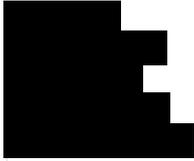


Your submission to Clean Water

Caroline Greig



Clause

What are your thoughts on the proposed swimming targets, for example, on the timeframes and categories?

Notes

I think the targets are poor. I think more waterways should be swimmable and the timeline of 23 years is far too long. The polluters need to be made to stop polluting and start cleaning up, beginning immediately. There should be a halt on more dairy farms going in, unless they are intended in traditional dairying areas (eg Waikato, Taranaki) where there is sufficient rainfall to allow for the farm's water needs to be met totally by rain harvesting. They should also show that stock will be nowhere near waterways.

Clause

What do you think about the proposed amendments to the Freshwater NPS?

Notes

Councils are currently not doing an adequate job to ensure high water quality. There are many factors in play, including involvement of people with vested interests and a lack of money to monitor which usually leads to "self-monitoring" by the polluter. This is too important a job to be left to councils. I believe this needs to be controlled by central government, and have adequate funding. I do not want the inclusion of consideration of the community's economic well-being in the policy as I believe that this will only benefit an intended polluter. Too often I have heard the argument that jobs will be generated by a proposed operation yet seen little or none of that happening, while the adverse environment impacts raised by objectors do occur - to the cost of the community. I think water testing should be by central government using uniform testing which is in alignment with high quality testing overseas. The results of this testing should be readily available to anyone wanting to see it.

Clause

What are your thoughts on the proposed stock exclusion regulation, for example, the timeframes and stock types to be excluded?

Notes

There is sense in being most restrictive on the lower gradient, highly intensive land where the greatest pollution occurs and where exclusion of the animals from the waterways is easier and cheaper to do. The suggestion to the use of other than fixed farm fencing is reasonable - SO LONG AS it is effective and it is actually done. By opting for easier, more cost effective measures, the timeline for completing this should be moved much closer.. I have major concerns regarding the willingness of some farmers to comply, as well as the lack of monitoring and action taken when transgressions occur. One example which comes to mind is the cattle seen in Lake Taylor, owned by 2 prominent (and presumed to be wealthy) NZers, namely Dame Sian Elias and Hugh Fletcher. I am sure examples such as that are occurring in many places across New Zealand and the consequences to the transgressors seem to be minimal, if they exist at all. This does not inspire confidence that the existence of rules to keep stock out of waterways will be anywhere close to 100% effective. As well, I am not sure whether exclusion of stock from waterways was an issue in the animal-derived E.coli contamination of the water supply in Hawkes Bay which caused so many people to be ill. I found it appalling that it was not safe to drink water from taps in "clean green" New Zealand, and believe that high stocking rates in flood-prone areas need to be curtailed.

Clause

Do you have any other comments on the contents of the Clean Water discussion document?

Notes

I was born in Auckland and have spent most of my life living there. For the last 33 years I have lived in an area of Auckland where our water supply is directly derived from rain collection. During that time, my husband and I have raised 3 sons, had an extensive vegetable garden and, for the last 15 years or so, enjoyed a swimming pool which we had put in. We also run stock on our 8 acres. Despite all those demands for water, we have rarely had to buy in water because we have been conscious of conserving and recycling it. I have felt for a long time that many water users do not appreciate the resource and tend to squander it. Certainly the majority of the times we have had to buy in water, it was immediately after we had had "townies" to stay. I believe that water in New Zealand is owned by all its people. When I see it being taken for some use or other, I ask myself who benefits from the taking of that resource, and what is the effect on the environment. When it is taken for something such as the generation of electricity, while there is often an adverse effect on the environment, there is usually benefit for many people. However, in cases where water is taken for private enterprise the benefits appear to be limited to relatively few people while the adverse impacts affect many. I am very unhappy with the taking of water for dairy farms which have been put in totally inappropriate places, such as the Canterbury Plains and other drought "prone" regions. It feels to me that the people of NZ are being asked to subsidise these farmers. Much more thought needs to be put into where such operations are being developed. This is only likely to happen when farmers and owners of other water-requiring operations have to pay for the resource. It will then quickly become apparent that it is not cost-effective to have that particular operation in that location. I can easily remember being able to swim safely in any waterway when I was growing up. I am very disturbed by the change in that situation during the lifetime of my children. We used to swim in the river at the bottom of our land but no longer do so. The combination of water-flow reduction from water being taken for Auckland City's water supply, along with runoff from quarry and dairy farms entering the river have meant the visual quality has deteriorated significantly to the point I would not feel safe swimming in it. I have felt for some years that the "Clean Green" image which is used to market NZ is a sham. I want future generations to be able to enjoy swimming in our waterways as I was as a child. I do not want the waterways to become like so

many I have seen overseas, particularly in Asian countries. In New Zealand we have the benefit of our water being limited to our country. No rivers have to pass through other countries before they reach us. We have control over our water " unless we sell out to foreign companies. I want to have swimmable waterways " wadeable is not acceptable in my opinion. I appreciate that the financial cost of achieving that is likely to be high but I believe the cost of not doing it will be too high when measured in other ways. I am not averse to economic development but I believe too much has occurred in the wrong locations. The benefits have been limited to a few people while the costs are being borne by many. There needs to be SMART development not just AMY development.