

## CONCERNS IN MORE DETAIL

### 1 Aerial Deployment of poison baits

Compound 1080, when distributed by aerial means, is far harder to control than when it is distributed using ground-based methods. In the photograph (Reference 4), taken on 23 July 2006, the same week the 1080 baits were air-dropped, three poison baits are visible on the roadway immediately adjacent to the Big Bush Conservation area (NZMS 260 sheet H45 GR 832 498). This public road runs through areas, on one side conservation land (see sign in background) and on the other, privately owned plantation forest just planted for its second rotation.

Bait placement involving global positioning systems (GPS) is reputed (reference 15) not to be haphazard, but accidental placement on a public road is clearly a regular occurrence - these were not the only baits found on the road.

### 2 Amount of 1080 used

New Zealand is reportedly the major world user of compound 1080, using about 80% of the world output, and is arguably one of the few countries where its deployment by aerial means is permitted (Reference 18).

- 1 I find it significant that the manufacturer makes quite specific recommendations about the use of the baits treated with this poison: as a ground baiting toxin only. No mention is made of aerial application of this substance, nor of the aerial deployment of baits treated with this substance. The need for care in its storage and the disposal of the leftover pesticide as well as of the empty container is given. Avoidance of availability to the general public is urged as is the need for careful disposal of the bodies of poisoned pests (Reference 43).

Knowledge that more than 12,000 tonnes of baits treated with compound 1080 were spread by aerial means over NZ for the period 2000 to 2005 inclusive, apparently without knowledge of the target pest populations for which the control efforts were being made (References 1, 21 and 22). This is despite the official acceptance that,

"use of 1080 is controversial due to its lack of specificity." (Reference 23).

Others routinely question its use (Reference 51), worried about the unseen, or at least less easily observed functions of the compound once it is washed into the soil biome.

Perhaps of even more concern was the advice that by late 2004, some 8,133 kgs had been imported and stockpiled in NZ but the amount that now remains is uncertain (Reference 32).

### 3 Land areas subject to aerial 1080 operations

Another aspect of the widespread use of aerial-dropped 1080 baits about which I have concern is the large land areas subject to 1080 poison operations: 10,000 hectares on many occasions, and in some cases more than 50,000 hectares (Reference 35).

The closure of such extensive land areas to hunters for operational reasons for some time (often more than six months) effectively removes hunting opportunity from the public including hunters. Selection of alternative hunting areas (assuming they too are not subject to poison operations) usually increases travel times, leading to greater fuel consumption and generally, reduced hunting opportunity. This situation is now quite common to many parts of New Zealand (Reference 35, 36, 13).

Implications for reduced game kill, a significant factor in the table fare for many New Zealanders, are obvious (Reference 33).

I believe that the prospects of compound 1080 getting into the food chain are much enhanced by the aerial dropping of baits treated with compound 1080, and if any was found by our export customers, particularly in Europe, where awareness of contamination is of widespread public concern, the consequences for our export markets could be dire (References 10, 31).

#### **4 Poisoning of primary produce**

Poisoning of non-target species and/or of areas not intended for poisoning are far more likely when aerial means of poison bait distribution are used (References 2,3,4).

Accidental contamination of processed feral deer and pig carcasses has long been a cause for concern, to judge from newspaper reports (References 2, 24, 25, 26,) and scientific papers (References 27, 28, 29). Reported poison residues brought about the temporary end of the multi-million dollar commercial wild animal meat recovery industry in 2002 (References 10, 31). The recent increase in venison prices and changes in feral venison processing regulations have encouraged some feral wild animal recovery for export (Reference 33).

A significant non-target kill was reported after an aerial operation involving cereal baits for possum control in the Blue Mountains RTIA resulted in a 66% to 75% kill of all deer present in the operational area (Reference 30). This was despite the expressed warnings based on earlier reports of such by kill (albeit of red deer, not of fallow) (Reference 12).

In over forty years of recreational hunting, over many parts of the South, North and Stewart Islands of New Zealand, I have never found evidence of bovine TB in wild animal carcasses. Many of these have been examined by hunting companions who had recent meat inspection experience or were in charge of an abattoir where inspection of meat was a requirement.

#### **5 Concern about poison contamination compared to bovine TB infection**

Potential overseas clients seem to be far less concerned about the presence of bovine TB (which is endemic to many client nations) than about the contamination of primary produce with poison residues (References 11, 31).

Recreational hunters hoping to hunt in areas subject to poison operations are advised to