MFE Consultation “Action for Healthy Waterways”

Submission by: Carbon Neutral NZ Trust, Kerikeri Branch
Writer: Carbon Neutral NZ Trust is a national “umbrella” organisation for citizen-based, bottom-up community initiatives aimed at addressing climate change at the local level.

Generally, we strongly support the intended protection and improvement of waterways and the environment as proposed, including the Te Mana o Te Wai collaboration.

We would like to add some points:

• Effective rules and targets/limits are required and must be monitored and enforced by Regional Councils and District Councils (wastewater systems).

• It is important to avoid that farmers feel unduly victimised by the new rules, but they need to be made to understand and accept the need to protect and (where necessary) improve the waterways and environment, on which their own and everyone’s livelihood is based. Farms applying “Best practice” already clearly show what is possible with even improved bottom line results.

• Not only farmers, but everyone, every business and government agency, including the six largest hydro-schemes must adhere to the environmental protection rules and freshwater policy.

• Science needs to be enhanced and supported as well as offered and applied to reach the targets.

• Applications for intended land-use changes resulting in higher degrees of pollution than permitted must be rejected outright.

• Existing businesses, which already cause the set limits to be exceeded must be obliged to reduce the degree of pollution urgently (i.e. within a reasonably short period) to permitted levels based on plans mentored, monitored, and controlled by Regional Councils; while help and support should be offered generously as far as required and possible, severe penalties and possibly closing down of the operations should be imposed to continuous polluters.

We agree to publication of my submission