



National Council of Women of New Zealand

Te Kaunihera
Wahine O Aotearoa

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Submission on the 1080 Reassessment

INTRODUCTION

The National Council of Women of New Zealand (NCWNZ) is an umbrella organisation representing 41 nationally organised societies and has 33 Branches throughout the country. The Council's function is to serve women, the family and the community through research, study, discussion and action. This submission is written from responses from 17 Branches and 1 nationally organised society.

NCWNZ has policy dating back to 1959 expressing its concern regarding the conservation of indigenous forest and has made submissions in recent years on pest management and documents such as the Biodiversity Strategy and review of the National Parks Act at the end of 2003. This present submission continues the long history of interest which NCWNZ members have taken in conservation matters.

GENERAL COMMENT

- 1) **Do you support the use of 1080 to control bovine tuberculosis?**
- 2) **Do you support the use of 1080 to conserve New Zealand's native forests, plants and animals?**

Of the responses from members, 12 were in favour of 1080 use, 3 were opposed and 1 response was maybe. Those for were in favour in both the above circumstances; likewise those against were opposed in both circumstances.

Give reasons for your answer.

- 1) To control bovine TB.

- it can be used in places that people are unable to access, and can be dropped from the air
- trapping does not always work
- it is cheap and effective
- alternative poisons are more toxic in some cases such as cyanide, and new alternative poisons are less well researched
- there are strict guidelines for its use
- it does not seriously endanger birds and other wildlife

Against: paying a bounty could provide useful work for the unemployed

- 2) to conserve New Zealand's forests.

- more birds are killed by cats, rats, stoats and possums as by 1080
- it is very good at killing possums without seriously endangering birds and other wildlife
- there are no natural predators of possums in New Zealand
- birds flourish in areas where a successful campaign has been waged
- it is keeping kiwi alive and regenerating the forest.

New Zealand's bush is fast losing its biodiversity and we have little option but to hold this loss at bay with the current tools available. 1080 not only kills possums, but rats also giving birds a window of opportunity to breed without predation. When cost, risk and benefit is assessed, no other known method of control gives the forest and wildlife a better chance.



- 3) If you do not support the use of 1080, how could its use be modified to make it more acceptable to you?
- operators may take shortcuts so there should be stringent checking of operators to ensure compliance with guidelines
 - use of global positioning in all aerial drops to ensure even distribution of baits and that they do not enter waterways
 - construction of baits to reduce fine dust and shavings
 - choice of baits to promote rapid decomposition
 - comprehensive warnings for stock and dog control to avoid exposure

Do you have any other comments about the use of 1080?

Members commented that secondary poisoning had conservation advantages in reducing the populations of rats, stoats and other pests. While most members would include deer in the list of pests there was recognition that for hunters there may be risks in the consumption of poisoned venison and a reduction in deer populations for hunting.

The development of alternative methods of possum control was raised by members and this took two approaches, one in the development of other methods of killing the animals and the other through reproductive intervention. Research currently being undertaken shows that this second method is most likely to involve the use of a genetically modified organism (GMO). Given the public suspicion of GMOs the debate about possum control should be widened to include this aspect so that people are informed about alternatives well before application is made for field trials or release.

NCWNZ is pleased to have the opportunity to present members' contributions to the 1080 debate. Overall there was support for the continued use of the poison as the best tool for the task, especially in mountainous and inaccessible areas of New Zealand. It is recognised that there are conservation gains through reducing the populations of both the target species and the secondary poisoning, and that overall New Zealand's forests and wildlife benefit from its use.

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National President

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Convener, Environment Standing Committee