



Office of Hon Dr Nick Smith

MP for Nelson

Minister for the Environment

Minister for Building and Housing

11 JUL 2016

Alastair Bisley
Chair
Land and Water Forum
PO Box 10822
Wellington 6143

Dear Alastair

We wish to express our deep appreciation for your leadership of the Land and Water Forum for the past seven years. Under your care, the Forum has gone from strength to strength, and been instrumental in the reform of the way that we manage fresh water in New Zealand. The changes being made by the Government as a result of the Forum's recommendations are having a profound and lasting impact on the availability of fresh water for community, cultural and economic purposes, while respecting common environmental values through setting limits on water use.

Your work with the Forum has made progress that was unthinkable ten years ago. The Forum's collaborative approach has confronted difficult issues where parties on each side of the debate had deeply entrenched views. By sharing and understanding individual perspectives and listening to the views of others, consensus has been achieved with shared understanding even where agreement is not fully reached.

The Government is now implementing policies, over time, to give effect to Forum recommendations. Regional councils are giving effect to these policies, often through using the collaborative processes recommended and modelled by the Forum. Through the NPS framework water quality and quantity limits are being set in catchments. Local authorities are developing methods to account for water takes and the sources of nutrients and contamination for all water bodies, a clear process for setting limits, and expectations around monitoring of progress are huge steps forward. These steps would not have been possible without the consensus that the Forum forged, and the enormous effort of all involved.

While there is a great deal more to improve freshwater management, the progress that has been made is extraordinary. We thank you for the huge and lasting contribution that you have made to freshwater management in New Zealand and changing the way we resolve complex resource management issues through collaboration. We hope that you and your family enjoy your well-deserved retirement and hope that in some way New Zealand will continue to benefit from your skills and efforts in the future.

Yours sincerely

Hon Dr Nick Smith
Minister for the Environment

Hon Nathan Guy
Minister for Primary Industries