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16 October 2023

Hearing Evidence – proposed TTPP
C/o West Coast Regional Council
P O Box 66
Greymouth 7840

Tayla.mehrtens@wrc.govt.nz

Dear Sir/Madam

WCRC evidence for TTPP Hearing – Strategic Direction chapter

The West Coast Regional Council (the Council) does not wish to appear before the proposed TTPP Hearing Panel on the Strategic Direction chapter. However, we wish to submit brief written evidence.

The Council's evidence is attached.

Our contact details for service are:

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We would be grateful for acknowledgement of receipt of our written evidence.

Yours faithfully

Fiona Thomson
Planning and Science Manager

West Coast Regional Council Written Evidence on TTPP Strategic Direction chapter, Agricultural Objective O1

Background

The proposed Te Tai o Poutini Plan (TTPP) Strategic Direction chapter's Agriculture Objective AG - O1 reads:

"To maintain the productive value of versatile soils and agricultural land for current and future agricultural and horticultural uses."

The West Coast Regional Council (WCRC or the Council) made a further submission point (FS136.009) supporting the Horticulture New Zealand (HNZ) submission point (S486.008), to amend the Strategic Direction chapter's Agriculture Objective AG - O1 to read:

"The productive value of highly productive land and agricultural land is maintained for current and future rural production activities."

Issue

The WCRC wishes to clarify that the intent of the WCRC further submission was not to support the whole of HNZ's amendment, but to support removing the term "versatile soils" from Objective AG - O1.

An error occurred in the Council's further submission point, it should be "support in part", not "support", as we only support the part of the HNZ amendment which removes the term "versatile soils".

The section 42A Report recommendation is to reject HNZ's amendment, and Council assumes our further submission point FS136.009 is also rejected. This means that the term "versatile soils" could remain in Objective AG – O1.

The Council still considers that "versatile soils" should be removed from Objective Ag – O1, if AG – O1 is intended to give effect to the National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land (NPS). This term is not used in the NPS, and it could create uncertainty and confusion with applying the Objective in a consent process, if the term is retained in AG – O1.

We note that a related s42A recommendation is to accept changing the name of the "Highly Productive Land Precinct", to the "Rural Production Precinct", as the former name is confusing and does not relate to the NPS.

Decision sought

If the intent of AG – O1 is to apply to both land with highly productive soils, and agricultural land, Council suggests this be made clearer in AG – O1:

"To maintain the productive value of ~~versatile~~ highly productive soils and agricultural land for current and future agricultural and horticultural uses."

This ends our evidence.