tomtit, rifleman, ruru, karearea, kahu, kakariki, white faced heron, and higher up, kea regularly and often. Seeing and hearing native frogs, lizards and insects would be another indicator of healthy, functioning native ecosystems. This would be most likely to be achieved by having 'islands' of decent sized (1-3ha minimum) bush blocks (with all layers from emergent and canopy to shrub and floor layers) wetland and dryland areas in 'stepping stone' formation within 2km radius' of each other, making a mosaic of native habitat from the mountains to the sea.

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::

However the implementation of these objectives will be the hard part. While many of the actions are quite good, they are still not very specific and some of the timeframes seem dubious – for example collating information on sites of cultural heritage values and sharing mahika kai concept and knowledge, both in the medium term, when this has already been part of the district and regional council agenda for the past 15 years through the CWMS and Zone Committee process. Surely this information is at our fingertips to start sharing immediately. So I have some doubts about the drive to get the goals and objectives implemented.

Q3

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

Support projects that aim to restore and interconnect indigenous biodiversity sites

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Sustain and improve school environmental programmes

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Council to take a leadership role in working together and encouraging conservation and enhancement

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Encourage the public to participate in conservation and celebration of biodiversity

,

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.

The Staveley Camp Forest Regeneration Project is protecting and restoring what is, essentially the 'Riccarton Bush of MidCanterbury'. Given that Staveley Camp is a publicly accessible community asset with a huge local history and is in desperate need of community engagement if it is to survive as a native remnant, this place could be adopted by the Council to lead the way with the strategy. By sending all council staff on practical experience & education the Council could achieve all strategy goals at once; collaboration; engaging and educating community; and celebrating the protection and restoration of one of the most precious remnants left on the Plains. The Staveley Camp and Forest could become a hub as the Council's Biodiversity Learning Centre.

Q5

Do you have any other comments or feedback?

There needs to be more funding in this region for the protection and restoration of native habitats. Obviously we have a tension between the land-based extractive industry which has given our region its immense wealth, and regenerating our native habitats and ecosystems.

We are living in an economic system that causes us to value the things we pay money for and often treat as if we don't value the things we don't pay for. Hence we have a situation in which the capital that is being used up in production is our natural capital (land, air, water) and the costs of degrading those are then 'externalised' onto future generations rather than being paid for as a cost of doing business. In this system, the most direct way to protect and restore native ecosystems or not have them destroyed or degraded in the first place would be to factor in the costs of degrading native ecosystems into the costs of doing business.

While the 'internalisation' of the costs of degrading the environment is not entirely possible and can also cause unintended consequences, it could be possible and more effective to set up a fund that stakeholders and the community could donate into to recognize and honour the fact that the impressive wealth of this region comes at the direct cost of our native ecosystems. Council could administer this fund to go towards the protection and regeneration of the mosaic of native habitats which would be emerging, many of which would be on the land of stakeholders who might have paid into the fund. This would be a 'Pay It Forward' approach, which is essentially the approach towards retaining our native species for future generations that would be good to foster in order to make it happen.

Other ways we could consider resourcing these goals could be through a local currency or rewards system. This could be designed, for example, so that businesses who recognize the costs on the environment and wish to help to mitigate those but are not able to take any practical measures can offer their products or services at a discounted rate to those who are actively engaged in ecosystem restoration.

Consider Regenerative Practitioner Series education for all Council staff so that all processes can be viewed through a living systems approach rather than linear thinking.

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Q6

Your contact details

Name

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Organisation (if appropriate)

Staveley Camp Forest

Q7

Yes - I wish to present in person

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