

Save Foulden Maar

TO: Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern, Hon Eugenie Sage, Hon David Parker, Hon Damien O'Connor, Hon Grant Robertson, Hon Dr Megan Woods, Hon Shane Jones, Hon James Shaw, Hon Clare Curran, Hon Dr David Clark, Dunedin City Council, Otago Regional Council.

We are calling on you to stop the destruction of Foulden Maar, near Middlemarch in Central Otago, by Plaman Resources Limited.

We ask that you reject Plaman Resources Limited's application to purchase the neighbouring farm (sensitive land), which is currently with the Overseas Investment Office.

We ask that you acquire the land currently owned by Plaman Resources Limited and turn Foulden Maar into a scientific reserve under section 21 of the Reserves Act 1977.

Additionally, we ask that Foulden Maar is classified as an area of outstanding natural features so that it may be protected by section 6(b) of the Resource Management Act.

Why is this important?

Foulden Maar is the only site in the Southern Hemisphere that contains such high-quality data about the last major period of de-glaciation in Antarctica. In the face of human-induced climate change, we have no mandate to destroy a place that could help future generations to cope with the impacts of climate chaos and to plan for the future.

Foulden Maar is one of New Zealand's pre-eminent fossil sites that provides a unique window into New Zealand's geological past and the evolution of our enigmatic biodiversity.

The maar was formed 23 million years ago by a volcanic eruption and the shallow crater left behind was gradually filled with layers of microscopic algae to form diatomite. This has preserved an exquisite and detailed fossil record spanning around 130,000 years that includes freshwater fish, flowers, fruits, seeds, bark and fungi, as well as beetles, ants, scale insects, termites and other invertebrates. It is also highly likely to contain moa fossils and possibly crocodiles. New Zealand led research is already studying the fossils that have been discovered in collaboration with experts from all over the world.

Plaman Resources plan to mine the entire maar of all that it contains. They will export diatomite for use as a stock food supplement on factory farms and feedlots and as a fertiliser on environmentally destructive palm plantations in south-east Asia.

Plaman have an application with the Overseas Investment Office to purchase another 400 hectares of surrounding land, which is required to make their proposal commercially viable. This would give them the ability to fully exploit the maar and establish mine infrastructure that will operate 24/7. This will permanently exclude access for scientists to continue internationally-recognised research, currently funded by the Royal Society of New

Zealand's Marsden Fund.

It is critical that the Overseas Investment Office declines this application immediately.

The government has an opportunity to protect this unique geological site and the wealth of information it contains by creating a scientific reserve under section 21 of the Reserves Act 1977.

This would honour our geological heritage and contribute significantly to the sustainable development of the region through eco-tourism initiatives. It would also allow for crucial science and research in the area to continue unhindered and protect the site for future generations.

After all, it was none other than Superman, Christopher Reeves, who said: “so many of our dreams at first seem impossible, then they seem improbable, and then, when we summon the will, they soon become inevitable.”

More information:

www.savefouldenmaar.co.nz

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A note to the signature collector...

Thank you for supporting the campaign to save Foulden Maar by printing this petition and helping to collect signatures.

Once you have collected them, please either scan the forms and email them to action@savefouldenmaar.co.nz, or post them to:

ATTN: Kimberley Collins
C/O PetriDish
8 Stafford Street
Dunedin Central
Dunedin 9010