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Q1:

I could not gain advantage of trade competition through this submission

Q2

I do not want to speak at the hearing

Q3:

I would not want to present a joint submission

Submission on the Proposed Waikato Regional Plan Change 1 - Waikato and Waipā River Catchments

1. Introduction:

We support the overall aim of ensuring healthier rivers so that they are safe for people to swim in and take food from is laudable.

At the same time, we acknowledge the Government's goal in doubling the value of exports by 2025, while balancing the use of natural resources with environmentally sustainable limits.

2. Science:

Best practice (farm management) in the dairy industry has excellent science behind it, in the form of DairyNZ. We believe more science is still required given our diverse soil types, farm systems and the seasonal impacts.

More definitive research is required on;

- Clear defined outcomes of current N & P usage
- N, P movement in soil profiles given soil type, farm system and seasonal impact
- Alternatives to N or Mitigants to the impact of
- Contribution to unhealthy water ways between Urban (cities/towns) and Rural (Dairy, Drystock & Horticultural)

3. Dairy Industry Growth:

In order the dairy industry continues to remain a significant contributor to NZ economy the Dairy Industry must provide pathways to new and existing farmers to grow their business.

2 key barriers of the proposed plan;

- I. Not being able to convert drystock land into dairying i.e. either total conversion or added to your current operation.
- II. Capped use of N. By improving on-farm performance the industry is in a stronger position to handle the huge fluctuations in Milkprice. A key tool in improving Industry performance is Nitrogen.

4. Implementation of current Model

The financial cost of implementing regulations in the form of Plan Change 1 are very high especially for drystock farmers, predominantly fencing costs and in a lot of cases this additional debt would result in farms being uneconomic.

We acknowledge the benefits the rural communities provide to the NZ economy so could all taxpayers assist in these costs?

5. Year Round Targets

The proposed Plan Change 1 requires that swimmable water quality targets must be met 365 days of the year. This target is not realistic given exceptional weather events. This appears to be now well supported by Nick Smith Environmental Minister.

6. Summary

- More science is required to definitively provide management tools to manage farm systems in order we can achieve required water standards.
 - a. At the same time given current scientific support guidelines can be implemented immediately.
 - i. N & P/ha capped
- Common sense approach
 - a. In the absence of science, huge capital costs of fencing drystock farms and the economic benefit to NZ economy a government funding support package should be CONSIDERED.
 - b. Cap N&P/ha on all land until more science provides definitive impacts of N and P
 - c. Good commentary from Nick Smith RE: 365 days being unrealistic