

**From:** [Patrick Stokes](#)  
**To:** [RPS](#)  
**Subject:** Submission on Regional Policy Statement  
**Date:** Tuesday, 24 August 2021 7:57:48 p.m.

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Name of submitter: Patrick Stokes

This is a submission on the Proposed Otago Regional Policy Statement 2021

We all rely on fresh, clean water for our survival. I call on you to prioritise the health of ecosystems, people and animals across Otago when adopting your Regional Policy Statement on freshwater.

I want to see an Otago where rivers run clear and clean, native plants and animals thrive alongside waterways, and drinking water is safe. The Regional Policy Statement must keep the health of water at its core so it can inform strong plans to clean up and protect water, and create a safe climate for all.

The National Policy Statement on freshwater says te mana o te wai must be preserved - that means that rivers, lakes, streams, wetlands and drinking water must be protected.

We know intensive dairying is a key driver of water and climate pollution. If we want rivers, lakes and drinking water to be healthy for generations to come, we need to tackle sources of pollution - like intensive dairying.

I am calling on the Otago Regional Council to:

- Put te mana o te wai first, so that all other objectives in the Regional Policy Statement are informed by the priority to care for water and keep it healthy
- Commit to phasing out synthetic nitrogen fertiliser and lowering cow stocking rates - two things that are incompatible with protecting te mana o te wai
- Tackle the climate crisis by lowering cow stocking rates and phasing out synthetic nitrogen fertiliser.
- Consider cumulative effects of pollution such as intensive dairying and too much synthetic nitrogen fertiliser, rather than simply in each individual catchment. What happens upstream affects people, plants and animals downstream.
- Act according to the national plan, which identifies limits based on environmental impacts. In order to do this, councils must phase out synthetic nitrogen fertiliser.
- Apply the precautionary principle to freshwater management. Intensive dairying and synthetic nitrogen fertiliser have long-term effects on water, climate and human health. With emerging research showing links between nitrate contamination from intensive dairying in drinking water and health effects like bowel cancer, the Council must act now to protect the health of our communities.
- Invest in regenerative organic farming that works with nature, not against it, to help mitigate the climate crisis and prevent water degradation.

Having dairy farmed in Canterbury for many years I have personally seen the effects of poor environmental policies and intensive farming. I have personally seen the pollution, the destruction of biodiversity and suffered the effects of polluted drinking water. I left the industry because I could no longer be part of such a dirty, exploitative and cruel industry. I suffered both physically and mentally. Please help bring our nature and people back into harmony.

- I confirm that I could not gain an advantage in trade competition through this submission.
- I am not directly affected by an effect of the subject matter of the submission that adversely affects the environment and does not relate to trade competition or the effects of trade competition
- I DO NOT wish to be heard in support of my submission

- If others make a similar submission, I will NOT consider presenting a joint case with them at a hearing

Sincerely,

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