



Cabinet Economic Growth and Infrastructure Committee

EGI Min (11) 18/5

Copy No: 32

Minute of Decision

This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.

Fresh Start for Fresh Water: High Level Government Response to the Land and Water Forum Report

Portfolios: Environment / Agriculture

On 17 August 2011, the Cabinet Economic Growth and Infrastructure Committee (EGI):

Background

1 noted that on 9 May 2011, Cabinet:

1.1 invited the Minister for the Environment and the Minister of Agriculture to report back to EGI with:

1.1.1 a high-level government response to recommendations in the Land and Water Forum's (LAWF) report;

1.1.2 recommendations on the future role of the LAWF, and processes for ongoing engagement with other key parties including local government, iwi/Māori, non-governmental organisations, and industry;

1.1.3 options for commissioning further work on water services management;

1.2 agreed to a three-tranche forward work programme for Fresh Start for Fresh Water, with further reports to EGI scheduled for:

1.2.1 February 2012 for tranche 2 (methods, tools and governance arrangements for setting limits for water quality and quantity);

1.2.2 October 2012 for tranche 3 (managing to limits, including allocation methods and additional tools to manage the effects of land use on water);

[CAB Min (11) 18/9]

High level government response to Land and Water Forum report

2 agreed to the proposed thematic response to the LAWF report, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the paper under EGI (11) 163;

Future role of the LAWF and stakeholder engagement

- 3 **agreed** that the LAWF be authorised and funded to continue work on a set of broad policy issues that still need reconciling between key stakeholders, in particular:
 - 3.1 the setting of limits;
 - 3.2 governance and decision-making processes;
 - 3.3 managing to limits (including land use);
 - 3.4 allocation;
- 4 **agreed** to change the reporting dates referred to in paragraph 1.2 above to May 2012 for tranche 2, and to November 2012 for tranche 3, in order to allow the LAWF sufficient time to reach consensus;
- 5 **authorised** the Minister for the Environment and the Minister of Agriculture to approve the terms of reference for the next phase of the LAWF process;
- 6 **noted** that officials will:
 - 6.1 continue to participate in the LAWF process as active observers;
 - 6.2 remain responsible for coordination and management of the government's overall reform programme, and continue to advise Ministers on policy options for the overall reform package;
 - 6.3 lead the design of policy and regulatory instruments, and consult with the LAWF and other stakeholders as required, once high-level policy decisions have been made by Cabinet;
- 7 **noted** that iwi participation will continue through the Iwi Leaders and Iwi Advisors Groups;
- 8 **noted** that, in some circumstances, officials may undertake targeted engagement with selected stakeholders, but that any such engagement will be carefully managed to avoid undermining the LAWF process;

Urban water services management

- 9 **agreed** that the report back scheduled for May 2012 reassess the situation with regard to water services management in the light of progress in the Smarter Government Stronger Communities review of local government;

Publicity

- 10 **noted** that the paper under EGI (11) 163 will be published on the Ministry for the Environment's website.

Reference: EGI (11) 163