

I am concerned about proposed changes to water quality limits within New Zealand. It seems clear to me that any changes to water quality policy would involve tighter restrictions and more careful monitoring. However, it is becoming frustrating, bordering on frightening, that within New Zealand we are letting our standards slip, and it is our environment that is suffering.

To have water quality standards which do not allow safe swimming and fishing, and do not accommodate healthy freshwater ecosystems in New Zealand is beyond belief. It can be difficult to know where to draw the line, but I have already seen first hand in Canterbury the degradation of rivers to levels where swimming is no longer safe. If this has happened within such a short period of time I dare not think of the state of all rivers within a decade or two.

Calling ourselves a clean and green country is now becoming more of a joke than a self-description. This I have observed from conversing with environmentalists from other countries. My efforts in defending environmental decisions in NZ (especially concerning freshwater ecosystems) are decreasing with the increase in ridiculous decision-making. These decisions are based solely on economic gain and disregard sound scientific data concerning ecosystem health. It deeply saddens me to see where this country is headed if we continue in this manner.

Thank you for considering this submission.