Your submission to Action for healthy waterways – consultation

Graham Robertson, Matamata-Piako District Council

Submitter Type: Local Government

**Clause**
Proposals as a whole - please refer to questions 1-3 on page 19 of the discussion document

**Notes**
The Matamata Piako District Council supports the intention of Government to improve the health of the country’s waterways and to provide policy tools to enable this to happen. However it shares the concerns of the Local Government Association that the reality is that the pace of freshwater change can only proceed as fast as a communities ability to pay. It also agrees that getting the details and timeline settings will be critical for both urban and rural communities. Freshwater is not the only matter that is needing to be addressed by councils and in particular is the need to upgrade potable water systems. MPDC notes that land in this district is widely used for industry associated with food production and increasingly for the production of potatoes and other vegetables. In this regard we are replacing Pukekohe as a “food bowl”. It is essential to these activities that there is a supply of potable water and also the ability to dispose of the waste arising from them. Our communities are concerned with rate increases exceeding the rate of inflation but this will become inevitable with increasing requirements to improve the environment and the water we drink – to say nothing of other issues that lead to increasing costs. Seeking more efficient methods of carrying out our activities can only go so far and the lack of suitably qualified staff is already a real issue. There is a significant cost to comply with the reporting standards envisaged and the upgrading of infrastructure to comply with higher standards. It is appreciated that there are significant environmental, social and cultural benefits but alongside is this the need to fund the program - whether this is from rates, taxes or the increased cost of goods.

**Clause**
Impacts and implementation - please refer to questions 4-6 on page 19 of the discussion document

**Notes**
see above

**Clause**
Water commission and other comments - please refer to questions 7-8 on page 19 of the discussion document

**Notes**
see above