

## Submission for Wildlife Act 1975

I was shocked to read this Act had not been revisited in 45 years. But when you witness the destruction of our natural habitat, it makes sense. Protections for nature are inadequate to prevent ecosystem collapse. And here we are at a precipice. This Act has failed us and future life.

I have read numerous recommendations that I encourage the panel to heed, including –

1. Redefining feral species, such as deer and removing hunting from the Act
2. Including all life in necessary protections, even invertebrates
3. Ending logging in native forests now (not in 2030)
4. Ending the deliberate killing of native wildlife
5. Increasing protections for remaining native habitat
6. Increasing penalties for harming wildlife
7. Prescribing duties for landowners to protect wildlife (such as protecting waterways, creating wildlife corridors etc.).
8. Recognising the sentience of all wildlife, e.g. in 2017, the Wanganui River in Aotearoa was granted the status of a person, and thus iwi could push for a greater conservation effort.
9. Following First Nations protocol and recommendations

For too long, we have put ourselves on a pedestal as ‘managers’ of ‘the environment’, using it as a resource that can be plundered until extinction. Thankfully, this colonial, capitalist regime is coming to an end.

The only way to move forward is walking with First Nations people, as original caretakers of this land. We need a big dose of humility, real treaties, land returned and reparations. If this Act becomes just another colonial document for pretending to care about country, it will fail again.

Our oceans are dying, our forests are burning and our rivers are drying up. The new Act needs to reflect the urgency of our situation and put in place robust and foresighted protections for all non-human life.

Kind Regards,

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