

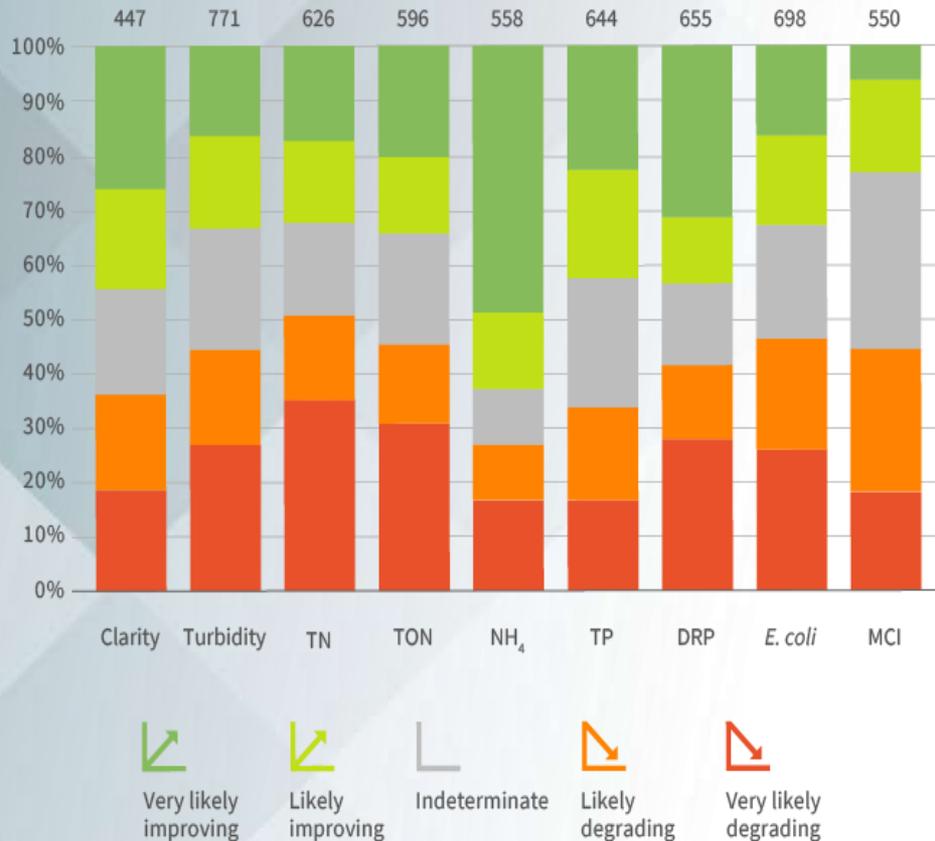
Essential Freshwater National direction for freshwater

Primary Industry Advisory Services – Freshwater Seminar
Wairarapa

Kirsten Forsyth, Ministry for the Environment, 14 October 2020

Evidence of a problem

LAWA National River Water Quality 10-Year Trends (2009–2018)



- A 2019 nationally representative survey found water degradation was the number one issue for New Zealanders
- Many New Zealand rivers likely to be degrading
- Indigenous species are declining and threatened, notably freshwater fish

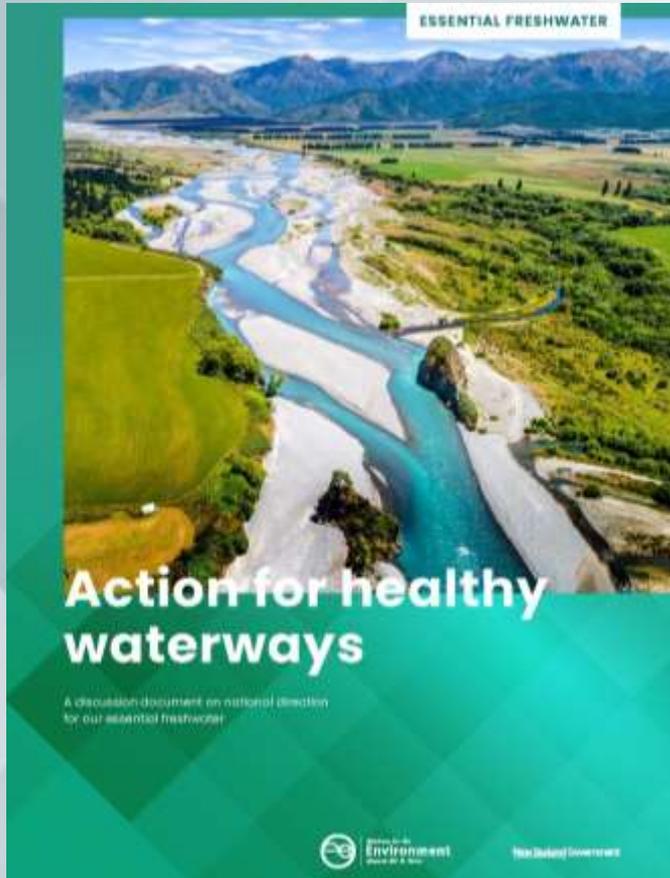


Policy objectives



- Stop further degradation
- Show material improvements within five years
- Reverse past damage within a generation so that all of New Zealand's waterways are in a healthy state

A package of reforms for fresh water



Changes to the RMA to speed up planning

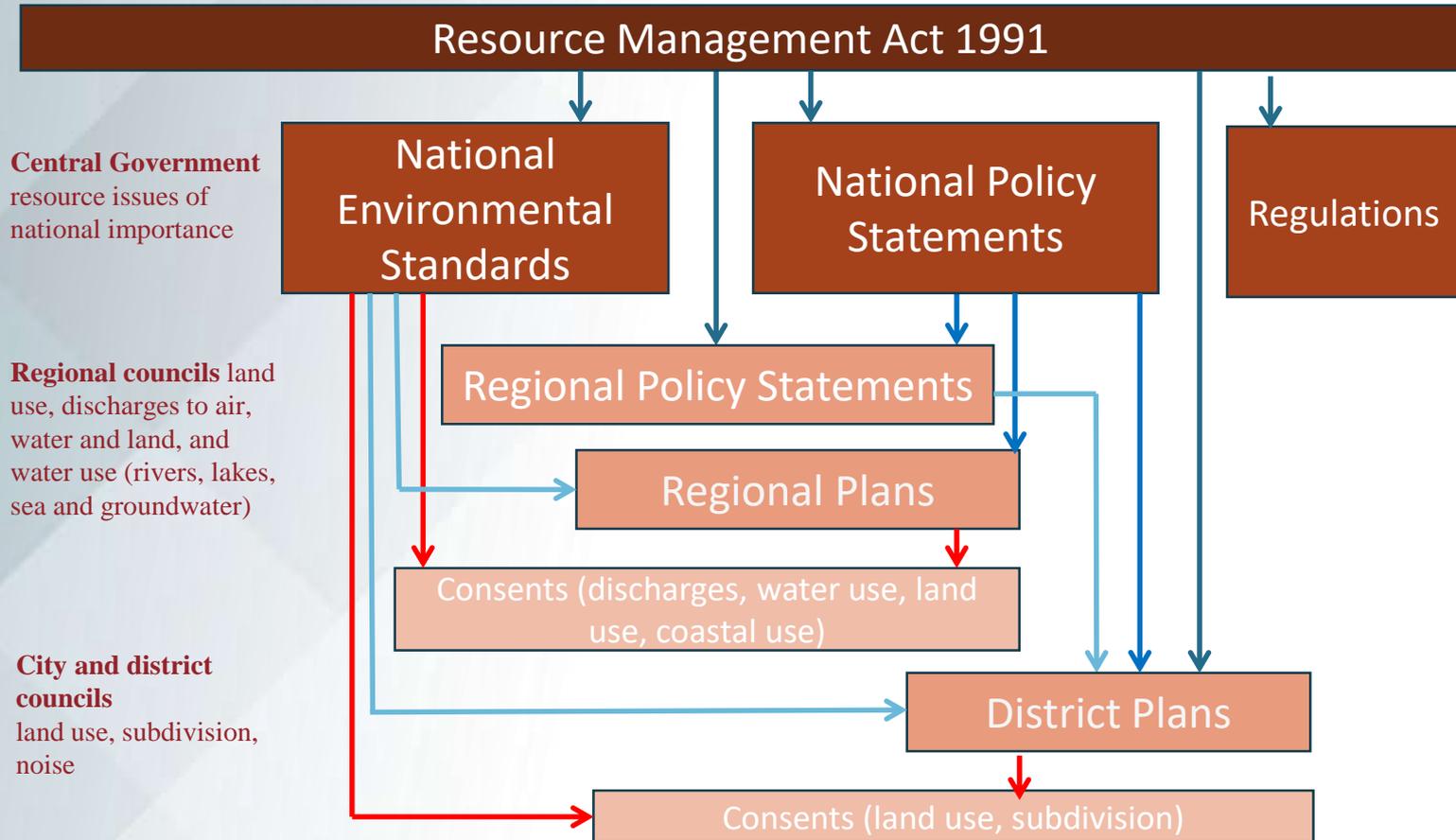
A fully updated national policy statement to bring freshwater to a healthy state within a generation

A new national environmental standard to introduce rules to protect wetlands and streams, and improve farming practices

A new regulation to exclude stock from water bodies, introduces regulations that apply to dairy and beef cattle, pigs and deer

Changes to the water measuring regulations

RMA and national direction



Changes to the RMA



A compulsory planning process for all regional policy statements and regional plans that give effect to the NPSFM 2020 or otherwise relate to freshwater

These policy statements and regional plans must be

- notified by the end of December 2024
- finalised by the end of 2026

The NPSFM 2020

The NPS has been redrafted to lift the overall quality so that it is clearer and more accessible

Most existing policies have been carried over, others have had minor changes to be better integrated with the new proposals

What's new

- Te Mana o te Wai – now the “fundamental concept” of the NPSFM
- 12 new attributes (e.g. suspended sediment)
- A new national bottom line for primary contact sites in the bathing season
- New requirements to better protect threatened species, wetlands and streams



NPSFM: Te Mana o te Wai



Te Mana o te Wai encompasses 6 principles relating to the roles of tangata whenua and other New Zealanders in the management of freshwater.

There is a hierarchy of obligations in Te Mana o te Wai that prioritises:

- (a) first, the health and well-being of water bodies and freshwater ecosystems
- (b) second, the health needs of people (such as drinking water)
- (c) third, the ability of people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural well-being, now and in the future.

NPSFM: national objectives framework



Four compulsory values

Ecosystem health, human contact, threatened species, mahinga kai

For water quantity: regional plans must set objectives for values, set flows to achieve those outcomes, set take limits to achieve those flows, and make rules and determine consents to achieve the take limits

For water quality: regional plans must set objectives for values, set target attribute states to achieve those outcomes, set resource use limits (or prepare action plans) to achieve the target attribute states, and make rules and determine consents to achieve the limits

NPS: natural wetlands



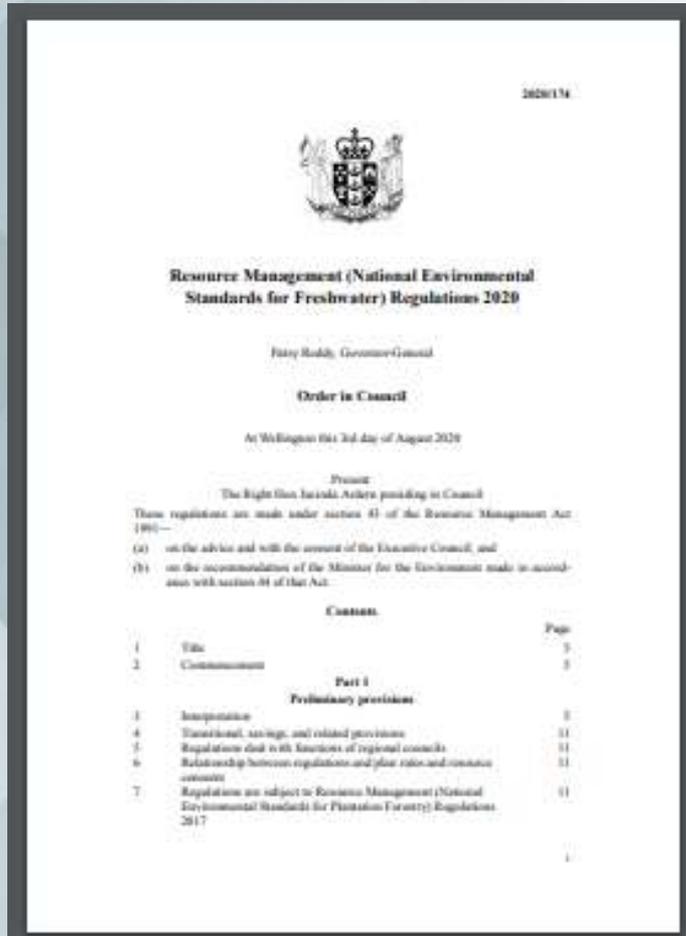
A wetland that is not:

- (a) a wetland constructed by artificial means (unless it was constructed to offset impacts on, or restore, an existing or former natural wetland); or
- (b) a geothermal wetland; or
- (c) any area of improved pasture that, at the commencement date, is dominated by (that is more than 50% of) exotic pasture species and is subject to temporary rain derived water pooling

Effects management hierarchy (avoid, minimise, remedy, offset, compensate, avoid) to support rules in the NES

Natural inland wetlands > 0.05 ha, or with threatened species to be mapped (2030)

NES for Freshwater



Rules to protect wetlands from draining, earthworks, and vegetation clearance

Restrictions on reclaiming rivers

Rules to enable fish passage

Rules for high risk farming activities

- Intensive winter grazing
- Feedlots
- Stock holding areas
- High risk land use change

Natural wetlands – coastal and inland



Same definition as the NPS and the stock exclusion regulations

Permitted – restoration, scientific research, maintenance of specified structures, sphagnum moss harvesting (existing)

Non-complying – most earthworks, vegetation clearance, water diversion etc

Prohibited – earthworks or water diversion that drain a wetland

Intensive winter grazing



Grazing livestock on an annual forage crop at any time in the period that begins on 1 May and ends with the close of 30 September of the same year

Permitted – no greater than 50 ha or 10% of the area of the farm

Conditions about pugging depth, land slope and setback from waterways

Stock exclusion



Applies to

- dairy cattle, beef cattle, pigs and deer
- natural wetlands, lakes and rivers more than one metre wide

3 September 2020 for new pastoral systems

1 July 2023 dairy cattle and pigs

1 July 2025 dairy support cattle, beef cattle and deer

Beef cattle and deer on [low slope only](#), unless intensive use





Ministry for the
Environment
Manatū Mō Te Taiao



Making Aotearoa New Zealand
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Aotearoa - he whenua mana kura mō te tangata