

POLITICAL PARTIES SPEAK



Fish & Game New Zealand offered the six political parties currently in Parliament the opportunity to outline their policy positions on issues important to anglers and hunters. This year's feature on political parties' policies focuses on five current issues of a critical interest to a large sector of the conservation and outdoor recreation public. Fish & Game New Zealand holds a neutral political position and makes no comment or analysis of any of the parties' responses. Readers are encouraged to form their own opinions on the following replies prior to the election and we have provided a simple table and scoring system for you to evaluate the policies.

1. BRAND NEW ZEALAND

NEW ZEALANDERS, INCLUDING ANGLERS and hunters, are very proud of the established "100% Pure, clean and green" Kiwi brand. It is estimated to be worth more than US\$14 billion and is relied upon by our tourism and primary industries to differentiate their products in world markets. Securing integrity behind the brand is also directly relevant to Fish & Game's reason for being.

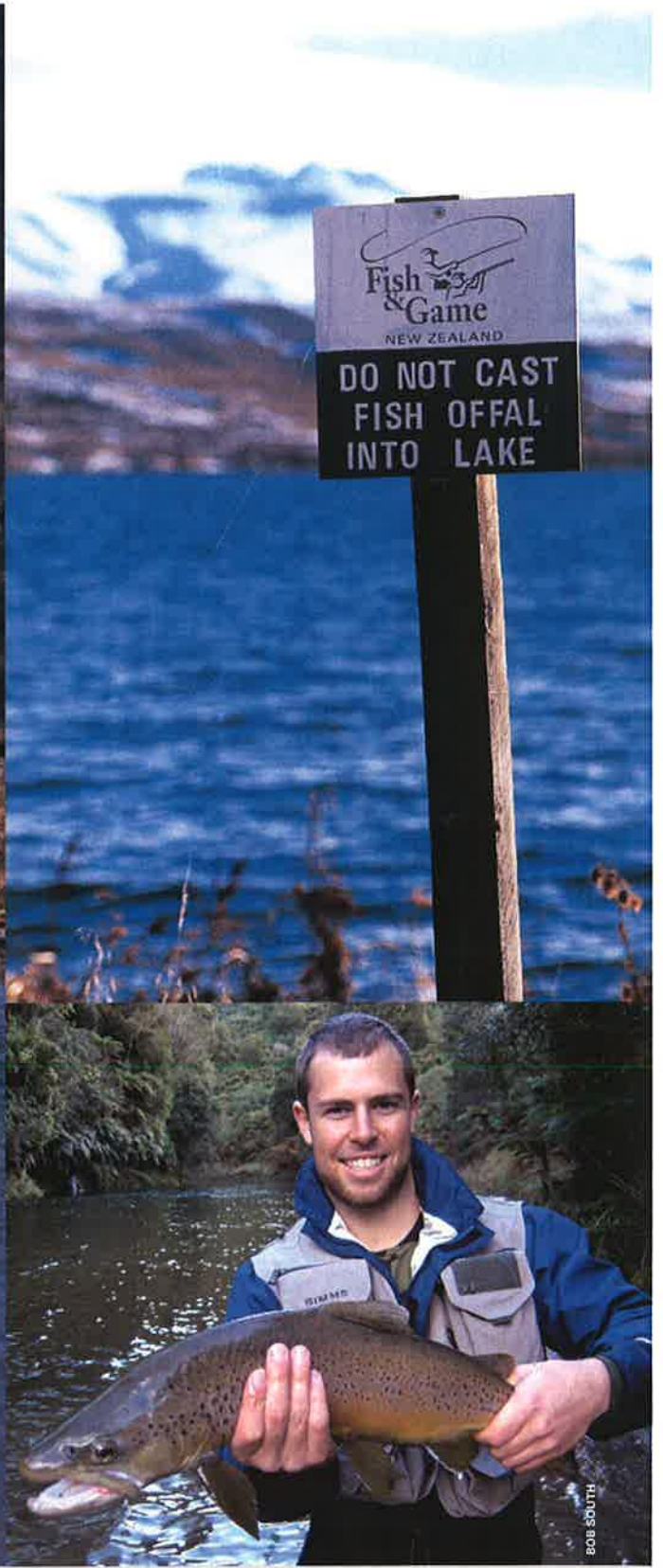
Question: How will your party ensure New Zealand's "100% Pure, clean and green" brand will stand up to international scrutiny?

National

Stronger Institutions: National's created the new Environmental Protection Authority and have work in progress with the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment for a new national Environment Reporting Act. **Better Regulations:** We've advanced new regulations covering freshwater management, coast management, biodiversity, contaminated soil, air quality, renewable energy, and marine pollution. **New laws** are being advanced to control freedom camping and to manage the EEZ. **Practical Improvements:** We've increased funding for progressing freshwater clean-ups and clean air by more than five-fold.

Labour

Labour believes our natural environment is central to our identity. All our major export earners – especially tourism and agriculture – leverage a premium from New Zealand's "clean green/100% pure" branding. It follows that care of the environment has to be integrated into our economic future. Scientists tell us the rate at which environmental degradation is increasing is near crisis point. It is this generation, and Labour is the party, to reverse that decline and secure New Zealand's environmental future. Labour will require the agricultural and other sectors using the brand to have independently auditable processes capable of demonstrating their export



products come from environmentally sustainable production systems.



The Māori Party believes the sustainable management of natural resources and conservation of our native birds, animals and plants is important not just to the image we portray to the world, but also for the use and enjoyment of our future generations. We also believe that Māori can and do play a constructive role as tangata tiaki in helping to develop good practices, which will keep our water, land, and air in pristine quality. The Māori Party would like to see Māori participation in the development of renewable energy resources, such as wind, solar, and geothermal initiatives, and

a more focused cooperative approach to managing our natural resources.



New Zealand needs to do a lot more than we are now to live up to the "100% pure, clean and green" image. In fact, the brand is a charade; the facts do not back it up. Major environmental issues, such as the worsening state of our freshwater quality, the exploitation of our wild rivers, and the ongoing use of aerial 1080 poison, prove that "100% pure" is more myth than reality. UnitedFuture will prohibit aerial 1080 poisoning, secure greater protection of our few remaining wild rivers, clean up rivers already degraded, and make agriculture formally account-

able for the impact it has over freshwater quality.

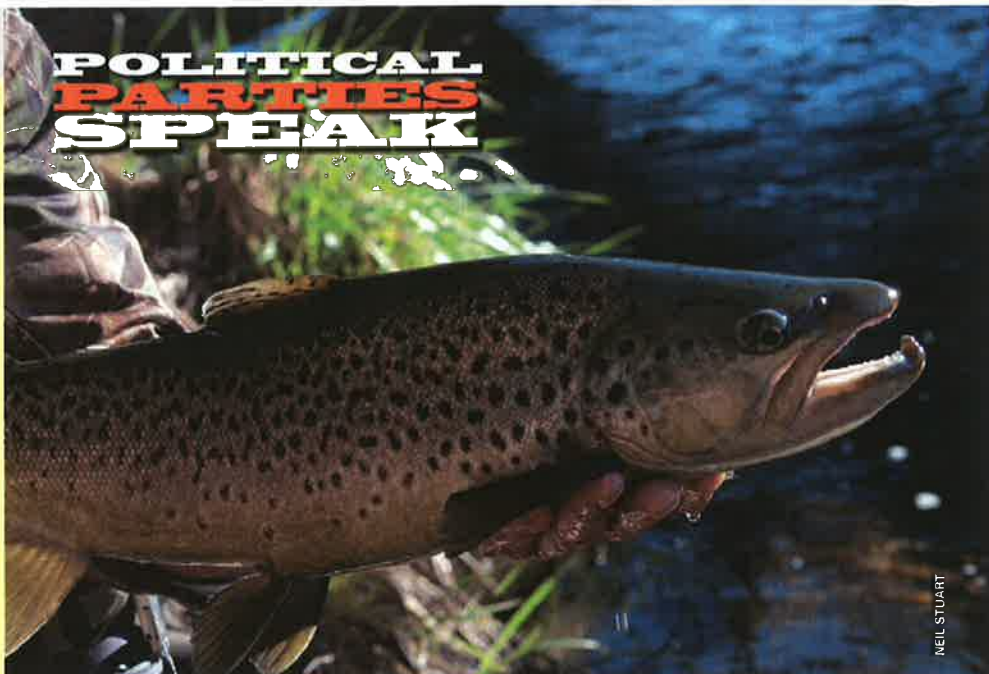


New Zealand's clean and green brand is important to our reputation. But we do ourselves a disservice if we assume that tourists are only attracted to New Zealand if we produce nothing. Tourists are not that naïve. They know that all nations must utilise their natural resources in order to create jobs and lift people out of poverty. That is precisely what ACT is advocating across our policy platform.



First, we would acknowledge the problem instead of attacking the messenger, as successive governments have attacked Fish & Game, the Greens, and reputable

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scientists. Second, we would start to clean up our rivers and lakes by regulating intensive agriculture, especially the dairy industry. The Green Party acknowledges and celebrates the many dairy farmers out there who use sustainable methods of farming, however the industry as a whole needs regulation. No industry has the right to pollute our rivers – fullstop. We would also assist communities with sewerage systems upgrades.

2. PUBLIC ACCESS TO PUBLIC RESOURCES

PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE GREAT OUTDOORS for hunting and fishing is an internationally admired feature of the New Zealand lifestyle, but is now threatened by some land occupiers using the Trespass Act to effectively grant themselves de-facto private ownership of public sports fish and game resources for commercial purposes. There is a growing view that Kiwis are being denied free, certain, enduring and practical access to the great outdoors.

Question: What will your party do to ensure creeping privatisation of public natural resources is halted and reversed, and would your party support a strengthened dispute arbitration role for the Walking Access Commission as a component of this recovery?

Labour Labour established the Walking Access Act in 2008 to create “free, certain, enduring, and practical” public access for outdoor recreation, including around lakes, along rivers, and to public resources (which include trout, salmon, and gamebirds). Labour supports tourism businesses based on these places and public resources, but believes the quid pro quo for this privilege of commercially using public natural resources must be reasonable public recreational access. Specifically, in the case of sports fish and game managed by Fish & Game New Zealand, Labour would make Fish & Game Councils the approval authority for any such commercial concessions, similar to DoC management of tourism activity on public conservation land where public access is protected. For other access issues, Labour would support a dispute arbitration role for the Walking Access Commission.

māori The Māori Party position asserts, firstly, that Te Tiriti o Waitangi guaranteed to Māori “te tino rangatiratanga...o rātou whenua o rātou hainga me o rātou taonga katoa,” - the full and undisturbed possession of their lands, estates, fisheries, and other properties. It is our view that access to public natural resources must

always be balanced by the need to ensure that sites of cultural importance to Māori must be respected, recognised, and protected. The Māori Party would never support the provision of free access to land, if it meant possible desecration of taonga and damage to significant sites. Our preference would be that any discussions around any changes to land and waterways should be undertaken in consultation with tangata whenua. The Board of the Walking Access Commission has a statutory obligation to include at least one member, who has a knowledge of tikanga Māori (Māori customary values and practices). We believe that kaupapa and tikanga Māori should and can play a significant role in the dispute arbitration service and that this expertise should be called upon.

UnitedFuture Our outdoor heritage is central to what it means to be a Kiwi. We are committed to preserving our egalitarian rights of access to the great outdoors, including sports fish and game. Loopholes within our laws that contribute to situations of exclusive capture need closing. UnitedFuture will promote Fish & Game having the authority to manage commercial exploitation of trout fisheries with attached conditions to ensure fair and practical access for ordinary licenceholders. Furthermore, we will strengthen the Walking Access Commission so that it is an advocate and arbitrator in access negotiations, rather than purely a mediator, and ensure that it has sufficient power to secure appropriate practical access to public resources on lands of all tenure.

act ACT does not accept that the vesting of natural resources in private ownership is incompatible with conservation of natural resources. For example, ACT supports tradable water rights so that local communities can decide the best use of local resources. So far as the Walking Access Commission is concerned, we believe any strengthened role in dispute arbitration should be on a voluntary basis only – the Signage Project between the Walking Access Commission and Federated Farmers is a great example of such voluntary interaction in practice.

Green The Green Party advocated for a dispute arbitration role for the Walking Access Commission at the time the Commission was established and we will continue to advocate for this role. When it comes to recreational fishing, we agree that public access to fisheries is being undermined. We would investigate the use of concessions, modeled on those required for

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ZANE MIREN



LES HILL

public conservation land, to regulate commercial use of rivers – potentially Fish & Game could grant concessions to commercial operators, but with the condition that non-commercial public access and use would be allowed.



The claim in this loaded question of creeping privatisation of public natural resources is false. Public ownership and access is growing through the Resource Management Act, the process of tenure review, the work of both QE II and the Nature Heritage Fund, and the recently amended Overseas Investment Commission process that enhances access to sensitive areas.

National is open-minded about a mediation role for the Commission, but is cautious of arbitration, if it amounts to compulsory acquisition.

3. AGRICULTURE'S ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

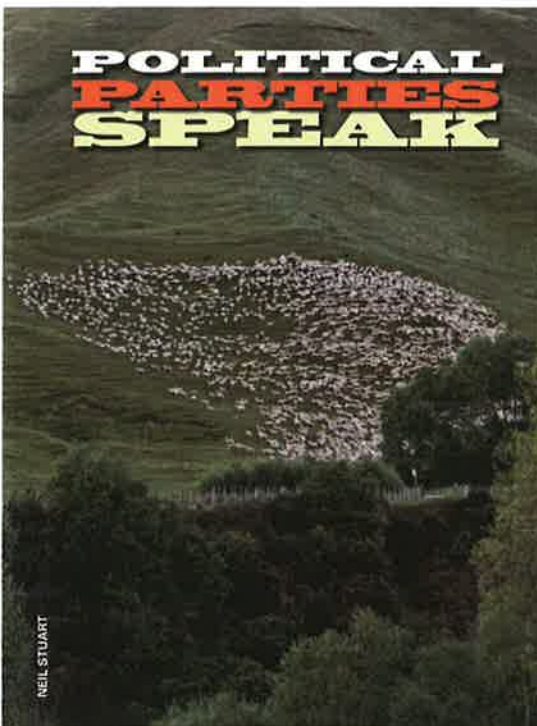
SURVEYS BY LINCOLN UNIVERSITY CONFIRM that declining water quality of our rivers, streams, and lakes is now the number one domestic environmental issue for a majority of New Zealanders, with agriculture recognised both by survey respondents and NIWA research, as the primary cause of this degradation. Mandatory, envi-

ronmentally sustainable, best on-farm practice is now essential if New Zealand is to secure its trading future. The recent Land and Water Forum report and recommendations recognise this and identify actions that need to be taken.

Question: With what urgency will your party ensure that agriculture takes responsibility for avoiding, remedying, or mitigating its adverse environmental effects (as required by the RMA) and for restoring the water bodies (such as the Waituna Lagoon in Southland and lowland rivers and streams in Canterbury) that have already been degraded?

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NEIL STUART



CAMERON WEBB



The Māori Party is very concerned about the impact of the agricultural sector on our natural resources. We must work hard and with urgency to protect our waterways from the production, release, and disposal of hazardous and toxic waste from farming, industry, and waste processes. The party promotes the regeneration and revitalisation of freshwater, including implementing stronger policy that will enhance water quality and protect native flora and fauna. We have also negotiated, within the context of the Emissions Trading Scheme, for two members of the agriculture advisory committee to be Māori. The Agriculture ETS Advisory Committee was formed to provide independent advice on bringing agriculture into the ETS. It included the strategic advice of Roger Pikia, chief executive of Te Arawa group holdings, as well as Edward Ellison, a sheep and beef farmer of Ngai Tahu and Te Atiawa whakapapa.



As stated in the answer to question one, UnitedFuture will hold agriculture accountable for any negative impacts on freshwater quality arising from agricultural activity. We believe what is needed is a true 'polluter-pays' system in which agriculture, or any polluter for that matter, directly pays for the cost of cleaning up our waterways. We do not believe taxpayers and Fish & Game licenceholders should be required to pick up the tab for a problem they did not cause and which undermines the natural habitat.



We are all responsible for pollution we cause from our properties. Our laws confirm this principle. Farmers, as property owners, will generally be better guardians than the government, if their property rights are protected and strengthened – a polluted farm will be an unproductive farm. The majority of farmers are responsible citizens and understand they are holding land for future generations.



With absolute urgency. Our lowland rivers and wetlands are the last of the wild places on the plains and they belong to all New Zealanders. No one has the right to degrade these common places for private profit. The agricultural sector has a responsibility to improve its practices and help restore our degraded waterbodies, however, voluntary measures by industry haven't worked. We would legislate to prevent further degradation of our waterways and begin the task of restoring them.



We will need tighter rules, as well as funds for clean-ups to better manage water quality. We are keen to work with the Land and Water Forum on National Environment Standards to complement the new National Policy Statement. We have increased the investment in waterway clean-ups by five-fold to more than \$265 million. We also doubled funding for the New Zealand Landcare Trust. Our changes to the Resource Management Act dramatically increased penalties for non-compliance and we have encouraged stronger monitoring, compliance, and enforcement.



Water is a common good, owned by us all and belonging to no one. Scientists have repeatedly reminded us that a key driver of poor water quality remains poor farming practice, so it follows that agriculture has a 'duty of care' towards the public water resource in our rivers and lakes. Labour will require agriculture to be environmentally accountable and, given the clear intent of the law, we will introduce National Environmental Standards to establish environmental bottom lines that are sufficiently ecologically robust to also put some real integrity behind the "clean green/100% pure" New Zealand brand.

4. RIVERS AND LAKES AS ICONIC FEATURES OF NEW ZEALAND

NEW ZEALAND'S FINITE STOCK OF ICONIC rivers and lakes are widely recognised as central to the "100% Pure, clean and green" brand, and are the habitat of sports fish and game. However, they are being cumulatively dammed, diverted, dewatered, and polluted by urban water demand, energy generation development, agricultural intensification, and industrial use, in the pursuit of economic growth and a living standard similar to Australia. Whenever there is reference to a need to 'balance' economic interests against the environment, it invariably leads to an imbalance, with the environment on the losing side of the ledger and resource developers, extractive, and polluting industries being favoured. Leaving options for 'future generations', as also required by the RMA, has become a forgotten promise.

Question: In recognition of the iconic importance of New Zealand's rivers and lakes, how does your party define the 'balance' between conserving our remaining finite stock of natural free-flowing rivers and lakes and

using them for domestic, agricultural, energy, and industrial consumption, and pollution assimilation? And how should this 'balance' be nailed down in order to ensure that future generations are actually provided with genuine options?



While UnitedFuture strongly supports the intention behind Water Conservation Orders, we believe in their current form they are too easily ignored and don't adequately address land use that impacts on water quality. UnitedFuture wants the scope of Water Conservation Orders reinforced by regulatory intervention, such as the establishment of a National Environmental Standard for both flow and water quality. Any regulatory intervention needs to stand the test of time by placing permanent restrictions on environmentally unsustainable use of water from our rivers and lakes.



ACT believes that allocating property rights in respect of rivers and lakes is the best way to determine the proper balance between society's conservation goals and its economic goals. Property rights give people a direct interest in making the best use possible of available resources. It is the most accurate way to reveal what people actually want and is not subject to distortion by lobbyists (whatever their motive) in the same way that a government focused decision-making process is.



The National Government uses the word balance to mean trading off a bit more environmental degradation for a bit more GDP growth – not even our rivers protected by Water Conservation Orders are safe. We have already traded away too much. Now is the time for *bottom lines*. New Zealand urgently needs to introduce bottom lines for river flows, lake levels, and water quality. Meantime, we need a *moralatorium* on agricultural intensification in over-allocated catchments. This will give us breathing space to develop national standards, limits, and targets for water quality and quantity, and implement a nationwide riparian planting programme.



National's Bluegreen approach is about the balance between growing the economy, while improving our environmental management. We need to ensure minimum flows in all our rivers, as well as setting aside some rivers solely for their recreational and conservation values. New Zealand is more richly blessed with freshwater than just about any other country and, if



BOB SOUTH

GARTH OAKDEN

we take a balanced, collaborative approach, we can wisely use this resource to create jobs and wealth, as well as providing for recreation and conservation.



Rivers are special and damming main stems of rivers should be behind us. Our remaining wild and scenic rivers are too important to our New Zealand brand and we need to restore those that are degraded by over-allocation and pollution. A moratorium on further large scale river development is required until New

Zealand has had a proper public debate and settles on a vision for its environmental future. Meantime, the law on Water Conservation Orders needs to be strengthened to enable restrictions on adjoining land use impacts on water quality. Water quality must come before personal profit, with water resource rentals funding restoration.

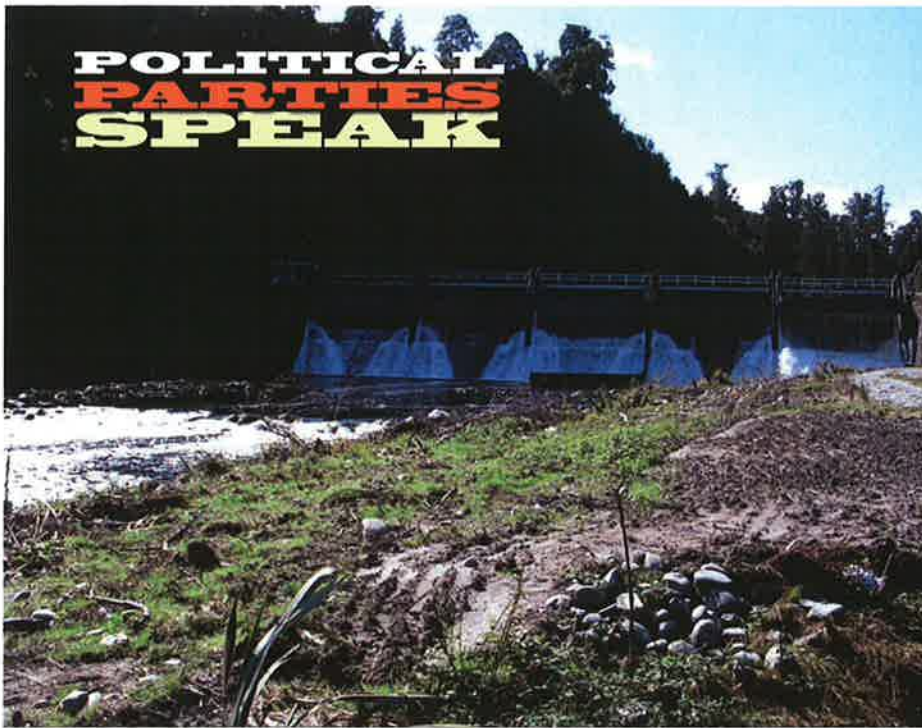


We are concerned about the impact our use of natural resources is having on our precious land and our water. Tangata

whenua take up responsibility for the protection, care, and conservation of the water resource as implicit in our respect for kaitiakitanga. As we stated in our response to your question prior to the 2008 election, urgent action is required to protect and preserve our environment from further degradation. The Māori Party is committed to supporting the implementation of the National Policy Statement on Freshwater Management, taking effect, which aims to manage water in a sustainable way,

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while providing for economic growth within more stringent limits. The Māori Party has been very pleased to see the commitments made to ongoing engagement between Ministers and the Iwi Leaders Group on the rights and interests of iwi in relation to water. We believe it to be right and proper that rangatira-to-rangatira discussion on water management issues, on water ownership issues, on sustainability of our water resources, is crucial.

5. NATIONAL POLICY STATEMENT FOR FRESHWATER MANAGEMENT

A LONG AWAITED AND NOW MUCH NEEDED 'National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management' has recently been adopted by the present government. It has drawn widespread condemnation. This has perhaps been a consequence of its development having spanned two successive governments from opposite ends of the political spectrum. Had the National Policy Statement (NPS) been initiated and concluded by a single government administration it could well have been a very different document in relation to establishing integrity behind New Zealand's "100% Pure, clean and green" brand.

Question: *If your party had been in charge for the whole duration of the policy development process, what would have been the primary objectives of a 'National Policy Statement for Freshwater'? And what does your party think ought to happen with the present NPS, given that it has drawn wide spread condemnation?*

act At present, water is owned by everyone and has no inherent value, so no one is responsible for it. ACT believes establishing water rights to give water a value will provide the best environmental outcomes. Where communities have a real interest in water, the best results for the envi-

ronment will follow. A National Policy Statement on freshwater has to, as with any such policy, strike the right balance between maintaining high environmental standards and economic growth.

Green Campaigning for a strong NPS was the focus of Green Party co-leader Russel Norman's national Dirty Rivers Rafting Tour this past summer. Our objective is to have the health and biodiversity of our rivers restored and to have 100% of our rivers safe to swim and fish in. Under the previous Labour Government, the Ministry for the Environment developed a useless NPS. Then the Board of Inquiry turned it into something useful with teeth. Finally, the National Government pulled its teeth to return it to a bunch of nice-sounding, but ineffective words. We would restore the Board of Inquiry NPS. We are the only party courageous enough to regulate the dairy industry and we need your support.

National The NPS has not been widely condemned. Some environmental groups have said it is not tough enough, while some industry groups have said it goes too far. The new requirement for councils to set limits is long overdue and has triggered important rule changes that will better protect freshwater. The NPS is only part of National's Fresh Start for Freshwater reforms and needs to be complemented by more detailed National Environment Standards. We will review the NPS at the conclusion of the reform programme to ensure the complete package safeguards New Zealand's freshwater resources.

Labour Labour does not support the pro-irrigation freshwater NPS adopted by the present government. We are committed to replacing it with an NPS in line with that recommended by the Board of Inquiry established

by the previous Labour government, which recognises the prime importance of the environment. This will be underpinned by equally focused National Environmental Standards.

māori As a coalition partner of the current government, The Māori Party is pleased to have been given the opportunity to contribute its views to this Policy Statement on behalf of Tangata Whenua, who, as kaitiaki, should always have a say over the management of our environment. The party is particularly pleased to see that, through this Policy Statement, the special cultural and spiritual values that Māori hold have been recognised and will be given effect in the sustainable management and protection of water. Iwi have spoken very clearly with us that they want to be involved in setting strategic priorities at the national level. The Māori Party supports this intention and considers that meaningful, Treaty-based engagement with mana whenua should be central in the policy process. The Māori Party supports the recommendations from the Land and Water Forum's report, A fresh start for freshwater, which promoted the need for improved structures and processes to improve the national direction and coordination, to better reflect the Treaty relationship with iwi.

UnitedFuture UnitedFuture's primary objectives for the National Policy Statement on Freshwater would have been to give primacy to the preservation of the environmental and recreational sustainability of our waterways. We wish to see minimum flows set above current levels to preserve not only the ecological value, but the recreational and amenity value of our rivers. The current NPS does not go far enough to preserve the environmental integrity of our rivers. It needs to be revisited in order to ensure all our waterways and lakes are safe for fishing, swimming, and food gathering.

SCORE THE RESPONSES

To assist your assessment of the level of commitment by the political parties to the issues raised in the questions above, you might like to use the following ranking system and table to score the parties. You may be surprised by your final result!

- 0 = A pathetic response.
- 1 = Weak commitment, likely to be compromised by its other policies, tries to be all things to all people.
- 2 = Getting there, has potential, but needs sharpening to get rid of escape clauses.
- 3 = Clear, committed, action focused, trust them to take it into any coalition negotiations.

	Labour	National	Green	māori	UnitedFuture	act
1. Brand New Zealand	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Public Access To Public Resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Agriculture's Environmental Responsibilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Rivers And Lakes As Iconic Features Of New Zealand	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. National Policy Statement For Freshwater Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
TOTAL						