



SUBMISSION ON OTAGO REGIONAL COUNCIL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY

TO: Otago Regional Council
Private Bag 1954
Dunedin 9054

Name of submitter: Shaping Our Future Inc

This is a submission on the Otago Regional Council ("the Council") Biodiversity Strategy and applies to the Queenstown Lakes District.

Shaping our Future Inc was founded in 2011 by a group of leading Queenstown Lakes residents. Our Board and Taskforce members are volunteers working towards achieving our 2011 created long term community vision of *"Spectacular environments, enterprising people, exceptional solutions"*

We aim to give every person in the community a voice in shaping the future of our district for future generations, not just our children, but grandchildren and beyond. We are independent and apolitical with a process not constrained by single interest groups.

The Shaping our Future process includes public forums and online engagement, the formation of a volunteer taskforce to refine and establish a vision, goals and objectives within a strategic report that is then taken back to the public for ratification prior to being implemented.

Applications and Reference (engagement numbers in brackets):

1. Shaping our Future Upper Clutha Conservation Report 2015 (80)
2. Shaping our Future Water Forums 2018 (in progress) (200)

The Upper Clutha Conservation Report included a section on Biodiversity in the Upper Clutha supporting collaboration, cohesion and a district wide approach to biodiversity. The key recommendations included:

- **Regional and District Biodiversity Strategies will be operative within 3 years.** The District Strategy will give effect to the regional strategy and the National Biodiversity Strategy but will have district-specific objectives. The district strategy will deliver objectives that are tangible and measurable on an annual plan basis
- **A District Plan that is well aligned with and promotes the objectives of other statutory tools.** - water & air plans (6a water quality, 6b town water), the Regional Pest Management Strategy, the Otago Conservation Management Strategy (DOC) Ngai Tahu (regional plan) 2025. Such a district plan would align current plans and fill in the gaps. The ORC Regional Policy Statement will be instrumental ensuring this happens within the next 18 months.
- **QLDC policy and environmental management gives affect to the district biodiversity strategy.** Individual plans eg reserves management plans will all link into the wider strategy within 5 years.
- **ORC and QLDC to be leaders in conservation management by example on the water and land they manage.** In 10 years time, conservation is integrated into all aspects of local and regional government and the community is fully engaged in this process.

Further details on the biodiversity section of the Upper Clutha report is available online at www.shapingourfuture.org.nz

In April 2018 Shaping our Future consulted with over 200 residents and 800 primary and secondary school children on the current challenges, values, goals and objectives for freshwater in the Queenstown Lakes District. Consultation was through two public forums (Queenstown and Wanaka), online and direct with schools in the district.

Please note the information provided below is the raw data from our forum, volunteer taskforces will be working through the next six months to refine and define the information and recommendations. The following is a summary of the information received as it relates to our waterways and biodiversity:

Key Values – respondents identified the following key values and measures for the future of freshwater (full results available at www.shapingourfuture.org.nz).

Ecology

Resilient, healthy waterways that support biodiversity – some measures might include:

- No algae blooms
- Return of birdsong, habitat restoration (Riparian), sustains a healthy and diverse ecosystem.
- Wetland extent returned to 80% of original
- Rivers kept close to natural hydrology % MALF and variability
- Solve biosecurity issues e.g. Lake Snow, Didymo
- All lakes to have a trophic level 2 or less & to exceed MFE National Objective Framework

Strategic Management

- Collaboration to manage water supply – our rivers, reservoirs, biodiversity.

Research and Monitoring

Continuous and effective monitoring of freshwater quality and quantity including:

- Minimum flows
- Contamination – chemicals, run off
- Scientifically measurable
- Identify trends and warning signs
- Continuous research – biological markers and indicators
- Action from monitoring – communication, remediation, research

Summary:

- Shaping our Future supports the development of a comprehensive biodiversity plan for the Queenstown Lakes District with a focus on collaboration, research and monitoring, communication and community input.
- Support for continued research, monitoring and efforts to address and reduce the impact of introduced species on our environment eg Lake snow, causes of algae blooms
- Support work to improve our freshwater biodiversity and ecosystems.

Shaping Our Future

Alastair Porter, Chair, Shaping our Future

Contact: executive@shapingourfuture.org.nz or 021 222 1231

Date: 09/05/2018

