

OCEANAGOLD (NEW ZEALAND)
LIMITED

WAIHI NORTH PROJECT

Native Frogs

Evidence of **Dylan van Winkel**
Regarding Technical Assessment of
Native Frog Effects and Proposed
Conditions

5 February 2025

INTRODUCTION

My name is Dylan van Winkel.

My role in relation to the Waihi North Project (“**WNP**”) has been to provide expert advice in relation to Native Frogs (*Leiopelma* spp.). I wrote the Proposed Wharekirauponga Underground Mine Native Frog Effects Assessment, which is provided within *Part H – Supporting Technical Assessments* of the application.

This evidence has been prepared to accompany the application by Oceana Gold (New Zealand) Limited (“**OGNZL**”) for approvals required for the WNP under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (“**FTAA**”). It has been prepared on the understanding that the process for determining applications under the FTAA does not require a hearing to be held, and accordingly, the purpose of this evidence is to confirm that, relative to my area of expertise the Proposed Wharekirauponga Underground Mine Native Frog Effects Assessment provides an appropriate description of the relevant environment, the proposed activities comprising the effects of the WNP on that environment, and the way those effects are proposed to be managed.

My findings are set out in full in the Proposed Wharekirauponga Underground Mine Native Frog Effects Assessment included within *Part H – Supporting Technical Assessments* of the application.

While this application is not being considered by the Environment Court, I confirm that I have read the Code of Conduct for expert witnesses contained in the Environment Court of New Zealand Practice Note 2023 and that I have complied with it when preparing this evidence. Other than when I state I am relying on the advice of another person, this evidence is within my area of expertise. I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions that I express.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

I am currently employed as a Senior Ecologist at Biosearches (Babbage Consultants Ltd.) and have held this position since October 2009. My current position is Technical Director of Terrestrial Ecology & Herpetology.

I hold the qualifications of Bachelor of Science (Zoology and Physiology), Postgraduate Diploma in Science (Conservation Biology and Entomology), and Master of Science (Hons) (Conservation Biology) from Massey University.

I am an external member of the Department of Conservation New Zealand Lizard Technical Advisory Group (“**NZLizardTAG**”), a member of the New Zealand Herpetological Society

(“**NZHS**”), a Council member of the Society for Research on Amphibians and Reptiles in New Zealand (“**SRARNZ**”), and a member of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Skink Specialist Group.

I have 15 years of experience as a professional ecological consultant and my primary area expertise is in terrestrial ecology and herpetology. Generally, my work experience includes assessment of ecological values and environmental effects, development of ecological restoration and mitigation programmes, including biodiversity offset and compensation packages, and development and implementation of biodiversity inventory, research, and monitoring programmes. I have developed reptile survey and monitoring programmes for New Zealand governmental organisations and conservation groups, including programmes that have involved threatened (e.g., ‘Nationally Critical’ and ‘Nationally Vulnerable’) reptile taxa.

Relevant previous work experience includes:

- a) Co-led surveys for Hochstetter’s frogs and lizards for the Ara Tūhono – Pūhoi to Warkworth Project and co-authored the Pūhoi to Warkworth Assessment of Terrestrial and Aquatic Ecological Effects report.
- b) Consultant herpetologist for OceanaGold (NZ) Limited’s Macraes operation since February 2022.
- c) I am the primary consultant herpetologist for the New Zealand Ministry for Primary Industries to whom I provide technical advice and support on reptile and amphibian biosecurity responses, as well the taxonomic determinations of foreign herpetofauna detected at and post-border.
- d) Have appeared as an expert witness for Council hearings and Environment Court on behalf of applicants.
- e) Co-authored the 2015 and 2021 “Conservation status of New Zealand reptiles”, a Department of Conservation Technical Series publication that classifies the conservation/ threat status of all recognised New Zealand reptile taxa.
- f) Co-authored (lead author) of the authoritative book on New Zealand’s reptiles and amphibians, published by Auckland University Press in 2018, and by Princeton University Press (USA) and Bloomsbury Publishing (UK) in 2020.
- g) Invited member on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (“**IUCN**”) Red List assessment panel for New Zealand lizards, including co-authorship on 44 of the Red List assessments, assessed in 2019.

- h) Published over 10 peer-reviewed scientific articles in international and national scientific journals on reptile conservation management and reptile and amphibian biosecurity and co-authored a book chapter on the ecology of New Zealand's lizards.
- i) Experience leading or assisting in several conservation translocations and development-related relocations, including Duvaucel's gecko (Tiritiri Matangi Island, Motuora Island, Motuihe Island), pacific gecko (Motuihe Island, Crusoe Island), moko skink (Rotoroa Island), shore skink (Tiritiri Matangi Island, Motuora Island); elegant gecko (Auckland), copper skink (Auckland, Tauranga, Hamilton), ornate skink (Auckland), and forest gecko (Auckland).
- j) I have held a DOC Wildlife Authorities to undertake lizard and frog surveys nationwide and salvage and relocation operations in the Auckland Region since 2009.

In providing this evidence in relation to Native Frogs, I have considered the following matters as relevant to that topic:

- (a) The project description provided by OGNZL as set out in Section 2 of the Substantive Application prepared by Mitchell Daysh Limited;
- (b) The description of the existing environment, the effects of the WNP on that environment and their significance, and the proposals to manage those effects all as set out in the assessment of environmental effects accompanying the application;
- (c) The technical assessments of
 - i. Flo Solutions (2023a, 2023b) – Conceptual groundwater model and numerical modelling.
 - ii. Intera (2024) – Model calibration and sensitivity analysis.
 - iii. GHD (2024) – Hydrology modelling.
 - iv. WWLA (2024a, 2024b, 2024c, 2024d) – Regional hydrogeologic setting, wetland delineation and drainage effects.
 - v. NIWA/ Taihoro Nukurangi (2024) – Instream habitat (for aquatic fauna) of the Wharekirauponga Streams and tributaries.
 - vi. Boffa Miskell (2016, 2018, 2019a, 2019b, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2024a, 2024b) – Ecological and Freshwater environment effects.
 - vii. Bioresearches (2024) – Wetland delineation and dewatering effects assessment.

CONFIRMATION OF CONTENTS OF REPORT AND PROPOSED CONDITIONS

I confirm that in my opinion the Proposed Wharekirauponga Underground Mine Native Frog Effects Assessment contains an accurate and appropriate description of the environment, the actual and potential effects of the WNP, and the recommended actions to manage those effects within my area of expertise.

I confirm that in my opinion the contents of the Proposed Wharekirauponga Underground Mine Native Frog Effects Assessment may be relied on in making a decision on the approvals sought for the WNP, and confirm that provided effects within my area of expertise are managed as proposed in the application those effects will not be unacceptable and will be managed to a standard that I consider meets good practice.

I confirm that I have reviewed the conditions that OGNZL proposes for the various approvals being sought as they relate to my area of expertise. I confirm that in my opinion those proposed conditions are appropriate.

Dylan van Winkel

Dated this 5th day of February 2025