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Feedback on the Annual Plan from:

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Valerie Campbell

3rd April

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## Feedback Annual Plan 2022/3

1. I have long association with local planning and especially ECan's role in environmental management and protection, as member of the public and as a politician and recognise the problems this year's Plan presents to you.

### 2. Flood Mitigation:

It is critical that all aspects of **ECan's work move us towards better environmental outcomes and improved condition of bio-diversity in a region** that has become sadly depauperate. Therefore all the necessary **flood mitigation measures must incorporate improved bio-diversity outcomes**. Natives not willows was the old cry for strengthening river banks! At this stage I would like to see the co-ordination of a **War on Weeds in river-beds combined with the expansion of flood controls** such as - expanding river-ways to give back something of the old channels for excess water. I understand some of this work has begun and urge its continuance.

3. I know that there has been a push to reduce demands on the river flows in dry time there has been a process of **out-of-river storage**. Presumably they also have the potential to reduce flood effects.

(a) However, there are places where this has resulted in extensive and ugly piles of rubble that are significant barriers to man and beast and of no earthly use to native birds who may have once used that section of the river. **Any future down-drawing engineering works** should require restoration to a presentable landscape with weed control mandatory.

(b) Ecan staff I believe (Braids conference, 2021) have identified that that this practice of creaming the flood level highs increases the fines in the river braids and in the small tributaries. This **represents a serious decline in the quality of those environments and will lead to further decline of** their value to riverine birds, fish and insect communities. A recent survey of fisherman confirmed that they have noted an increase in fines in the rivers some had fished for over 30 years along with declines in the number and condition of salmon in Canterbury rivers and this needs to be monitored with possible modification of the practice. Reducing expansion of improvements in the flood-prone areas will also minimise the impact of floods from rivers throughout the catchments; even in the lower catchments along the coast.

### 4. Budget implications: flood reduction work can be engineered to also include bio-diversity gains, both will contribute to a reduction in Canterbury's carbon footprint.

I agree that rates targeted for flood mitigation should fall on those effected most but the inclusion of "green" outcomes would justify a portion of that coming from the general rate and from grants that might be gained for reducing CO<sub>2</sub>.

### 5. Fresh-water crises Facing ECan are the most significant issues in my opinion.

(a) A most pressing issue is the need to address the **Conservation Orders on the Rakia and Rangatata Rivers**. This would be an effective way to give effect to Te Mana Te Wai and demonstrate ECan's intent on improving its performance.

(b) ECan is still reaping the consequences of entrenched practice from the 1990's of granting **water-take consents for 35 years**, some of which are still running. These are largely the cause of the current reduced river flows. I trust that NO consents are now given of this duration apart for



structures such as wharves or bridges! However, careless consenting continues. I noted with horror the non-notification of the Kaitia Valley feed-lot By the CCC. I trust that ECan did not respond by consenting water and discharge consents.

7. Hand-in-hand with the rapid growth of intensive production has been the **increasing use of nitrogenous fertiliser**. This is compounded by the enormous output of urine from mega-dairy herds; problems that can only be fixed by marked reductions in the cows packed onto the land. The actual density of herds needs to be reduced. Regional Councils' support of cries for central government for a ban on artificial nitrogenous fertilisers would be almost cost-free and its ban would almost certainly necessitate reduction of herds.

8. **Reducing the use of nitrogenous fertilisers in the "High Country"** would be a likely way, to not only prevent the deterioration of such lakes, but should slow the **destruction of drylands vegetation regimes**, such have recently disappeared from the Upper Waimakariri Catchment. Once again carbon retaining natural herb lands have been replaced by less efficient green grass!

9. Monitoring and enforcement of protection measures needs to be instituted for the **protection of existing lakes and wetlands and encouraging steps to ensure their ongoing health**. I'm outraged to hear deterioration of the Ashburton Lakes for example

10. **Budget implications:** it has been shown that healthy Rivers and eco-systems sequester large amounts of carbon and so the general practice of enhancing the performance of natural areas will contribute to New Zealand's move towards being carbon neutral. **At present New Zealand is buying carbon off-sets**. Removal of artificial nitrogenous fertilisers and the probable, consequential drop in the number of cows, would reduce some of that need. Central government should be responsible for recognising the effect on **regional economies of their moving towards cleaner production**, encouraging greener alternatives. Therefore there should be a system whereby those changes **are granted carbon off-sets**.

11. **Similarly, farmers setting aside areas of SNA's should be able to claim similar offsets**. This might well quiet some of the voices currently fearful of the implications

12. **Buses: Option 2** is the option that I favour.

(a) People often don't hold things that come free in the highest esteem and therefore I think a reduction in fares as suggested in Option 2 will be appreciated (it might even be dropped to \$1.50 / fare)

(b) Secondly there will not be the great fall-off in patronage that would accompany the return to fares that would follow Option 1 after the 2 year trial. The lower level of cost puts less strain on the overall budget implications for the community

(c) **NB. Introduction of more frequent services, especially on the longer routes, will similarly encourage greater use of public transport**. The effect if that could be introduced simultaneously I would expect to be considerable.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to your Annual Plan. I wish to speak to this submission.