

Forest & Bird misrepresent Te Ara ki Mua

The wild animal management strategy, Te Ara ki Mua, represents a significant opportunity to create enduring management solutions for game animals (deer, tahr, chamois and wild pigs) that will bring major conservation benefits for New Zealand despite the misrepresentations from Forest & Bird, says the Game Animal Council.

“It is incredibly disappointing to see Forest & Bird distort what Te Ara ki Mua is about and the potential it has for delivering significant conservation and game animal management benefits,” says Game Animal Council General Manager Tim Gale.

“Te Ara ki Mua rightly recognises that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to game animal management in New Zealand. Different populations in different places require different strategies and these must be underpinned by science and involve collaboration with local communities.”

“This challenge should not be characterised as being about conservation interests versus hunting interests. Hunters and hunting organisations care deeply about the health of the ecosystem and do more to help manage game animal populations than anybody else.”

“Simple ecology and experience tell us that by better managing, and where required, reducing game animal numbers, will also improve the quality of the hunting resource. This represents a win-win.”

Te Ara ki Mua also applies to goats, which are not a game animal. Goats are a major issue and the Game Animal Council understands and supports the significant effort that DOC is planning to put into goat control to reduce numbers.

“It is incredibly frustrating that rather than collaborating on better management, Forest & Bird are more focused on throwing rocks from the sidelines,” says Gale. “This is disappointing because there are a lot of people working extremely hard to achieve outcomes that can benefit all New Zealanders.”

“It is also unfortunate that Forest & Bird continue to focus on the impact of deer on carbon storage in forests when that issue is still very difficult to calculate, uncertain and [highly contested](#).”

“The Game Animal Council, DOC and all those interested in improving conservation and game animal management need to work together. If we do that, we can achieve some really good outcomes for New Zealand.”

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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