

Minutes of the Freshwater Leaders Group Meeting 17 June 2019

The Terrace Conference Centre

Standing Items

Conflicts of interest

No members identified conflicts of interest with any agenda items.

Apologies

Apologies were received from: Graeme Gleeson, Allen Lim, Alison Dewes, Traci Houpapa, Hugh Logan, Bryce Johnson,

Minutes

1. Because not all members were present the group agreed to consider the minutes of the May 24 meeting at its next meeting subject to enough members attending. This will ensure that all can review the minutes.

Matters arising

2. As they were not discussed there were no matters arising from the minutes.

Update from STAG

3. Marc Schallenberg gave an update on STAG's work drafting its report to the Minister.
4. The update and discussion about the update included:
 - The N numbers developed by STAG haven't changed
 - the report is focusing on providing a clear record of the differences of opinion about how the numbers were arrived at and the rationale for the discussion and decisions
 - while there is some disagreement, about N numbers and the nutrient attribute table, it is more focused on the process and interpretation of evidence used to come to the numbers than the numbers.
 - The report is not intended to be used for policy its final use will up to officials
 - The group expressed concern that one regional sector STAG member who does not agree with the use of ecosystem health is having a disproportionate impact on the content of the report.
 - The chair offered to send a letter to the regional sector group asking for details about their opposition to ecosystem health. — the group agreed to this and the drafting of a letter to be sent during the meeting. This was done.

Update from the Primary Sector Council

5. Stephanie Howard provided an update on the Primary Sector Council
6. The update included:
 - An overview of the role of the group and its operating timeframe
 - Council members hold a range of views about how and where they should work on freshwater issues
 - The Council is looking at generational change in the primary sector
 - The Taiao workstream, what it wants to achieve and how it maps some of the Iwi Leaders thinking about freshwater

Update from John Penno

7. John Penno updated the group on his meetings with other sector groups to bring them up to speed on the group's work.

Update on Official Information Act request

8. Officials provided an update on an official Information Act request for information about the number of meetings attended, daily fees paid to members and reports produced by the group.

Bottled Water

9. Officials provided an update on the timing of Cabinet papers considering options for a royalty on bottled water.

Update on Essential Freshwater Programme processes

Budget

10. Officials from the Ministry for the Environment and the Ministry for Primary Industries provided an overview of the recent budget announcements and what they mean for freshwater and the primary sector. Key points include:
 - The budget was co-developed by ministries
 - funds have been allocated to MPI to help the primary sector improve water quality
 - the majority of MfE's funds are for climate change with other funds allocated to allocation and iwi rights and interests, helping council's implement the changes needed to have plans in place by 2025, at risk catchments.
 - Funds have been allocated to improve Overseer
 - MPI, MfE and other agencies will work together to ensure that implementation is coordinated
11. The majority of Freshwater Leaders Group is of the view that Farm Environment Plans (FEP's) and Good Management Practice (GMP's), without a strong regulatory framework controlling high risk activity, are insufficient to achieve freshwater objectives

Processes and timeframe for Cabinet Decisions

12. Officials outlined the processes and timeframes for getting the draft discussion document, supporting briefings and supporting

Open session for the group to review and finalise reports

The remainder of the day was spent writing the group's report to the Minister. See the report for details.