

Subject: FW: SUBMISSION

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To: Water Consultation Questions and Comments

Subject: SUBMISSION

- REIHANA ROBINSON

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I DO NOT HAVE TIME TO VISIT WELLINGTON TO SPEAK TO THIS BUT I FEEL VERY STRONGLY ALL THE POINTS MUST BE CONSIDERED. IT IS A BARE CRITERIA MINIMUM TO HAVE SWIMMABLE RIVERS FOR OUR MOKOPUNA. PLEASE SEE THAT THIS IS ENSHRINED.

THANK YOU

REIHANA ROBINSON

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- Rivers should be at least "swimmable" but preferably "healthy" based on aquatic invertebrate populations. In short healthy ecosystems.
- There should be no room for weak compromises such as in proposed "freshwater management units". Water quality must be managed on a watershed and aquifer basis, not a piece meal approach.
- Water must not be tradeable, i.e. tradeable water rights. The parallel is in tradeable fish quotas (Quota Management System) where the big players inevitably and eventually buy out the smaller players. This results in the big players, usually of corporate character, dominating the resource. From time to time politicians and bureaucrats speak glowingly of NZ's well managed fishery under the QMS. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Commercial use of water must be charged for with payments going directly into a fund for restoration of rivers.

It must not be tradeable.

Charges must only apply to commercial extraction or use of water. Recreational (non profit) cannot be charged.

- Rivers and streams must be managed on a watershed or catchment basis. Riparian strips to exclude stock in the case of intensive dairying, are just one aspect. However, the most important factor is total watershed management with soil health and structure the key.
- Land use and avoidance of monocultures is vital to restoring water quantity (flows) and quality. Strategies for large scale dairying development of a corporate nature is abhorrent especially in low rainfall areas where irrigation at the expense of aquifers and rivers becomes the driving factor. Trying to turn the Mackenzie Basin and Canterbury into gigantic dairy farming areas can only have disastrous long term consequences for the public's water resource both on flows and quality the latter through nitrate contaminants.
- Planning. This comes back to the fundamental flaw in the RMA. Under the previous town and country planning law, zoning could control land use and avoid the creation of monocultures. As a former town and country planner, I consider the RMA to be lacking vital controls on land use.

Potentially and alarmingly aggravating that deficiency has been stated intentions by Environment and Conservation ministers to weaken the RMA's standards and safeguards on the public resource of water.

There is an irony coming from the lips of Ministers of Conservation and Environment.

- Siltation. Dairying has received bad press largely through Fish and Game's single publicity focus. Surprisingly Fish and Game and the public in general ignore accelerated sedimentation of streams and rivers through monocultures of forestry. Pine trees use abnormal amounts of water in growth. Consequently rural residents will tell of streams losing water flow as a planted pine forest grows.

Pines also introduce an increasing acidic character to soils to the detriment of the soil. Then at harvesting time, wholesale clear felling causes soil, debris and log run off.