



01 November 2021

Wendy Pond

fyi-request-17010-1a101e54@requests.fyi.org.nz

Tēnā koe Wendy

Thank you for your Official Information Act (The OIA) request to the Department of Conservation (the Department), received on 02 October 2021 in which you asked for:

- *Please provide copies of reports by DOC to NZ Parliament, to commissions of enquiry, and to the UN for the years 2017 - 2021, where there is reference in relation to predator control and use of poisons and VTAs, (a) to social licence and (b) to legislation.*
- *Please include any other reports that address the issue of social licence for predator control.*

Regarding the first part of your request, I can confirm that the Department has not provided any reports to Parliament or to any Commissions of Inquiry for the years 2017 to 2021, referencing Predator Control and the use of poisons and Vertebrate Toxic Agents (VTA's) in relation to social licence or legislation. This part of your request is therefore declined under section 18(e) of the OIA, as the information requested does not exist.

You also requested copies of reports to the United Nations. I have identified one document within scope of this part of your request. This part of your request is declined under section 18(d) of the OIA, the information requested is publicly available. For your convenience I have included the following link to the report in question.

<https://www.doc.govt.nz/globalassets/documents/about-doc/role/international/nz-6th-national-report-convention-biological-diversity.pdf>

The second part of your request is framed very broadly and necessitated several extensive database searches to be undertaken. The initial search returned more than 9,000 individual records for consideration as possibly within the scope of your request. This was a key word search with no time parameters using the term social licence. On review of the records this turned out to be a phrase used by the Department to refer to a range of things such as trust and confidence, community understanding and acceptance. The topics referenced in these records included, but are not limited to, concession licencing, hunting, fishing, firearm use, questionnaires, conditions for sporting events, fact sheets and publicly available research. Further modified searches were undertaken including additional parameters, for example the date period as stated in your first question, the years 2017 to 2021. This narrowed the information returned to 3,000 plus records. A sample of these were then reviewed. The findings made it quite evident that a large percentage of the sample records were not valid



for your request and just contained a passing reference to the phrase social licence in context unrelated to predator control operations.

To identify all material in scope of your request would require considerable resources and time to review each individual record to see if it is within scope of your request. We cannot undertake this work without it adversely impacting our day-to-day functions. On that basis this part of your request has been declined under section 18(f) of the OIA, that the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research. I have borne in mind sections 18A and 18B of the OIA but concluded that use of either provision would not assist in this case.

You are entitled to seek an investigation and review of my decision by writing to an Ombudsman as provided by section 28(3) of the Official Information Act.

Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) and enclosed documents may be published on the Department's website.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Hilary Aikman'.

Hilary Aikman
Director Operations Issues and Programmes
Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai