

13 April 2015

Submission on Long Term Plan 2015-2025
Environment Canterbury
PO Box 345
Christchurch 8140



Consultation Document: Deciding Our Long Term Plan 2015-2025

Introduction

The TBfree Otago Committee appreciates the opportunity to submit on the Environment Canterbury Long Term Plan 2015-2025.

The TBfree committee operates as a volunteer stakeholder representative group for OSPRI/TBfree New Zealand. Our members represent the Otago dairy, beef and deer sectors, Federated Farmers and the Otago Regional Council. We work closely with the TBfree South Canterbury committee and many of our pest control boundaries border or overlap each region.

OSPRI/TBfree New Zealand has been the organisation responsible for implementing the National Pest Management Plan (NPMP), which aims to eradicate bovine tuberculosis (TB) from New Zealand.

Submission

The TBfree Otago committee believe commissioners and council staff should review its decision to cease funding for the TB Vector control for the 2015/16 year. We acknowledge a funding review has taken place and a different funding model will be in place for the 2016/17 year. However, as the contributions from each party are still being negotiated, the current situation with council indicating they will not collect on behalf of OSPRI New Zealand means the vector programme in Canterbury will be reduced. We believe this is not what farmers and rural ratepayers of Canterbury want to see and as boundary neighbours this is not something we want to see either.

There is high support for the TB scheme in rural and semi-rural areas, we know this by our own experience with the consultation of the Otago land levy where we have wide acceptance of the levy from not only farmers but also any rural ratepayer over four hectares, this is due to the reduction of TB Otago has seen and the biodiversity benefits a reduction in pests bring.

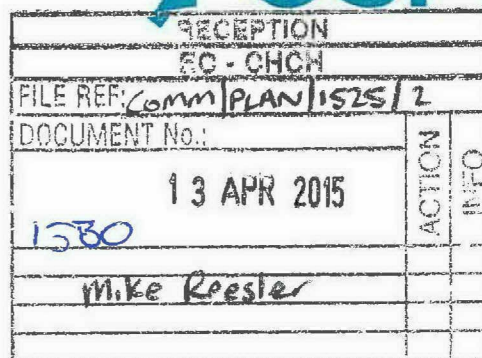
The joint private/public approach of the TB programme has been its strength and where everyone pays their share. The funding review still sees landowners as beneficiaries for the TB plan and has attempted to quantify the biodiversity benefits of the scheme and to that end, collection on behalf of ratepayers for the TB scheme by council for one further year is prudent and an effective and responsible use of rate payer's money.

We submit council should reconsider its position on funding for the TB control programme for the 2015/16 year.

We do not wish to be heard in support of this submission during council's Long Term Plan hearing process.

Ross Wilson

Chairman, Otago TBfree Committee



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Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission. This letter and attachment constitutes OSPRI's submission on funding of the TB Plan, a long-running and successful collaboration between multiple funding parties, including regional councils on behalf of landowners.

Our submission, at its heart, is very simple:

- the case for landowner funding of the TB Plan has never been stronger, based on the extensive funding review work conducted by a stakeholder group (including regional council representation);
- the only way the well-justified landowner funding share can be currently collected is through the council;
- funding of the TB Plan guarantees a very significant co-investment in the region by other funders;
- it is recognised that councils are unlikely to be the collection agency in future – consistent with the funding review recommendations, but a new approach cannot unfortunately apply until 1 July 2016 alongside implementation of a new TB Plan.

We are aware that some councils are concerned about whether or not other councils are funding, and whether or not OSPRI's approach to managing the programme in 2015/16 will be fair to all funders. We will be fair, and explain the approach in our submission.

The TBfree programme has enjoyed, and continues to enjoy, long-running support from councils. We appreciate that support and hope you can look positively on further funding support for 2015/16. We would like to be heard at your oral hearing, in support of our submission and look forward to discussing our request with you. Please contact Danny Templeman in the first instance regarding our submission

Stu Hutchings
Acting Chief Executive