Your submission to Action for healthy waterways – consultation

Reference no: 221
Submitter Type: NGO

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

Notes
Qu.8: Precious Resource We agree that freshwater is the most precious resource that New Zealand has. It is vital that we protect it from pollution and foreign interests trying to control it, buy it, bottle it. We are concerned that the current management plans make no mention of this second possibility. This is something that is happening all over NZ right now and we must act to curb it before we no longer control our water at all. We are in broad agreement that the proposals are needed, the main concern is their implementation. How can you ensure that the actions required are adhered to? Protection of Waterways It is good to see that the health of the water will be a primary concern, however we do not think that such concerns will remain the forefront when confronted with difficult subjects such as dairy herd numbers. In many areas the waterways have been fouled by over dairying and the water quality has suffered enormously. Many rivers are not fully fenced from livestock and it is problematic to do so, current legislation states that they should not have access to rivers, yet it is clear that time and again cattle get in the local waterways. How is this new plan actually going to address that question. It simply reiterates what is already in place. In some places, the only way to return water quality will be to limit herd numbers. Where is the ability to do so? Persistent Polluters We would like to see that polluters will be appropriately fined, in accordance with their income, not simply what amounts to a paltry sum that means it is much better for them to pay a fine than to put into action the proposals listed. Can you ensure that persistent polluters are removed from the area or prevented from operating? Given our current numbers of dairy cows, which are already causing problems, there should no longer be options to convert to dairying. NZ does not need any more dairy farms, we need to reduce the national herd numbers, not increase them. Dairy Phase Out We are aware that intensive winter grazing, feedlots and stock holding areas are difficult to manage and often result in water quality degradation, with this in mind, these styles of farming should be decreased and phased out. This should be inline with other government policies to reduce dairy herd numbers overall. Policy Interactions There needs to be cross communication with other government departments to ensure that all actions will have a net positive effect. New Zealand must stick to the Paris Agreement and the implementation of the Zero Carbon Bill will affect many other areas of government policies. Loopholes The current action plan has great potential, however we are concerned that there will be loopholes and little actual monitoring done, let alone regulation, fines and support for ensuring the practices are adhered to. It's ability to deliver will depend on everyone adhering to them. Who will be checking? How often? Will there be fines for those who do not comply?

Clause
Policy interactions - please refer to questions 79-80 on page 101 of the discussion document

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Supporting documents from your Submission

Plight_of_Freshwater_Fish_in_NZ_Rivers.pdf Uploaded on 10/02/2019 at 03:42PM