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SUBMISSION ON: Port Noise Management Options

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1. The kiwifruit industry in New Zealand

The kiwifruit industry is a major contributor to regional New Zealand returning \$2.25 billion directly to rural communities in 2020/21. There are ~2800 growers, 14,000ha of orchards, 10,000 permanent employees and up to 25,000 jobs during the peak season. Approximately 80% of New Zealand's kiwifruit crop is grown in the Bay of Plenty and the industry is expected to grow its global sales to \$4.5 billion by 2025 which is an increase from \$3.58 billion in 2020/21.

2. Kiwifruit in Tasman

Tasman's kiwifruit production returned \$71 million to local communities in 2020/21. There are 86 orchards with 448 producing hectares of kiwifruit and all of the regions kiwifruit is exported through the port.

- In 2020, 637 containers and four Zespri reefer ships were loaded with ~5.15m trays exported
- In 2021, the crop was reduced 50% by hail and due to global supply chain disruption, container ships mostly bypassed Nelson. 49 containers and six reefer ships were loaded with 2.4m trays exported.

Next year it is expected that a rebound in the kiwifruit crop will see around 5m trays exported however because of ongoing supply chain disruption, the crop will mostly be carried by Zespri reefer ships.

3. Nelson Port

Nelson Port was established in the 1840's and is one of New Zealand's oldest ports. Residential housing was first built around the port in the early 1900s when European settlers arrived, and Nelson city has since been built around the port.

The port is a 24-hour operation and is tidally restricted which means that large vessels can only enter and exit the port on high tide. The port is the major gateway for exports from, and imports to the top of the south region and operates the largest fishing port in Australasia, the

second largest pip fruit export port in New Zealand and provides essential import/export services to the forestry, fishing/fish processing, fruit and wine industries. More than 3.3 million tonnes of cargo pass through the port annually.

4. Port Noise

The port is critical infrastructure and due to tidal restrictions, port operations occur at night and therefore port noise has impacts on residents. The port was established long before the city of Nelson was built and residential housing in the vicinity of the port. New or altered dwellings should account for the close proximity to the port and mitigate noise by being acoustically insulated. There must be an expectation from people residing in residential homes when they are living in the vicinity of the port to expect noise. To restrict port operation due to this noise is economically unviable.

Section 16 (1) (duty to avoid unreasonable noise) of the Resource Management Act (RMA) states that:

Every occupier of land (including any premises and any coastal marine area), and every person carrying out an activity in, on, or under a water body or the coastal marine area, shall adopt the best practicable option to ensure that the emission of noise from that land or water does not exceed a reasonable level.

The port has excellent noise mitigations in place. Effected properties have been categorised into three stages – the most affected being stage one. The port offers to purchase, or provide acoustic treatment and ventilation at no cost to these properties and pay 50% of the cost of acoustic treatment to those properties in stage two.

Noise monitors have been set up to monitor noise 24/7 and a comprehensive Noise Mitigation Plan¹ has been established.

5. Conclusion

The port's continuing ability to operate with the flexibility they need to manage the port facility is critical to the kiwifruit industry. We consider kiwifruit leaving the region to reach export markets vital to the economy for the region.

At this time we would not support any change to the management of port noise that would increase the operating costs or create additional challenges or barriers for export of kiwifruit.

NZKGI therefore supports Option 1 – Status Quo and supports no changes to the way noise from port operations are currently managed. The requirements of the other options are too restrictive in particular predicting future port noise for the next ten years. The port Noise Management Plan adequately requires continued noise management improvement.

¹ https://www.portnelson.co.nz/media/wyhmrwn/web_final_noise-mitigation-plan-_-v1-_21-6-2021.pdf