



Te Kaahui o Rauru

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NEWS RELEASE

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CONSERVATION BOARD ASKED TO GET LEGAL OPINION ON APPEAL AGAINST SEABED MINING DECISION

Te Kaahui o Rauru has written to the Taranaki-Whanganui Conservation Board asking them to seek a legal opinion on the Environmental Protection Authority's decision to grant consent to the Trans Tasman Resources Ltd seabed mining application, with a view to appealing the decision.

Kaiwhakahaere Anne-Marie Broughton said that the conservation board had opposed the application, submitting at the oral hearings.

"As the former conservation board chair, I am intimately aware of the conservation board's strong opposition to the application. The Conservation Board is the representative voice of the community and is the "handshake" between the community and the department. Given that iwi and the wider community is overwhelmingly opposed to the Trans Tasman Resources application, we believe the conservation board must now continue its advocacy role and take all steps to seek to overturn the Environmental Protection Authority decision."

Ms Broughton said the conservation board had a specific legislative right to appear before courts and tribunals in New Zealand and be heard on matters affecting or relating to its functions.

"Te Kaahui o Rauru is of the view that any legal action should be resourced through external legal support as the department abdicated its responsibility to the community and failed to protect the environment by not participating in the consent application process. We believe the conservation board cannot rely on DOC's internal legal stream in this matter."

Ms Broughton noted the split decision of the hearings commissioners, with two members of the panel (Sharon McGarry and Gerry Te Kapa Coates) making strong statements against the decision to approve the consent.

"This vindicates our view that the consent approval is dangerous – these two commissioners are highly qualified and experienced and come to this view without bias. The use of the casting vote to push through untested underwater opencast mining is irresponsible and irrational."

For further information, please contact Anne-Marie Broughton on 027 342 3005.