

From: [BDC Lgoima](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Official Information Request for Climate Change & Biodiversity Loss Ref: OIA 024/22
Date: Wednesday, 18 May 2022 12:29:27 pm
Attachments: [image002.png](#)
[image004.png](#)

Dear [REDACTED]

We refer to your official information request dated 19 April 2022 for Climate Change & Biodiversity Loss.

The information you have requested is enclosed.

Question 1 and Question 2

Does your council have a Climate Change Strategy? And Does your council have an implementation plan for your climate strategy?

Council has produced a Climate Change Adaptation Project Plan (February 2022) based on the Ministry for the Environment Guidelines for Local Climate Change Risk Assessments (LCCRA) (September 2021). This Project Plan contains key principles (that were identified within Council's LTP 2021 – 2031) that will govern the way Council approaches its climate change adaptation work. The Project Plan delineates seven project stages for implementation.

The Project Plan also addresses the importance of undertaking Climate Change Mitigation activities and identifies current initiatives and pipeline projects that will realise outcomes that address the dual crises of biodiversity loss and climate change.

Question 3

How do you measure outcomes relating to the achievement (or not) of the objectives of your climate change strategy?

MfE's LCCRA guidelines use the adaptive management approach which incorporates a monitor and review project phase. Council's Action Plans that will be produced as a result of the planning process will feed into the National Adaptation Planning cycle. Climate Change Adaptation by its very nature will require an adaptive management and iterative approach.

Council is working with Toitu 'carbon reduce' to baseline its GHG emissions profile and measures its reductions in GHG emissions.

Question 4

Does your council have a biodiversity strategy?

Council developed a high-level Environmental Improvement and Prosperity Strategy (EIPS) in September 2020 that began work on environmental sustainability and biodiversity. This work was taken forward and developed further in Council's LTP 2021 – 2031 under the heading of "Environmental Sustainability". A key approach within the LTP to develop a sustainability strategy and policy and establish baseline information to assess performance across various environmental performance parameters including greenhouse gas emissions, freshwater quality, biodiversity protection, and waste minimisation. Although work is being progressed on all of these environmental issues, a strategy or policy has not yet been developed.

Council also signals its intent to maximise opportunities presented by the Te Tai o Poutini planning framework to achieve greater consistency, and therefore improved outcomes, in the way our district's biodiversity values are protected.

Priorities for Council identified within the LTP 2021 – 2031 include identifying ways to:

- Drive for a balance between development, biodiversity, and sustainability
- Develop strategies for climate change and natural hazard preparedness
- Improve waste management approaches
- Promote and advocate for the mana o te wai.

Council is also an active member of the Kotahitanga mō te Taiao Alliance and is developing, in partnership with Alliance members and partners, a number of active and pipeline projects that will benefit the district's biodiversity.

Question 5

Does your council have an implementation plan for your biodiversity strategy?

Although work is underway to address biodiversity protection and restoration, a specific implementation plan has not been developed.

Question 6

How do you measure outcomes relating to the achievement (or not) of the objectives of your biodiversity strategy?

Individual projects that contribute to biodiversity protection and restoration have their own outcomes. However, biodiversity outcomes are not currently measured or reported upon in an integrated manner.

Question 7

Has your council mapped its Significant Natural Areas (SNAs)? Are these maps in your operative District Plan?

SNAs are not mapped in the operative Buller District Plan.

Question 8

How many SNAs have you identified in your district/region. Could you please quantify the total area these SNAs represent?

As above

Question 9

How does your council maintain SNAs?

Part 4 of the operative Buller District Plan sets criteria as a guideline for identifying areas of indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna.

Areas are assessed on a case-by-case basis during the processing of an application. Vegetation clearance applications will often require an ecological report where the criteria are used to identify significant areas.

Question 10

How many consents have you issued in the last five years to allow for vegetation clearance in SNAs? How many have been declined?

17 resource consents have been issued for vegetation clearance (noting that SNAs are not mapped in the operative District Plan).

No applications have been declined.

Question 11

Do you have vegetation clearance rules that enable identification of additional SNAs through the consenting process?

Part 5.3.2 contains rules for vegetation clearance. An ecological report submitted through the resource consent can have the potential to identify areas of significant and recognise areas that may be excluded from the proposed clearance area.

Question 12

How often does your council monitor SNAs?

Frequency varies depending on the type of application and is done through monitoring of resource consent conditions.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact the Buller District Council by return email to lgoima@bdc.govt.nz.

Kind regards

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