



Ministry for the
Environment
Manatū Mō Te Taiao

Status Report

Minister for the Environment

Minister for Climate Change Issues

Week beginning 15 March 2010



Seen by Hon Dr Nick Smith

Date _____

1. Actions from the meeting of 8 March 2010

- 1.6 **ECan review** – You agreed that we should draft individual responses to letters received from Councils etc on this review. **Noted.**

Kevin Currie/Mark Sowden

5. Further information requested by you

- 5.1 **ECan review** – In the event that Cabinet adopts proposals to replace Council with Commissioners, advice has been provided to you as to whether you can seek Cabinet's provisional approval of Commissioners before legislation is passed.

Kevin Currie

6. Major Media Items from the past week

- 6.1 **Continued coverage on ECan:** The Weekend Press (6 March) focused on the possibility that an Environment Canterbury commissioner role would go to former Prime Minister Jenny Shipley. However, you have been quoted as saying that this was "premature speculation". The article quotes Christchurch Central MP Brendon Burns (Labour's water spokesman) as saying that the future management of Canterbury water was too precious to be handed over to a succession of former National Government Ministers.

Another article in The Press (4 March) says that ECan is offering an 'olive branch' to the government. Eleven of the fourteen ECan councillors have signed a document saying that they want to keep their jobs, but also asking for a commissioner-adviser to manage the region's water. A further recommendation was to have an external advisory group set up to assist the commissioner and councillors. The advisory group would consist of two members of Local Government New Zealand's regional affairs committee, a Ngai Tahu representative, a member of the Canterbury Mayoral forum, Alec Neill and the commissioner-adviser. Alec Neill said "We've come up with what we believe ticks all the boxes for the government to carry out their direction as to water, but allows for the community to retain elected representation".