

From: [Lucy Auberson](#)
To: [Nadeine Dommissie](#)
Cc: [Andrea Szujo](#)
Subject: Estimates - Environment, Freshwater responses
Date: Friday, 21 July 2023 7:39:09 am
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Kia ora Nadeine,

Please find the Freshwater questions and responses below. These have been reviewed by Sam and Pepi and I will need to send them to the Minister's office at 12pm today.

2. Please update the Committee of the next steps for the essential freshwater work programme and focus areas for 2023/24.

Essential Freshwater is the name for the package of measures introduced in 2020 which are aimed at restoring water quality. The key focus areas to support ongoing implementation of this work package are:

- Supporting councils to prepare and notify their freshwater plans by 2024. This includes providing guidance, making sure councils have the tools they need (Overseer review and the Risk Index tool), increasing internal capability to review the content of plans and work with councils to ensure compliance with the national policy statement for freshwater management (NPS-FM) framework, including providing access to experts.
- Ongoing support for the freshwater planning process and the Freshwater Commissioners.
- Establishment and rollout of the freshwater farm plan system (see more detail in Question 3).
- Ongoing monitoring of the freshwater system and investigations or involvement where required (i.e., Ashburton Lakes lessons learnt or supporting the Minister in the Rakaia River High Court declaratory proceedings).
- Ongoing work to support the national environmental standards for freshwater and stock exclusion regulations, including updates to current guidance and ongoing work with councils on fertiliser reporting and intensive winter grazing, for example.
- Continuing to support Business as usual (for example, Official Information Act requests, and ministerial and departmental correspondence requests where they relate to freshwater).

3. Please update the Committee on the main activities planned for implementing freshwater farm planning in 2023/24. How will the funding of \$13.8 million for 2023/24 for freshwater farm plan implementation be spent?

The \$13.8 million of funding for freshwater farm plan implementation in 2023/24 will primarily be spent on the Ministry supporting the effective implementation of the

freshwater farm plan system, including:

- The roll out of Freshwater Farm Plan Regulations in Southland and Waikato from 1 August 2023.
- The establishment of a certifier and auditor appointment process.
- Supporting the rollout of Freshwater Farm Plan Regulations in additional regions from early 2024.
- Supporting regional councils and industry with the transition into the new regulatory system.
- Establishing funding agreements for additional workforce support for farmers, farm plan certifiers and auditors, and tangata whenua (via the Essential Freshwater Fund).
- Servicing ongoing policy needs relating to the new system.

Also included within the \$13.8 million funding is a contribution from the Ministry to support the development of an integrated farm data platform in partnership with regional councils, to support effective performance monitoring of the freshwater farm plan system.

Kind regards,

Lucy

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