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Media Release

EDS welcomes Māori Party and United Future opposition to RMA reforms

The Environmental Defence Society welcomes today's announcement that the Māori Party and United Future will not vote in support of the present RMA reform proposals.

"We have previously expressed our serious concern that the proposed changes will lower environmental standards," said EDS Policy Director Raewyn Peart.

"The validity of our concern was confirmed by legal advice we received from DLA Phillips Fox. It has now been further supported by a comprehensive analysis undertaken by Sir Geoffrey Palmer and released by Fish & Game NZ today.

"We are very pleased to see that the Māori Party and United Future have now reached the same conclusion and will not be supporting the amendments.

"The proposed changes to Part 2 of the Act go to its very heart. They threaten those aspects of the environment which are very dear to New Zealanders – our outstanding landscapes, our healthy waterways and our native species.

"The changes would also create considerable legal uncertainty whilst the meaning and application of new provisions are clarified by the courts. This will unnecessarily increase costs for all parties.

"There are a number of improvements to the Act proposed by Government that are broadly acceptable such as creating templates, common definitions and new timelines for resource consents. These could sensibly form the basis of the reform package going forward.

"But the proposed changes to Part 2 are simply unacceptable, and should be excluded from any Bill introduced into Parliament," Ms Peart concluded.