

Otago Regional Council

Proposed Otago Regional Policy Statement 2021

(excluding parts determined to be a freshwater planning instrument)

Directions for expert caucusing regarding Appendix 2

[Minute 9]

1. Counsel for Otago Regional Council, Mr A J Logan has raised with the Hearing Panel the suggestion of expert witness caucusing to be arranged by ORC in relation to Appendix 2 (Significant Criteria for Indigenous Biodiversity) of the Proposed Otago Regional Policy Statement.
2. The purpose of the caucusing is to seek to achieve agreement between the various experts on matters that are essentially of a technical ecological nature.
3. The Panel is of the view that much hearing and deliberation time should be able to be saved by such a co-ordinated approach by experts seeking an agreed conclusion.
4. The Panel therefore accepts the offer made by Otago Regional Council to conduct such a caucusing for that purpose. There is an obvious urgency given that the relevant hearing of the ECO Chapter where Appendix 2 will have significance will commence on Monday 17 April.
5. The Panel also agrees with Mr Logan's suggestion that the caucusing results must be available to submitters at least 5 working days before 17 April. Allowing for Otago Anniversary Day on 11 April and Good Friday and Easter Monday that will require a formal caucusing report by the experts involved by 5pm on Thursday 4 April.
6. The Panel directs that the ecological experts involved in the caucusing report areas of agreement. Where there are areas of disagreement the Panel requires succinct individual reasons for their position with reference to the relevant parts of their evidence.
7. The experts to be involved or provided opportunity to be involved in the caucusing include:
 - a. Those expert ecological witnesses who are listed to be giving evidence on Appendix 2 at the ECO Chapter hearing;
 - b. Any other ecological expert who assisted any submitter who made submissions on Appendix 2.

provided that it is incumbent on any expert described in para 7(b) above who wishes to be involved in the caucusing to contact the Hearings' Administrator in writing or by email seeking involvement within 3 working days of this Minute being posted on the Hearings website.

Dated 3 March 2023

Ron Crosby

Panel Chair