

# WORK PROGRAMME

## Essential Freshwater

The Essential Freshwater work programme will deliver important long-term improvements to our freshwater. While changes to the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management are needed, it will take time before these fully take effect as councils need to incorporate any changes into their planning processes. So more immediate impacts are achieved, we propose identifying at-risk catchments where immediate action can be targeted and developing a national environmental standard, which can take effect as soon as it is complete.

WORKSTREAM	2018		2019				2020		
	JULY - SEPT	OCT - DEC	JAN - MAR	APR - JUN	JULY - SEPT	OCT - DEC	JAN - MAR	APR - JUN	JULY - SEPT
<b>AT-RISK CATCHMENTS</b> <b>Identify at-risk catchments, to:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» consider the need for regulatory intervention</li> <li>» target erosion risk for input into the One Billion Trees programme and other funds</li> <li>» identify existing restoration projects that could be scaled for increased impact</li> <li>» support voluntary action by councils, Māori, NGOs, other community groups, and industry.</li> </ul>	Identify at-risk catchments and potential interventions, in discussion with Kahui Wai Māori, the Freshwater Leaders Group, and others		Develop and implement appropriate tools, or interventions, or incorporate into other workstreams				Track and monitor progress		
<b>NATIONAL POLICY STATEMENT FOR FRESHWATER MANAGEMENT (FRESHWATER NPS)</b> <b>Changes to the Freshwater NPS may include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» how to better provide for ecosystem health</li> <li>» new attributes – sediment, copper and zinc, dissolved oxygen</li> <li>» clarifying the direction around how to set effective limits</li> <li>» better protection for wetlands and sensitive downstream environments (eg, estuaries)</li> <li>» policy around at-risk catchments</li> <li>» resolving exceptions to national bottom lines</li> <li>» other changes proposed by the Land and Water Forum and other groups.</li> </ul>	Scope policy	Develop policy and draft Freshwater NPS amendments	Consultation and analysis				Amended Freshwater NPS in force		
<b>NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARD FOR FRESHWATER MANAGEMENT (FRESHWATER NES)</b> <b>A new Freshwater NES may include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» preventing further loss of wetlands and urban streams</li> <li>» mechanisms for managing intensification, including targeting at-risk catchments</li> <li>» direction around the use of farm environment plans and good management practices such as stock exclusion and riparian management</li> <li>» rules to control activities such as intensive winter grazing, hill country cropping, and feedlots</li> <li>» direction on nutrient allocation</li> <li>» direction for the review of existing consents</li> <li>» a default regime for ecological flow and levels where none are set, and how minimum flows apply to existing consents.</li> </ul>	Scope policy	Develop policy	Consultation and analysis				Freshwater NES in force		
<b>RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT (RMA) AMENDMENTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» 2018 RMA Bill – a narrow range of amendments.</li> <li>» Second phase; a more comprehensive review of the resource management system.</li> </ul>		Bill introduced	Parliamentary process [tbc]		Royal Assent [tbc]		Second phase of RMA amendments developed and introduced		
<b>ALLOCATION OF FRESHWATER RESOURCES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Gathering information to understand catchment-level water quality issues and land (especially Māori land) development constraints.</li> <li>» Developing options on discharge allocation and engaging with stakeholders.</li> <li>» Developing options on water take allocation and engaging with stakeholders.</li> </ul>	Information gathering at the catchment level		Consultation, analysis and action						
<b>FUTURE FRAMEWORK</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Extend good practice across farms, forests, and urban water management.</li> <li>» Target investment in solutions and in advice and tools to support decision-making.</li> <li>» Improved and nationally-consistent measurement and monitoring.</li> <li>» Support councils to undertake their roles.</li> </ul>	Engagement and development of elements								