



MEDIA RELEASE

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HB Dairy farms “91% pure” – let’s do better

The Green Party has released a list of Hawke’s Bay dairy farms that breached resource consent conditions in 2006/7, and renewed calls for action to protect public rights to fish and swim in rivers.

“The list of dairy farm consent compliance in the 2006/7 year shows that 9% of Hawke’s Bay dairy farms did not comply with their consents even when minor non-compliance is excluded, and 11% breached monitoring and reporting requirements”, said Tukituki candidate Quentin Duthie.

The list was obtained from the Hawke’s Bay Regional Council under the Official Information Act. Non-compliance includes not having a consent, and exceeding effluent and run-off discharges.

“9% non-compliance differs from the *Clean Streams Accord: Snapshot of Progress 2006/2007* report released in February, which said 7% of Hawke’s Bay dairy farms were non-compliant.

“An October review of the actual data by Forest & Bird and Fish & Game not only found the report data flawed, but that water pollution from dairy has worsened since the Accord was signed!

The Clean Streams Accord – a voluntary agreement between Fonterra, Government and Councils – aims for fairly mild targets to improve water quality, but even these are not being achieved.

“Far from nearing the 2003 Accord target of immediate 100% compliance, 14% of NZ dairy farms breached consents in 2006/7 in a more-than-minor way.

“While Hawke’s Bay’s compliance is better than the national average, 9% of farms letting the side down and contributing to our worsening water pollution is still too many.

“I hope the 2007/8 figures, which will be available soon, show a considerable improvement.

Yesterday the Green Party released its plan to clean up New Zealand’s rivers, lakes and aquifers to:

- Set firm target dates for councils to ensure rivers are swimmable again
- Encourage a requirement for consents to convert new areas to dairy and limit run-off
- Establishing a dedicated fund to support sustainable farming
- Measure and charge for commercial water use to encourage efficiency
- Allow councils to impose moratoria on water-takes for over-allocated catchments

“Town sewage is also a major contributor to water pollution, and the Greens are looking closely at solving the problem of poor Council sewage plans also.

“Water pollution undermines the public right to a safe healthy environment, and our economic future so dependent on the ‘clean and green’ brand – let’s aim to live up to the 100% pure target.

“A party vote for the Greens is a vote for a ‘clean green’ environment”, Mr Duthie concluded.

RELEASE ENDS

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