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Long-Term Insights Briefing
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IrrigationNZ Submission on the draft Long-Term Insights Briefing 2022

To the Long-Term Insights Briefing Team,

Irrigation New Zealand (IrrigationNZ) welcomes this opportunity to submit on the draft Long-Term Insights Briefing (LTIB) 2022. Please find below the IrrigationNZ submission, albeit late, to the Ministry for the Environment (MfE) on the draft LTIB.

IrrigationNZ represents over 3,800 members nationally, including irrigation schemes, individual irrigators, and the irrigation service sector across all regions of New Zealand.

Our irrigator members include a wide range of farmers and growers – sheep and beef, dairy and cropping farmers, horticulturalists, winegrowers, as well as sports and recreational facilities and councils. We also represent over 120 irrigation service industry members – manufacturers, distributors, irrigation design and install companies, and irrigation decision support services for both freshwater and effluent irrigation.

We are a voluntary-membership, not-for-profit organisation whose mission is to create an environment for the responsible use of water for food and fibre production for local and international consumers and to sustain the wellbeing of communities.

As an organisation we actively take a technical leadership role in promoting best practice irrigation and carry out a range of training and education activities associated with freshwater management. Over the last five years, we have trained over 3,000 irrigators on various aspects of irrigation best practices to improve water use efficiency (lowering consumption) and better manage environmental effects (improved soil moisture and surface water management).

IrrigationNZ members share many of the same goals as other New Zealanders:

- Reduce their environmental footprints and see improvements in the health of the natural environment,
- Contribute to the wellbeing of their communities, and
- Provide for a resilient future for New Zealand in the face of climate change.

Our main points of contention are as follows:

Chapter 2 of the LTIB outlines the seven main drivers that could affect the state of the land in the coming years. IrrigationNZ broadly agrees with the importance of all these drivers. However, we stress the need for greater consideration of climate change and its impact on the availability and



quantity of water resources for primary industries. The production of high quality and healthy foods is undoubtedly key to the health needs of people, and sufficient water availability, such as for irrigation systems, for primary industries is crucial to this. Enabling the production of these foods will further enhance people's economic and social wellbeing, as identified on pg.10 of the LTIB. There is little regard to the importance of primary industries and their direct impact on all drivers of change identified in Chapter 2 of the LTIB. IrrigationNZ urges for the drivers to be amended to reflect this importance.

Chapter 3 outlines the four main challenges for the possible future for the land and New Zealanders' relationship with it. Based on the provided scale, IrrigationNZ (3) somewhat agrees with the draft LTIB's description and its alignment with our aspirations for the land. We stress that bullet-points (2) and (3) on pg.46 of the draft LTIB focus too largely on biodiversity, at the expense of water availability for primary industries. We refer to the National Climate Change Risk Assessment (NCCRA) 2020, which subsequently informs MfE's National Adaptation Plan (NAP) 2022. The NCCRA refers to reduced water availability and quality from climate change as posing *"risks to land-based primary sector productivity and output due to changing precipitation and water availability, temperature, seasonality, climate extremes, and the distribution of invasive species."* There is clear acknowledgement of the risks of climate change on primary industries, yet this is not reflected in this Chapter. This creates an incoherent message. IrrigationNZ suggests the amendment of this Chapter to accurately reflect these risks and enhance the clarity of these provisions across the board.

Chapter 4 outlines nine pathways for a more resilient future for land in subsequent generations. IrrigationNZ agrees with the importance of these pathways, however there is inadequate provision for primary industries throughout these pathways. Despite a positive economic outlook for primary industries, climate change will put an inevitable strain on these pathways from its direct impact on water reliability. IrrigationNZ emphasizes the need to amend these pathways to recognize the importance of water availability and security for primary industries and its direct link to the wellbeing of New Zealanders.

This submission highlights the underlying importance of freshwater availability and quality in the LTIB and its impact on primary industries and the broader wellbeing of New Zealanders.

We are eager and available for further consultation on these issues, so please do not hesitate to reach out.

Nga mihi,



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