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Media Release

Axe hanging over *Our Changing World*

EDS is extremely concerned that Radio New Zealand's iconic and award winning program *Our Changing World* is facing the cost-cutting axe.

"RNZ CEO Paul Thompson has confirmed to us that a decision was taken last week to review spoken features and drama in order to reduce costs and staffing," said EDS CEO Gary Taylor.

"This suite of programs includes *Our Changing World* which is the pre-eminent communicator of conservation, science and medical research journalism to the New Zealand public.

"*Our Changing World* has achieved widespread recognition for its excellence and objectivity in bringing the world of natural things to life. Its staff are superb communicators and the program contributes positively to RNZ's reputation as a serious media outlet.

"We would counsel Mr Thompson to avoid "doing a Weldon" and implement careless cuts and lose talent. RNZ is not a privately owned company and so has a higher duty of care to maintain high standards and avoid the dumbing down that is occurring in other media.

"EDS is very supportive of RNZ and we acknowledge the need to look at new opportunities for program development and extension into new forms of outlet. We recognize that the media world is in a state of flux and RNZ needs to adapt.

"But the prospect of axing or drastically curtailing the scope of *Our Changing World* raises serious concerns.

"EDS has communicated its concerns to relevant state sector CEOs (Environment and Conservation), to the Prime Minister's Chief Science Advisor, Sir Peter Gluckman and to other environmental NGOs.

"We have asked Mr Thompson to consult with key stakeholders including EDS when firm proposals for the future are being decided. He has not yet had time to respond," Mr Taylor concluded.

OCW: <http://www.radionz.co.nz/national/programmes/ourchangingworld>