

10 October 2019

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SURVEY AND SPATIAL NEW ZEALAND SUBMISSION ON VALUING HIGHLY PRODUCTIVE LAND

Who are we?

Survey and Spatial New Zealand (S+SNZ, the trading name of the New Zealand Institute of Surveyors) represents surveyors and spatial professionals. We are a stakeholder across a wide range of government policy areas and the sector including housing development, land subdivision, construction, infrastructure, spatial information and resource management. Our members are involved in each stage of rural and urban development and infrastructure projects. Consequently, they are the lead professionals enabling connections between the earth sciences, engineering and applied geography.

What are our key points on the Discussion Document?

Our submission is high level and brief. It also includes comments on the inter-relationship between National Policy Statements that have been the subject of recent public consultation or already exist.

- 1 S+SNZ considers that a National Policy Statement is the appropriate vehicle to address the lack of clarity on how highly productive land should be managed. A number of National Policy Statements have been proposed to help resolve problems in areas such as urban development and indigenous biodiversity, and add to the number of those already existing on a variety of environmental issues. A National Policy Statement on Valuing Highly Productive Land would be compatible and further that consistent approach.

The Discussion Document had other options for solving the problem, including National Environmental Standards. We do not see such standards as being incompatible with a National Policy Statement. Rather, the development and establishment of those standards, where required, would fit within the wider framework of complementary environmental management instruments.

- 2 It is critical that all National Policy Statements form an integrated suite of documents.
- 3 With the increasing number of National Policy Statements covering different facets of the environment, those working with National Policy Statements including landowners,

professional advisors, consultants as well as decision-makers will need to consider interactions between National Policy Statements. For example, between those proposed for urban development and valuing highly productive land, or between those on highly productive land and freshwater management etc. This will inevitably involve trade-offs. These are expected to increase in number and complexity as the number of National Policy Statements increases.

It is, therefore, critically important that a uniform trade-off process or clear weighting between National Policy Statements be developed if we are to achieve integrated management of natural and physical resources under the Resource Management Act. It must be applied uniformly by decision-makers and be efficient, robust and transparent. Otherwise, progress to achieving the outcomes sought is likely to be delayed through litigation between vested interests each operating in a siloed manner and relying on a particular National Policy Statement.



Mark Dyer
Chief Executive