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Committee Policy and Finance Committee
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1080 Reassessment Application - Submission to Animal Health Board & Department of Conservation

1. Purpose

To seek approval from Council for a proposed submission to the Animal Health Board (AHB) and the Department of Conservation (DoC) on the continued use of the pesticide 1080 in New Zealand.

2. Introduction

The ability to retain the use of the pesticide 1080 for pest animal control is considered essential to the Wellington region and New Zealand. 1080 is particularly important as the toolbox for vertebrate pest control is becoming increasingly limited through concerns such as animal welfare, residue issues and water quality.

This region has had major success in reducing the incidence of Bovine Tuberculosis (Tb) in cattle and deer herds, principally through the use of 1080. This substance was the main pesticide used in the mid to late 1990s period when possum numbers were high. Whilst the total volume used now is much less, 1080 still remains a critical tool in areas where possum numbers continue to be high, access is poor, and the terrain is difficult. Recent possum control operations on Council land (i.e. water supply catchments and parks) would not have been so successful without the use of 1080.

3. Background

The Environment Risk Management Agency (ERMA) is charged with implementing the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act (HSNO). ERMA therefore has responsibility for approving applications for 'new substances' and for transferring 'existing substances' to the HSNO framework. ERMA is currently in the process of transferring controlled vertebrate poisons, presently managed by MAF under the Pesticide Regulations, over to the HSNO system. While ERMA has responsibility for managing the risks to public health and the environment from these pesticides, the risks to trade, animal

welfare and agricultural security are managed by MAF. So, as part of the transfer process, 1080 will also be controlled under the Agricultural Compounds and Veterinary Medicines Act 1997.

The HSNO Act also allows for a much more rigorous re-evaluation of existing substances (a process referred to as a 'reassessment'). This is essentially the same process required for approval of a new substance entering New Zealand for the first time. In 2001, the AHB and DoC decided to apply to ERMA for a full reassessment of 1080 for the following reasons:

- There is now considerably more information available on 1080 than when it was initially registered in 1964. This additional information should be properly evaluated;
- Given the strong public interest over 1080, particularly aerial application, the reassessment process provides an opportunity for public input and scrutiny; and
- Both the AHB and DOC are seeking increased use of 1080 to meet targets for reducing the levels of Tb in cattle and deer and in support of government strategies on sustaining biodiversity.

In March 2002, ERMA agreed that reassessment of 1080 was appropriate.

4. Application for Reassessment

The two applicants have set up a Steering Group to facilitate development of the application. The Group comprises representatives of the AHB, DoC, Animal Control Products (manufacturer of 1080 products), and local government (represented by Environment Waikato). The Group has appointed a Project Manager, URS New Zealand Ltd.

4.1 Application Preparation

The work programme currently falls into three broad categories:

4.1.1 Lifecycle assessment and hazard classification

This process will identify the lifecycle of 1080, from its manufacture to its application, and how it is disposed of. It will identify the hazards 1080 poses to human health and the environment.

Landcare Research Ltd and URS have been commissioned to prepare the hazard classification. Landcare has completed significant research on 1080 for both AHB and DoC since the early 1990s and have access to a comprehensive literature database. Landcare have also completed a 'gap analysis' and additional scientific studies were commissioned to complete the hazard database.

4.1.2 Consultation

For any substance that is used nationally and is of significant interest, the HSNO Act requires the applicant to undertake nationwide consultation. In

addition, it is necessary under the Act to assess any particular risks, costs and benefits that may arise from the relationship of Maori and their culture and traditions with their taonga.

The applicants have prepared a Discussion Document ‘The use of 1080 for pest control’ as a step in the nationwide consultation process. The attached Council submission is in response to that document (**Attachment 1**).

The use of 1080 is arguably one of the most contentious hazardous substance issues in New Zealand. Concerns are normally raised by one or more groups – e.g. the hunting lobby, disaffected landowners, or communities concerned about water quality. Operations conducted by the AHB, DoC and regional councils are subject to resource consent and statutory approval processes in most cases. Regular consultation with concerned groups or individuals occurs on these occasions, particularly when aerial application of 1080 is proposed. Most of the issues and concerns are well known. However, the discussion document seeks to canvass the wider public’s views on the matter. Submissions on the document close at the end of October 2004.

Consultation with Maori is being co-ordinated by DOC, through their network of Kaupapa Atawahi Managers. Each conservancy office has developed a consultation programme. In most cases this will involve hui with iwi and meetings with trust boards to explain the reassessment process and seek the feedback required by ERMA. It should be noted that ERMA will run a second public and iwi consultation process once the reassessment application has been lodged and accepted by ERMA.

4.1.3 Risk assessment

Information provided by the consultation process will supplement the comprehensive assessment of risks, costs and benefits of 1080 compiled by the applicants. The applicants will also be providing information on how 1080 will be managed, including the management of any adverse effects and the risks associated with its use.

The applicants will prepare an overall evaluation by pulling together all the information that has been gathered on risks, costs and benefits. This will form the basis of the application to be submitted to ERMA.

5. ERMA Response

Once ERMA receives the application, a new phase of the process begins. ERMA will set the timetable for this. Written submissions will be invited and hearings will be required. ERMA will weigh up all the scientific and non-scientific information and then make a judgement on whether 1080 should continue to be used in New Zealand. If ERMA supports ongoing use, then it will decide what controls or conditions should apply. In the interim, 1080 can continue to be used under existing statutes, regulations and operating procedures.

6. Recommendation

*That the attached submission to the Applicant Group on the reassessment of 1080 be **approved**.*

Report prepared by:

Report approved by:



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Attachment 1: Submission to the Applicant Group