

Mailbag

No Thar, Thanks

John Dyer is wrong to suggest that eradication of thar from New Zealand would contravene the Convention on Biological Diversity (*Forest & Bird*, November 2001). The Convention requires New Zealand to 'control or eradicate those alien species which threaten ecosystems, habitats or species'. Thar threaten alpine ecosystems.

If thar in New Zealand were needed for re-establishment in the Himalayas, then these animals should be managed beyond New Zealand's conservation lands, rather than compromising New Zealand's internationally recognised alpine plants.

Forest and Bird shares Mr Dyer's concerns about the impact of sheep grazing. In the ongoing review of land tenures in the high country, Forest and

Bird is actively seeking the retirement of such lands and their transfer as protected areas under the Department of Conservation.

GEOFF KEEY

Forest and Bird researcher, Christchurch

Restoring Nature

Your last magazine cheered me up no end. There are so many good things happening. No doubt stories like those in *Forest & Bird*, will stimulate more people to get up and going on mainland-island type projects or even planting projects. People must also be starting to realise that anyone can do their bit by setting a few traps around the garden or farm or beach section.

STUART CHAMBERS

Waiuku

10 Years of the RMA

Many small-scale everyday activities generate the 'cumulative effects' of the Resource Management Act, particularly in urban areas. ('Ten Years of the R.M.A', *Forest & Bird* November 2001). Water-related matters, particularly discharges, are critical environmental issues, but water-related impacts are given poor scrutiny. This is because water is still seen as something to take, make and waste with virtual impunity. But clean water comes from somewhere and dirty water must go somewhere.

One important part of the RM Act which receives very little attention is section 17. This states that 'every person has a duty to avoid, remedy, or mitigate any adverse effect on

the environment arising from an activity...' This applies to all New Zealanders but how many know this and carry out their duty to the country and their community?

Another serious culprit is the Building Act 1991. In many ways the Building Act is contrary to the RMA. The Building Act does not have proper regard for other legislation, sustainable principles, waste minimisation, water efficiency, pollution prevention, long-term contamination of surface water and streams, rivers etc. Impacts on neighbours are not well handled in the Building Act either. Perhaps these issues may be covered somewhere by words, but what translates into practice is a different matter.

PETER NAGELS

North Shore

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