

# **Submission to Waikato Regional Council: Proposed Waikato Regional Plan Change 1**

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I could not gain an advantage in trade competition through this submission

I am not directly effected affected by an effect of the subject matter of the submission that adversely effects the environment and does not relate to the trade competition or the effects of trade competition.

I wish to speak at the hearing in support of my submission.

If others make a similar submission I would consider making a joint case with them at the hearing.

I am a Dairy Farmer in the upper Waikato catchment. I own a 390 ha dairy farm at Tokoroa milking 700 cows, sharemilk 1800 cows on 950ha south of Rotorua, sharemilk 700 cows on 270ha in Whakamaru, and lease 145ha milking 400 cows at Reporoa. All these farms are within the Waikato catchment.

Overall I support and agree with the intent of the long term objectives and the aspirations of the proposed plan regarding the restoration and protection of the greater Waikato River catchment. The outcome from a collaborative approach of all stakeholders is hard to ignore and so this opportunity should not be lost.

Though I believe we do need to be given time to accept, innovate and adapt to change - this is important. The other important point is that this plan should still allow us to have viable businesses. We have already invested heavily into our businesses often for a slow but long term return and we don't need to be burdened further with any unnecessary compliance costs or have opportunities to increase productivity taken away from us.

#### Objective 1 Long term restoration and protection. - Support

I agree in principal with long term aspirational targets that aim to improve water quality and take into account all four discharges. It is aspirational and gives me a sense of direction in how I can be a part of the success of the vision.

#### Objective 2 Social, economic and cultural wellbeing. – Support the provision with amendments

This objective is very important for me. As a farmer I have invested for the long term and plan to continue to invest for the long term. The time frames that a farmer can think in are intergenerational and this shouldn't be understated. My social, economic and cultural wellbeing is all wrapped up with the land and intertwined with our community identity. We have an affinity to the land and therefore to the other natural resources such as our local waterways and catchments. But in order for these to be maintained farming must continue to be viable. I can accept that we have our part to play and that it will mean constant change to the best management practises but it doesn't need to come at such a haste and cost that will make our industry uncompetitive, unprofitable and unattractive to young New Zealanders.

My dairy farm is only sustainable if it is profitable one, and being profitable means that we can continue to contribute into the local communities and therefore we can all enjoy a higher standard of living. There is no point in achieve our aspirational targets in 2096 if we arrive there broke.

An amendment to this objective would be in a provision to be able to provide farmers with ongoing support and guidelines or practical ways how they can achieve improvements within their tailored Farm Environment Plans that were cost effective and practical.

#### Objective 3 Short term Improvements – Support

#### Objective 4 People and Community Resilience - Support

A staged approach as outline in the objective I support as it will give me and the Dairy Industry as a whole time to adapt and accept the changes so that we know what the goal posts are and we can continue to contribute to achieving the overall goal.

#### Objective 5 Mana Tangata – Support

In the reasons outlined for this objective regarding the impediments that have been imposed it seems only fair that this objective exists.

#### **3.11.3**

##### Policy 5 Staged Approach- Support

This is a very important policy as I would need time in order to change my farm system and try and test what works and what doesn't. New practices often not only cost dollars but also take time to learn or innovate. Farmers are good at adapting but not in a short time frame. We learn best from each other in a tried and test way. This often works out to be the ideal way, the most adopted and the most effective, but its not the fastest. We will need time.

##### Policy 6 Restricted land use changes. – Support the provision with amendments

It should be clearly stated that the land use change doesn't include normal land use changes within a farming system such as normal crop rotation or grass renewal process. It would be ludicrous to intervene standard farming practices that weren't considered wholesale changes to the land use of a farm.

##### Policy 7 Preparing for allocation in the future- Support the provision with amendments

This policy should be amended to allow a provision for farmers to have involvement and understanding of any future changes that are considered.

#### **3.11.5.3**

##### Farm Environmental Plans - support

I support Farm Environment plans and especially the ability for the Certified Industry Scheme, especially because the likes of Fonterra has the capability and already much of the data already on our farms. But they shouldn't be onerous in design or cost to achieve the outcome. The Farm Environment Plans should also have the flexibility to adjust quickly to any new best practises or technological advances.

End of Submission.