

PRESENTER



Environment Judge Jon Jackson, Christchurch

Judge Jackson was appointed an Environment Judge on 6 September 1996. Judge Jackson was admitted to the Bar in 1978 and practised civil litigation and resource management work in Nelson where he was a partner in a law firm. He is a former member of the Nelson District Law Society Committee. He is based in Christchurch.

CONTENTS

PREDICTIONS IN AN UNCERTAIN WORLD – ASSESSING EFFECTS UNDER THE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT 1991	1
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 <i>The aims of this paper</i>	1
1.2 <i>Why is prediction relevant to the RMA?</i>	2
1.3 <i>The description of the “environment”</i>	4
1.4 <i>Causes: activities, natural hazard and climate change</i>	7
1.5 <i>The definition of effect</i>	8
1.6 <i>The concept of risk</i>	9
2. POTENTIAL PROBLEMS FROM THE COMMON LAW APPROACH TO CAUSATION, EFFECTS AND RISK...	10
2.1 <i>Causes in the common law</i>	10
2.2 <i>The common law on predicting the future</i>	11
2.3 <i>Predictions can be falsified</i>	12
3. SCIENTIFIC APPROACHES TO RISK MANAGEMENT	13
3.1 <i>To quantify risks or not?</i>	13
3.2 <i>Assessing probabilities in the light of evidence: Bayes Rule</i>	14
3.3 <i>A generic approach to risk management</i>	17
3.4 <i>Assessing the likelihood of an effect</i>	18
3.5 <i>What the shape of a curve tells us about future observations</i>	19
3.6 <i>Vulnerability</i>	21
3.7 <i>The (dynamic) time factors</i>	22
3.9 <i>Quantifying the costs of effects</i>	23
4. CUMULATIVE EFFECTS	24
4.1 <i>The dictionary sense of cumulative effects</i>	24
4.2 <i>The multiple stressor/cumulative effects problem</i>	25
4.3 <i>The Dye understanding of cumulative effects</i>	i
5. EFFECTS OF LOW PROBABILITY BUT HIGH POTENTIAL IMPACT.....	28
5.1 <i>An example</i>	28
5.2 <i>Extinction of species</i>	30
6. ASSESSING THE CONSEQUENCES OF AN EFFECT	32
6.1 <i>Qualitative assessment</i>	32
6.2 <i>Attempts at quantification of the risk</i>	33
7. THE EFFECTS OF ACTIVITIES ON PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES	34
7.1 <i>Positive social/cultural and financial (“economic”) effects</i>	34
7.2 <i>Negative social effects</i>	34
7.3 <i>Effects on safety</i>	35
7.4 <i>Noise effects</i>	35
7.5 <i>Odours</i>	35
7.6 <i>Effects on tangata whenua</i>	36
7.7 <i>Heritage</i>	37
7.8 <i>Direct “nuisances”</i>	37
8. NATURAL HAZARDS AND THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE	38
8.1 <i>Natural hazards</i>	38
8.2 <i>The effects of climate change</i>	38
9. RISK MANAGEMENT	42
9.1 <i>Permits for managing effects versus taxes</i>	42
9.2 <i>Reversibility</i>	43
9.3 <i>Adaptive management</i>	43
9.4 <i>Environmental compensation (offsetting effects)</i>	45
10. WEIGHING THE EFFECTS	45