

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Water Consultation Submissions](#)
Subject: Submission on water
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Submission on water

I am deeply concerned that this government is contemplating the transfer of ownership or any form of control over water in Aotearoa New Zealand. I fully support the Waitangi Tribunal's settling of grievances for each iwi. But it is overstepping the mark when it advises the government that Maori rights and interests in water are akin to ownership, because water is used for food trade, travel, in rituals, waiata and (and here we cross over into fairytale myth that should play no part in serious discussions) the abode of taniwha. It can equally be argued that any of the 50+ races residing in this country use water for the same or similar range of activities. So to argue ownership on this basis is spurious, misleading and unacceptable.

Water, like air, is a natural resource to which all human beings must continue to have an inalienable right. If the government starts to apportion ownership to water, then the risk is that it effectively becomes privatised, as iwi may well engage the services of huge private water companies to process this precious resource and sell it at a profit, as has happened in many jurisdictions where such global corporations have operated. I cite one article, which although is not recent, demonstrates the dangers of privatising water:

<https://www.icij.org/projects/waterbarons/cholera-and-age-water-barons>

I am also concerned about the reports of the diversion of vast amounts of water by companies from areas of scarcity, so that crops can be watered or bottles filled and sold. On a large scale look at the way the Mekong is being drained. On a smaller but still significant scale we have Ashburton Council's proposed granting of access to 40 billion litres of artesian water to a private water bottling company.

I do not want my children and grandchildren to inherit a country in which the basic elements of life are completely privatised. It was totally unacceptable that this government sold 49% of our power generation. Now they want to give away ownership of our water.

I must stress that my objection is not racist, as I am sure some will wish to portray it. As I have said, I am fully supportive of Maori self determination. I would object to the nomination of anyone at all as owners of the actual water. Processing and purifying water for human consumption is currently the task of local councils, and we expect to pay a reasonable amount for this. Bottling water, carbonating it etc can be left to private companies. But the water itself **MUST** remain accessible to all.

Regards

Chris Bangs

