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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?

The key outcome of the 2023 draft Ashburton Biosecurity strategy was recognition that people respond best to change when they are involved in decision making. The failed central government (2017-23) directive approach of virtue signaling was abandoned and a fruitful dialogue commenced with practical environmentalists, putting result goals before ideology. ADC recognised the region's economy depended on the environment and the region's ability to care for the environment depended on the success of the economy. Learnings from the QEII Trust collaborative model became the key means of communicating with landowners particularly in the Foothills and High Country to secure a ten fold increase in covenanted privately held indigenous diversity areas. Exponential growth in lowland native vegetation plantings and resultant habitat corridors came from engagement with irrigation company shareholders and other landowners.

Ongoing scientific and evidence-based findings facilitated land management changes and resulted in the regions becoming a beacon for biodiversity practices in New Zealand.

Mutual respect and education were core strengths of the collaboration model. ADC initially assisted this by appointing a Council Ecologist and Biodiversity Adviser and added personnel expertise over the years, including issuing biodiversity credits as incentives to supportive landowners rather than direct financial support.

Q2

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

No,

Please explain::

Too much virtue signaling and weak attention to engaging with the key enablers to increasing the district's biodiversity - landowners!

Q3

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

Prevent further loss of threatened indigenous species via pest control

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Increase indigenous vegetation cover,

Interconnect biodiversity sites and threatened species habitats

,

Encourage ecotourism,

Encourage cooperation and collaboration among stakeholders

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.

Landowners are almost an after thought. They should be central to facilitating a successful strategy.

Q5

Do you have any other comments or feedback?

I am a practical environmentalist who has had negative experiences with faceless ideologs and regulators, yet has pressed on fencing and closing off from livestock substantial areas of montane scrubland, subalpine red tussock grassland, black beech and podocarp forests, and personally planting sizeable areas of native trees, shrubs and grasses on lowland areas. Current ADC regulations for Rural C land are not fit for purpose and need to be changed.

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Q6

Your contact details

Name

Graeme Harrison

Q7

Yes - I wish to present in person

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