

**Submission on “PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE  
NATIONAL POLICY STATEMENT FOR FRESHWATER MANAGEMENT 2011**

Further to the above proposals, there is no doubt that the freshwater management needs a significant overhaul as clearly shown by the large number of reports recently published (including the Commissioner for the Environment) which shows that unless something is put in place quickly our rivers and lakes will be severely affected.

However there are a number of issues in the proposals which tend to indicate that the Ministry for the Environment is not taking the issue seriously.

- A The suggestion that the control of freshwater resources be vested in regional and local councils is lacking in judgement.

As shown in the recent reports, the main contributors to the degradation of freshwater resources in New Zealand comes from the farming industry who are also significantly represented on regional councils. To expect these councillors to give totally unbiased judgements on these issues is naïve and the control of freshwater resources should lie with the Government and in particular the Ministry of the Environment.

- B It is my understanding that it is proposed that the bottom line for the setting of the health of freshwater resources is below that which allows safe swimming but above that which allows safe wading, canoeing etc. This is a totally illogical standard. Surely those making the proposals are aware that waders, canoeists etc often end up in the water. To suggest that we should expose them to unhealthy water conditions deliberately is totally irresponsible. To also suggest that we expose the thousands of children living on rural properties to unhealthy swimming conditions is also incredible.

New Zealand’s freshwater resources are in our hands to protect not only for our generation but for future generations and to allow degradation simply to improve economic performance is not acceptable.

Industrial, farming, agricultural and forestry industries should, as part of their economic feasibility, build in costs which maintain or enhance the environment. If the activities are unable to sustain the costs then they are of no benefit to the New Zealand people and the New Zealand way of life and should not be undertaken.

- C The time lines and the fact that existing activities will be able to continue unchanged despite clear evidence that they are badly damaging the environment clearly shows that those proposing the amendments do not understand the severity of the situation.

To suggest that some of the proposals will have a thirty year time line is ludicrous.

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