



Ban 1080
Look after our native birds
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Sodium Monofluoroacetate (1080) is a colourless, odourless, tasteless poison that has no known antidote. It is toxic to all air breathing organisms.

New Zealand is the world's largest consumer of 1080 and it is banned or restricted in most countries because of its lethality and indiscriminate killing power. Sub-lethal concerns include male infertility, embryo changes and immune system damage.

1080 blocks the ability of the body's muscles and organs to absorb energy from food and results in a slow, inhumane death which can be many hours for birds and up to four days for large mammals. The Department of Conservation ("DoC") and the Environmental Risk Management Authority ("ERMA") rate its cruelty at six out of ten. Their logic in calling it "relatively humane" is that it is possible to more cruelly torture an animal to death. New Zealand's much touted and new Animal Welfare Act needed a special exemption for DoC to "wilfully and recklessly ill-treat wild animals" so that DoC can continue to use 1080 poison.

DoC plans to aerially spread 1080 poison over one million hectares of New Zealand's wilderness this year. This is the third massive poisoning operation in four years. DoC's justification is a "beech mast" which it says could lead to population increases of rats and stoats. However, in previous drops the beech masts were "light to moderate" and rat numbers remained low or were zero at the time of the aerial operations in many valleys. DoC's science tells us that rat numbers can increase up to four-fold after 1080 operations and remain high for several years. Poorly timed operations can increase stoat predation on birds.

Nineteen native bird species have had their corpses test positive for 1080 poison after aerial operations. In the 63 years New Zealand has been spreading 1080 poison across our mountains there has been a 99% decline in kea numbers. Since radio tagging of kea began DoC has killed 40%, 64% and 25% of kea with 1080 poison. Franz Josef (2008), Okarito (2011) and Arthurs Pass (2013) respectively.

Yet DoC's recent Press releases point the blame on lead head nails, feeding by tourists and predation for the kea's decline. This public denial of responsibility by DoC is of major concern given that an internal DoC report concludes "aerial 1080 may well be a significant threat to the kea population" with some drops "probably devastating". Kea are now an endangered species.

Another major justification for aerial 1080 poisoning is the myth that possums transfer bovine tuberculosis (BTb) between areas. In the last decade 124,000 possums have been autopsied and only 54 had BTb. Most farmers now accept that BTb is moved around New Zealand on stock trucks and stock movement recording (NAIT) and controls on infected herds is reducing the incidence of BTb.

In the last decade our Government has injected over 200 possums with BTb and released them into the wilderness in bizarre experiments supposedly, one could argue, to justify further aerial poisoning.

What would happen to New Zealand's "100% Pure" branding if DoC's continual 1080 poisoning campaigns were widely known outside New Zealand by tourists or if 1080 traces were ever found in exported food products? In 2002 40 tonnes of butter, 20 tonnes of casein and 75 tonnes of venison were recalled for extra testing after bungled 1080 operations.

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