

22 May 2015



Media Release: EDS celebrates International Day for Biological Diversity

Today, May 22nd, is the United Nations International Day for Biological Diversity. It is a day to note that we need to do much better in managing our relationship with New Zealand's unique flora and fauna.

"EDS is at the first stage of a major campaign to turn around the alarming and continuing decline in the state of New Zealand's biodiversity," said EDS Chairman Gary Taylor.

"The foundation for this effort is Dr Marie Brown's new book *Vanishing Nature*. This demonstrated that the decline of our precious natural heritage is of great concern to all New Zealanders, and the solutions lie both in improving existing methods and in new and more strategic approaches to environmental management.

"Sales of the book have exceeded our expectations and we are planning a reprint. This is recognition of the strong interest in what is the first comprehensive analysis of both the state of our biodiversity and how well we are managing it. The positive reception for *Vanishing Nature* has been heartening and demonstrates that kiwis are keenly interested and willing to engage to turn things around.

"Lead author Dr Marie Brown is hard at work on the next phase of thinking – a project focussed on better managing the interface of biodiversity and development. The Pathways project will look at operationalising the recommendations from the book.

"Fittingly, the theme for IBD in 2015 is Biodiversity for Sustainable Development.

"Central to our biodiversity focus later this year, is our 2015 EDS Conference *Wild Things: addressing terrestrial, freshwater and marine biodiversity loss*. This will bring together some of the best thinkers in the world for two days of solutions-focused dialogue. It will be a national conversation that will seek a step-change in the way New Zealanders interact with nature – a much more positive and symbiotic relationship than we have experienced during our short history to date.

"We are currently seeking partners including those from the business sector willing to support this important event and engage in a constructive dialogue with us.

"As Dr Brown says in her book, "biodiversity loss is not inevitable, it is a choice. A future of declining natural heritage and loss of some of the world's most iconic species and landscapes is simply not acceptable."

"EDS is determined to provide thought leadership that can break us out of the cycle of loss once and for all," said Mr Taylor.

More: Gary Taylor (09) 810 9594, Dr Marie Brown (021) 808 764