

## Media Release

### EDS Welcomes New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy Discussion Document

EDS welcomes the release of *Te koiroa o te koiroa – Our shared vision for living with nature*, a discussion document seeking feedback on New Zealand’s Biodiversity Strategy for 2020 - 2030. The strategy will give effect to New Zealand’s international obligations under the Convention on Biological Diversity.

“*Environment Aotearoa 2019* painted a sad story of the state of biodiversity in New Zealand,” said EDS CEO Gary Taylor.

“Almost two thirds of New Zealand’s naturally rare and uncommon ecosystems are threatened. Given our high proportion of endemic species, we need to ensure the strategy for the next decade will turn those statistics around.

“The discussion document focuses helpfully on 5 so-called “shifts”. The first: ‘getting the system right’ establishes a good foundation for the strategy – it sets out roles and responsibilities of all those involved. Biodiversity priorities will be set out at a national level, with support from regional and local level planning.

“This process will be informed by the expected National Policy Statement on Indigenous Biodiversity: coordination across government is essential.

“The document sets a vision of nature in Aotearoa being healthy, abundant and thriving by 2070. Progressive and measurable goals are set and provide an opportunity to measure progress towards the long-term outcomes. However, some of these goals lack detail and will be hard to measure.

“EDS would like to see a more ambitious “shift” reflected in the strategy from managing existing biodiversity to large-scale restoration of what has been lost.

“And while the strategy provides comprehensive targets for terrestrial biodiversity, it fails to adequately address important marine ecosystems. Mapping of marine ecosystems and prioritisation of those that require protection is a good starting point. Zero by-catch of seabirds and marine mammals by 2050 is a target but the important detail about how to get to that outcome is missing. More thinking is required to get marine issues right.

“The document proposes that a final implementation plan will be developed collaboratively following finalisation. While this is a good idea in principle, there are risks of sector capture involved. To protect against this, input will be required in that process from an expert science panel,” Mr Taylor concluded.

The Department of Conservation is encouraging public submissions. These must be lodged by 5pm on Sunday 22 September.