

The Kurow Pest Liason Committee wishes to make a submission on Environment Canterbury's 2015/16 Long Term Plan.

The Committee represents farmer landowners in the Otematata, Kurow and Hakataramea Valley areas on animal and weed pest issues.

Our submission is in relation to ECan's decision not to collect the current TB rate as its share of regional funding for the overall TB programme for the 2015/16 financial year.

An independent review is to be undertaken on funding the future TB programme nationally and it may well be that the local share contribution is taken up by other industry groups as it has long been a point of conjecture with Regional Councils.

However the results and implications of this review will not be apparent prior to the 2015/16 year and we respectfully ask ECan to continue with the current funding for this transitional 12 month period.

The amount OSPRI is seeking is around \$925000 to compliment an overall vector control programme in the Canterbury region of approximately \$7million.

Canterbury has seen a major reduction in the last 15 years, and no-one can deny the ongoing benefits to the region, of TB infected herds from 200 down to 4, all due to a dedicated vector control programme and ongoing support from landowners.

A reduction in funding at this stage would have serious implications for the programmes on going success with some operations having to be delayed or cancelled.

As far as South Canterbury and the Kurow area in particular we do not want to see any reduction in the current vector control programme as the results speak for themselves and we are quite happy to see the present targeted TB rate continue. Indeed if the full funding is received work will be intensified to a goal of proof of freedom that TB no longer exists in vector populations in the Hakataramea Valley and Hunter Hills areas, long term control programmes would finally come to an end allowing more money to be spent in other areas.

In closing a reduction in funding for the 2015/16 year will have a major slowdown on the Canterbury vector control programme which could see some of the gains made in infected herd reductions lost as has happened in the past when funding was reduced.

Continuation of the current local share funding from ECan for this transitional year 2015/16 is requested after which Regional Councils will no longer be involved in funding the TB programme.

EC - CHCH		
FILE REF: Comm/PLAN/1525/2		
DOCUMENT No.:		ACTION INFO
15 APR 2015		
51583		
Mike Boesler		

However as OSPRI withdraws possum control in some areas and the overall rollback in the TB vector control programme in coming years , ECan may have to look at biodiversity issues in keeping possum populations low as has happened in Banks Peninsula.

Thank you

Peter Reid

Chairperson

Kurow Pest Liason Committee

~~The Committee wishes to be heard in support of this submission.~~

The committee does not now need to be heard in support of this submission as its intent was made clear to Commissioners Tom Lambie and David Bedford at a recent Pest Liason Committee chairs meeting on 10/4/15.

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