

**From:** [ withheld ]  
**To:** [WaterReformPublicConsultation](#)  
**Subject:** Rivers are for swimming  
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Rivers are a principle source of freshwater; a commodity necessary for life, both for human consumption and for the maintenance of ecosystems that we rely upon.

Pollution to river systems affects that local area as well as a cascade of systems further downstream; through riparian edges, estuaries (our natural filter service) through to the marine environment.

A spoiled river affects many an industry; through aquaculture with loss due to contaminated fish and shellfish, disturbance to water turbines and water reservoirs, through to the tourism industry and recreational users suffering from loss of aesthetics and nature (aquatic life), as well as a loss of a piece of national identity (scenery and way of life that we grew up with).

So yes rivers are for swimming, and when in a state to do so, are also for the continued maintenance of many other essential ecosystem services.

As well as supporting the following points from the Green Party covered below:

I want strong rules that protect our rivers and ensure that they are safe for swimming. The proposed changes are inadequate. Ensuring rivers are clean enough to swim in should be a compulsory standard, not optional.

Too many recognised water quality indicators are missing. If councils don't have to monitor these indicators then we don't get an accurate understanding of the state of our waterways.

The rules should ensure:

- \* water clarity and periphyton cover (a measure of how much algae, bacteria and detritus is covering the river bed) are monitored, to ensure our rivers are safe for swimming;
- \* monitoring of aquatic insects to ensure our rivers are healthy;
- \* there is a limit on both problem pollutants nitrogen and phosphorus so they don't cause nuisance algal growth; and
- \* a limit on sediment to ensure our rivers are healthy.

Any exemptions to the rules should be limited to a list of specific water bodies.

One certain way to help protect our rivers is to ensure that we look after them and that the water is clean enough for swimming, not just wading or boating. Human health and our economy depend on safeguarding our environment.

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