

Report 17.84  
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Committee Council  
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## Greater Wellington Regional Council submission on the 'Clean Water' discussion paper

### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to provide a summary of the key proposals from Government for freshwater management and provide a draft submission, **Attachment 1**, for consideration by Council. Submissions are due by 28 April 2017.

### 2. Background

The Ministry for the Environment has released a discussion document titled "Clean Water" as a further step in the Government's freshwater reform programme. The proposed changes respond to the previous round of Government consultation documents 'Next steps for freshwater' and 'Seeking your views' on which Council made submissions in mid-2016.

The full consultation document can be downloaded from:

<http://www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/fresh-water/clean-water-90-of-rivers-and-lakes-swimmable-2040>

There are a number of background documents on the MfE website <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/>

A background paper entitled 'Clean Water Proposals' was presented to and discussed by the Environment Committee at the meeting of 22 March 2017.

### 3. Key proposals

Most importantly, the document contains proposed changes in four areas:

- A new standard for swimming contact recreation in our large rivers and lakes
- Introducing a framework for Te Mana o Te Wai

- Detail of proposals for national regulations for exclusion of stock from waterways, and
- Further changes to the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM) 2014 for monitoring, new objectives in the National Objectives Framework and a number of points of clarification.

Many of the proposed changes made are in line with Council comments made in previous submissions and we are generally supportive of the changes proposed. There are some matters of detail on which we have asked for amendments and we have a number of comments and recommendations on the detail of the proposed national regulations for stock exclusion. These recommendations are based on our experience both at working with the community on the stock exclusion rules for the region in the Proposed Natural Resources Plan and with implementation of those rules with landholders.

#### **4. Comment**

The ‘targets and timing’ for improvement in swimmability in large rivers and lakes in the discussion document are not a part of the Clean Water package for which feedback is sought.

These issues were the subject of a letter to the chairs of regional councils from the Minister for the Environment which was tabled at the Environment Committee meeting of 22 March. Staff are using other avenues to investigate the requirements proposed in the letter and will report to Councillors on our findings and any recommended actions.

#### **5. Communication**

The content of this submission is in line with Council policy and does not require community engagement.

#### **6. The decision-making process and significance**

The matters requiring decision in this report have been considered by officers against the requirements of Part 6 of the Local Government Act 2002 (the Act). Part 6 sets out the obligations of local authorities in relation to the making of decisions.

##### **6.1 Significance of the decision**

Part 6 requires Greater Wellington Regional Council to consider the significance of the decision. The term ‘significance’ has a statutory definition set out in the Act.

Officers have considered the significance of the matter, taking the Council's significance and engagement policy and decision-making guidelines into account. Officers recommend that the matter be considered to have low significance as the Council is generally in support of the proposed changes which align with current Council RMA processes and policies.

## 6.2 Engagement

Engagement on the matters contained in this report aligns with the level of significance assessed. In accordance with the significance and engagement policy, no engagement on the matters for decision is required.

## 7. Recommendations

*That the Council:*

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the content of the report.*
3. *Approves the draft submission for the 'Clean water' discussion paper.*
4. *Delegates to the Chair the ability to make minor editorial amendments to the submission.*

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Attachment 1: Copy of Submission on 'Clean Water'