

**NZ Game Animal Council
Media Statement**

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Perceived conflicts should not undermine Predator Free NZ

A report claiming that Predator Free NZ could be derailed by conflict over how to maintain biodiversity should not discourage New Zealanders from getting involved in conservation, says Game Animal Council Chair Don Hammond.

“We all want to fundamentally achieve the same outcomes for New Zealand,” says Hammond. “In a project as multi-faceted and nationwide as Predator Free NZ there will always be a range of views as to how it should be done.”

“Predator Free NZ will be a far more robust and enduring project if the various opinions of the community are taken into account. As the report states, it relies on widespread buy-in from the public, and that cannot be done if certain views are suppressed.”

Hunters, of course, wish to maintain access to the world-class hunting opportunities that exist in New Zealand and while that may mean at times voicing concern over specific pest control operations, it doesn't mean the sector doesn't support the overall objectives of the programme.

“The Game Animal Council is passionate about preserving and enhancing our native biodiversity and we work constructively with stakeholders such as DoC, OSPRI and ZIP to get the best possible outcomes for both hunting and conservation. Other hunting sector organisations like the Fiordland Wapiti Foundation, the Sika Foundation and NZDA are heavily involved in pest control and are making a very positive contribution to the predator-free goal.”

The NZ Game Animal Council is a statutory organisation responsible for the sustainable management of game animals and hunting for recreation, commerce and conservation.

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