



## WATER QUANTITY - Summary of Community Feedback

### Issues

- Water allocation was the single biggest issue brought up by submitters in terms of water quantity issues.

Ensuring on-going and adequate water sources and supplies was seen as a priority by all. Many comments noted that there needed to be more of an emphasis on water being available to all, not just those who have consents through a first in first served basis.

- Some submitters thought there was not enough monitoring of existing consents and more monitoring was needed to ensure consent compliance and also compliance in terms of permitted water takes.

The importance of monitoring was emphasised especially in light of land use change and intensification. This tied in with comments relating to the need to accurately determine the effects different land uses are having on water quantity in different areas and establishing more information about the water resources of Southland.

- A large number of submitters said water efficiency was one of the most important issues facing our region.

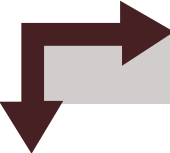
There were a number of parties who stated large water takes for irrigation purposes are not efficient, with water being inefficiently redistributed and also polluted.

However, some submitters argued irrigation takes were necessary if Southland was to keep increasing its economic productivity.

- Concern was also expressed about major diversion of water for hydro electricity generation purposes, particularly in terms of reducing water availability downstream.
- The impact of large scale up catchment landuse change was raised as an issue, particularly the potential of forestry activities to alter the characteristics of water flows for downstream areas.

This was balanced by other parties who did not consider this to be an issue. Common agreement was that there was not enough real data and scientific information available to make an informed decision on the impacts of forestry.

The potential introduction of the Emissions Trading Scheme and the possibility of increased forest planting were raised by a few submitters as being a potential catalyst for water quantity issues.



*Please see the reverse side of this card for Water Quantity options and Councils' commentaries.*



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### Options

- Strong support from most parties for whole catchment management and aquifer management schemes. These approaches were seen as better able to address water availability issues and enable a robust framework to make decisions about water.
- There were also some comments on the catchment management approach noting the need for a precautionary approach to protect against over allocation and ensure satisfactory minimum flows. It was thought the catchment management approach would allow a more integrated approach between councils.
- It was proposed by a few people that during times of high flow water storage should be allowed. However, there was also some opposition to this. There was both support and opposition to the suggestion that major users should pay.
- There was a small amount of support for tradable water permits. However, given the very site specific nature of any hydrological flow of water and necessary scientific testing and verification needed to accurately measure and determine the effects of water takes, there was a large amount of opposition to this.
- It was agreed by all that ensuring the efficient operation of consents is paramount to minimising effects on water quantity. It was suggested automatic electronic devices could be used to transfer the relevant information to council databases.
- A number commented on the benefits of partnerships with major industry groups and recommended that these existing relationships continue and were possible be built upon. Industry groups could help identify areas of potential water efficiency.
- One option that was repeated a number of times was for the inclusion of policy and regulations that supported the use of rainwater collection tanks as a means of primary drinking water supply for residential dwellings.

### Councils' Commentary

It is recommended that whole catchment planning approaches, which would include aquifers, are developed and encouraged through the Regional Policy Statement with existing rules in regional and district plans feeding into an integrated catchment specific plan.

This is already occurring at a non-regulatory level in a number of catchments.

More research is needed before a recommendation on high flow water storage can be made. It should be noted that there is already provision in the Regional Water Plan for this, but more emphasis could be given to this in the future.

The Regional Policy Statement needs to provide guidance on water permit transfers. Transfers are currently considered through the Regional Water Plan.

A user-pays approach should be investigated further and this could be linked with real data collected through Environmental Southland's

existing monitoring. Environment Southland is preparing a State of the Environment report for water in Southland.

The Southland District Council should develop approaches that encourage or require the provision of rain water collection systems for new dwellings and domestic use. This will help ease the pressure on water resources and is in line with fire fighting requirements.

Where possible, councils should be working with industry groups to come up with appropriate methods to deal with water allocation issues and potential water efficiency.

However, a possible Regional Water Plan change may be needed to deal with ground water provisions and priority of supply for community water schemes.

It is recommended the impact of forestry at the top of catchments on water flows be investigated.

