

Other: **Climate Change**

17. Forest & Bird supports immediate and strong action in tackling the challenges that arise as a result of the climate crisis. Marlborough District Council has to ensure all of its activities - from planning to consents, from infrastructure to economic activity- are consistent with reducing emissions, sequestering carbon and protecting the most vulnerable habitats, ecosystems, and species in Marlborough.
18. We are disappointed that the Council has not made the ambitious commitment and investment to reduce climate change emissions, and the impacts upon the natural environment that are sorely needed.
19. Marlborough is a signatory to the Local Government Leaders' Climate Declaration (2017) which declared the following:
  1. Develop and implement ambitious action plans that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support resilience within our own councils and for our local communities. These plans will:
    - a. promote walking, cycling, public transport and other low carbon transport options;
    - b. work to improve the resource efficiency and health of homes, businesses and infrastructure in our district; and
    - c. support the use of renewable energy and uptake of electric vehicles.
  2. Work with our communities to understand, prepare for and respond to the physical impacts of climate change.
  3. Work with central government to deliver on national emission reduction targets and support resilience in our communities.
20. The current Marlborough Long Term Plan does not outline sufficient action to address the threat of climate change. Forest & Bird is particularly concerned about the effects on the natural environment, especially natural features, native plants and animals and their habitats, and the wider ecosystems, including marine, freshwater, and terrestrial.
21. One particular issue that stands out (and is very relevant at the moment), is the implications of increasing droughts in South Marlborough. As Council will be aware, South Marlborough is home to some of our most important endemism (native species only found here) in the country. Drought not only impacts upon rural communities and water users, but it has serious implications for the long-term survival and resilience of South Marlborough plant communities, threatened species, habitats and ecosystems.
22. Reduced rainfall will mean there is a contradiction between providing water resilience for landowners, and the need to maintain appropriate river flows and health as outlined by Te Mana o te Wai and the NPSFM 2020. Nationally and internationally important ecosystems, like the Wairau River, will be placed under increasing pressure.
23. Forest & Bird suggests that Marlborough needs to invest in a partnership with the community interested and/or involved in the potential impacts of the likelihood of increased and prolonged droughts. A model could be similar to the Te Hoiere Catchment approach where Council, iwi and the wider community are working together to identify improvements to the catchment. The model could be similar, but the subject would be different. How do we provide drought resilience across South Marlborough and retain, protect and sustain important ecosystems, habitats and species? At the moment those conversations are somewhat siloed and create an "us and them" situation, whereby the reality is that we are already working across the boundaries with the East Coast work and the wilding conifer control.
24. Blenheim is a flat town with plenty of opportunities for capitalising on cycling and other forms of active transport. We urge greater and rapid investment in public and active transport. Care should be taken to ensure that the natural environment, including the coastal margin and significant features, are not adversely affected by the installation of cycleways. Cycleways should provide appropriate

travel between destinations, including work commutes - especially given the uptake in the use of e-bikes, and an increased capacity for people to commute using pedal power. At the moment we are conscious that many cyclists face difficult commutes exacerbated by very narrow road shoulders and impeded by poor quality road surfaces at the margins.

25. In the interface between biodiversity and climate change, the biodiversity work of the Council, regional economic activity, infrastructure and Covid recovery responses should prioritise the following matters to address climate impacts:
- a. Identifying and protecting natural environments, ecosystems, habitats and species vulnerable to the effects of climate change;
  - b. Opportunities for identifying and sequestering carbon utilising native ecosystems - whether terrestrial, freshwater, or in the estuarine/marine environment;
  - c. Creating buffers to ensure appropriate migration inland/altitude/coastal for species that will need to migrate as a result of the changing climate; and
  - d. Responding to any increased biosecurity and/or pest issues arising from a changing climate.