

BAN1080 PARTY PRESS RELEASE

DoC are currently preparing the NZ public for another massive aerial 1080 poisoning of our forests in winter 2016, supposedly in response to yet another beech mast. (Fairfax Nov 16th 2015)

Masts or good flowering years of beech trees and other native plants are normal sporadic events. Some native birds only breed in mast years, it's the way of nature, fluctuations of populations in response to food supply and environmental conditions. So improved breeding success for species like Kaka in a mast year is a natural phenomenon. (Powlesland et al 2009)

The same natural fluctuations occur with introduced species. Rat numbers in Kahurangi dropped naturally about 50% this winter, so at least half the extravagant claims for Battle of the Birds success last winter would have occurred naturally anyway. (OIA Nov 20th 2015)

Last year's Battle for the Birds poisoned an area the size of Taranaki supposedly in response to a beech mast and rat plague. The beech mast was light to moderate in most areas, and rat numbers in high altitude areas were at zero at the time of the 1080 drop in many areas.

Interestingly, the unpoisoned areas in Kahurangi showed no increase in rats without 1080, the predicted plague did not occur. (OIA Nov 20th 2015)

1080 is a cruel inhumane poison that effectively chemically strangles it's victims to death over many hours for the birds or days for large mammals.

1080 kills a fair percentage of all animals (insects, birds and mammals), but rats are the fastest to recover and remain at higher levels in poisoned areas for several years.

DoC's Graeme Elliot tells us "The 1080 drop in 2014 killed four Keas and led to the death of Rock Wrens" (Fairfax Nov 16th 2015)

It wasn't just four kea, it was four kea wearing radio transmitters, 10% of the radio tagged kea, in previous poisoning drops DoC have managed over 30% kill on kea.

If 4000 kea were exposed to last year's massive drop, DoC killed at least 400, possibly a thousand.

On Jan 17th (Fairfax) this year, DoC reported 25 of the 39 monitored rock wren had disappeared since the drop in Kahurangi National Park, that's a staggering 64%.

If there was 1000 rock wren exposed to 1080 last year, DoC potentially killed 600 of this endangered species. DoC have invested huge effort in tagging 66 rock wren in Kahurangi since the drop (Forest and Bird May 2015). If this cover-up effort had been made prior to the drop, they would have tagged hundreds more.

There was no rats recorded in rock wren habitat, DoC's own Compulsory Standards (June 2014) prevents 1080 drops unless rat monitoring is at 20%. The only exception to the Compulsory Standard is expert judgement of benefit to the birds. Nelson's DoC conservator said "The technical advice was given verbally and therefore a copy cannot be made available" (OIA reply Dec 18th 2014)

DoC's own "Principles based Decision Tree" (2013) warned against exposing endangered birds to 1080 until mortality was established at less than 3% (100 bird minimum sample). Rock wren were specifically mentioned.

DoC advised they “did not intend to aerially apply 1080 to areas where the triggers for initiating predator control have not been met” (OIA reply Sept 29th 2014). A fortnight later they 1080’ed the stronghold of the rock wren and kea, which was recording zero rats, not the 20% threshold their Compulsory Standards require.

The NZ public and media do not hesitate to question and investigate CYPS or our Police Force every time a child is harmed, or someone runs a red light during pursuit and kills innocents.

It is time to turn that level of scrutiny onto our Department of Conservation.

DoC have received \$3.5 Billion of taxpayer’s money in past decade, and not a single endangered bird species is in recovery on mainland NZ.

DoC’s Graeme Elliot says it’s “1080 or nothing” (Herald Sept 10th 2014), but for kea and rock wren, nothing is definitely the better option.

But for \$350 Million per year targeted to Conservation, we should expect a lot better than nothing.

Randomly scattering the insidious insecticide 1080 over vast areas of our bush and mountains, whilst claiming that it will control the most successful, adaptable and widespread mammal on the planet, in the futile hope it is protecting the most vulnerable and endangered birds, often in breach of DoC’s own scientist’s advice and Compulsory Standards, is the “dirtiest, cruellest and most cynical” pretence at Conservation in Western World. (personal observation).

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Ban1080 Party