



**Ministry for the Environment**

**Submission on Clean Water Consultation 2017**



28 April 2017

## **INTRODUCTION**

- [1] This submission has been prepared by Te Rūnanga-Ā-lwi O Ngāpuhi.
- [2] Te Rūnanga-Ā-lwi O Ngāpuhi is the mandated organisation representing over 120,000 people who identify as Ngāpuhi. Ngāpuhi is the largest Iwi in New Zealand. Te Whare Tapu O Ngāpuhi, i.e. the tribal lands and shores of Ngāpuhi, are generally described as being from Takou Bay through to Whangārei, across to Maungakārama, then northward to the Hokianga, across to Mangamuka and arriving back at Takou Bay.
- [3] As affirmed in Te Tiriti O Waitangi Ngāpuhi is the guardian of the natural resources – land, foreshores, sea, waterways etc – within our tribal region. This includes the foreshores and seabeds extending out from the coast and harbours of Te Whare Tapu O Ngāpuhi and the subject of the current debate over ownership and management of such.
- [4] Ngā Hapū O Ngāpuhi actively exercise their customary rights and responsibilities of kaitiakitanga (guardianship) throughout our rohe. Traditional cultural practices closely tie Ngāpuhi to our coastal shores, waters and whenua.
- [5] Te Rūnanga-Ā-lwi O Ngāpuhi welcomes the opportunity to comment on “Improving our freshwater management: Proposed amendments to the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2011.”

## **GENERAL COMMENTS**

- [6] We acknowledge that improving the way we manage fresh water is critical to New Zealand’s future growth, environmental integrity and cultural well-being.
- [7] We value the benefits of a Treaty-based planning framework for developing freshwater management policy for both central and local government.
- [8] Although we support many of the underlying proposed concepts in the Consultation Document for example stock exclusion and swimmable rivers. However, we are concerned that throughout the years of these freshwater reforms many recommendations provided by the Land and Water Forum have not been carried through with integrity. These recommendations are based on robust science and collaborative processes that are supported by Te Rūnanga-Ā-lwi O Ngāpuhi and need to be implemented to their fullest degree to have effective changes in freshwater reforms.

## **NATIONAL OBJECTIVES FRAMEWORK**

- [9] Te Rūnanga-Ā-lwi O Ngāpuhi acknowledges that from their 2013 submission attributes identified have been included. We note that the National Objectives Framework separates the freshwater system into silo components and we believe that a more integrated and holistic approach be implemented.

## Macroinvertebrate Community Index

- [10] Te Rūnanga-Ā-lwi O Ngāpuhi acknowledge that cultural monitoring approaches identified in their 2013 submission have been supported through the inclusion of MCI. However, Cultural Health Indicators (CHI) is an important and vital component of tangata whenua values, and provides an accurate understanding of the state of all waterways. Te Rūnanga-Ā-lwi O Ngāpuhi seek to have CHI be included to support a holistic cultural approach.
- [11] Policy CB1 is supported that requires regional councils to develop monitoring plans. Te Rūnanga-Ā-lwi O Ngāpuhi believe this policy does not go further enough to require action. We believe that the policy should require regional councils to action a response if MCI scores are below count.

## Dissolved inorganic nitrogen and dissolved reactive phosphorus

- [12] Te Rūnanga-Ā-lwi O Ngāpuhi believe that setting maximum limits to DIN and DRP are required and would like to see that the NPSFM include such a requirement for regional councils to be included in their regional plans.
- [13] To assist regional councils, we seek that mandatory decision making tools in setting limits to DIN and DRP be developed to address water quality issues that lead to periphyton growth.

## Inclusions

- [14] Sediment is one of New Zealand's biggest water quality issue, and not only impacts on freshwater systems it also impacts on coastal marine areas. Although the NOF identifies many attributes that need to be managed, Te Rūnanga-Ā-lwi O Ngāpuhi believe that sedimentation needs to be included. Strong policy direction and development to include sediment attributes in the NOF is sought.

## SWIMMING

- [15] Te Rūnanga-Ā-lwi O Ngāpuhi support the concept that to achieve water quality it needs to be suitable for swimming. However, throughout the consultation document there is lack of consistency when referring to swimming. When referring to 'swimming' replace 'swimmable', 'suitable for immersion' and 'swimming' with the words 'primary contact recreation' so that it includes all manner of activities relating to water immersion.

## Target waterbodies

- [16] It is further noted that 'swimming' referred to in the Consultation Document only apply to 'large rivers and lakes'. This excludes the vast majority of water systems in Te Tai Tokerau. The removal of the *E.coli* attribute table is unacceptable and provides different approaches to dealing with waterbodies that do not qualify as 'large rivers or lakes'. Clarity is required for freshwater objectives for all waterbodies.

## STOCK EXCLUSION

- [17] Te Rūnanga-Ā-Iwi O Ngāpuhi acknowledge that the stock exclusion proposals are in line with the Land and Water Forum's recommendations. However, there is the integration of stock exclusion fencing and riparian management missing.
- [18] Te Rūnanga-Ā-Iwi O Ngāpuhi in their 2013 submission sought for consistent integrated resource management. Stock exclusion and riparian setbacks are intimately linked. Stock exclusion limits stock entering waterways, but does not prevent run-off of nutrients. Setbacks and riparian margins act as filters and preserve natural habitats and prevent erosion.
- [19] Te Rūnanga-Ā-Iwi O Ngāpuhi support a review of existing riparian management and setback assessment tools to produce a new consolidated tool with mandatory national application.

## Timeframes

- [20] Te Rūnanga-Ā-Iwi O Ngāpuhi does not support the 'stock exclusion' term to 2030. It is believed that more urgency is required regarding the setting of freshwater objectives. The timeframe to exclude stock from waterbodies is too long and drawn out, this timeframe needs to be shortened.

## Monitoring

- [21] As part of a Treaty-based framework, Te Rūnanga-Ā-Iwi O Ngāpuhi supports the inclusion of the monitoring requirement and seeks a requirement for hapu /iwi involvement in the monitoring of freshwater bodies, to strengthen and enable Kaitiakitanga and resourcing is made available.

## FRESHWATER IMPROVEMENT FUND

- [22] In general, Te Rūnanga-Ā-Iwi O Ngāpuhi supports a fund that improves the mana of freshwater. Although the Fund criteria includes the provision to increase iwi/hapū capability and capacity in freshwater management, the actual implementation proves difficult and does the complete opposite. The criteria to the Fund lock out whānau, hapū and iwi who are required to put up a minimum of \$200,000 to access the fund. This is currently a huge barrier for hapū and whānau to reach. We seek that the criteria for hapū and iwi take into account mechanisms that provide equitable access for whānau, hapū and iwi.
- [23] We look forward to further developments to this Fund so that there is equitable access for whānau, hapū and iwi.



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Te Rūnanga-Ā-Iwi O Ngāpuhi

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