

# Land and Water Forum

Barry Weeber

ECO

**Environment and Conservation  
Organisations of NZ (ECO)**





# Land and water Forum

- What does it cover?
- Has land and soil issues been well covered?

## Policy Development

- LAWF a new way of developing policy
- Two tier process – “Small Group” vs Plenary
- Is this a model for collaborative governance?



# Why LAWF?

- Recognition that officials had failed to date to produce effective land and water policy.
- On the back of campaigning by Fish and Game – the so called “dirty dairying” campaign
- Desire of Government to get more water for irrigation
- Desire of Government and industry interests to speed up decision-making



# LAWF Structure and Reports

- “Small Group” – which is not the small – includes Forest and Bird, Environmental Defence Society, Federated Farmers, Fish and Game Business NZ, Iwi Maori, etc.
- Plenary Groups – includes ECO, Federated Mountain Clubs, and many others
- Secretariat in Wellington
- Some Working Groups in Phase II – Diana Shand has been represented on one group.



# LAWF is not always consulted

Government made a number of decisions without considering LAWF:

- Axing of the elected representation on Environment Canterbury – the regional council;
- Limiting the scope of wild and scenic rivers legislation in Canterbury
- Changes in managing water in Canterbury.



# LAWF Recommendations

- Two major reports from LAWF
- Process is not completed
- Not all the recommendations have been agreed to be Government eg the National Policy Statement on Water under the RMA
- Not all recommendations have been responded to by Government



# Challenges to ECO

Its not by any means a perfect process:

- Being a member of the Plenary rather than the small group but improvement in stage II
- Increasing dominance of industry members – there are much more industry interests in LAWF than conservation or recreation interests
- Time consuming and far reaching discussion which is much wider than just land and water
- Poor consideration of the land aspects, water dominates, aspects of water considerations eg for indigenous fish is rather limited.



# Changes proposed

- Package of measures;
- Management by regional councils with appointment from Government;
- Complex process of avoiding the Environment Court via a collaborative approach to producing water plans at a regional level;
- National Strategy engagement;
- National Water Policy and standards





# Unfinished issues

Core issues are still to be resolved:

- Whether merit appeals are allowed to Environment Court;
- Allocation of water;
- Water quality
- Governance
- National obligations

AND

Iwi and hapu issues in relation to water and the Treaty  
kaupapa for water and the results on the National Iwi  
Water Summit



# Input into LAWF

- Welcome greater engagement and feedback into this process.

