



RMA/FRESHWATER REFORM - WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

What future for your local river?

Changes to the RMA and freshwater management recently outlined by the Government will gut its environmental protections and pave the way for further rampant exploitation of our finite water resources. Current protection of habitats and consideration of recreation and environmental quality would go with these sweeping reforms, which is completely against the recommendations made to the Government through the Land & Water Forum's (LWF) so-called "collaborative process".

The Government's proposals will fundamentally change the context of the RMA without actually defining what the problem is with the current law – anecdote, rather than analysis, is being used to force these raft of extreme changes. The RMA enables sustainable resource use while providing some environmental protection, but in future it will promote resource use with fewer protections; in other words, unsustainable and unchecked development at the expense of our environment.

WHAT'S AT STAKE:

- No more matters of 'national importance' which decision makers on resource applications must currently recognise or provide for.
- Amenity values – like swimming or fishing, and maintaining environmental quality – will be deleted from decision making.
- Only 'significant' aquatic habitats will be considered; even these won't be protected, as at present. Small streams will essentially become farm drains. Is your local waterway significant?
- Public access to waterways will no longer to be maintained or enhanced.
- The ability of Fish & Game and the public to participate in resource management processes to advocate for the protection of freshwater habitat (for trout, salmon and game birds, as well as recreation) will be severely limited.
- Applications for Water Conservation Orders, the National Parks of waterways, can be parked indefinitely by regional councils, none of which ever supported these when originally applied for.
- Matters of economic consideration are given specific weight over other matters. Will your local river be diverted down someone's irrigation pipe or be dammed?
- Decades of case law established under the RMA will be lost.
- More "collaboration", which Government has shown to be a sham by making these changes despite agreement through LWF.

PTO...

CONTACT YOUR LOCAL MP AND TELL THEM WHAT YOU THINK. AND MAKE A SUBMISSION!

New Zealanders must make the Government aware of their concerns about the proposed changes by making a submission. See below for details about how to have your say.

POINTS YOU MIGHT LIKE TO MAKE IN YOUR SUBMISSION:

- Oppose the short (just five weeks!) submissions timeframe as completely inadequate for public consultation and comment on such major changes. Ask for explanation why these environmental protections are being removed.
- Oppose the Government's claim that changes are necessary when no analysis has been provided to indicate the current RMA is not working.
- Oppose the Government fundamentally changing the context of the RMA from 'environmental protection' to 'economic development'.
- Oppose all amendments that weaken or remove the protection currently afforded to freshwater habitats and fisheries and for recreational use and amenity value.
- Oppose the removal of specific reference to "protect", "preserve", "maintain", and "enhance" from Section 6 & 7 and demand such protections are retained.

To have a say on the RMA reform there is an online submission tool at www.consultation.mfe.govt.nz or email rmreform@mfe.govt.nz (submission should be attached as Word documents or PDFs). Alternatively you can mail to:

RM Reform
PO Box 10362
Wellington 6143

Comments must be received by 5.00pm April 2, 2013

WCOS IN GOVERNMENT'S SIGHTS!

The Government's planned Freshwater Reform package is equally as disturbing as the RMA changes and, among other major concerns, will wreck Water Conservation Order (WCO) protection.

You can have your say on the Freshwater Reform by emailing watercomments@mfe.govt.nz or writing to:

Water Comments
Water Reform Directorate
PO Box 10362
Wellington 6143

Comments must be received by 5.00pm April 8, 2013

- **FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE RMA AND FRESHWATER REFORMS VISIT:**
WWW.FISHANDGAME.ORG.NZ