

OCEANAGOLD (NEW ZEALAND)  
LIMITED

## **WAIHI NORTH PROJECT**

### **Pest Animal Management as part of the Wharekirauponga Compensation Package.**

Evidence of Dr Helen Blackie Regarding  
Technical Assessment of Pest  
Management Effects and Proposed  
Conditions

5 February 2025

## INTRODUCTION

My name is Dr Helen Blackie.

My role in relation to the Waihi North Project (“**WNP**”) has been to provide expert advice in relation to the development of a pest animal management plan as part of the Wharekirauponga compensation package. I wrote the Pest Animal Management Plan: Wharekirauponga Compensation Package report 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 Pest Animal Management Plan: Wharekirauponga Compensation Package report 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 Pest Animal Management Plan: Wharekirauponga Compensation Package 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

**1.1** I hold the qualifications of BSc in Biological Science (2002), MSc (first class honours) in Biological Science (2005) and completed a PhD in Environmental Science (2010), all from the University of Auckland.

I have over 20 years' experience in ecology, biosecurity, restoration and pest control. I have substantial experience in the preparation of evidence regarding pest management matters for both Council level hearings and the Environment Court.

In 2024 I received the 'Excellence in Environmental Practice Award' from the Environment Institute of Australia and New Zealand ("**EIANZ**"), which recognises outstanding practice by an individual.

I am currently employed as a Director and Principal Ecologist at Alliance Ecology Ltd and have held that position since November 2024. My previous work experience includes almost 11 years as an Associate Partner and biosecurity discipline lead at Boffa Miskell Ltd, 5 years as the Associate Director at the Centre for Wildlife Management and Conservation at Lincoln University and previous to that I worked for the Department of Conservation.

In providing this evidence in relation to pest management, 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 Ecological management / compensation described in this report is based on findings in other reports including:
  - a. Terrestrial ecology values and effects compiled Boffa Miskell Ltd (2024)
  - b. Ecological Impact Assessments by Boffa Miskell Ltd (2024)
  - c. Compensation modelling undertaken by RMA Solutions (2024)
  - d. Likelihood of project impacts on frogs, Biosearches (2024), and;
- (d) Evidence to demonstrate the benefits which will be achieved via the proposed pest control, including multiple referenced examples and case studies.

## **CONFIRMATION OF CONTENTS OF REPORT AND PROPOSED CONDITIONS**

I confirm that in my opinion the Pest Animal Management Plan: Wharekirauponga Compensation Package 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 Pest Animal Management Plan: Wharekirauponga Compensation Package 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.

**Dr Helen Blackie**

Dated this 5<sup>th</sup> day of February 2025