

Subject: Water quality standards submission

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Date: 22/04/2016 10:25 PM

I wish to make the following submission on the water quality standards Clean fresh water is fundamentally important for ecological and human health. Therefore the standard that we should strive for is the best water quality that it is possible to have rather than compromising. All our streams should be safe for humans to swim in and most should also be safe to drink and gather food from. There are historical issues which will mean that many streams will never reach such a standard but there is no excuse for water quality to decline. Water quality should be measured by catchment and not by region and a more robust system of monitoring should be implemented. Too much water is currently wasted resulting in greater demand than necessary, for example 1 large irrigation systems running during the heat of the day 2 Farming choices that are in appropriate for the local climate 2 Drinking water being used to flush toilets 3 Inefficient plumbing resulting in long delays in hot water reaching taps 4 Rainwater running off roofs into waste water instead of being caught in water tanks and used for washing and toilets There should be mandatory water conservation and recycling measures to address this wastage and reduce depletion of aquifers, every new house should have a water tank and subsidies should be given to encourage people to install water tanks on existing properties in urban areas. Farming and horticultural businesses should factor in the maintenance of water quality and other ecosystem services as part of the costs of business and those who cannot afford to protect the environment from degradation should not be considered viable businesses. Forestry operations and housing developments which disturb the soil and cause massive run off and siltation of streams should have mandatory vegetation buffers of at least 50 metres from any waterway. Water conservation orders should be protected from political interference. Helen Lindsay [REDACTED]