

**BEFORE THE** Canterbury Regional Council  
independent hearing panel: David  
Sheppard (Chair), Raewyn  
Solomon and Rob van  
Voorthuysen

**IN THE MATTER OF** The Resource Management Act  
1991 and the Environment  
Canterbury (Temporary  
Commissioners and Improved  
Water Management) Act 2010

**AND**

**IN THE MATTER OF** Variation 2 (Section 13  
(Ashburton) of the proposed  
Canterbury Land and Water  
Regional Plan

**EVIDENCE OF IAN MACKENZIE FOR COMBINED CANTERBURY PROVINCES,  
FEDERATED FARMERS OF NEW ZEALAND**

Dated 15 May 2015

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Evidence statement from Ian Mackenzie: Hearing for Variation 2 (Ashburton) Canterbury Land and Water Regional Plan

Ian Mackenzie and family have been farming Akaunui, in Eiffelton, for four generations. Our arable operation consists of 400ha of predominantly heavy soils.

Akaunui was once part of Longbeach station and is reliant on the drainage work that John Grigg did in the 1800's— in now what is known as the Ashburton Hinds drainage district. The network of tile drains and open drains is designed to mitigate the effects of the high water table— in part created by artificial recharge— and is vital to allow us to farm and live in this district.

Akaunui has always been a mixed livestock cropping farm because of its good soils and since the late 1960's, irrigation. As market demands have changed and irrigation and on-farm infrastructure has been developed, we have moved to cropping all of the farm and incorporating the livestock around that cropping programme.

Irrigation was once entirely dependent on abstraction from drains but is now supplied by ground water and the Eiffelton irrigation scheme.

Our farming system is one of constant change. Our cropping philosophy is to grow one third wheat, one third grass seed and one third vegetable seed crops— but market demand and seasonal variations can change that mix substantially.

Our livestock policy relies on similar flexibility. In the last 20 years we have moved between wintering cows, to buying in cast for age ewes, to fattening beef, to lamb fattening. Numbers and classes of stock depend on the cropping regime and market opportunities.

Due to our deep and predominantly poorly-drained soils, our farming operation has minimal effect on ground water nitrate levels, and this is born out by the relatively low nitrates in our shallow bore.

The ability to adapt and change our farming system to market and climatic change is critical to our farm and family for not only maintaining a sustainable business but to also minimise our environmental externalities.

The effects of locking us in to baseline farming system numbers, the potential threat to close the Eiffelton irrigation scheme and the unconditional use of MAR are a combined and serious threat to our farm and family's future.

We hope that common sense will prevail so that a small amount of flexibility is built into the Plan, rather than being given no room to move, as in the Hurunui situation. Adapting to change has been the great strength of the Canterbury farming economy for generations, and acknowledging this in the Plan will enable the farming economy to continue, while still capping N losses at an environmentally useful and economically achievable level.