

FRESHWATER IN TE TAITOKERAU

Changes to freshwater management

Two years ago the Government released their vision for halting the degradation of our freshwater systems and key to this vision is the concept of Te Mana o te Wai.

Te Mana o te Wai refers to the vital importance of water. When managing freshwater, it ensures the health and well-being of the water is protected first, then human health needs are provided for before enabling other uses of water.

The Government has also set some 'bottom lines' we will need to meet for a range of measures of water quality, such as *E.Coli* (an indicator for disease causing organisms) and water clarity (an indicator of sediment).

WE ALL WANT FUTURE GENERATIONS TO BE ABLE TO ENJOY CLEAN WATER AND THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS THAT HEALTHY WATER SUPPORTS.

It's now our job to work with communities to prepare a plan for how we'll get there – our Freshwater Plan.

The Freshwater Plan will include new rules for activities that impact on water quality and freshwater ecosystems. Right now, we're doing



a lot of background work to understand the baseline state of our freshwater, and what improvements are needed. The reality though, is that it's likely there'll need to be some big changes just to meet the Government's bottom lines.

To help with setting the standards we want for our freshwater, we'll be asking people to share what's important to them about our freshwater towards the end of the year. We'll share more detail with you on what the Freshwater Plan might look like when we release a draft for public feedback around this time next year.

IMPROVING OUR FRESHWATER IS GOING TO BE A LONG GAME AND WE CAN'T EXPECT TO ACHIEVE ALL THE THINGS WE WANT TO OVERNIGHT.

Even if we did, it would still take time before we started to see improvements in water quality. However, we must start this journey together. In the meantime, check out our website if you want to find out more.



2022

JULY → ONWARDS

Engage with interest groups and tangata whenua and prepare draft Freshwater Plan.

OCTOBER - DECEMBER

Public feedback on what's important about our freshwater.

2023

MID 2023

Have your say on the draft Freshwater Plan.



2024

JANUARY - MAY

Prepare Freshwater Plan using feedback and advice.

APRIL

Public can make submissions on the proposed Freshwater Plan.

2025

Freshwater Plan reviewed by freshwater hearing panel.

2026

Freshwater Plan officially adopted.



WHO ARE WE WORKING WITH?

We've set up two advisory groups to help develop the draft Freshwater Plan. One is a group of tangata whenua freshwater technical experts, and the other includes representatives from primary sector organisations (such as Dairy NZ, Federated Farmers, Northland Wood Council and Horticulture NZ). We're also talking with community groups, government agencies, local councils, hapū and iwi.

TE MANA O TE WAI

Te Mana o te Wai is a concept that puts the well-being and health of our streams, rivers, lakes, aquifers, wetlands and estuaries at the heart of how we must manage our freshwater resources. It's a holistic approach which is all about restoring and preserving the balance between water, the wider environment, and the community. While it puts the health of water first before all other considerations, it doesn't mean that in every case the water needs to be restored to a pristine state before the other needs can be looked at.