

Subject: Submission on Clean Water: National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2017

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Hello

Please find below my submission on Clean Water: National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2017.

[Submission on Clean Water: National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2017](#)

Thank you for the opportunity to submit on this policy statement. I commend the organizations and individuals who have contributed to the statement on what is a very divisive issue.

I am a sheep and beef farmer in the Wairoa region of Hawkes Bay. I support improving the state of our water and look forward to a time when the freshwater ecosystem is healthy and flourishing and when I and my children and grandchildren can drink the waters of our rivers, swim and fish in them without fear of contamination.

1. Improving our water will require everyone in NZ to take part in the goal, from people and businesses living and working in the high catchments to those at the river-mouth. We all need this water and all must contribute to its health. This is a policy where strategies need to be funded by all. Monitoring and action must be nationally supported, as small regions do not have the populations to fund such work on their own.

2. It is disappointing that the focus in this document appears to be on swim-ability. This excludes other uses that water is put to, and which should be considered, eg drinking water. It also appears to be fixated on farmers as polluters, when other groups such as electricity producers, forestry, town councils and other industries also contribute to pollution as we have recently seen in the news. These groups should also be held to account.

3. It is apparent that the changes in criteria for grades of water quality will disguise a lack of true improvement in the water (eg in the E.coli levels). This is just "shifting the goal post". We cannot wait for later improvements, we need to make them now.

4. Stock exclusion is going to be fraught with difficulties and expense. On our own farm we already fence off a small hill-country QEII block to ensure a natural and healthy environment for fauna and flora, but maintaining that fencing is expensive, difficult and time consuming. This has shown us some of the problems we may face if asked to fence off waterways. So while I applaud the goal, I would caution that all New Zealanders must bear this cost to some extent and any action over lack of compliance must be reasonably considered, ie not designed to break the economics of the defaulter, but rather supporting compliance.

5. Lastly I recommend that national investment be made in supplying quality rural communications systems that will allow farmers and other inhabitants in those areas to use new technologies that are being developed, such as virtual fencing, remote water-level and water quality monitoring, etc. Very few rural areas have such quality communications systems available to them currently and this is holding farmers back from developing methods to support improvement in water quality. Such investment could enable farmers in playing their part in the strategies suggested. I acknowledge that this recommendation would seem not to fall under the remit of the policy statement but in the same way that the whole of our society is dependent on an ecosystem that will supply us with quality water, we also need laws, government policies and infrastructures that work together and will enable everyone to contribute to that quality. Therefore I believe rural farmers will find it easier to comply with the strategies if they have supporting infrastructure to enable new kinds of fencing, etc.

Yours sincerely

Judy Bogaard

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