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PRESS RELEASE: New Zealand celebrates first dedication to The Queen's Commonwealth Canopy

Today, New Zealand launched its first dedication, the Mount Terako Covenant, to The Queen's Commonwealth Canopy (QCC), a pan-Commonwealth forest conservation initiative in Her Majesty The Queen's name.

The dedication was unveiled by Her Excellency, Dame Patsy Reddy, Governor-General of New Zealand, at Mount Lyford Lodge, Waiiau in North Canterbury. The Minister of Conservation, the Hon Maggie Barry, was also present.

Established by Sue and Peter Turnbull, who own a farm on Mount Terako, in partnership with the Queen Elizabeth II National Trust (the National Trust), the dedication will protect one of the few larger areas of forest remaining on Canterbury's modified private land. Protection of the forest is made all the more significant given there are very few forests left in the Canterbury landscape containing primary forest.

The area also has significant landscape values and will extend and enhance habitat options for native species because of its good connectivity to the surrounding protected areas of Snowden Scenic Reserve, Molesworth Recreation reserve and Ka Whata Tu o Rakihouia Conservation Park.

To support the initiative in New Zealand, the Government announced it would spend \$1 million over 3 years, allocated to the National Trust to help it extend the network of covenants over native forest on private land.

Dame Patsy said: "I am delighted to help celebrate the QCC launch and registration of the Mount Terako Covenant. This will protect the natural values of a precious forest ecosystem, and align with moves to protect indigenous forests throughout the Commonwealth."

Michael Lake CBE, Director of The Royal Commonwealth Society said: "We warmly welcome New Zealand's first dedication to the QCC. The National Trust's model of working with land owners to protect native forests on private land provides yet another example that other

Commonwealth countries can look to when pursuing their own forest conservation agendas. New Zealand's three-year commitment to create QCC Covenants is expected to see many more such dedications to this important Commonwealth initiative, conceived in The Queen's name and honoring Her commitment as Head of the Commonwealth."

New Zealand's dedication joins those received by Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Belize, Canada, Jamaica, Fiji, Malta, Mauritius, Namibia, Papua New Guinea, Saint Christopher (Kitts) and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Seychelles, Singapore, Sri Lanka, the United Kingdom and Zambia.

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Notes to Editors:

The Queen's Commonwealth Canopy (QCC) was launched in 2015 with the goal of uniting the Commonwealth's 52 members in conserving forests for future generations. The initiative, in The Queen's name, will raise awareness of the Commonwealth's 2.3 billion citizens of the value of saving forests and facilitate knowledge exchange between Commonwealth members, sharing best practices and creating new, collaborative initiatives for forest conservation. www.queenscommonwealthcanopy.org

The Queen Elizabeth II National Trust is an independent statutory organisation and a registered charity. It was set up in 1977 to 'encourage and promote, for the benefit of New Zealand, the provision, protection, preservation and enhancement of open space'. www.openspace.org.nz

The QCC Partners:



THE ROYAL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY

The Royal Commonwealth Society (RCS)

is a network of individuals and organisations committed to improving the lives and prospects of Commonwealth citizens across the world. www.thercs.org



Cool Earth is an award-winning, UK-based charity that works alongside indigenous villages to halt rainforest destruction. www.coolearth.org



The Commonwealth Forestry Association links foresters, scientists, students and policy-makers throughout the Commonwealth to seek ways of wise forest management. www.cfa-international.org

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