



*Ministry for the*  
**Environment**  
*Manatū Mō Te Taiao*



**Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry**  
Te Manatu Ahuwhenua, Ngāherehere

# **Report of the Sustainable Development Water Programme of Action Local Government Workshops**

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# Executive Summary

The Government established the Sustainable Development Water Programme of Action in 2003 to ensure that the country's freshwater resources are managed to best support New Zealand's future sustainable development. The programme is part of the Government's wider Sustainable Development Programme of Action.

In February 2005, 14 meetings were held with local government around the country to discuss the issues and options contained in the discussion document *Freshwater for a sustainable future: issues and options*. The discussion document was released for public comment in December 2004. This report summarises the initial comments made on the document received at the meetings, as well as additional issues and actions raised.

There was general agreement that the eight key issues are challenges which New Zealand faces in the management of freshwater resources. Several additional issues were identified which participants felt were not sufficiently emphasised in the discussion document. These included:

- integrated catchment management
- urban use and supply
- climate change
- biosecurity
- sustainable development.

The level of support for each of the 13 actions was dependent on their future shape and form. In many cases local government provided comments about how the actions could be developed, which problems particular tools could address, and implementation issues which need to be considered. The following actions received wide support at most meetings:

## **Action 4: Increase central government participation in regional planning**

Whole of government submissions were supported; however, central government participation was not to be at the expense of local decision-making.

## **Action 5: Increase central government's support for local government**

Central government involvement in the following areas was supported:

- funding for implementation
- funding for science and research
- developing and disseminating best practice
- funding community projects
- funding new agencies
- funding for storage.

## **Action 12: Raise awareness of freshwater problems and pressures**

There was agreement that raising awareness of freshwater issues should be a key part of the programme. Central government has a role in developing national programmes with local government and disseminating existing information on freshwater issues.

## **Action 13: Collaboration between central government and local government, scientists and key stakeholders on pilot projects to demonstrate and test new water management initiatives**

Greater co-ordination and partnership between central government, local government, the science community and community groups was supported at all of the meetings. Pilot projects were widely supported, especially in the area of addressing land-use impacts on water quality.

For some actions, it is not possible to draw clear levels of support or opposition due to the initial nature of the comments and the need for further development of the actions. There was uncertainty about how the following actions could be developed:

### **Action 1: Develop national policy statement**

There was support for a national policy statement if it is a high level guidance document. An 'overly prescriptive' document was not supported. The importance on maintaining local decision-making was raised.

### **Action 2: Develop national environmental standards**

Methods for setting minimum flows, allocation limits and water quality standards at the regional level were supported. Few supported a numerical standard set at the national level.

### **Action 3: Address nationally important values**

There was a split of opinion regarding this action. Identifying nationally important values for water bodies could be useful to guide regional planning, but national values could conflict with local values.

### **Action 6: Develop special mechanisms for regional councils**

Few comments made about the use of a tool to progressively constrain consents for over-allocated resources ('clawback'). Tools for managing diffuse discharges were supported, as well as the use of incentives to improve efficiency of use, and tools for setting minimum flows.

### **Action 7: Enhance the transfer of allocated water between users**

Transfer could increase efficiency of use if environmental, social and cultural values are provided for. Existing investments must be protected in a transfer system.

### **Action 8: Develop market mechanisms to manage diffuse discharges**

More information is required on how this action could work. Local government suggests that there is a need to consider the range of tools available for managing diffuse discharges.

### **Action 9: Set requirements for regional freshwater plans to address key issues and challenges**

Few comments were made regarding this action. Improved strategic planning was supported.

### **Action 10: Enhance Māori participation**

The Resource Management Act and the Local government Act were regarded as already providing opportunities for Māori to participate in freshwater management. There is a need for clearly defined roles for central government, local government, and Māori.

### **Action 11: Enable regional councils to allocate water to priority uses**

Councils did not support having to ‘pick winners’ amongst uses and values. Market tools could provide more flexibility for allocating water but environmental, social and cultural values must also be provided for. Water should remain in public ownership. Equitable access to water for all interests is important.

# 1 Purpose of this Report

This report summarises the feedback received at 14 meetings held with local government in February 2005. The purpose of the meetings was to discuss with local government, the issues and options for developing a national framework for freshwater management contained in a discussion document called *Freshwater for a sustainable future: issues and options*. The discussion document was released for comment in December 2004 and is the first round of consultation undertaken on the Sustainable Development Water Programme of Action.

This report does not include or express opinions about the responses received. These are more appropriately expressed following comprehensive analysis on the policy implications of the feedback.

## 2 Background

### The Sustainable Development Water Programme of Action

The Government established the Sustainable Development Water Programme of Action in 2003 to ensure that the country's freshwater resources are managed to best support New Zealand's future sustainable development. The principles of the programme are outlined in Appendix 1. The programme is part of the Government's wider Sustainable Development Programme of Action.

The Sustainable Development Water Programme of Action established working groups to look at three areas: water allocation and use, water quality, and the identification of potential water bodies of national importance. Three technical papers were produced by the working groups and released in December 2004: the papers *Water allocation and use*; *The effects of rural land use on water quality* and *Potential water bodies of national importance*, and other technical papers on water bodies of national importance, can be found at [www.mfe.govt.nz](http://www.mfe.govt.nz) or [www.maf.govt.nz](http://www.maf.govt.nz).

### Discussion document

A public discussion document was developed based on the work completed within the three work streams of water allocation, water quality and potential water bodies of national importance. Because the three areas of focus are closely connected, the discussion document treats them in an integrated way. The discussion document:

- outlines the different ways in which New Zealanders value and use freshwater
- describes how water allocation, water quality and water bodies of national importance are managed at present
- describes the pressures and challenges facing our water management system
- identifies eight key issues that need to be addressed in any reform of the country's water management system
- proposes a package of actions to improve the water management system and overcome the challenges it currently faces. The proposed package is not the only way forward, and other possibilities are also described.

The discussion document did not focus on urban water quality issues. The primary issue addressed by the water quality working group was the impact of diffuse discharges from rural land use.

The discussion document was released for comment on 9 December 2004.

## Consultation process

In February 2005, consultation meetings on the discussion document were jointly held by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and the Ministry for the Environment. Meetings were held with regional councils, Māori, the public, and stakeholder groups in approximately 20 locations across the country. A schedule of meetings is included in Appendix 2.

The purpose of the consultation meetings was to hear what New Zealanders had to say about freshwater management. The government did not have a set policy for participants to react to – the intent was very much to garner feedback on the initial set of ideas developed under the programme. The priority was to listen to feedback on whether the right issues and options had been identified, what other issues and options might exist, and what people thought of the actions presented. Written submissions were also invited from meeting participants and from all New Zealanders.

In addition to this report, separate reports are available which summarise the issues raised at a series of public meetings and hui. An analysis of the written submissions received has also been completed. Copies of these reports are available by contacting the Ministry for the Environment or by visiting the Ministry's website at [www.mfe.govt.nz](http://www.mfe.govt.nz).

## Meetings held with local government

The following meetings were held with local government.

Region	Meeting location	Meeting date
Northland	Northland Regional Council	2 February 2005
Auckland	Auckland Regional Council	1 February 2005
Waikato	Environment Waikato	1 February 2005
Bay of Plenty	Environment Bay of Plenty	2 February 2005
Gisborne	Gisborne District Council	2 February 2005
Hawkes Bay	Hawkes Bay Regional Council	31 January 2005
Taranaki	Taranaki Regional Council	9 February 2005
Manawatu Whanganui	Horizons Regional Council	7 February 2005
Wellington	Greater Wellington Regional Council	8 February 2005
Nelson/Tasman/Marlborough	Tasman District Council	9 February 2005
West Coast	West Coast Regional Council	16 February 2005
Canterbury	Christchurch Convention Centre	14 February 2005
Otago	Otago Regional Council	14 February 2005
Southland	Environment Southland	14 February 2005

The meetings were regionally based, with most held in regional council buildings. Territorial local authorities within the regions were invited to the meetings. The notes from these meetings are contained in Appendix 3.

## **Next steps**

The reports from the consultation meetings and submissions will be used to help guide the Government's decisions about future approaches to freshwater management. This will include making any changes required to the Government's preferred package of options to develop sustainable ways of managing freshwater.

# 3 Responses to the Issues

Eight key issues for improving freshwater management in New Zealand were identified in the discussion document as follows:

- Issue 1: National and regional strategic planning for water management could be improved
- Issue 2: Nationally important values need to be better addressed
- Issue 3: Setting environmental bottom lines and allocation limits is costly and contentious
- Issue 4: Water is over-allocated in some catchments, is not consistently allocated to its highest value use over time, and can be wasted
- Issue 5: Tension between investment certainty and planning flexibility
- Issue 6: Māori participation in water management could be improved
- Issue 7: A lack of effective action in the management of diffuse discharges of contaminants on water quality, in some catchments
- Issue 8: Development of water infrastructure is not keeping pace with demand

## Issue 1: National and regional strategic planning for water management could be improved

Participants commented on the need for better strategic planning at all levels of government. Improved strategic planning was regarded as important at the problem identification phase, as well as the research and consultation planning phases. The need to be specific about the extent, trend and spatial distribution of problems was also raised.

Specific problems associated with the current planning system included the time taken to develop plans, the difficulty of predicting sustainable development outcomes and the difficulty of predicting future water and land use.

*The lengthy plan development process makes them out of date. The consent process ends up determining the outcome. (Christchurch)*

Defining national outcomes and priorities through a national policy statement was regarded as useful by some, as it could help guide plan and policy development at the local and regional levels of government. Central government was regarded by some as having a role in balancing competing national values for water to aid strategic decision-making. The long term council community planning process was also raised at the Whangarei meeting as useful for identifying and monitoring water resources of regional significance.

## **Issue 2: Nationally important values need to be better addressed**

The need for information about nationally important water bodies and values to provide guidance for plan and policy making was raised at some meetings (refer to Action 3 for specific comments on identifying national values and water bodies).

Some participants regarded central government as having a role in balancing competing national values:

*Central government should balance the competing national values. (Greymouth)*

Concerns were raised however about government interfering with the management of water bodies identified as nationally important:

*Central government will take over local government responsibilities. (Christchurch)*

Water conservation orders for managing nationally important water bodies were seen by some as adding an extra layer of bureaucracy and in some cases, overriding community values.

*There is a conflict between communities determining their values for water and then having a water conservation order placed on a particular water body. (Gisborne)*

## **Issue 3: Setting environmental bottom lines is costly and contentious**

There was agreement at most meetings that environmental bottom-lines are a necessary part of any regime for managing freshwater. The need for science-based information for setting minimum flows and allocation limits was raised at most meetings.

*Setting environmental bottom-lines requires good information which is expensive to obtain. (Napier)*

Establishing environmental bottom lines for water quality was also discussed. Prescribed methods for setting standards at a regional level in regions where poor water quality is a problem were favoured over a numerical standard set at the national level.

## **Issue 4: Water is over-allocated in some catchments, is not consistently allocated to its highest value use over time, and can be wasted**

At some of the meetings participants recognised that over-allocation of water resources is a problem in some regions. Participants considered that the current water allocation system often referred to as the ‘first-in, first-served’ system, is ineffective for managing over-allocated resources. Central government was regarded by some as having a role in developing a system for managing over-allocated resources.

*There is a need for tools that deal with over-allocation and cross boundary issues.*  
(Hamilton)

Allocating water to the highest value use raised more concern than support. Concern was raised at many of the meetings that councils should not have to ‘pick winners’ amongst uses and values, and that the highest value could become an economic value only. Participants suggested that methods for transferring water permits to the highest value use such as auctions or tenders would need defined boundaries which account for cultural, social and environmental values (refer to Actions 7 and 11 for specific comments on transfer and allocating to highest priority use).

Many agreed that water is not always used efficiently. The need to be able to measure the actual volumes used was raised at most meetings. Many participants regarded water metering as a good start for measuring actual use. Improved information and technology was also regarded as a key factor for improving efficiency of use. Participants suggested developing awareness and education programmes on water efficiency and conservation for rural and urban communities, and industry. The need for greater support for research on methods for improving technical efficiency as also raised.

## **Issue 5: Tension between investment certainty and flexibility**

The importance of investment certainty was a key theme at many of the meetings. Recognising and accounting for existing rights to take water was regarded as important, but at the same time the need to provide for new water users was raised.

*Existing investments in infrastructure will need to be recognised if management systems change.* (Napier)

Increasing the tradability of permits was regarded as a way of providing more flexibility; however, this was only supported when operating within a framework which recognises existing rights and social, cultural and environmental values (refer to Actions 7 and 11 for detailed comments on transfer of permits and allocating water to the highest priority use).

## Issue 6: Māori participation in water management could be improved

Participants raised the need for clearly defined roles for Māori in planning processes at some meetings:

*The Resource Management Act looks at engagement with iwi while the Local Government Act looks at engagement with Māori. [There is a] need to be aware of the difference and to look at the implications. It must be clear what sort of engagement central government wants and with whom. (Hamilton)*

Some councils regarded their existing relationships with Māori as working well, and did not view further improvement as necessary:

*Local government already has requirements for building relationships with Māori under the Local Government Act. (Greymouth)*

There was general recognition that in many cases effective participation of Māori in resource planning is limited by a lack of capacity of councils and iwi organisations. Central government was regarded as having a role in providing increased resources for participation, and in assessing why current Resource Management Act provisions such as transfer of powers under section 33 of the Act have not been exercised:

*Is there commitment towards co-management regimes and to encourage a greater role for Māori to engage in regional decision-making? (Nelson)*

## Issue 7: Lack of effective action in management of diffuse discharges of contaminants on water quality in some catchments

Problems with managing the effects of diffuse discharges to water were raised at most meetings. People asked whether the recommendations of the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment's report *Growing for good* would be incorporated into the Sustainable Development Water Programme of Action.

Part of the problem in managing diffuse discharges was thought to be a lack of information. The need for independent research on nutrients and solutions for managing diffuse pollution was raised.

Dissemination of information and best practice for managing diffuse pollution was regarded as a key part of addressing water quality issues. Some participants suggested that water fora should be established to share knowledge and expertise on water quality.

*Forums to discuss issues and disseminate ideas would be useful. (Nelson)*

Current non-regulatory approaches such as codes of practice and riparian planting for managing water quality were also raised at many of the meetings as effective solutions.

## Issue 8: Development of water infrastructure is not keeping pace with demand

Most councils agreed with this issue and called for central government support and investment in developing and upgrading infrastructure.

*Central government should have a role in infrastructure. A separate national group could be put in place to oversee infrastructure and to provide funding. (Dunedin)*

Funding for regional development projects was also regarded as important:

*Funding is needed for long-term community investment in water development. (Nelson)*

Many participants felt that water storage needs more emphasis in the programme.

*Water storage is missing from the document. (Dunedin)*

*Storage is a major issue. (Christchurch)*

## Additional issues

A number of additional issues were raised at the meetings which participants felt were not sufficiently emphasised in the discussion document. The additional issues included:

- integrated catchment management
- urban use and supply
- climate change
- biosecurity
- sustainable development.

## Integrated catchment management

The value of adopting an integrated catchment management approach as part of a national framework for freshwater was raised at many of the meetings. A whole of catchment approach without a separation between allocation and quality issues was regarded as useful by many participants. Participants supported developing closer links between district and regional planning at meetings held in Greymouth, Napier, Whakatane, Whangarei, Christchurch, Dunedin and Wellington.

*[There is a] need to integrate planning and thinking around water issues. Domestic, stock, irrigation and biodiversity interests should all be integrated. An holistic view is needed. (Dunedin)*

One participant raised concern at the Napier meeting that the discussion document did not address the tension between increased demand for water and water quality problems that often result from intensive agricultural production. The participant suggested that the programme should include solutions for managing this tension.

Too much emphasis on water allocation at the expense of looking at water bodies as living systems was raised as a concern at the Wellington meeting. The need to consider the total water cycle rather than looking at water in a linear way was also raised at the meeting held in Christchurch.

Specific issues relating to the interface between land-based activities and water were raised, such as the effects of subdivision on riparian management. The need for controls on land management practices was raised at the meeting held in Whakatane. There was also thought to be inequity between point source polluters having to pay for technology and practices to reduce impacts, and diffuse polluters who do not always have to deal with their impacts. This view was raised at the Hamilton meeting.

## **Urban use and supply**

At most of the meetings people asked why urban freshwater issues have not been incorporated into the scope of the programme. The view that urban and rural water issues should not be separated was expressed at many of the meetings. Particular concerns raised included:

- the impacts of storm water on water quality in urban areas (Whangarei)
- the need for central government to have a greater role in stormwater management and monitoring (Christchurch)
- peri-urban development and the demand for potable water supplies, and concerns about public health issues relating to drinking water from groundwater sources which can be affected by intensive agriculture (Dunedin)
- the need for urban residents to better understand their demands for potable water and the cost of making water available (Dunedin)
- the need for sustainable water use to be considered as a component of urban design principles (Auckland)
- the need to incorporate criteria and guidelines for sustainable water use into long term council community plans (Auckland).

## **Climate change**

A lack of reference in the discussion document to the impacts of climate change on water supply and demand was raised at meetings held in Whakatane, Nelson and Wellington. One participant at the Nelson meeting suggested that climate change should be regarded as a key issue and if so, it is perhaps relevant to Actions 5 and 8.

## **Biosecurity**

The problem of aquatic weeds was raised at two of the meetings held with local government. At the Nelson meeting, one participant raised the need for central government to develop a proactive campaign for the eradication of aquatic weeds. The participant also stated that pest issues have been left to local government to manage without national resources. Clarity on central government's responsibility for national biosecurity was requested at the Whangarei meeting.

## **Sustainable development**

At the Napier meeting one participant expressed the view that the actions outlined in the discussion document are reactive to the Resource Management Act and do not incorporate a broad sustainable development approach. A question was asked about how regional councils can address the social, economic and cultural factors for making effective environmental decision-making within the Act's sustainable management framework which does not explicitly provide for these values.

The status of the discussion document in relation to the Resource Management Act review was also raised. The point was made at the meeting held in Invercargill that some of the proposals to change the Act appear to override the actions in the discussion document which are supposed to be about sustainable development. One participant asked whether the government had already determined what the outcomes of the programme will be.

## 4 Responses to the Proposed Actions

Thirteen key actions were identified in the discussion document. The 13 actions were grouped into four main areas for the presentation at the consultation meetings.

- providing national direction
- central government being more involved
- providing more tools to councils
- working together.

The grouping of the 13 actions into the four main areas can be seen in the table below.

13 actions grouped into four main areas			
Provide national direction	Central Government being more involved	Working together	Providing more tools to councils
Action 1: Develop national policy statements Action 2: Develop national environmental standards Action 3: Address nationally important values	Action 4: Increase central government participation in regional planning Action 5: Increase central government's support for local government	Action 10: Enhance Māori participation Action 12: Raise awareness of freshwater problems and pressures, and promote solutions Action 13: Collaboration between central and local government, scientists and key stakeholders, on pilot projects to demonstrate and test new water management initiatives	Action 6: Develop special mechanisms for regional councils Action 7: Enhance the transfer of allocated water between users Action 8: Develop market mechanisms to manage diffuse discharges Action 9: Set requirements for regional freshwater plans to address key issues and challenges Action 11: Enable regional councils to allocate water to priority uses

The level of support for each of the actions was dependent on the shape and form which they would take. In many cases, local government provided comments about how the actions should be developed, which problems they could be used to address, and implementation issues which need to be considered. Therefore, it is not appropriate to draw a clear level of support or opposition to a particular action.

### Central government direction

#### General comments

The importance of developing local solutions for local problems was raised at all of the meetings. This was regarded as an underlying philosophy of the Resource Management Act which should be retained. The long term council community planning process provided for under the Local Government Act was also raised as reinforcing the importance of local decision-making.

There was strong consensus that regional councils should continue to make decisions regarding the management of freshwater. Participants noted that different solutions are needed to address different issues across the 16 regions.

*Local solutions for local problems must be maintained.* (Greymouth)

There was some support for central government providing consistent direction in the form of a national framework for freshwater, as long as this incorporated sufficient flexibility to enable regional councils to implement the framework in their own way. Central government could lead on issues which are politically difficult to manage at the local level.

One participant at the Dunedin meeting raised the need for a combined top-down, bottom-up approach because practical knowledge is often missing from a top-down approach. The community was thought best placed to determine outcomes for water management. Concern was raised by some that central government tools could potentially override local solutions which are already working effectively. The key role of central government was thought to be one of assisting councils to manage freshwater effectively.

The possibility of increased government direction raised concern for some who viewed potential changes as resulting in frustration and increased costs for ratepayers.

*Implementation costs will be imposed on the community.* (Invercargill)

*[I am] uneasy about a raft of changes which could result in frustration and cost.* (Stratford)

Overall there was considerable diversity of opinion about the role of central government and the balance between central and local government. The diversity of opinion is a common theme in many of the comments made regarding Actions 1 to 3.

## **Action 1: Develop national policy statements**

Caution was expressed at all of the meetings about the development of a national policy statement. There was some support for a document which could provide oversight and support for councils with few resources. Most expressed the view that a national policy statement should be a high-level guidance document that can accommodate regional differences. Some stated that a better approach might be to have targeted solutions for particular problems rather than developing a 'one-size fits all' document.

Concerns were raised at some of the meetings that an overly-prescriptive national policy statement could be contentious. The view was expressed at the Napier meeting that prescriptive legislation is only useful if the problem is the same across the country and that enabling legislation would better accommodate regional differences and changes. Participants also raised concern that ratepayers would bear the implementation costs if a national policy statement was too prescriptive.

*[There will be] costs to ratepayers if a national policy statement is too prescriptive.*  
(Greymouth)

Participants raised the need for a process for involving local government and stakeholders when developing a national policy statement at several of the meetings.

*Irrigators and industry need to be included in the plan and policy development process.*  
(Nelson)

The content of a possible national policy statement was discussed at some of the meetings. Suggestions included:

- issues such as water storage, supply of freshwater, and realistic implementation costs (Dunedin)
- identifying priority uses, for example, defining land-use activities that are appropriate for particular land areas as a result of the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment's report *Growing for good* (Invercargill).

## **Action 2: Develop national environmental standards**

Establishing environmental bottom lines was raised by participants as an important issue at all of the meetings held with local government. Some support was expressed for having national and regional standards for addressing water quality. The Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment's report *Growing for good* was raised as reinforcing the need for a minimum water quality standard. However, many participants raised concern that a national environmental standard which specified a particular base-line number would not be effective because it would not necessarily apply to all regions due to the different characteristics of water bodies. Best practice and guidelines were raised as more appropriate options by some.

Developing a national environmental standard which specifies guidance and methods for determining low flow regimes was regarded as useful by many participants. Councils often have difficulty developing methods and obtaining accurate information for establishing minimum flows for rivers. Low flow levels and methods are often contested at the Environment Court and the cost of this process was raised by many as concerning.

*Consistent methodology for determining minimum flows could be helpful in a national environmental standard. (Napier)*

The risks of defining methods in a national environmental standard were raised at the Nelson meeting. One participant stated that local solutions cannot always be applied in other areas of a catchment or other catchments. Flexibility within a standard to adapt to regional situations was raised by many participants as important, along with the involvement of local government in developing a framework for a standard.

Concern was raised by one participant at the Invercargill meeting that a national environmental standard could be contentious if there was no community buy-in to the tool. A standard could cut across some of the effective work that has already been undertaken.

*The national environmental standard process can cut-across community solutions. Local solutions could already be working well. (Invercargill)*

### **Action 3: Address nationally important values**

There was a split in opinion regarding the value of the project on water bodies of national importance. Concern was raised at most meetings about the identification and listing of water bodies of national importance. Participants at the Christchurch and Dunedin meetings stated that all water bodies should be regarded as nationally important and that a focus on one value reduces the importance of other values. One participant suggested listing water bodies of regional importance alongside water bodies of national importance.

*Does having nationally important water bodies lower the value of other water bodies? All water bodies are nationally important. (Christchurch)*

Concern was also raised at the Christchurch meeting about central government interfering with the management of water bodies identified as nationally important.

Participants at the Greymouth and Nelson meetings raised the need for information about nationally important water bodies and a clear policy statement about nationally important values. The benefits of having this information included raising public awareness of water bodies of national importance and providing guidance for plan and policy development by local government. The project was also regarded as having value if it could assist whole of government approaches for managing particular water bodies or making submissions on regional plans or resource consents.

Some participants regarded central government as having a role in balancing competing national values. Questions were raised about the process for resolving competing values and comparing the criteria in each of the background reports on water bodies of national importance. The background reports in their current state were thought by one participant at the Dunedin meeting to be unhelpful for making decisions. One participant at the Nelson meeting raised the need for Māori values to be incorporated into the national values project.

Suggestions for determining national values and priority values included:

- determining instream values before determining values for abstractive uses (Dunedin)
- conducting an inquiry into how national values could be mediated through local processes (Nelson)
- determining the national interest as part of the regional planning process (Wellington)
- developing national legislation on a catchment and/or river specific basis for water bodies of national importance (Stratford).

The use of water conservation orders for protecting nationally important water bodies was discussed at some of the meetings. The question was raised at several meetings whether the Sustainable Development Water Programme of Action provided an opportunity to review current water conservation order provisions within the Resource Management Act and orders which are currently in place. One participant at the Gisborne meeting regarded water conservation orders as adding an extra layer of bureaucracy. The issue of community values being potentially overridden by water conservation orders was also raised at the Gisborne meeting.

# Central government involvement

## General comments

Central government involvement was generally supported if it involved providing guidance, support and funding. Interference in the management of water at the regional level was not supported. Participants did not support central government involvement adding extra layers of bureaucracy or increasing the burden of implementation costs on regional councils and rate payers. Central government funding was supported in the areas of:

- policy implementation
- scientific research
- developing and disseminating best practice
- assisting community-based projects
- establishing new agencies
- investigating options for upgrading infrastructure and water storage.

## Action 4: Increase central government participation in regional planning

### Whole of government submissions

Whole of government submissions were generally supported because they can allow for a broad government view to be presented. This approach was regarded as consistent with sustainable development principles:

*Government needs to determine the balance between the values of sustainable development at the national level. (Greymouth)*

Concern was raised that there would need to be a checking process for central government, because if local government disagreed with a whole of government view, the lowest common denominator could result.

Some participants at the Greymouth and Invercargill meetings expressed the view that a whole of government approach should be adopted at the beginning of the planning process, rather than an end of process sign-off like the coastal plan process. As well as a whole of government approach, information and guidance should be provided to councils at the beginning of the planning process.

## **More central government involvement**

Other suggestions included central government having a supervisory role to step in where there are problems. This view was tempered by the concern that councils do not want to have to report to central government on a regular basis.

*Central government has an overview role to ensure regional councils are doing their job adequately, but councils don't want to have to report to central government. (Nelson)*

## **Action 5: Increase central government's support for local government**

### **Funding for implementation**

Concern about the overall implementation costs of the proposed actions in the discussion document was raised at all of the meetings. A general response was that if central government is going to provide the policy direction by identifying specific outcomes, criteria for funding should be developed to support local government achieve the outcomes.

*The costs to ratepayers need to be taken into account. Taxpayers should pay as well as ratepayers. (Napier)*

Concern was raised about the impact of the proposals on under-resourced councils with small rating bases and whether central government would provide subsidies. One participant at the Napier meeting expressed the view that support and assistance should also be given to councils doing well, and not just the poor performers. Compliance costs for water users were also raised as needing careful consideration.

### **Funding for science and research**

Participants at all of the meetings raised the need for central government funding for more research and information on freshwater. Concern was expressed that central government investment in water research is not co-ordinated, and does not support the needs of local government.

*Central government investment in water research is not co-ordinated. Research needs to be aligned with the issues raised in the discussion document. (Nelson)*

The view was expressed by some participants that the Ministry for the Environment needs to be involved in reviewing funding criteria of organisations such as the Foundation of Research, Science and Technology to seek alignment.

The need for a separate fund for water was raised by some participants who felt that specific water projects often get lost between funding criteria which are not specifically for freshwater initiatives. The length of funding terms was also raised as problematic and often resulting in unfinished research.

Specific information gaps included:

- independent research on nutrients and solutions for managing diffuse pollution
- integrated catchment management and whole of catchment solutions
- methods for improving technical efficiency
- how to set water allocation limits
- how to maintain security of supply
- how to develop regimes which result in water allocated to priority uses.

Other information gaps raised were around rainwater collection and recycling of water, science-based information for calculating minimum flows, and information on how much water is available and whether water bodies are actually over-allocated. Providing a template for councils to balance competing values was also thought to be useful.

Some councils raised the need for funding for joint projects between central and local government to address particular issues, such as groundwater quality and allocation. The Canterbury Strategic Water Study was raised as an example of a local government initiative which should receive central government funding.

## **Develop and disseminate best practice**

There was general agreement at all of the meetings that central government has a role in facilitating the dissemination of best practice. This view was strongly expressed at the Napier meeting in the comment that the Ministry for the Environment should continue to fund and administer the Quality Planning website. Enhancing the sharing of information and lessons learned was regarded as a key aspect of the Sustainable Development Water Programme of Action at most meetings.

*Central government has a role in providing tools and facilitating the dissemination of solutions and best practice. (Greymouth)*

The suggestion for a 'one-stop shop for water information' was made at the Invercargill meeting. This would provide research and policy networks for information coordination. One participant at the Whangarei meeting commented that manuals, guidance and education material are already available however, the problem is with their use and dissemination.

## **Funding for community projects**

The need for central government funding for community-based projects was raised by several councils, as well as increased support for education and awareness programmes at the local level. Central government was also regarded by some as having a role in getting involved in 'on-the-ground' clean-up programmes with polluters.

*Funding is needed for more information and community-based projects. (Greymouth)*

## **Funding for new agencies**

Funding for establishing a new agency was also raised at the Christchurch and Palmerston North meetings. Options of a central water efficiency agency with a similar role to the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA), or a national water advisory council with a scientific and policy function were raised.

A suggestion was also made by one participant at the Christchurch meeting for an agency with an ombudsman role which could resolve disputes between different agencies and stakeholders.

*[We need a] dispute resolution mechanism between the different mandates [of central and local government]. (Canterbury)*

## **Funding for storage**

Most councils expressed the need for central government investment in upgrading existing infrastructure and developing new infrastructure. This included funding for investment in research and development of water storage, irrigation and distribution systems. Suggestions for water storage and water harvesting options to be investigated were made across the country in water short and water abundant regions.

*Central government should help less wealthy councils upgrade infrastructure. (Stratford)*

*Water storage should be an option. (Palmerston North)*

One participant at the Dunedin meeting suggested that a national group could oversee infrastructure development and provide funding. Views were also expressed that central government should carry the risk for regional irrigation projects.

## **Lack of freshwater expertise**

A lack of freshwater expertise was raised as an issue at some of the meetings. Central government was regarded as having a role in providing support for regional councils to strengthen their professional networks. One participant at the Nelson meeting suggested that central government should establish forums for regional councils to discuss water issues and to disseminate knowledge and expertise.

Capacity amongst less well-resourced councils was raised as a significant issue by most councils. Participants were supportive of central government providing a roving team of practitioners or secondments to councils to help build capacity. Establishing audit panels to assess regional plans was also suggested at the Nelson meeting as a way of sharing expertise and achieving consistency in approaches and outcomes. A lack of expertise within central government was also raised as an issue for councils seeking support when developing plans.

# Provide more tools

## General comments

Many councils regarded the Resource Management Act as already providing a range of tools for managing freshwater effectively. There is a need however, to develop existing tools further through projects for scoping, investigating and trialling their use.

*Tools are already available. They need to be used professionally, imaginatively and [with] support from communities.* (Stratford)

## Action 6: Develop special mechanisms for regional councils

Comments about tools focused on the need for solutions for managing the effects of diffuse discharges, the use of a tool to progressively constrain consents (often referred to as 'clawback'), establishing minimum flows, and developing incentives.

### Tools for managing diffuse discharges

Tools for managing diffuse discharges were discussed at all of the meetings. Suggestions were made for greater use of non-regulatory approaches which many councils have adopted, such as codes of practice and riparian planting.

At the Nelson meeting one participant suggested that the Ministry for the Environment should have a role in developing risk mapping for catchments under pressure and making this information available to the farming community. Suggestions for waterway design guides and systems for predicting the location of fish were also made.

The option of ranking impacts on water quality and developing action plans from the ranking was raised at the Auckland local government meeting. One participant suggested establishing water fora across district and regional council boundaries where water quality is a problem.

Changes to the regulatory framework were also suggested for managing diffuse discharges. One participant's view of the problem of managing diffuse discharges was the requirement in the Resource Management Act of 'no significant adverse effects'. The participant suggested that 'no significant adverse effects' should be strengthened by changing it to 'no change' or to 'beneficial change' to ensure that there are no adverse effects that need to be mitigated.

A suggestion was made at the Dunedin meeting for a moratorium to be put in place to prevent degradation of waterways. A suggestion was also made for the current enforcement regime to be tightened by setting higher fines.

## **Progressively constrain or ‘clawback’**

Participants asked questions at some of the meetings about how the proposed ‘clawback’ tool would work. Some councils regarded the review provisions for resource consents within the Resource Management Act as sufficient rather than developing a new tool. Environment Bay of Plenty is currently considering the use of the review provisions in this way.

Support for a ‘clawback’ tool was expressed at the Gisborne meeting. The tool was thought to be useful for the future when water bodies may be subject to increased pressure. Information on the implementation of the tool, including the possible implications of case law, was regarded as useful to councils.

## **Establishing minimum flows**

Tools for establishing minimum flows were regarded as useful by many councils. The current gaps in information and inconsistency of approaches to setting minimum flows were raised as problems.

## **Incentives**

Incentives for improving water conservation and efficiency of use, and for reducing discharges to water were supported by some participants. In particular, incentives for rain water collection and the recycling of water in rural and urban areas were suggested by participants at the Palmerston North meeting.

*A reward for not using water should be considered. (Auckland)*

Water metering was regarded as a feasible option for encouraging efficiency of use at most meetings.

*[We] need water metering in Canterbury; central government should push for compulsory metering. (Christchurch)*

## **Action 7: Enhance the transfer of allocated water between users**

The opportunities and risks of enhanced transfer mechanisms for allocating water were noted in many places. Interest was shown in enhanced trading opportunities in areas where catchments have reached, or are near to reaching full-allocation. Full allocation is not just a Canterbury issue – there are catchments all over New Zealand which are fully allocated. The fact that the current legislative framework already provides for trading was raised at some of the meetings. Interest in some mechanisms for enhancing transfer was wide-ranging.

Some participants regarded a trading system as providing more flexibility than the current first-in, first-served system especially in areas where water resources are over-allocated. The need for central government to consider transfer models developed by other countries was raised at the Palmerston North and Napier meetings. A trading system would require guidelines and boundaries to be set by central government for it to be effective. This would also prevent regions duplicating efforts to develop individual systems.

*Trading of water rights is an option. We should look to overseas examples. (Palmerston North)*

Measuring the actual volume of water used was crucial for a transfer system. Compulsory use of water meters or a water efficiency diagnostic service for determining use was supported. A suggestion was made by a participant at the Dunedin meeting for the use of meters to be trialled. A pilot registry system for transfers was also regarded as useful by many.

While trading consents was regarded by some as having merit, concern was raised that trading systems can assume a market value for water and this could result in private ownership.

*Resource consents could become a tangible asset if water has a market value. (Greymouth)*

*Avoid privatisation of water. (Palmerston North)*

The costs of establishing a transfer system were raised as a concern at the Napier and Dunedin meetings. The need to consider the costs of upgrading systems and processes if a more sophisticated water allocation system is developed was raised in Napier.

*Thought must be given to measuring systems if we have a more sophisticated allocation system. A set of systems for determining use and undertaking monitoring will be needed. Upgrading and retrofitting equipment will be needed. (Napier)*

Trading groundwater was regarded as problematic due to the difficulty in defining the boundaries of the resource. Tradability across regional boundaries was also regarded as difficult.

The need to recognise existing rights to take water was raised at all of the meetings. In particular, any system must recognise the existing economic investment of consent holders to provide certainty and security of supply.

*Existing investments in infrastructure will need to be recognised if management systems change. (Napier)*

*[We] need certainty for consent holders. (Palmerston North)*

*The cost of establishing a tendering system and lack of tenure and security will mean that it will not work. Certainty is important especially where long term investments are involved. (Dunedin)*

An alternative view was raised at the local government meeting held in Invercargill, where a participant was concerned about recognising existing economic investment because it reinforces the first in, first served system which cannot always provide for all interests.

## **Action 8: Develop market mechanisms to manage diffuse discharges**

Some councils regarded the introduction of transfer of discharge permits for managing diffuse pollution as problematic. Questions were raised at the Greymouth meeting about how to quantify the level of discharge for the soil type and the number of stock. Participants stated that a tradable discharge system would need significant information and monitoring to be effective.

The need for information on how to manage non-point source discharges and the use of nitrogen caps was raised at the Invercargill meeting. Concerns about the receiving environments were also raised.

*Transfer of discharge permits is concerning as the receiving environments may be different.*  
(Auckland)

A participant at the Whakatane meeting expressed concern about the implications for Maori landowners who want to develop land if diffuse discharges become regulated. The point was made that earlier developers would not have been confined by the possible future regulation and therefore, central government was regarded as having a role in providing assistance to address equity issues.

## **Action 9: Set requirements for regional freshwater plans to address key issues and challenges**

Few specific comments were made about this action. Comments were made at some of the meetings about the need for better strategic planning for water use at all government levels. Strategic planning included problem identification, research and consultation phases, as well as the need to be specific about the extent, trend and spatial distribution of problems. One participant at the Whangarei meeting suggested that the long term council community planning process could be used to prioritise, identify and monitor water resources of regional significance.

The problem of managing diffuse discharges was raised at the Invercargill meeting. The suggestion for joint plans to be developed between territorial local authorities and regional councils under section 80 of the Resource Management Act was made to address cross-function issues related to land-use impacts.

## **Action 11: Enable regional councils to allocate water to priority uses**

The issue of determining highest value use for water and how this could be achieved was discussed at all of the meetings held with local government. Caution was expressed by participants about either central or local government deciding the best value or use for freshwater. Many councils expressed concern about a system that would require them to 'pick winners' amongst values and uses:

*How do you decide water uses?* (Whangarei)

*Highest value use is subjective to determine. It would be difficult for councils to determine this.* (Napier)

An alternative view was expressed at the local government meeting held in Wellington, where determining highest value use for rivers was regarded as useful by one participant.

## The current system (first-in-first-served)

There was general support for retaining the first-in, first-served approach for water allocation, although problems with the system were recognised. Councils tended to prefer the existing system because it meant they did not have to 'pick winners' which could be required under an alternative system.

*[There is a need for] caution with moving away from first-in-first-served. [You] could use frequent review to determine whether water is going to the highest priority use. (Napier)*

The problems raised with the current system included the inability to manage over-allocated resources and a lack of flexibility to encourage efficiency of use. In cases of full allocation there was support for options that did not require councils to 'pick winners'. Participants at meetings held in Whangarei, Stratford, Hamilton, Invercargill and Nelson raised the need for central government to develop a system for managing over-allocated resources.

Participants at the Invercargill meeting raised other concerns with the current allocation system. These included a tendency for allocations to commercial users to dominate, leaving little water for community interests, and the preference given to existing consent holders.

## A market-based system

General comments regarding the use of a market-based system for allocation included the need to be cautious when considering market options and the need to identify the costs and benefits and the appropriateness of their use.

*Market instruments could be used for fully allocated resources. (Stratford)*

Many participants raised the need for social and cultural values to be defined and accommodated within an allocation system. This view was often accompanied by the concern that a market-based tradable system could result in economic values becoming the highest values. One participant at the Wellington meeting suggested trading would need to occur within a framework to determine the highest value use.

Some participants raised the view that a transfer system could not always guarantee that water would be transferred to the highest value use or would result in the best outcome for the wider community. An alternative approach could be to use frequent review of consents to determine whether water is allocated to the highest value rather than using a trading system.

Concerns were raised at all of the meetings regarding access for all interests to freshwater if an auctioning, tendering or trading system was introduced. Wealthy water users were regarded as having an advantage over others in acquiring water permits. Concern was raised at most meetings about how non-consumptive interests in water would be accounted for if an auctioning or tendering regime was implemented.

*How will recreational groups compete in a tendering or auctioning system? (Gisborne)*

The need for boundaries to be set for an auctioning or tendering regime to protect cultural values was raised at the Hamilton meeting.

*The auctioning/tendering option is commercialising water. If central government is going down this path you need to have boundaries to protect cultural values. (Hamilton)*

The comment was made at the Gisborne meeting that a successful trading regime relies on access to accurate information which is not always attainable.

Overall, there was support for considering various options for increased tradability, although the need for thought to be given to the detail of a regime was raised on many occasions.

## **Working together**

### **Action 10: Enhance Māori participation**

Few comments were made regarding this action. The need to clearly define the type of engagement and the roles of central government, local government and Māori was expressed by one participant at the Hamilton meeting. The need to be aware of the difference between engagement with iwi as stated in the Resource Management Act, and engagement with Māori as included in the Local Government Act and the implications of this was also raised.

The role of Māori in decision-making was raised by several participants at the Nelson meeting. The question was asked whether there is there a commitment towards co-management regimes and to encourage a greater role for Māori to engage in regional decision-making. The need for central government to fund increased Māori involvement in a strategic way that does not cut across existing effective relationships was raised at the meeting held in Stratford.

### **Action 12: Raise awareness of freshwater problems and pressures**

There was general agreement at all of the meetings that raising awareness of freshwater issues should be a key part of the programme.

*Public awareness should be a tool incorporated into the other actions.* (Nelson)

Some councils discussed programmes that are already in place within their regions and cautioned central government against overriding effective relationships that have already been established. The point was made at the meeting held in Stratford that there is already growing awareness of sustainability amongst resource users in the region, but often non-government organisations and policy makers are unaware of this.

Most councils agreed, however, that although there is already an abundance of education material and resources available there are gaps, and dissemination of information can be a problem. Central government could have a role in undertaking a stock-take of the material already available.

Although councils stated that resource users are generally well-informed about water management, there is a role for central government to raise general public awareness of freshwater issues. Some councils suggested that central government could develop awareness campaigns with regional councils which are customised to particular areas and empower local government to deliver the programmes that are needed within particular regions. National templates could be developed which could be adapted for local issues. National-scale campaigns would also need to build in sufficient time for local government to be incorporated. Catchment-based education programmes were regarded as more effective than large-scale advertising campaigns, for example, the Landcare Trust was regarded as an effective community-based model.

Other suggestions for increasing awareness and developing education programmes included more education on water conservation and efficiency of use for the rural and urban communities, as well as industry. Increasing awareness of the state of water quality was regarded as important at the Dunedin meeting. One participant at the Auckland meeting raised the need for greater community responsibility for monitoring environmental quality and water use.

### **Action 13: Collaboration between central government and local government, scientists and key stakeholders, on pilot projects to demonstrate and test new water management initiative**

The value of collaboration between central and local government, the science community, and local communities was acknowledged at all of the meetings. The importance of partnerships between local and central government was raised at the meeting held in Napier, along with the need for local government to be involved at the start of the policy development process. One participant at the Nelson meeting stated that irrigators and industry groups need to be closely involved in the planning and policy development process.

The engagement of science in environmental decision-making was also raised as an important issue. At the Hamilton meeting a more coordinated approach to working together was thought to be needed where people from a range of institutions and organisations should be brought together to deal with significant issues.

*Central government, local government and science need to work together on diffuse discharges. (Hamilton)*

One participant at the Christchurch meeting stated that central government, local government, other agencies and communities need to work together to understand water systems and to agree on outcomes and actions.

Greater alignment between territorial local authorities and regional authorities was regarded as important at the Whakatane meeting. One participant suggested that a requirement could be included in long term council community plans to show that there has been alignment between district and regional planning.

## **Pilot projects**

The proposal for pilot projects to test tools and new initiatives was generally supported. It was consistent with the view that funding should be targeted at particular problems and regions. Greater coordination between central and local government and the science community would provide a basis for pilot projects to be developed. Particular issues were raised as possible pilot projects such as models for addressing land-use impacts, the conversion of forestry land to dairy farming, and whole of government approaches to provide examples of process for future projects.

Greater support given to community-based projects which have difficulty obtaining funding from local rates was widely supported. The Lake Brunner project on the West Coast was cited as a good example of central government providing funding for a successful community-based project. The biodiversity fund for initiatives on private land was also regarded as an effective model for providing advice to land owners.

# 5 Key Themes

## Maintain local decision-making

Maintaining local decision-making for freshwater management was raised as an important issue at all of the meetings. Increased central government involvement was seen by some as interfering with local decision-making processes provided for in the Resource Management Act and the Local Government Act. Regions and districts were regarded as having the best knowledge to make decisions about resources in their areas. Concerns were often raised that national policies could override local initiatives and solutions.

## Provide national direction

Whole of government submissions which involve central government making decisions about competing national values were regarded as helpful. However, the potential for conflict between regional and national values was raised. Determining methods for setting low flows and water quality standards on a regional basis was also regarded by many as useful.

## Funding for science and research

Funding for science and research was a key theme at most of the meetings. More funding for research was suggested, as well as alignment of existing funding with government priorities. Access to existing research was also regarded as a problem and suggestions were made for improved dissemination of information.

## Dissemination of best practice

Councils expressed interest in sharing ideas and solutions for managing water. Central government was regarded as having a role in establishing networks and forums for the sharing of ideas and expertise. Best practice solutions were thought to be needed in a range of areas including managing diffuse discharges on water quality and methods for achieving efficient use of water.

## Upgrading infrastructure

Some councils raised the need for central government funding for upgrading existing infrastructure for water management. This included considering options for developing storage facilities.

## **Integrated catchment management**

The need for integrated solutions to help tackle water quality problems and to make informed allocation decisions was raised at all of the meetings. Integrated solutions were regarded as lacking in the discussion document. Many councils raised the need for integrated models on which to base plans, decisions and policies.

The impacts of urban activities on water quality and urban use and supply were also raised at many of the meetings. A common theme was that rural and urban freshwater issues are interdependent and should not be separated in the programme.

## **Recognise existing investments**

Recognising the rights of existing consent holders and investments in water infrastructure was regarded as important at most of the meetings.

## **Increase efficiency of use**

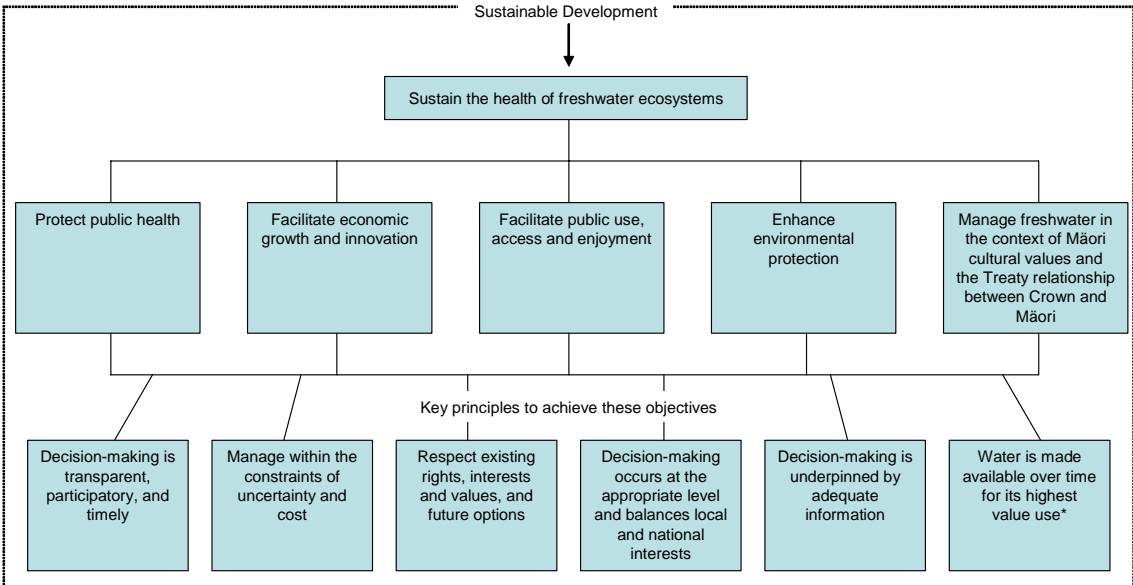
The need to improve the efficient use of water was raised at all of the meetings. Efficiency could be improved by transferring excess volumes and providing information and guidance for rural and urban communities on how to use water more efficiently. Water metering was raised at many of the meetings as essential for gauging the actual volumes of water used.

# Appendix 1: Principles of the Sustainable Development Water Programme of Action

The programme’s vision, objectives and underlying principles are:

**VISION:** Freshwater is managed wisely to provide for the present and future social, cultural, environmental and economic wellbeing of New Zealand

- CHALLENGES**
- Not all expectations and needs for freshwater are currently being met and demands are growing
  - Water quality is declining in many areas and is unacceptable in some catchments
  - Given the range of people’s interests in water it is difficult to establish priorities for action



\* Value is defined in its holistic sense and not just in reference to economic value. 'Highest value use' encompasses all aspects of sustainable development: environmental, social, cultural and economic.

# Appendix 2: List of Consultation Meetings

**Table 1: North Island consultation meetings**

Location	Public meeting	Local government meeting	Hui
Kaitia	No meeting	No meeting	14 February 2005 Far North Community Centre
Whangarei	2 February 2005 Kingsgate Hotel	2 February 2005 Northland Regional Council	15 February 2005 Whangarei Terenga Paraoa Marae
Auckland	1 February 2005 Ellerslie Convention Centre	1 February 2005 Auckland Regional Council	16 February 2005 North Harbour Stadium
Hamilton	1 February 2005 Ferrybank Reception & Conference Centre	1 February 2005 Environment Waikato	17 February 2005 Waikato Rugby Stadium
Whakatane	No meeting	2 February 2005 Environment Bay of Plenty	21 February 2005 Maungarongo/ Ohope Marae
Rotorua	2 February 2005 Royal Lakeside Novotel Hotel	No meeting	No meeting
Gisborne	1 February 2005 Gisborne Hotel	2 February 2005 Gisborne District Council	22 February 2005 Gisborne Hotel
Napier/ Hastings	31 January 2005 East Pier	31 January 2005 Hawkes Bay Regional Council	23 February 2005 Heretaunga Taiwhenua Administration Centre
Taupo	9 February 2005 Millennium Hotel	No meeting	4 March 2005 Wairakei Resort
New Plymouth	8 February 2005 Plymouth International Hotel	No meeting	No hui
Stratford	No meeting	9 February 2005 Taranaki Regional Council	No hui
Waitara	No meeting	No meeting	31 January 2005 Owae Marae
Wanganui	No meeting	No meeting	1 February 2005 Putiki Marae
Palmerston North	7 February 2005 Palmerston North Convention Centre	7 February 2005 Horizons Regional Council	2 February 2005 Te Manawa Gallery
Masterton	7 February 2005 Masterton District Council	No meeting	No meeting
Greytown	No meeting	No meeting	3 February 2005 Papawai Marae
Wellington	8 February 2005 Duxton Hotel	8 February 2005 Greater Wellington Regional Council	28 February 2005 Waiwhetu Marae

**Table 2: South Island consultation meetings**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Public meeting</b>	<b>Local government meeting</b>	<b>Hui</b>
Blenheim	8 February 2005 Scenic Circle Blenheim Country Hotel	No meeting	No meeting
Nelson/ Richmond	9 February 2005 Seifried Function Centre	9 February 2005 Tasman District Council	7 February 2005 Whakatu Marae
Greymouth	15 February 2005 West Coast Regional Council	16 February 2005 West Coast Regional Council	No meeting
Christchurch	14 February 2005 Christchurch Convention Centre	14 February 2005 Christchurch Convention Centre	8 February 2005 Te Waipounamu House
Timaru	15 February 2005 Phar Lap Raceway	No meeting	No meeting
Dunedin	14 February 2005 Dunedin Centre	14 February 2005 Otago Regional Council	11 February 2005 Karitane Marae
Alexandra	15 February 2005 Centennial Court Motor Inn	No meeting	No meeting
Invercargill	14 February 2005 Ascot Park Hotel	14 February 2005 Environment Southland	10 February 2005 Murihiku Marae

# Appendix 3: Record of Meetings Held in Each Region

**Table 3: Whangarei meeting held at Northland Regional Council**

<p><b>Central government direction</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the national motives?</li> <li>• National standards would need an adaptation to the regional situation</li> <li>• Is it a national or a regional issue?</li> <li>• Existing plans would need to be integrated into any regime</li> <li>• How effective would the programme be in areas where water allocation is not an issue?</li> <li>• Who drives the setting and funding for the standards?</li> <li>• A national environmental standard would have to be usable across New Zealand and based on regional differences</li> <li>• Need national and regional standards and solutions to address water quality</li> </ul>
<p><b>Central government involved</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding and research issues</li> <li>• Lack of support for community programmes</li> <li>• The programme is great work, but it's too late. Should have had guidance when the Resource Management Act was enacted</li> <li>• Manuals, guidance and technical education is already available – the problem is with its use and dissemination</li> <li>• Integration of State of the Environment monitoring with regional/industrial/other agency reporting is needed</li> <li>• Need information on whether water bodies are actually over-allocated</li> <li>• Monitoring and evaluation needs to be early and focused</li> <li>• Research and funding needs to be accessible and coordinated</li> <li>• Need to know about abstraction effects on biodiversity</li> <li>• Need to look at the commonalities already in regional plans – national direction might not be needed</li> <li>• Continuation of funding</li> <li>• More funding for investigations to develop data to convince people of the need for change</li> <li>• Review the work already being undertaken and identify the gaps</li> <li>• Pilot trials for models of land use impacts</li> <li>• Provide template for regional councils to balance competing values</li> <li>• Need more complete background work, discussion and consultation on water bodies of national importance</li> <li>• Need national co-ordination of research, standard approaches, best practice, funding and resourcing</li> <li>• Regionally based pilot projects</li> </ul>

<b>Provide more tools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you set water allocation?</li> <li>• How do you decide water uses?</li> <li>• How long do you allocate consents for?</li> <li>• Need certainty of water allocation</li> <li>• Need better strategic planning for water use at all government levels involving problem identification, research and consultation</li> <li>• Need a code of practice for non-point source discharges</li> <li>• Use long term council community plans to prioritise, identify and monitor water resources of regional significance</li> <li>• Need an alternative system to first come first served</li> <li>• Need allocation catchment modelling</li> </ul>
<b>Working together</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need better public awareness regarding water conservation</li> <li>• Need information leading to behaviour changes. Could use overseas experience</li> <li>• Need to identify target audiences and use different approaches</li> <li>• Industry needs information</li> </ul>
<b>Additional issues raised</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The impacts of storm water on water quality is an issue in urban areas</li> <li>• Who is providing national biosecurity?</li> <li>• Need integrated catchment management</li> <li>• Management should be catchment focused. Riparian management is a quick fix solution for rivers</li> </ul>

**Table 4: Auckland meeting held at Auckland Regional Council**

<b>Central government direction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central government should provide the framework and local government will administer it with flexibility, local values, policy and practice</li> <li>• There is inconsistency across New Zealand in approaches. Government should set direction and councils should set into practice</li> <li>• The RMA is permissive but increased central government involvement results in a more prescriptive approach. It is better if it is guidance and assistance including money, than prescriptive</li> <li>• There are ways to better the control at a national level</li> <li>• A national environmental standard would bring certainty and consistency</li> <li>• Need a set of criteria to help prioritise values</li> </ul>
<b>Central government involved</b>	
<b>Provide more tools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First in first served is a problem</li> <li>• Transfer of discharge consents is concerning as the receiving environments may be different</li> <li>• A reward for not using water should be considered; for example, incentives for water efficiency</li> <li>• Need to rank the impacts on water quality and develop actions plans from that</li> <li>• There is conflict between regulation and standards at the local level. This presents barriers to sustainable management</li> <li>• Water fora should be established where water quality is a problem. Should be across districts and regional councils</li> <li>• Should use overseas experience to inform New Zealand policy especially on market based tools</li> <li>• Water needs to be valued</li> <li>• Move to market mechanisms (cost and benefit identification) – caution as to appropriate national environmental standards</li> <li>• Management tools do exist. They need to be developed further</li> </ul>

<b>Working together</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need funding and education for urban catchment management and community engagement</li> <li>• Needs to be a cultural mindshift from consumption to conservation</li> <li>• Needs to be greater community responsibility for monitoring practice</li> </ul>
<b>Additional issues raised</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urban issues should be addressed</li> <li>• Water Sustainable Urban Design needs to be considered, including programmes, criteria and guidelines. They should be incorporated into the long term council community plans</li> </ul>

**Table 5: Hamilton meeting held at Environment Waikato**

<b>Central government direction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has there been any attempt to determine the dollar value of water to guide consent decisions?</li> <li>• The discussion document does not contain enough detail about 'values' and criteria for identifying important values. Would have liked more bold statements</li> <li>• Supportive of development of a national environmental standard in relation to diffuse discharges. At the moment regional councils are trying to change national practices in land management. National standards would be valuable to help with this</li> <li>• The work undertaken at Taupo could be a model for the future and an example of dealing with national values</li> </ul>
<b>Central government involved</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resourcing of poor councils is important. Currently is inequality in resourcing of councils and rates cannot be relied on for funding</li> <li>• Unsupportive of Action 4: Increase central government participation in planning. Central government does not need to have a role in approving plans</li> <li>• Cost of compliance needs to be considered along with resourcing</li> <li>• There is a possible pilot project in conversion of forestry land to dairying and other farming in Reporoa. A whole of government approach could be adopted from the beginning. Could be an example of how things could be done</li> <li>• Central government needs to take the lead where there are gaps</li> <li>• More co-ordination between central and local government and scientists and more whole of government work</li> </ul>
<b>Provide more tools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How is MfE going to provide regional councils with tools to achieve the outcomes they want?</li> <li>• There is a problem of building sustainable development outcomes and strategic planning into consent decisions. Greater weight needs to be given to sustainable development and tools to encourage this</li> <li>• In terms of changing land use, there is a lack in certainty of direction in the document. Land-users need to be able to plan for investment</li> <li>• Tools exist but they are blunt</li> <li>• There is a need for tools that deal with over-allocation and cross boundary issues</li> <li>• The auction/tendering option is commercialising water. If central government is going down this path you need to have boundaries to protect cultural values</li> </ul>
<b>Working together</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central government, local government and science need to work together on diffuse discharges</li> <li>• The Resource Management Act looks at engagement with iwi, while the Local Government Act looks at engagement with Māori. There is a need to be aware of the difference and to look at the implications. It must be clear what sort of engagement central government wants and with whom</li> <li>• There needs to be a more coordinated approach to working together to working together to address issues</li> <li>• People from a range of institutions/organisations should be brought together to deal with big issues</li> </ul>
<b>Additional issues raised</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The land and water interface. Subdivisions, land management etc needs more attention</li> <li>• When will something usable come out of this process?</li> <li>• Inequity exists between point source dischargers who spend money reducing impacts and diffuse dischargers who do not have to deal with the impacts</li> </ul>

**Table 6: Whakatane meeting held at Environment Bay of Plenty**

<p><b>Central government direction</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no reflection in the document of enhancing the environment. A minimalist approach is not raising sights high enough. This could come through as a high level national policy statement</li> <li>• Values need to be quantified. Central government needs to set guidelines and not necessarily just bottom lines. There is a need to cater for more than 'bottom lines' for the environment and it is important to recognise the need to integrate quality and flow aspects</li> <li>• How are we going to decide which are nationally important water bodies? They are all important. It should probably be a local decision</li> <li>• Central government should be dealing with the big picture. Hands-on work should stay at the regional level</li> </ul>
<p><b>Central government involved</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central government should provide more tools and funding and local and central government should provide the science</li> <li>• Affordability has not appeared in the document. This is very important to councils because ratepayers can't afford the full cost</li> <li>• Lake Rotoiti has rapid deterioration in water quality. It will take a considerable amount of money to put it right</li> <li>• The majoring of local government funding comes from local ratepayers but it is not them majority of ratepayers who are polluting or using the waterways</li> <li>• Industry should pay for some of the pollution clean up</li> <li>• Central government should look at developing criteria within catchments</li> <li>• Developing a national role is crucial. Central government should be taking the majority of responsibility for funding. Would like to see government providing policy direction for outcomes and within that, criteria for funding to support local government to achieve outcomes</li> <li>• Central government needs to be proactive not reactive</li> <li>• Central government needs to take the lead with polluters. Central government needs to get involved in consultation with polluters</li> <li>• Lack of research is a problem. There appears to be no government direction for funding. Is there possibility for setting up a water portfolio within the FORST funding system? Maybe government needs to rethink research funding models</li> <li>• Science in New Zealand is closeted and not transparent. There is a lack of integration</li> <li>• Need to look at water harvesting</li> </ul>
<p><b>Provide more tools</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rotorua Lakes Action Plan is a model of how decisions should be made</li> <li>• Central government guidelines would be required for water trading. Need to make sure each region does not re-invent trading systems</li> <li>• Support for central government providing tools but not tools that would require duplication of work already completed. Central government should set a framework and some boundaries and let councils work within this.</li> <li>• Need to provide for temporary transfer</li> <li>• If diffuse discharges are to become more regulated, need to address implications for Maori owners who want to develop undeveloped land. They will be hit by controls that earlier developers did not face. Role for central government to provide assistance for equity reasons</li> <li>• 'Clawback' presents potential difficulties for councils. This councils is looking at using current Resource Management Act provisions (review of consents) to deal with the need for clawback. What else is proposed?</li> <li>• Concern about the implications of the Aoraki decision for the consent process</li> </ul>
<p><b>Working together</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional councils could apply more pressure to district councils. Regional and district councils could form closer relationships. There could be a requirement in the long term council community planning process to show there has been alignment between district and regional planning</li> <li>• Water is now a scarce resource. Need to raise awareness. Public education is an important tool</li> </ul>

<b>Additional issues raised</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subdivisions are an issue. Developers make a profit and then leave a mess behind for communities to clean up. There is a need for controls on land management practices; for example, riparian management on farms</li> <li>• 1080 is still being dropped on land and finds its way into rivers. There is a need to go to the sources of pollution to fix the problems</li> <li>• Need to recognise that district and regional planning go hand in hand. Need to look at functions of catchments as a whole</li> <li>• Need to strengthen the focus in the Resource Management Act on looking at efficiency, including efficiency of energy generation. Emphasis on climate change and water efficiency are missing from the discussion document</li> </ul>
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**Table 7: Gisborne meeting held at Gisborne District Council**

<b>Central government direction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government or councils should not decide what the best use of resources is</li> <li>• There appears to be a threat of government regulation. Local government decision-making should be maintained</li> <li>• All districts are different so policy statements would have to reflect local conditions</li> <li>• Nationally important values could raise the level of awareness about important values</li> <li>• How would a national environmental standard address specific regional issues?</li> <li>• Maori may have different expectations for a national environmental standard</li> <li>• Would water conservation orders be abolished? There is a conflict between communities determining their values for water and then having a water conservation order placed on a particular water body</li> </ul>
<b>Central government involved</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could central government require regional plans to be developed?</li> <li>• Under the proposed changes to the Resource Management Act the Minister for the Environment is given powers to intervene without criteria. There are no opportunities for councils to contest the direction of ministerial decisions. Similar proposals for water management are not supported</li> <li>• The cost to local authorities with small rating bases is significant</li> <li>• Are the whole of government submissions like the input of the former Ministry of Works and Development?</li> <li>• Science-based information for calculating minimum flows would be useful</li> <li>• Is there support across government for providing subsidies to local government?</li> <li>• Would Resource Management Act regional plans be required or would another type of regime or strategy be sufficient? Could set requirements for regional planning rather than requiring plans</li> <li>• Central government approving plans is not supported</li> </ul>
<b>Provide more tools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fencing waterways is not always feasible in hill country areas</li> <li>• How will recreational groups compete in a tendering or auctioning system?</li> <li>• If you do not allow the resource to get over-allocated then you will not need to set up markets</li> <li>• People are entitled to certainty. Recognition of existing use rights should be included</li> <li>• Tradability can allow regions to manage their way through demand for water</li> <li>• A tradable system could allow the best value to result in a financial value. What about social and cultural values?</li> <li>• We do not want councils or central government to decide what the best use of water is</li> <li>• Are there opportunities to review the water conservation order provisions as well as existing orders?</li> <li>• 'Clawback' tool would be useful for the future, and information on implementation of the tool</li> <li>• How would 'water permit holders required to return a fraction of water resources' work?</li> <li>• Merit in returning a fraction but returned amount needs to be used as an efficiency measure</li> <li>• Who should determine what the highest value of water is?</li> <li>• Deciding on who gets the water is about deciding which is the most important value</li> <li>• A trading permit system relies on accurate information which is not always possible. A pilot registry system would be useful for transfers.</li> <li>• Could have transfer between land owners and transfer between sections of rivers</li> </ul>

<b>Working together</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raising awareness of the issues is important. Central government should not assume all people have access to the internet</li> <li>• Local government also has an obligation to provide information</li> <li>• The council informs water users of the issues but there is a gap for raising general public awareness</li> <li>• More education is needed on water efficiency</li> <li>• What would central government's role be in the pilot programmes mentioned under Action 13?</li> <li>• Collaboration has to be issues driven. Problems need to be clearly identified</li> </ul>
<b>Additional issues raised</b>	

**Table 8: Napier meeting held at Hawkes Bay Regional Council**

<b>Central government direction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is difficult to determine the best mechanisms until we know what the national priorities are</li> <li>• Who sets the national priorities? A process is needed for involving local government and stakeholders for developing a national policy statement</li> <li>• Consistent advice and direction is needed from central government</li> <li>• Central government needs to be clear that there is not enough water to meet demands in some areas</li> <li>• There is a danger that the issue could become politicised and overly influenced by pressure groups</li> <li>• Trade-offs between values will have to happen. The reality is that increased use of water correlates with a decrease in water quality</li> <li>• Some level of national guidance would be useful</li> <li>• The content of an national policy statement should be high level. Prescription can result in conflicts</li> <li>• A consistent methodology for determining minimum flows could be helpful in a national environmental standard</li> </ul>
<b>Central government involved</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Quality Planning website should continue to be funded and operated by the Ministry for the Environment</li> <li>• Whole of government submissions could be useful because how can councils be expected to determine national priorities?</li> <li>• There often a confusing message from central to regional government on what the national priorities are</li> <li>• What is going to happen with the lists of water bodies of national importance?</li> <li>• The Heretaunga Plains is included in the irrigation report – does this mean that central government will interfere with the management of this resource?</li> <li>• The costs to ratepayers need to be taken into account. Taxpayers should pay as well as ratepayers</li> <li>• Support and assistance from central government is needed for councils performing well, not only for those councils under-performing</li> <li>• Assistance for under-resourced councils in the form of secondments and information sharing is supported</li> <li>• More information is needed on how much water is available</li> <li>• Is there central government support for water harvesting?</li> <li>• Setting environmental bottom lines requires good information which is expensive to obtain. Compliance costs for water users and councils are also significant</li> </ul>

<b>Provide more tools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central government has a role in researching international experiences and models. The Californian and Israel models should be researched</li> <li>• We need to consider selling water to the highest bidder. Systems for allocating scarce resources need to be considered</li> <li>• Selling water to the highest bidder does not always mean it is allocated to the highest value</li> <li>• Caution with moving away from first in first served. Could use frequent review to determine whether water is going to the highest priority use</li> <li>• There is room for improving the efficiency of water use</li> <li>• Would a water rental unit be payable to the Crown or to councils?</li> <li>• Highest value use is subjective to determine. It would be difficult for councils to determine this</li> <li>• Thought must be given to measuring systems if we have a more sophisticated allocation system. A set of systems for determining use, and undertaking monitoring will be needed. Upgrading and retrofitting equipment will be needed</li> <li>• The practicalities behind measuring water need to be considered</li> <li>• As water becomes more valuable there is more incentive for users to take all of the volume they are entitled to. Councils need to be able to measure use. The compliance regime is resource hungry</li> <li>• Existing investments in infrastructure will need to be recognised if management systems change</li> </ul>
<b>Working together</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to emphasise the importance of partnerships. Local government is an equal partner and should be involved at the start of the policy development process</li> <li>• Central government needs to listen to local government</li> </ul>
<b>Additional issues raised</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why aren't urban impacts on water quality included in the scope of the programme?</li> <li>• The document does not address the tension between the demand for more water and the water quality problems that often result from intensive agricultural production. The discussion document does not offer solutions on how to deal with this tension</li> <li>• The document is reactive to the Resource Management Act. Where does sustainable development fit in? How can regional councils address social and economic factors to make effective environmental decision-making within a Resource Management Act (sustainable management) framework?</li> </ul>

**Table 9: Stratford meeting held at Taranaki Regional Council**

<b>Central government direction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uneasy about a raft of changes which could result in frustration and cost. Need transparency, clarity and buy-in from the community</li> <li>• One-size fits all is not a good approach. Regulatory costs are high and regions don't want to have to pay for problems that aren't theirs</li> <li>• Solutions have to be targeted</li> <li>• National environmental standards are too blunt. Would be useful to have capability and research undertaken to provide a tool box of methodologies that could be region specific</li> <li>• National legislation may be required on a catchment and/or river specific basis</li> </ul>
<b>Central government involved</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to remember local relationships are important and a heavy-handed approach might not work</li> <li>• Department of Conservation is the only department doing its job regarding submissions. Needs to be an integrated government view when appropriate. It would be valuable at consent and plan level. At the moment social and economic departments are absent</li> <li>• New Zealand Planning Institute would be more effective operating at the regional level like the Resource Managers' Group</li> <li>• There is value in pilot programmes</li> <li>• Need targeted funding</li> <li>• Central government should help less wealthy councils upgrade infrastructure</li> <li>• Lean lessons from overseas experience</li> </ul>

<b>Provide more tools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problems need to be properly defined in order to develop solutions. Need to be specific about the extent, trend and spatial distribution of problems</li> <li>• It is difficult to predict future water and land use</li> <li>• The tools are already available. They need to be used professionally, imaginatively and with support from the community</li> <li>• Allocation – there is an issue with how you judge best use. The tools for allocation are already available. Certainty is needed in a system</li> <li>• Efficiency of use is a problem. If a charge is put on water use efficiency would increase</li> <li>• Work on Taranaki values found that environmental issues were in the top 10 things values, and water was number one</li> <li>• Minimum flow work would be helpful</li> <li>• Economic instruments won't work everywhere</li> <li>• Market instruments could be used for fully allocated resources</li> <li>• Tradable consents may have merits. There are no legislative impediments for trading to occur now</li> <li>• Pricing mechanisms would be the best way to deal with efficiency of use</li> <li>• Could put a condition in consents for hydro generation that would allow water to be allocated from their permits to other users</li> <li>• Use an enforcement regime that is based on the tools available</li> </ul>
<b>Working together</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry for the Environment has created false impressions and expectations with Māori. Need to fund increased Māori involvement in a strategic way that does not create problems for councils. Strong links with Māori have been established in Taranaki</li> <li>• Growing awareness of sustainability concept amongst resource users. Policy people and non-government organisations haven't connected with this yet</li> <li>• There is a lack of appreciation of mainstreaming of environmental values in the discussion document. This impacts on the tools that should be used</li> <li>• Regulation is needed to underpin education and awareness programmes in areas where there is no awareness</li> <li>• Need to connect with key resource users at a property scale</li> </ul>
<b>Additional issues raised</b>	

**Table 10: Palmerston North meeting held at Horizons Regional Council**

<b>Central government direction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no framework for non-point source pollution. Who pays for the impacts? Guidance, research and tools are required</li> <li>• Monitoring and legislation is required, and stronger penalties</li> <li>• Need a clear steer on priority use and providing certainty for investment</li> <li>• Some benefit in national direction, but there are risks with central decision-making</li> <li>• Communities should have the first call on water supply</li> <li>• Standards for water quality must be rigorous and enforced</li> <li>• National policy statement would be more helpful than a national environmental standard</li> <li>• Local government needs to be involved in developing a framework for a national environmental standard</li> <li>• Regional councils should retain decision-making</li> </ul>
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<b>Central government involved</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding is needed for local government to treat discharges</li> <li>• Coordination of best practice of water conservation approaches is needed</li> <li>• Need funding to deal with ageing infrastructure</li> <li>• Water storage should be an option</li> <li>• Nervous about central government involvement</li> <li>• Local districts need funding and support to improve water bodies of national importance</li> <li>• Central government should subsidise land-based sewage treatment</li> <li>• There should be a water quality fund</li> <li>• Central government funding for community projects such as riparian planting</li> <li>• Needs to be a central water efficiency agency like ECCA</li> </ul>
<b>Provide more tools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A levy could be established based on water volume</li> <li>• Avoid privatisation of water</li> <li>• Require metering of use</li> <li>• Tools for non-compliance are weak. Need higher fines</li> <li>• Incentives around water conservation and reduction of discharges are needed</li> <li>• How do you prioritise competing use?</li> <li>• Need to be aware of economic development needs of the region when thinking about allocating water</li> <li>• Land-based water systems are an option</li> <li>• A value needs to be put on water – this may result in behaviour change</li> <li>• Trading of water rights is an option. We should look to overseas examples</li> <li>• Need certainty for consent holders</li> <li>• Tools are needed for setting minimum flows</li> <li>• Incentives and direction is needed for rainwater tanks and recycling of water</li> <li>• Priorities must override a tendering process</li> <li>• Community water supplies should be permitted activities</li> </ul>
<b>Working together</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a need for research to determine bottom-lines</li> <li>• The public could benefit from central government sharing information about the state of resources across the country; but don't want central government involvement at the expense of local decision-making</li> <li>• There is a need for national interest research for regional councils to use; for example, for setting minimum flows. There is a need to be confident that minimum flows are defensible which requires good information</li> <li>• Better to focus on putting programmes in place to use rather than resources into pilot projects to develop more tools. Perhaps funding for significant national issues such as the Lake Taupo pilot project</li> <li>• Funding for education programmes</li> </ul>
<b>Additional issues raised</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no mention of public water suppliers, Ministry of Health or of the impacts climate change may have on supply and demand</li> <li>• Too much emphasis is placed on ecosystems at the expense of public health and economic growth</li> <li>• Too much emphasis is placed on allocation at the expense of looking at water bodies as living systems and the need to maintain these</li> <li>• The discussion document is too demand-driven. There is a need to look more at efficiency</li> <li>• There needs to be a 'whole of catchment' approach, without separating allocation and quality issues. Quality and quantity should be considered together</li> <li>• There has to be more emphasis on water conservation and sustainability</li> </ul>

**Table 11: Wellington meeting held at Greater Wellington**

<p><b>Central government direction</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarity is required on what the national interest is and what the difference is between the national and regional interest</li> <li>• If water bodies of national importance are going to be identified, there needs to be a tight definition of why it is important and what that means</li> <li>• There are potential issues involved in identifying national values if they clash with regional values that have already been set</li> <li>• There is disparity between looking at nationally important values across a range of environments and uses</li> <li>• If there is a national interest to be expressed, it should be done as part of the regional planning process</li> </ul>
<p><b>Central government involved</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a need for research to determine bottom-lines</li> <li>• The public could benefit from central government sharing information about the state of resources across the country; but don't want central government involvement at the expense of local decision-making</li> <li>• There is a need for national interest research for regional councils to use; for example, for setting minimum flows. There is a need to be confident that minimum flows are defensible which requires good information</li> <li>• Better to focus on putting programmes in place to use rather than resources into pilot projects to develop more tools. Perhaps funding for significant national issues such as the Lake Taupo pilot project</li> <li>• Funding for education programmes</li> </ul>
<p><b>Provide more tools</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Before looking at trading, look at the fishing quota system and whether it is effective in sustaining stocks</li> <li>• Need to look at a framework for finding solutions rather than trying to find solutions for everything. The concept of 'highest value use' would be useful to define for different rivers</li> <li>• Need to define the framework before having a useful look at the tools</li> <li>• The problem with diffuse discharges is the Resource Management Act requirement of 'no adverse effects'. This could be strengthened to 'no change' or 'beneficial change'</li> <li>• There lots of tools and information already</li> <li>• Need to look at increasing efficiency of use</li> <li>• Non-regulatory tools used by councils need to be recognised</li> <li>• Water trading should occur within a framework so it can be traded to 'highest value' rather than free trading</li> <li>• Efficient use of water refers to the best dollar use of water</li> </ul>
<p><b>Working together</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must take the process slowly and take people along with you</li> </ul>
<p><b>Additional issues raised</b></p>	

**Table 12: Nelson/Tasman/Marlborough meeting held at Tasman District Council**

<p><b>Central government direction</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meaningful standards could be helpful for plan development. They would provide some consistency</li> <li>• It would be useful to have more oversight and support for councils with few resources</li> <li>• Local solutions for local problems are needed</li> <li>• An effective national policy statement or national environmental standard is reliant on a good development process the accurate definition of issues</li> <li>• The Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment's report raises the need for a minimum water quality standard</li> <li>• Point source and non-point source pollution needs to be separated for a standard</li> <li>• There are risks in defining methods in a national environmental standard. Local solutions cannot always be applied in other areas of a catchment. Flexibility is needed</li> <li>• Having a national environmental standard would mean provisions in plans might need to be strengthened, but also tailored to the regions. Want to avoid arguments over numbers – best practice is a better option</li> <li>• Government involvement is not supported. Drinking water standards have not been helpful. The quality of different water bodies cannot be compared</li> <li>• Need information about nationally important water bodies and a clear policy statement about nationally important values. Water Conservation Orders might not be worth the effort. An inquiry is needed into how values can be mediated through local processes</li> <li>• The importance of Maori values needs to be incorporated into the national values project</li> <li>• National guidance which determines priority values would be helpful</li> <li>• What is the process for resolving competing values, or options for progressing the water bodies of national importance projects? Is there going to be a list for the uses of water, or for the priority uses of water?</li> <li>• A low-flow management regime provides some priority use</li> </ul>
<p><b>Central government involved</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Best practice covering how to set allocation limits, maintaining security of supply, and developing priority regimes would be useful</li> <li>• Long term commitment by central government is needed</li> <li>• Funding needed for long-term community investment in water development</li> <li>• Forums to discuss issues and disseminate ideas would be useful</li> <li>• Watchdog role for central government to step in where there are problems</li> <li>• Central government support to encourage regional councils to strengthen their professional and political networks</li> <li>• Capacity building in water resource management is needed. Expertise is lacking nationally. Central government organisations need technical expertise to advise Ministers. There is a lack of capacity in the Ministry for the Environment to help enhance the level of practice in the regions</li> <li>• A crew of practitioners or a roving practitioner could be placed on secondment around regions</li> <li>• Audit panels for regional plans could be useful</li> <li>• Central government has an overview role to ensure regional councils are doing their job adequately, but councils do not want to have to report to central government</li> <li>• Central government investment in water research is not coordinated. Research needs to be aligned with the issues raised in the discussion document</li> <li>• Ministry for the Environment needs to become involved in the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology review of funding criteria</li> <li>• Integrated catchment management is lacking. This should be included in best practice information</li> <li>• Biodiversity funding for achieving better practice on private land is a good model for providing advice locally</li> <li>• Cost implications for councils implementing the proposals need to be considered</li> </ul>

<b>Provide more tools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry for the Environment can build tools for moving from discharge consents to risk mapping and making this information available to the farming community</li> <li>• Problems with septic tanks could be improved through maintenance and use</li> <li>• Waterway design guides would be useful</li> <li>• Systems for predicting where fish are would be useful</li> <li>• Monitoring processes should be looked at from the national level</li> <li>• Councils need allocation powers such as comparative assessment, especially in high demand areas</li> <li>• Would a market mechanism approach result in private ownership of water?</li> <li>• A resource rental system could mean that permit holder might give up their rights to take water more quickly</li> <li>• How do you determine which is the highest values use? Some values are not economic</li> <li>• The debate is about how to determine security of supply and how to manage the tension between councils dictating security and users holding security in permits</li> <li>• First come first served can work for non- over-allocated resources. Central government should develop an RMA process for managing over-allocated resources</li> <li>• More work is needed to determine whether water bodies are over-allocated</li> </ul>
<b>Working together</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irrigators and industry need to be included in the plan and policy development process</li> <li>• There is not enough emphasis on the role of education in the discussion document</li> <li>• A stock take of education material already produced is needed and a programme focused on empowering local government to deliver programmes. National resources could be developed as templates which could be adapted for local issues</li> <li>• National scale programmes need to build in sufficient lead-in time to incorporate local programmes</li> <li>• Public awareness should be a tool incorporated into the other actions</li> <li>• The Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment report states that management of diffuse discharges is not a matter of setting a national water quality standard. Local solutions and changes in practices are needed</li> <li>• Is there a commitment towards co-management regimes and to encourage a greater role for Māori to engage in regional decision-making?</li> </ul>
<b>Additional issues raised</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aquatic weeds are a key issue in some regions. Government should develop a proactive campaign for eradication of aquatic weeds</li> <li>• Pest issues have been left to local government to manage without national resources</li> <li>• Should the impact of climate change be regarded as a key issue? If so, it is perhaps relevant to Actions 5 and 8.</li> <li>• Jurisdictional clarification of water end use is needed</li> </ul>

**Table 13: Canterbury meeting held at the Christchurch Convention Centre**

<b>Central government direction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to paint the big picture at the national level</li> <li>• National guidance would take the pressure off local political sensitivities</li> <li>• Guidelines need to be practical, sensible and workable. They must be developed in partnership between central and local government. Need greater local government involvement in setting national standards and the process for doing so</li> <li>• The national interest should not override local interests</li> <li>• Nervous about central government directing councils</li> <li>• Central government could lead when the issue is politically too difficult at the local level. Need adequate funding to make the direction happen</li> <li>• There is a gap between the idea and implementation especially regarding a national environmental standard</li> <li>• Does having nationally important water bodies lower the value of other water bodies?</li> <li>• All water bodies are nationally important</li> <li>• Would groundwater be recognised?</li> <li>• Need to identify the gaps in information first. Could have value if it assists a whole of government approach</li> <li>• Need to list water bodies of regional importance to be included along-side water bodies of national importance</li> <li>• Concern that central government will take over local government responsibilities</li> <li>• Questionable whether central government will be able to agree. Would be useful if discussion was had at central government level</li> <li>• National policy statement – prescription legislation is only useful if the problem is the same across the country. Enabling legislation would be better for regional differences. Need to be flexible to change and reflective of regional differences</li> <li>• National environmental standard – ability to enact standards is different across councils and communities. Need to identify consistent goals. Local government needs to be clear with the community what they are trying to achieve and this relies on local information which is hard for central government to deliver</li> <li>• Is a need to develop environmental bottom lines</li> <li>• Central government should provide the framework only and provide flexibility for local government to make it work</li> <li>• Need a balance between local and regional interests</li> <li>• Useful to have a national system to have a consistent approach and process to identify flow requirements</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Central government involved</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MfE needs scientific authority to balance policy, standards, more streamlining across the country and more national cohesion</li> <li>• Need a national water advisory council with scientific and policy function</li> <li>• Need guidance to assess the quality of waterways and to set standards</li> <li>• Storage is a major issue</li> <li>• A coherent central government view would be helpful but if local government disagreed could result in lowest common denominator</li> <li>• Would need to have checks around central government involvement</li> <li>• Should look overseas for research. Israel is doing research on water allocation and quality</li> <li>• Central government should carry the risk for regional development projects such as irrigation</li> <li>• Lack of coordinated science approach</li> <li>• Need an agency to play an ombudsman role. The Environment Court process is too cumbersome</li> <li>• Need a dispute resolution mechanism between the different mandates</li> <li>• Need a national water advisory council</li> <li>• Central government should fund a study on groundwater for allocation</li> <li>• A coordinated central government view would be useful in submissions but they need to include a regional perspective</li> <li>• Central government should support and fund local government initiatives such as the Canterbury Strategic Water Study</li> <li>• Need guidance on implementing solutions</li> <li>• Need to share best practice</li> <li>• Need access to good science</li> </ul>
<p><b>Provide more tools</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• User pays gets people thinking more</li> <li>• Need water metering in Canterbury households</li> <li>• Central government should push for compulsory metering</li> <li>• Major consents should be decided by the Environment Court</li> <li>• Lengthy plan development process makes them out of date. Consent process ends up determining the outcome</li> <li>• Could have consents decided by region only on points of law</li> <li>• Appeals should only be on points of law</li> <li>• Need to clarify property rights</li> <li>• Could develop a survey tool to assess waterways</li> <li>• Equity issues are associated with trading</li> <li>• Water as a property right could be an effective way of allocating it</li> <li>• Economic instruments can achieve better use and allocation and better quality of discharge because use is paid for. Need certainty for consent renewals. Trading groundwater would be difficult because it is hard to define the resource. Need to identify boundaries before trading. Existing users need to be recognised</li> <li>• Efficient use is critical for large scale dairy farms</li> <li>• Is there a role for triple bottom line reporting?</li> <li>• Need a process for fast tracking projects of national and regional significance</li> <li>• Need a national system for identifying flow requirements</li> <li>• Need a definition for priorities of use</li> <li>• Economic tool box is a good idea but needs more work</li> </ul>
<p><b>Working together</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to empower communities for better outcomes</li> <li>• Needs to be a model for the interface between central and local government, and communities</li> <li>• Need an engagement of science in environmental decision-making</li> <li>• Central government, local government, other agencies and communities need to work together to understand water systems and agree on outcomes and actions, which includes communication and education</li> </ul>

<b>Additional issues raised</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urban water quality should be addressed</li> <li>• Need to promote integrated catchment management</li> <li>• There is no mention of indigenous forestry or vegetation in the discussion document</li> <li>• Central government should have a greater role in storm water management and monitoring</li> <li>• Urban and rural should not be separated</li> <li>• Need to take a total water cycle approach rather than a linear approach</li> </ul>
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**Table 14: Greymouth meeting held at West Coast Regional Council**

<b>Central government direction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government direction will lead to government dictation</li> <li>• Costs to ratepayers if and national policy statement is too prescriptive</li> <li>• Local solutions for local problems must be maintained</li> <li>• Central government's role is to monitor and assist – not to demand</li> <li>• Different solutions needed for different problems</li> <li>• Long term council community planning process provides more credit to local decision making</li> <li>• How do you compare the water bodies of national importance criteria?</li> <li>• How to determine whether there is a threat to particular water bodies</li> <li>• Central government should balance the competing national values</li> <li>• Specified methodology for determining low flows would be useful and guidance</li> <li>• Don't want existing work overridden by national tools</li> <li>• Target areas where there are actual problems rather than blanket national policy statement or national environmental standard</li> <li>• Are we going back to Ministry of Works days when central government had more control?</li> </ul>
<b>Central government involved</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Councils are bearing the impact of paying for environmental impacts of tourism</li> <li>• Department of Conservation should be paying for the upkeep of water bodies in the Crown-owned estate</li> <li>• Water harvesting should be used more</li> <li>• Funding is need for more information and community-based projects</li> <li>• Funding should be longer-term and easier to apply for</li> <li>• Whole of government submissions would allow a broad government view to be presented which is in keeping with sustainable development</li> <li>• Government needs to determine the balance between the values of sustainable development at the national level</li> <li>• Whole of government approach should be adopted at the beginning of the planning process</li> <li>• Central government has a role in providing tools and facilitating the dissemination of solutions and best practice</li> <li>• National tools will need to be accompanied by funding for information, equipment and monitoring</li> <li>• A mobile team of planners and subsidies are supported</li> <li>• How will the funding be determined?</li> <li>• Cost of implementation of an allocation process should be relevant to the environmental threat</li> </ul>

<b>Provide more tools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource consents could become a tangible asset if water has a market value</li> <li>• Security of supply is important – existing investments need to be recognised</li> <li>• Water conservation orders add an extra layer of bureaucracy</li> <li>• Allocation system should be implemented by an independent body.</li> <li>• Water meters would be useful</li> <li>• Trading – mining licences are not traded because people want to protect their rights. The same could happen to water</li> <li>• Water efficiency diagnostic service made available to council would be useful for determining actual use</li> <li>• Transfer – picking winners is problematic</li> <li>• Market mechanisms for diffuse discharges – how can you quantify the level of discharge according to soil type and stock numbers? Would need information and monitoring</li> </ul>
<b>Working together</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Lake Brunner project is a good example of using Sustainable Management Funding for a community-based project. Central government should provide a proactive approach for local – level projects that would be difficult to fund from local rates</li> <li>• Central government has a role in developing education awareness campaigns with regional councils</li> <li>• Education and information is needed on the issues</li> <li>• Customised education programmes for particular areas</li> <li>• Catchment based education programmes are more effective than large scale advertising campaigns</li> <li>• Landcare Trust is a good model</li> <li>• Agencies need to work alongside communities</li> <li>• Local government already has requirements for building relationships with Māori under the Local Government Act</li> </ul>
<b>Additional issues raised</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for integrated catchment management approach</li> </ul>

**Table 15: Dunedin meeting held at Otago Regional Council**

<b>Central government direction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The concept of 'national importance' is worrying, for example, if the Waitaki River is identified as nationally important for hydro power generation</li> <li>• The background reports (with the exception of the biodiversity report) are useless and cannot be used to make decisions</li> <li>• There is a need to look at instream values above nationally important values. Instream values must be addressed before allocating to abstractive uses</li> <li>• Waters of national importance need to be identified so communities know where they are</li> <li>• Local decision-making is needed with central government providing guidance</li> <li>• There is a need for a combined top-down, bottom-up approach. All the actions in the document are top-down and patronising</li> <li>• A national policy statement could set default and minimum flows in the form of a method rather than a prescribed level and must take into account the individual catchment characteristics</li> <li>• A national policy statement would be a good start but must be written carefully. It could be used to reinforce the local role in decision-making</li> <li>• Practical knowledge is missing from the top-down approach; the community knows best</li> <li>• Ranking of national rivers of importance requires extreme care. Focus on one value reduces the value of other values. Tough decisions will need to be made</li> <li>• Must be careful not to introduce rural water standards because the cost will be impractical</li> <li>• You cannot treat the whole country as equal. There are different environmental conditions and resource implications in different regions</li> <li>• A national policy statement could address issues about water storage, acknowledge that we are short of water, acknowledge that rating issues are important and that costs have to be realistic</li> </ul>
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<b>Central government involved</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central government could provide funding for local government</li> <li>• Supportive of whole of government approach but it would require agencies to develop a joint, non-conflicting mission statement</li> <li>• Regional councils should be able to call for government assistance to deal with difficult issues</li> <li>• Central government should have a role in infrastructure. A separate national group could be put in place to oversee infrastructure and to provide funding. There is a need for policy which supports water harvesting as the Resource Management Act stands in the way</li> <li>• Water storage is missing from the document</li> <li>• We need improvements to infrastructure in terms of irrigation, water distribution systems and storage</li> <li>• A good scientific base is required. There are gaps in research and monitoring especially for aquifers. Central government funding and/or joint ventures with local government are needed</li> <li>• NIWA collects a lot of information on water but they are working for private interests and the information is not available to the public</li> <li>• Government should provide funding for compensation for loss of mining privileges</li> <li>• Government input needs to take an overview approach. Funding and resources need to be available</li> <li>• There should be no duplication between central and local government as this will lead to increase in costs to the rate payer. Whatever is implemented should minimise costs to end users</li> <li>• Shared expertise is needed throughout the country as not every council can afford to employ specialists</li> </ul>
<b>Provide more tools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The first in first served approach allocates to commercial uses leaving nothing for the community. Community values need to be provided for as well as economic values. The New Zealand community should own the water</li> <li>• Over-allocation is an issue and often people do not use their full allocation</li> <li>• A moratorium could be put in place as a tool to prevent degradation</li> <li>• In Otago there is currently a mechanism in place to trade water rights</li> <li>• Efficiency will impact on existing irrigation. If farmers make more efficient use of water they can irrigate more but still use the same amount of water</li> <li>• Does the market decide what is the highest value use?</li> <li>• Why not community values rather than minimum values?</li> <li>• Monitoring abstraction rates is a gap but it is a funding issue particularly where there is a low rating base</li> <li>• The Kakanui catchment was seen as a good pilot project where all water-users are metered voluntarily. The community accepted this approach as they recognise that there is a problem in the catchment. However, it may not be so readily accepted in areas where people do not perceive there to be a problem with water quantity</li> <li>• There needs to be central government direction on tools for conserving water in urban areas. In particular this relates to metering water supply, which will meet with political resistance</li> <li>• Tradable rights to discharge would be a bad idea. Loosening the polluter pays principle and allowing for the right to pollute</li> <li>• Tradability across borders would be difficult</li> <li>• The cost of the establishment of a tendering system and lack of tenure security will mean that it will not work. Certainty is important especially where long term investments are involved</li> <li>• Otago has a good working water plan. There is an opportunity for others to learn an use it as an example</li> </ul>
<b>Working together</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rural and urban communities need to be educated about making choices and the value of water</li> <li>• Awareness of sate of water quality is important</li> <li>• Joint ventures between central and local government are required to tackle many of the problems</li> </ul>

<b>Additional issues raised</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potable water is needed in rural communities for domestic needs, fire fighting, service schemes or storage</li> <li>• New subdivisions require potable water supplies</li> <li>• There is a need to integrate thinking and planning around water issues. Domestic, stock, irrigation and biodiversity interests should all be integrated. An holistic view is needed</li> <li>• Sustainable management of water needs to be undertaken on a catchment-by catchment basis</li> <li>• Urban areas need to better understand their demands for potable requirements and the cost of making water sources available</li> <li>• Concern over public health issues relating to drinking water from groundwater resources, which are affected by intensive agriculture</li> </ul>
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**Table 16: Invercargill meeting held at Environment Southland**

<b>Central government direction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A national environmental standard could be contentious if there is no community buy-in</li> <li>• Implementation costs will be imposed on the community</li> <li>• Some flexibility is needed in a national environmental standard. The arbitrary nature of setting them is problematic</li> <li>• The national environmental standard process can cut across community solutions. Local solutions could already be working well</li> <li>• A national policy statement should be high-level and act as a guidance document</li> <li>• There is no acknowledgment in the document that freshwater is a finite resource</li> <li>• Will a national policy statement provide percentages or will it be abstract statements? Minimum flows do not always take into account environmental values</li> <li>• Is there a call for government to define land-use activities that are appropriate for particular land areas as a result of the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment report?</li> </ul>
<b>Central government involved</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is central government looking at collaborative research on specific problems?</li> <li>• Research into recycling of water and rain water collection could be useful</li> <li>• Strong need for independent research on nutrients and solutions</li> <li>• Document is short on the research aspects such as research into technical efficiency</li> <li>• Will funding be provided for specific research on water allocation and use? There needs to be a separate fund for water allocation</li> <li>• There is already a lot of research but there are gaps around integrated and whole of catchment solutions</li> <li>• Central government needs to facilitate the exchange of information. What about a one-stop shop for water or water information?</li> <li>• Research and policy networks for information coordination are needed</li> <li>• National coordination is needed to facilitate the exchange of ideas and practices</li> <li>• Government used to make submissions but this has largely been withdrawn. Information, guidance and advice should be available to councils at the start of the planning process</li> <li>• Whole of government submissions would be useful rather than an end of process sign-off like the Coastal Plan process</li> </ul>
<b>Provide more tools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource consents could become a tangible asset if water has a market value</li> <li>• Security of supply is important – existing investments need to be recognised</li> <li>• Water conservation orders add an extra layer of bureaucracy</li> <li>• Allocation system should be implemented by an independent body.</li> <li>• Water meters would be useful</li> <li>• Trading – mining licences are not traded because people want to protect their rights. The same could happen to water</li> <li>• Water efficiency diagnostic service made available to council would be useful for determining actual use</li> <li>• Transfer – picking winners is problematic</li> <li>• Market mechanisms for diffuse discharges – how can you quantify the level of discharge according to soil type and stock numbers? Would need information and monitoring</li> </ul>

<b>Working together</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing of information and best practice</li> <li>• Community-based solutions should not be overridden by national policies</li> </ul>
<b>Additional issues raised</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urban supply needs to be taken into account. Urban supplies sometimes cross catchments</li> <li>• What is the status of the discussion document in relation to the Resource Management Act review? Some of the Resource Management Act proposals appear to overtake the discussion document proposals. Has the Government already determine what is to be done?</li> </ul>