

IN THE MATTER OF

Proposed Plan Change 1 to the Regional Land and
Water Plan (*PCI*)

AND

IN THE MATTER OF

A hearing into the above pursuant to the Resource
Management Act 1991

DATE OF HEARING

18-21 June 2018

**SUBMISSIONS OF COASTPAK TO PROPOSED PLAN CHANGE 1 TO
THE REGIONAL LAND AND WATER PLAN - SPHAGNUM MOSS
HARVESTING (MISCELLANEOUS CHANGE N)**

Evidence of Ian Aynsley

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 My name is Ian Aynsley and I began working in the sphagnum moss industry for Coastpak in 2006. I was manager of the business for a total of 9 years and through others sharing their knowledge and my own experiences, have developed a passion for what I believe is a sustainable and unique West Coast industry. My present position tasks me with sustainably harvesting and managing wetlands for the growing of sphagnum moss.

2.0 COASTPAK

2.1 Coastpak;

- is a sphagnum moss processing company with a long history (30 years) supplying Sphagnum moss to orchid growers worldwide.
- has invested heavily in infrastructure, research and development, and people on the West Coast.
- has refined its harvesting and post harvesting management to ensure we have healthy wetlands, maintained in a state to sustain growth of the sphagnum moss resource.

3.0 OUR SUBMISSION

- 3.1 Coastpak made a submission to support the moss harvesting industry as an industry with a direct interest in wetlands and wetland management. This is both in terms of the current Plan Change and also to ensure that recognition is given to the industry in future to avoid unconsidered consequences on the industry arising from such processes.
- 3.2 I feel that many submitters who oppose the permitted rule do not understand how committed the industry is to retaining and maintaining wetlands for moss production and this by default means these areas remain as wetlands. The result of not carrying out this harvesting and post harvesting management cycle in anthropogenic wetlands is to lose them to woody cover.
- 3.3 A lot of swamp land does not grow sphagnum moss, it may be too dry or have bush cover, or simply not been harvested for so long that woody vegetation has taken

over, dried out the surrounding area and the moss (having done its job) no longer grows. We know from experience that by suppressing the growth of woody vegetation by rolling it into the water table after harvesting, we prevent the drying out of the area and promote the regrowth of moss.

- 3.4 Moss processors must be able to apply what has been learned over many years to maintain these man-made wetlands (many stumps and dead spars show it was once forest land) at the stage where they produce moss, which was the reason for purchasing the land in the first place.
- 3.5 I do not think that harvesters should have to pay for a consent process, including costs of ecological reports verifying or otherwise whether the site meets certain criteria, to prove acceptance of appropriately managed moss harvesting as an activity in a wetland. The benefits in maintaining and enhancing wetland values have been, and are able to be, demonstrated through managed harvesting. Harvesters have a vested interest in seeing the wetland areas retained in a functioning state.

4.0 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 Most, if not all, of the schedule 2 wetlands have supported moss harvesting and the moss industry for many years and will continue to do so if appropriately managed. Having been involved with the development of a permitted rule that offers protection and monitoring of the wetland, and the positive comments about our operations from Rowan Buxton as part of an independent review of the potential effects of moss harvesting on wetland values, I feel we have shown care and respect for our environment.
- 4.2 Coastpak supports that the harvesting of sphagnum moss on schedule 2 wetlands should be a permitted activity if conducted as per proposed rule 7a.

Ian Aynsley
Coastpak

15 June 2018