

**BEFORE THE COMMISSIONERS APPOINTED ON BEHALF
OF THE OTAGO REGIONAL COUNCIL**

UNDER The Resource Management Act 1991 (the **Act** or **RMA**)

IN THE MATTER of an original submission on the Proposed Regional Policy Statement for Otago 2021 (**PRPS**)

BETWEEN **OTAGO WATER RESOURCE USER GROUP**

Submitter FPI043

FEDERATED FARMERS NZ INC

Submitter FPI026 and FSFPI026

DAIRY NZ

Submitter FPI024 and FSFPI024

**BEEF + LAMB NEW ZEALAND LTD and DEER
INDUSTRY NEW ZEALAND**

Submitter FPI025 and FSFPI025

AND **OTAGO REGIONAL COUNCIL**

Local Authority

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE OF KATE SCOTT

4 SEPTEMBER 2023

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SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE OF KATE SCOTT

1. My name is Kate Scott, I am a resource management and farm environmental planner. I am also the founder and executive director of Landpro Limited. I refer you to my expertise and experience outlined in my evidence.¹
2. The purpose of my evidence is to set out the broad suite of regulatory changes that are in the pipeline and which are affecting the sector already, or that will do so within the life of the proposed RPS.
3. This evidence also provides a detailed overview of the convergence of issues that are at play, in particular the role out of Certified Freshwater Farm Plans (CFWFP's) and the Resource Management Freshwater Farm Plan Regulations 2023 (FFP), and their interconnectedness with the RPS and other lower order planning documents.
4. I note for clarity that whilst I am a planner, that I have not provided a full planning brief of evidence, however, have provided some context to support planning matters where they specifically relate to the wider issues including CFWFP's, visions and transitional provisions. I have reviewed the evidence of Ms Perkins for the submitters, and I agree with her conclusions and recommended changes, including updated changes to the Visions, Integrated Catchment Management and Transition Policies.
5. My initial summary of evidence presented on behalf of OWRUG, Federated Farmers and Dairy NZ dated 29 August 2023 is also presented on behalf of Beef + Lamb New Zealand Ltd and Deer Industry New Zealand.
6. I have not repeated the content of that initial summary of evidence, assuming it is taken as read. I have instead focussed on the additional matters of the definition of the food and fibre sector, the need for

¹ At [1]-[14].

diversity of land use, and the importance of an integrated catchment management approach.

Definition of Food & Fibre Sector

7. It is important that the RPS fully captures the diversity of rural land uses that occur within the Otago Region through an agreed definition. To date terms such as agriculture, primary production, food production and the food and fibre sector have all been used to describe what occurs within the rural sector within Otago.
8. These terms whilst used interchangeably in fact mean different things, including or excluding some specific sub sectors of the agriculture sector depending on which term is used.
9. OWRUG, Federated Farmers, Dairy NZ, Beef + Lamb New Zealand Ltd and Deer Industry New Zealand fundamentally support the use of the term **Food and Fibre Production** or **Food and Fibre Sector** as being the most encompassing definition of the primary sector.
10. The Food and Fibre Sector is typically recognised² as encompassing the following primary sector production industries.
 - Arable
 - Dairy
 - Forestry and Wood Processing
 - Horticulture (including Vegetables, Viticulture and Winemaking)
 - Pork, Poultry, Bees and Other
 - Red Meat and Wool (Sheep, Beef and Deer)
 - Seafood
 - Cross-Sector

² <https://www.workforceinsights.govt.nz/assets/Documents-and-reports/NZ-food-fibre-sector-workforce-NZIER-MPI-June-2022.pdf>

11. The Food and Fibre Sector is routinely defined as including the primary sector production industries (other than mining) and the related processing industries³.
12. This definition is primarily adopted by Central Government, including the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI), and is widely adopted by the primary sector (including industry good organisations) as being the most reflective of the broad range of primary production that occurs within New Zealand Agriculture.
13. The use of the term primary production can be problematic in that it can also be used to capture non-agricultural land uses such as mining and other raw materials extraction.
14. Food production on the other hand, whilst encompassing of some rural land uses such as horticulture and arable, by its nature can exclude viticulture, and fibre (wool) production, both of which are fundamental land uses within the Otago Region.
15. It is the culmination of these shortcomings of definition, and the diversity of land use that occurs within the Otago Region which means that in my view ***Food and Fibre Production*** or ***Food and Fibre Sector*** is the most appropriate way to define rural land use.
16. It may be appropriate to consider inserting a definition into the RPS to capture Food and Fibre Production, along the lines of;

Food and Fibre Production means the primary sector production industries (other than mining) including Arable, Dairy, Forestry and Wood Processing, Horticulture (including vegetables, viticulture and winemaking), Pork, Poultry, Bees, Red Meat and Wool (Sheep, Beef and Deer), Seafood and Cross-Sector and the related processing industries. This definition is intended to describe the suite of activities that occur throughout Otago from a rural land use perspective and is

³ Dalziel, Paul, Caroline Saunders and John Saunders (2018). *The New Zealand Food and Fibre Sector: A Situational Analysis*. Client report prepared for the Primary Sector Council. Lincoln University: Agribusiness and Economics Research Unit.

not intended to prioritise one primary sector production industry over another.

Implications of Definition of Food and Fibre Production/Sector

17. Further discussion between Ms Boyd, and Ms Perkins in relation to the visions and policies has occurred, as outlined by Ms Perkins. In support of these discussions, Ms Boyd has indicated that she would be open to utilising the term food and fibre production, however, Ms Boyd has raised some valid concerns in relation to the definition of food and fibre capturing forestry and wood production given the wide-ranging concerns that have been raised in relation to the feedback around the impacts of 'carbon farming' and production forestry in some parts of Otago.
18. On the one hand I agree with the concerns raised by Ms Boyd about capturing Forestry and Wood Production if the term Food and Fibre Production is used for defining rural land use in Otago. There is valid and real concern around the impacts of unfettered conversion of farm land to production forestry or for 'carbon farming' purposes, and the impacts that arise in terms of the environment, loss of productive land, and impacts on local communities.
19. However, it is important that we recognise that forestry also has an important role to play in terms of improving resilience to the effects of climate change, as well as meeting future de-carbonisation aspirations. The key consideration here, the often-quoted mantra 'right tree, right place'.
20. It is also important that we consider the need for land use diversification as we move to meet freshwater obligations set out under the NPSFW, of which forestry may play a part, alongside other food and fibre activities. To ensure that we can operate within limits, land use change will be necessary, and in my view, we are likely to see an increase in diversified land use within farms, and within communities to achieve these limits.

21. Excluding forestry from the definition of food and fibre production, may result in unintended consequences for rural communities to adjust land use practices, in the same way that defining what the rural sector does is only food production. This would provide a narrow definition that doesn't accurately reflect the wide range of land use options that occur throughout the region.
22. It is therefore my view, that despite the broad definition of Food and Fibre Production encompassing Forestry and Wood Production, that this definition should still be adopted on the basis that the 'where and how' of production forestry and land use change associated with a change of land use to forestry (including carbon farming) is best dealt with in the Land and Water Plan, in the same way that the effects of arable, or dairy or horticultural land use should also be managed through the Land and Water Plan.

Integrated Catchment Management

23. To successfully meet freshwater obligations into the future, it is essential that the RPS provides for clear transitional pathways and sets clear integrated objectives. A collective catchment approach is one such approach that provides integrated catchment management that is fit for purpose to meet the needs of the community and the needs of the environment⁴.
24. Across Otago there are already numerous Catchment Groups and Catchment Collectives that have formed for the purpose of trying to collectively solve environmental challenges within their communities⁵. These groups are varied in terms of their purpose and composition but have had some substantial successes on the ground in terms of projects and practice change. Some examples include the Thompson's Catchment Group within the Manuherikia which has recently completed a successful wetland development project to address declining water quality within the Thompson's Catchment.

⁴ At [43-45].

⁵ At [21-24].

25. Another example is the work that Wai Wanaka have completed in terms of a community led Integrated Catchment Management Plan approach, whereby the community collectively identified actions to maintain pristine water quality within the Upper Clutha Lakes Catchment, spanning urban development, tourism and rural land use, resulting in clear actions to support the goals of the group to achieve good water quality outcomes.
26. A similar approach is also being adopted by the ORC for the Catlins Integrated Catchment Management Project, which seeks to support catchment groups with integrated catchment action planning, and the roll out of Catchment Action Plans in accordance with the NPSFM.
27. The RPS should in my view provide clear policy direction on the adoption of Integrated Catchment Management approaches, recognising the role that existing catchment groups and communities can play to achieve freshwater outcomes.
28. It also links to the requirements of CFWFP's to give effect to Catchment Context, Challenges and Values⁶, such that CFWFP's will demonstrate what actions food and fibre producers are taking behind the farm gate to achieve agreed catchment outcomes. This is where Integrated Catchment Management provides for a holistic and joined up approach across the suite of regulated requirements.
29. The FFP Regulations require a farm operator to have regard to catchment context, challenges and values, which is set out in Part 1 Regulation 4 as meaning;

In these regulations, unless the context otherwise requires, catchment context challenges and values includes the following information (without limitation) in relation to a local area:

- (a) *Existing information on landforms, soil data, climate data, freshwater data, freshwater bodies, contaminants, sites that are*

⁶ At [19-20 Summary Evidence 29 August 2023].

significant to the community, and significant species or ecosystems:

- (b) *Identified cultural matters of importance to tangata whenua, including-*
 - (i) *The cultural significance of the local area; and*
 - (ii) *The traditional names of freshwater bodies in the local area; and*
 - (iii) *Sites and species in the local area that are significant to tangata whenua:*
 - (c) *Any objectives, policies, and rules relevant to the management of freshwater or freshwater ecosystems in policy statements or the regional plan:*
 - (d) *Any relevant freshwater matters in planning documents that are recognised by iwi authorities and lodged with regional council:*
 - (e) *The National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management and any action plans made by the regional council:*
 - (f) *Any secondary legislation made under the Act that is relevant to the management of freshwater or freshwater ecosystems (other than secondary legislation made under Part 9A of the Act).⁷*
30. Part 1 Regulation 4(e) specifically refers to any action plans made in accordance with the NPSFM. The proposed additional process policies as detailed by Ms Perkins, including *LF-WAI-P3A – Integrated Catchment Management* directly connect the concept of integrated catchment management to Certified Freshwater Farm Plans which are intended to help deliver outcomes in relation to catchment context, challenges and values.

How do we achieve good outcomes?

⁷ At [41].

31. This can be achieved through clear visions, priorities and values and by providing for a joined up holistic and transitional pathway to implement and adopt efficient change on the ground.⁸ Moving forward certified freshwater farm plans will be a key strategy in enabling and delivering Te Mana o te Wai.⁹
32. Regulations and their transitional timeframes must recognise that change takes time to implement and because farms are made up of interconnected biological processes changes may not show immediate results.¹⁰
33. Challenges for farmers need to be in considered in a holistic manner as a disjointed approach will have widespread effects on environment, economy, and community and give rise to a suite of unintended consequences.¹¹
34. The role of non-regulatory methods, and catchment groups into the future needs to be directed and secured through the RPS to provide ongoing opportunity for rural communities to meet the needs of their communities and their environments.¹²
35. Catchment Groups have a role to play to translate local objectives that are more meaningful to landowners, as well as recognising that freshwater policy could be used to better incentivise collective management.¹³
36. We need clear transitional pathways, to set clear integrated objectives and to avoid duplication.¹⁴
37. In my opinion the suite of process policies proposed by Ms Perkins (*LF-VM-P6A – Transitions over Time, LF-WAI-P3A- Integrated Catchment Management, LF-FW-P7B -Recognise existing regulatory*

⁸ At [191].

⁹ At [95].

¹⁰ At [36].

¹¹ At [143].

¹² At [177].

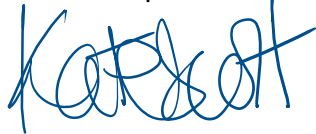
¹³ At [31-35].

¹⁴ At [43].

and non-regulatory measures when managing land and freshwater)
help to address each of the matters noted above.

38. **I would be happy to answer any of the Panel's questions.**

Dated 4 September 2023

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kate Scott', with a stylized, cursive script.

Kate Scott