

SUBMISSION POINTS: General comments

We farm in the King Country in the Mokau catchment within the WRC

Our families have farmed in New Zealand for many generations since the 1850's and have a passionate regard for the land and our environment.

We support improvement in water quality in the Waikato/Waipā catchments

We farm

- 950ha effective intensive property - 80% Cattle 20% sheep
- 1600ha effective hill country property – 50% Cattle 50% sheep
- 150ha Forestry

We have farmed in the King Country for over 30 years and in that time have spent approximately \$300,000 fencing off bush, streams, planting poplars and on the direct costs of water supply to areas where the natural water is fenced off. We have over 500ha in native bush (a lot of it in smaller blocks) fenced off and many kilometres of streams fenced. Further work is planned. I am currently fencing off an area of bush adjacent to the Mapara Kokokako Reserve. I would be working there today if I felt it wasn't necessary to be here to put a case for a balanced and pragmatic approach to the environment in our region.

It has been inspiring to work with DOC staff in our current fencing project and to see their passion and enthusiasm in taking a practical approach to protecting our native birds and bush.

I am also involved in a joint project with Clearwater Hydro to enhance the Mangapehi stream.

I was involved some years ago in instigating and running land care groups and a possum control group in our community with assistance from WRC. I am currently a member of the KCRC group. *and on the West Coast Zone Committee WRC*

We need an approach that works with farmers and landowner that is affordable, practical and has targets that can be proven to be attainable without having a long term detrimental effect on our rural communities.

Many farmers such as ourselves have bought land, and at significant cost to their business have improved the environmental foot print of the land. They have responded to signals from local and central government for their investment decisions. Farmers need to be profitable to enhance their environment.

If New Zealanders want to change the rules to enhance the environment, the burden of those costs should fall on all New Zealanders. We are now all aware that it is not just farmers who are having an effect on the environment. Urban councils are now starting to add up the cost to improve their water ways and harbours

We are concerned with the social and economic implications Plan Change One will have on our region relative to the environmental outcome. More specifically, more science and monitoring at sub catchment level needs to be done and more consideration made for the cost and practicality of the rules.

Over \$14 million was spent on Plan Change One up until the submission process. When considering the huge amount that has been achieved voluntarily with groups such as the Waiangaroa Harbour Care, think how this money could have been better spent on real environmental outcomes. \$14 million could cover the cost of a 30% subsidy from WRC to land owners to exclude cattle from 8000km of streams.

The vision and objectives of Plan Change One is all very well, however, the practicality of achieving these goals is flawed. Niwa scientists have told us that it is impossible to prevent E. coli reaching water ways in high rainfall events particularly where livestock is grazed. (WRC acknowledges this in their swimability website) Currently, as you are aware, the west coast of the South Island is being deluged with rain, look at the implications of that, these events have been occurring for millions of years. In December this year we had rainfall events where sheets of water were running off normally dry hillsides. Do people really expect New Zealand to be devoid of grazing livestock? Where is the science and monitoring data to determine what outcomes are achievable and in what time frames? Swimability 365 days a year in any region is a nonsense.

It is unknown what the cost is to communities and businesses would be with the implementation of Plan Change One. Quote from Plan Change One "Full achievement of the table 11.1.2096 water quality attributable targets may require potentially significant departure from how businesses and communities currently function". Our regions prosperity has been built on continued investment, innovation and development in Agriculture.

We need clarity of outcomes to invest. In policy 10 from the PC1 quote "will provide for the continued operation of regionally significant infrastructure and industry".

We need the right balance and vision for our communities PC1 currently does not have it. The Agriculture industry is showing leadership and vision in where we should be going with environmental outcomes. Look at initiatives from Beef and Lamb and processors in setting standards to enhance our reputation to customers in NZ and overseas.

John Reeves

Piopio