

27 September 2015



**Media release: EDS welcomes new Environmental Reporting Act 2015**

EDS welcomes the passing in Parliament on Thursday of the Environmental Reporting Act 2015. National environmental reporting will now be mandatory in New Zealand, catching us up to the rest of the OECD.

“Earlier this year, EDS released our landmark book *Vanishing Nature: facing New Zealand’s biodiversity crisis*. One of the key tactical recommendations we made in that book was the introduction of mandatory national-level reporting on the state of biodiversity,” says Dr Marie Brown, Senior Policy Analyst for EDS.

“We linked the failure to fairly and accurately demonstrate the state of the environment to low public concern for our ailing natural world. People simply don’t know how bad things are – and it’s hard to care about things you don’t know about.

EDS will be watching the source of the data reported upon closely, how it has been analysed and presented and whether identified gaps in availability and quality are addressed over time.

“While we are pleased to note the Act is now in place and the reporting regime is underway, we have some concerns about the availability and quality of underlying data, choice of indicators and analysis.

“Careful selection of indicators is required and analysis should be conducted over an appropriate timeframe. Obfuscation of environmental trends has been a criticism of past environmental reporting, and it is vital that this new statutory regime has much more integrity.

“Notwithstanding our caveats, EDS welcomes this important new Act. We look forward to seeing the reporting regime cycle carried out and engaging constructively with the Ministry for the Environment on refining the programme over time,” says Dr Brown.