



Q&A for Dr Mike Joy

	Question	Answer
1	What are your thoughts on the three waters programme as proposed by Government?	Typical for government, It is mostly about ambulances at bottom of cliffs and very little about fences atop, more treatment, mostly chlorine and some improved wastewater treatment. But what we actually need is to protect the sources get animals out of drinking water catchments, upgrade water infrastructure, I mean pipes and connectors first rather than the WWTPs.
2	Why governments are not responding the way is needed?	I do not know the answer to this, I guess because they are fixated on growth, they are trying to please everyone including the polluters
3	Kia ora Mike, what do you think about 'regenerative agriculture'? Is it a powerful grassroots movement getting buy-in from farmers and leading to real improvements? Or is it just another fad? I think MPI are starting looking into some policy around this - what do they need to be thinking about?	I think regen ag is the only possible future for NZ and in fact for humankind, it is about mimicking nature, and thus put simply the only possible way forward. So not a fad, it is grassroots driven in NZ and that seems to be the only place real change comes from. I distrust MPI they have been at the core of our Ag/environment problems for a long time. Every interaction I have had with them around farming or fisheries has been appalling. Apart from 2 exceptions the staff have been aggressively pro-industry and to my mind a classic example of agency capture. I recently saw some advice to the environment minister from MPI about a freshwater issue to do with the NOS-FM, it was utter rubbish, unreferenced, simply made-up numbers. If a first-year student had handed it in to me I would give it a fail, I was utterly appalled to think that this rubbish I the advice given to ministers. I suspect that the campaign from MPI around regen ag. will be to support the fake news line from industry that we are already regen farming.
4	Mike, what do you think of the conclusions of the recent RMA review ?	I agree mostly he came to the same conclusions as me a bout the failure to implement and enforce. I just make the point that the failings are in implementation and enforcement so whatever legislation we have it must be strong on implementation and enforcement and the councils have utterly failed in the past through politicisation so we need a new implementation model much more than new legislation
5	We really need a centralised database for all the freshwater information meant to be collected with the new NES:FW & NPS:FM as well	YES! We must remove the bias of politicisation, for example all agencies are dropping monitoring at bad sites and replacing with unimpacted ones to skew data, and fiddling behind scenes to make thing look better
6	Can you discuss your recent work on water reform and that the government didn't listen to expert working group (incl DMJ) and met with industry groups 10+ times.	Yes, I was a member of the STAG working group on NPS_FM changes and we discovered through a leaked email from Fed farmers (claiming that they were writing freshwater policy) that MfE had had at least 10 secret meetings with industry and that the policy was



		already written by them including material (fake science on N loss) that I recognised as having been lifted straight from DairyNZ webpage. So, I now have zero trust of MfE officials at the highest level, the lied straight to my face and others on multiple occasions. While they did formally apologise, their true colours have been revealed
7	How do we get an independent environmental body to manage our water quality?	I think the PCE model could work if properly funded and the independence guaranteed or a truly independent water commission
8	More training and support around the importance of freshwater and the impacts and more support from the Environment Court is needed and able to be resourced to all councils and iwi due to huge variations in resourcing	Yes, huge imbalance currently exists, the polluters and their council supporters or promoters have all the resources and thus the power, iwi, NGOs and environmental groups have a shoe string.
9	Do you think that the adherence to 'policy boxes' when urban planning is carried out, seriously denies opportunity for collaborative and sustainable environmental design paradigms to be developed?	Yes, the issue of siloing of issues is a big one across all planning, we need to join up all the connections in an ecological or Mātauranga Maori way to have any hope
10	How do the PSA or us as individuals get local and government politicians to act? To remove the Conflict of Interest you described between local council and regional council as their enforcer?	I do not know, I am sure there must be models overseas we can learn from, but it is patently clear this model is not working. We must remove vested interests and politics from decision making
11	How can regional councils ever be make decisions that drive improvements to water quality when they also have a conflicting mandate for regional economic growth?	They can't so these two must be separated, and anyway we cannot continue to have growth, its finished we must learn to degrow
12	Perhaps community can work with local govt staff and with elected officials (both) and all together they can make change? Hold each other accountable.	Yes, this sounds like a possible solution, transparency must be key to this along with equal power and resourcing.
13	Do you think people in the streets care enough about this things?	I do not think they do because there is a huge effort made to ensure they do not, the polluters must keep the average person ignorant of reality to keep consumerism running. The more desperate people are just coping with everyday life means people are less likely to know or care about existential risks like our climate and biodiversity crises
14	What are your thoughts RE effects based regulation vs regulation via absolute standards?	Not a fan of effects based, absolute numbers are only answer, my speed limits analogy holds here.
15	While agree that many point source discharges breach their consent limits. Generally speaking, they have shown massive improvements over the past 50 or so years and there is only so much more improvement that can be achieved at many of these sites. Where is the greatest regulatory impact going to be? What about	Yes, agree improvement in point sources but gains have been swamped by diffuse increases. We must change landuse intensity as a first and most important step. Grandfathering is just plain wrong and must halt immediately.



	grandfathering consents and intensive agricultural land use? These seem currently unregulated?	
16	Do you think point source discharges are the issue, given diffuse discharges such as runoff and nutrient leaching from agricultural land?	Point source nowhere near as big an issue as diffuse and of course diffuse mostly unregulated.
17	Hasn't government taken the 'environmental mandate' with a second proviso: neither Central Government nor Councils are to fund the solution from taxes and rates? So we shouldn't be surprised, but who will lead and who will fund?	I'm not sure what you mean, the had the mandate to set limits to protect freshwater and failed to do so, I don't think its is a funding issue its about taking discretion away from councils by have real numerical limits that must be enforced. I think you are saying that the onus will be on industry to fund a frightening thought.
18	How can we better spread awareness? I find, too few people are informed about the status quo?	I wish I knew ... I keep trying in my own way, but there is a natural avoidance listening to or hearing reality as a first battle and then the spin from business trying desperately to maintain status quo as long as they can.

