

Subject: Water Rights

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I wish to register my total opposition to any action by the Government of New Zealand to in any way allocate ownership of, co-governance of or involvement in the decision-making process surrounding fresh water to any special interest group (ie. Maori). Currently, nobody owns the country's freshwater as acknowledge by Nick Smith the Minister responsible for the government's fresh water policy, but is administered by the country's local and territorial authorities. The claim that Maori are entitled to an exclusive interest in water under the Treaty of Waitangi are arguable (see article posted 3 April 2016 by A A P Willy LLM.) . The government has had regular discussions with the Iwi Leaders Group and it is clear that the government is open to discussing both co-governance of and the allocation of fresh water to persons of Maori blood on a race basis. This would provide some 16% of the population with exclusive rights over the remaining 84%. (based on "Enrolment Statistics By Electorate" on the elections.org website as at March 2015 there were 2,921,189 eligible electors on the General Roll and 240,795 on the Maori Roll). One of the dangers of allocating such rights to a special interest group would be to allow that group to delay decisions around the use of water with the view to obtaining some monetary (or other) payment. Other interesting articles posted by Dr. Don Brash dated 20 September 2015 and 27 March 2016. Thank you. Anthony Fleete.