

From: Richard Wild <rjwild123@gmail.com>
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Attachments: 26032018083249-0001.pdf

see attached feedback form on the ECan Long Term Plan 2018 - 2028

regards

Richard Wild
23 Strathean Ave
Avonhead Christchurch

Feedback form

Puka urupare

Environment Canterbury is the regional council for this magnificent region. We need your input to ensure our Long-Term Plan will deliver the outcomes the community wants.

The Long-Term Plan 2018-28 outlines the framework for the types of activities we will undertake from July 2018. It also details the measures that we have put against these activities, and the corresponding financial information, policies and strategies.

OFFICE USE ONLY

COMM/PLAN/1828/2

Feedback closes at 5pm on Monday 26 March, 2018.

You may send your feedback:

By mail (no stamp required): Freepost 1201, Environment Canterbury, PO Box 345, CHRISTCHURCH 8140.

Online: Use the online form provided on our website www.ecan.govt.nz/haveyoursay. Please follow the online instructions provided.

By email: mailroom@ecan.govt.nz. Ensure your full name and address is included.

Submission includes 11 pages (includes cover page)
rlw

Use this form to tell us what you think

By providing feedback you agree that Environment Canterbury may use, and may publish, that feedback, including your name and the contact details you provide.

Your name Richard Wild

Your organisation and role in it (if applicable) _____

Address 23 Strathean Ave Arvonhead
Christchurch Postcode 8042

Phone number 03-3585125 Mobile number _____

Email rlwild123@gmail

Signature rlwild Date 25/3/18

(If you wish to meet with Councillors to discuss your submission please also complete Q12.)

The work of Environment Canterbury is reported on under six portfolios as outlined in the draft Long-Term Plan document. Our website outlines many of the areas we work in, in more detail. On this form you are asked for feedback on the activity planned under each portfolio as well as on the entire plan and specifically on the Public Transport options. In the comments section under each portfolio, please tell us what you support/don't support about the planned activity, and if there is anything you would like to see more or less of.

Please view our short Consultation Document and full Long-Term Plan supplementary document on www.ecan.govt.nz.

1. Whole Plan

Support/Oppose

Please select one of the following: (please select one answer)

I generally agree with the activity proposed for the Long-Term Plan.

I generally disagree with the activity proposed for the Long-Term Plan.

Comments:

See attached word document. My comments focus on the role of Ecan in providing leadership across the region. Also comments focus on water rather than the other parts of the plan.

2. Public Transport Options

Public Transport is one of the programmes in the Transport and Urban Development portfolio. For the first year of the Long-Term Plan 2018-28 we are proposing changes to the Public Transport programme as outlined in the Consultation Document. (on page 14)

To make comment on the Public Transport proposed changes please complete the selection panel below.
To make comment on the the whole Transport and Urban Development portfolio, please go to Q7.

Options

Please review the options in the Consultation Document and indicate which option you support: (please select one answer)

Option 1 – A combination of routes, fares and (targeted) rates changes: small fare and rates increases, reduced Total Mobility subsidy and six routes discontinued.

Option 2 – As Option 1 but larger rates increase, no fare increase: larger (targeted) rates increase, no fare increase, reduced Total Mobility subsidy and six routes discontinued.

Option 3 – As Option 1 but larger fare increase, smaller (targeted) rates increase: minimal rates increase, larger fare increase, reduced Total Mobility subsidy and six routes discontinued.

Option 4 – none of the above. (Please provide comment/ideas for an alternative solution)

Comments:

No Comments.

3. Freshwater Management

See page 6 of the Consultation Document.

Support/Oppose

Please select one of the following: (please select one answer)

I generally agree with the activity proposed for Freshwater Management.

I generally disagree with the activity proposed for Freshwater Management.

Comments:

See comments in the attached document

4. Biodiversity and Biosecurity

See page 8 of the Consultation Document.

Support/Oppose

Please select one of the following: (please select one answer)

I generally agree with the activity proposed for Biodiversity and Biosecurity.

I generally disagree with the activity proposed for Biodiversity and Biosecurity.

Comments:

See comments in the attached document.

5. Hazards, Risk and Resilience

See page 10 of the Consultation Document.

Support/Oppose

Please select one of the following: (please select one answer)

I generally agree with the activity proposed for Hazards, Risk and Resilience.

I generally disagree with the activity proposed for Hazards, Risk and Resilience.

Comments:

No comments.

6. Air Quality

See page 12 of the Consultation Document.

Support/Oppose

Please select one of the following: (please select one answer)

I generally agree with the activity proposed for Air Quality.

I generally disagree with the activity proposed for Air Quality.

Comments:

No comments.

7. Transport and Urban Development

See page 13 of the Consultation Document.

Support/Oppose

Please select one of the following: (please select one answer)

I generally agree with the activity proposed for Transport and Urban Development.

I generally disagree with the activity proposed for Transport and Urban Development.

Comments:

No comments.

8. Regional Leadership

See page 5 of the Consultation Document.

Support/Oppose

Please select one of the following: (please select one answer)

I generally agree with the activity proposed for Regional Leadership.

I generally disagree with the activity proposed for Regional Leadership.

Comments:

See comments in the attached document

9. Revenue and Financing Policy

See page 16 of the Consultation Document.

Support/Oppose

Please select one of the following: (please select one answer)

I generally agree with the principles outlined in the Revenue and Financing Policy.

I generally disagree with principles outlined in the Revenue and Financing Policy.

Comments:

No comments.

10. Rates

See page 16 of the Consultation Document.

Support/Oppose

Please select one of the following: (please select one answer)

I support the proposed total rates revenue increase of 4.5% for 2018/19.

I do not support the proposed total rates revenue increase of 4.5% for 2018/19.

Comments:

No comments.

Environment Canterbury – Feedback on Long Term Plan 2018-28

This word document is an addendum to my feedback on the attached ECan feedback form.

Richard Wild

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Avonhead, Christchurch

Phone - 03-3585125

Email – rjwild123@gmail.com

Background

I acknowledge the challenges that ECan has, to meet the expectations and competing priorities of all the people in the Canterbury regions. I accept the need for a vibrant economy but don't accept that that has to, by definition be accompanied by environmental impacts and the slow long term degradation of our climate and our environment.

I am a veterinarian with a strong interest in animal health and welfare in the livestock production sector and a strong interest in the environmental impacts of the agricultural industries. I have had an involvement in governance and leadership in the New Zealand veterinary profession over the past 2 decades.

At the World Veterinary Association Congress in 2017 the WVA adopted the Veterinary Vision 2050 Declaration on the role of veterinarians in One Health and Ecohealth initiatives.

The Declaration defined "One Health" as the integrative effect of multiple disciplines working locally, nationally and regionally to attain optimal health for people, animals, and the environment. A broad inter sectoral and interdisciplinary approach is essential to develop effective solutions to One Health issues. The Declaration highlighted that optimal health of people, animals, and the environment cannot be secured without understanding the context of ecosystems that are interconnected by social, economic, biological and physical links.

Questions and comments on the Plan

The Plan defines the purpose of Ecan, and the Plan is to facilitate sustainable development so

- We can breathe the air, swim in the rivers, have productive use of the of the land , enjoy biodiversity, and the landscape
- Live, travel and move with ease to facilitate work, leisure and tourism
- Access to information we need to be resilient to change in the natural environment
- Shape the future of Canterbury leaving a legacy for generations to come.

Statutory Framework

I acknowledge that the role of Ecan is to some extent defined by legislation and central government policy, as well as by priorities and the aspirations of the community. In the plan the section on statutory framework says that a long term plan is a requirement of the Local Government Act 2002 and provides a statement of commitment to the community and clarity regarding what Ecan will deliver.

The plan assumes known trends relating to population change, weather and climate, and technological innovation that will have an increasing impact.

Leadership

The Plan talks about the role that Ecan plays in providing secretariat support for the Mayoral Forum, CEO forum, the corporate and Operations Forum. It also talks about its role as a partner with central government in regional growth programmes with central government policy shaped and influenced by Canterbury/regional perspectives.

What is the role of Ecan in providing regional leadership?

From my perspective as a Christchurch resident, Environment Canterbury has overseen a period of massive growth in the agri sector that has gone a long way to support the previous government's objective of doubling agri sector exports by 2025. Again as a simple Christchurch resident and ratepayer it would seem this massive growth has been built on the back of a loss of democracy with the removal of any on the Council/Board that did not support unfettered growth.

We have seen Canterbury change from a predominantly dry land sheep and arable agricultural economy to a dairy cow based economy. The landscape has changed dramatically with shelterbelts removed to make way for centre pivots, irrigation and dairy cow operations.

This change in the nature of the agri economy of Canterbury has certainly been good for the regional and national economy but what has been the downside?

The Plan states that "a strong agricultural economy comes at a price". Is that statement correct? Is it narrow minded thinking that has not taken into account a multidisciplinary approach? Or are the bleeding hearts, tree huggers and technocrats just being negative?

Finally we are seeing some semblance of democracy returning to the governance of Ecan and I hope that concepts that are identified in the One Health movement around the world, can be more to the fore in planning and development.

The recent change in central government would seem to have meant an acknowledgement of the impact of human activity on the environment, climate, biodiversity etc etc. This acknowledgement seemed to me to have a little recognition within the previous government.

Hopefully with support and encouragement from central government we will see Ecan reviewing its purpose "facilitating sustainable development for the Canterbury region".

I love that word “sustainable” it’s a trendy word that means bugger all without some starch behind the spin.

I would like to know what Ecan means by “sustainable”.

I would also like to know what “vision” Ecan has for Canterbury in 2028?

There is mention of breathing the air, swimming in the rivers, moving around, access to information and shaping the future of Canterbury leaving a legacy for generations to come. That all seems pretty uninspiring to me and should be a given.

The most important statement relates to “leaving a legacy for future generations”. Putting some meat around that statement would create something worth engaging the population on, to get some level of consensus on what we all want for the region and for New Zealand.

Freshwater

The plan states that freshwater is a strategic priority and a big challenge to meet competing priorities.

The Land and Water Regional Plan identifies the key measures as

- Environmental restoration
- Improved water quality
- Improved water use efficiency and land management
- Infrastructure for reliable water supply.

No doubt there is plenty of argument about the range of causes for the sorry state of New Zealand waterways in 2018. And yes over the past few years there has been some action to address the issues. In my humble opinion the dramatic increase in dairy cow numbers in Canterbury has been the major reason for the deterioration in water quality and water flow in the region. This is also linked to deterioration in the biodiversity of river systems, zoonotic episodes in human populations, impacts on recreational uses of the rivers eg fishing.

I note the progress in the development of Farm Environment Plans and progress with greater efficiency of water use, through better monitoring of water application and developments in the area of infrastructure, the progress with riparian planting to reduce the contamination of waterways from faecal contamination and phosphates. My understanding is that these mitigations do not solve the nitrate leaching issues and other strategies have to be adopted to address that problem.

I would ask what is Ecan doing about continuing to review the requirements of FEP’s to ensure that the specifications of the plans truly address all the environmental impacts from dairy cows and are meeting world best practice?

Note: The EU has put in place regulations relating the nitrate and phosphate contamination and this is impacting on the numbers in the Dutch dairy herd.

I note the statement in the plan that Ecan manages 24,000 consents related to amongst other things water takes and that Ecan cannot monitor compliance with all those consents.

I would ask what is Ecan policy on issuing consents and at what point does Ecan restrict or stop issuing consents?

I know in some areas of Canterbury water is over allocated and hence the drive for more and more irrigation schemes.

I note that central government has recently flagged a reluctance to support any further irrigation schemes.

The Plan does not appear to have any perspective on the growth of the dairy sector in Canterbury. A number of scientists would argue we are at or past "peak cow" and that the environmental impacts of this form of agricultural endeavour will continue to degrade the Canterbury environment even further and impact further on human health. Pastoral farming in particular dairy is one of the major contributors to green house gases from New Zealand as well all know.

I also note the Ecan policy regarding regulatory enforcement and the reluctance over many years to enforce environmental standards for freshwater. No doubt there was an element of input from the previous central government given the ongoing statements from the relevant Ministers that our rivers met acceptable international standards. I appreciate that education and raising awareness of standards is important in the early years of developing and implementing any regulatory standards but it would seem to me that Ecan has taken this path for too long and this policy has exacerbated the deterioration in water quality.

Hopefully with support from the new central government, the Ecan approach to enforcement has changed.

Maybe if there was a greater focus on compliance over previous decades the LWRP might not have to focus so heavily on environmental restoration and the attendant cost that is involved.

I would ask to what extent is environmental restoration costs being allocated to the user/abuser rather than the average ratepayer having to pick up the bill?

The Plan refers to an NZIER report that states that 88,000 ha of irrigated land will come on stream in the next 10 years. The plan flags that there will continue to be intensified land use which presumably means that a significant amount of the intensification will be on large dairy operations. At the same time the Plan notes that with climate change there will be increasing evaporation across the plains meaning that there will be an increasing need for efficient irrigation systems with more drought.

Does that not suggest that Ecan needs to take a broader view, not just accept more irrigation, more intensification, more climate change and that means we need more efficient irrigation?

Those statements flag to me that Ecan should be taking a more proactive approach to intensification and climate change than just - we need more efficient irrigation.

Animal health and welfare

As I tried to highlight in the background, section animal health and welfare is inextricably linked to environmental health. A number of animal health and welfare issues that New Zealand is starting to recognise relate to intensive land use and land changes. Two of those that are very relevant to Canterbury are shelter for animals from adverse weather, and the impacts on animals and the environment from break feeding and the environmental damage from mud and sediment impacts on waterways.

We have seen the removal of vast amounts of trees and shelter belts from Canterbury to make way for intensive dairy systems, with centre pivots that don't encourage shelter from trees and other forms of vegetation to protect animals from weather impacts.

Trees and shelter belts not only improve welfare outcomes on farm, they also help retain soil moisture, protect from soil loss and a raft of other benefits.

At present vast areas of Canterbury look like a "green desert" of grass, dairy parlours and centre pivots with little or no protection for cows from the summer norwester or the cold southerlies. I would argue we are seeing long term losses and damage to the farm environment and soils for the short term gain. At the same time the welfare of our production animals is being seriously affected not only at the cow level but also at the international level as the world becomes more sensitive to "sustainable" farming systems, and images of cows outdoors in all weathers with no protection from the elements.

Biodiversity and Biosecurity

You will be aware of the biosecurity issues related to *Mycoplasma bovis* that are having a major impact on cattle producers in Canterbury and the south island. Hopefully the Plan will be reviewed to consider the biosecurity impacts on farmers in the Canterbury region and acknowledge the role that Ecan can play in supporting national strategies.

It is good to see that the Plan acknowledges the terrible damage that has been done to biodiversity since human habitation of this area. Many people across the region are doing great work at a local level. I would like to see an increasing focus in the Plan, year on year, on proactive biodiversity strategies and leadership on biodiversity initiatives by Ecan.

Conclusion

The long term plan is a very comprehensive document and I have not had time to comment on all sections. I have focused on the three sections that I think are the most important ie leadership, water, biodiversity and biosecurity.

In my view the Plan is limited in its vision of Canterbury in 2028. "Shaping the future of Canterbury leaving a legacy for generations to come" is about as close a statement as the Plan gets to defining the role of Ecan and its vision.

"Facilitating sustainable development" is not what I would expect to be the extent of Ecan's purpose. The planet has major issues to address around climate change and the environment on which we all rely. The human population of the world continues to deplete the environment all around the world including New Zealand.

The statutory framework in which Ecan operates is acknowledged, however Council needs to show a lot more leadership than what is currently in the Plan.

The Canterbury economy is based largely on cows and tourists. We have all our eggs in a couple of baskets. Canterbury needs a much more diversified economy, to be robust and resilient to disruptions.

For example what would happen if New Zealand lost the dairy market to China? What would that do to the Canterbury economy?

Ecan has a major leadership role, along with central government and the Chambers of Commerce, to support other industries and other sectors and diversify the economy from reliance on agriculture and one or two major pastoral enterprises.

Ecan needs to take a leadership role on true sustainability, challenging the idea that "endless growth" is possible and to seriously support alternatives that are truly sustainable.

Climate change needs to be a priority of all Ecan workstreams and budget decisions. How we farm, heat our homes, manage our waste, travel all impact on climate.

Enforce regulations that are already there. Unless you have lived under a rock for the last decade everyone in Canterbury is aware of the issues around water. The time for education is over, blatant non compliance should be addressed and consequences more commensurate with the damage "user pays" approach.

I grew up in southern NSW, Australia on the Murrumbidgee river and am acutely aware of all the issues that have impacted the Murray/Darling basin over many decades as several regulatory authorities and several State governments grappled with the same issues that ECan is grappling with. I have seen the environmental damage from the overallocation of water and the acrimony between competing uses of water along a river system that cuts through three States. I have also seen the same issues play out in the central valley of California as intensive agriculture sucks the last drop of water out of the system.

When I moved to New Zealand in the early 1990's Canterbury had some of the most pure and unpolluted water supplies in the world. We are now resorting to chlorination of water supplies to keep the water safe to drink.

The south island of New Zealand is a unique and beautiful ecosystem but is in grave danger of going the same way as many other water systems in the world where greed and lack of effective management are putting at risk human, animal and environmental health. A true One Health issue for New Zealand to address.

ends

Richard Wild

 25/3/18