

Tukuna mai ōu whakaaro

39398 27 MAR 2015		ACTION	INFO
W. K. R. 501			

You may send your submission:

**By mail (no stamp required):** Freepost 1201, Environment Canterbury, PO Box 345, CHRISTCHURCH 8140

**Online:** Use the online form provided on our website [www.ecan.govt.nz/plans](http://www.ecan.govt.nz/plans).

Follow the instructions provided

**By email: [ecinfo@ecan.govt.nz](mailto:ecinfo@ecan.govt.nz).** Ensure your full name and address is included

Your name Josh Summers

Your organisation and role in it (if applicable) WATCHDOG of/for Local Democracy

Date 23 / 3 / 15

**Tick the box ~~if~~ you wish to discuss your submission in person**

☒ I do not wish my contact details to be made public

☐ A waste of your time and mine.

**All submissions are public documents. Copies will be published on the Environment Canterbury website.**

## Your submission

What do you want Environment Canterbury to do?

Your submission *I submit that any one who takes this submission procedure seriously is lending legitimacy to an organisation that really has no legitimacy whatsoever unless we regard a National government puppet answerable to Wellington as legitimate. The usurping of democratically elected members by Nick Smith after pressure*

I want all the commissioners to resign and plead and implore the minister to return to an elected E. Can. Totally elected that means you're all wealthy beyond most citizen's wildest dreams and your massive egos will find new outlets this so called consultation

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# Submission form continued

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**Submissions close at 5pm on Monday April 13, 2015.**

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Your submission	What do you want Environment Canterbury to do?
<p>from the local rural mayors (all iron-ically happy to be properly elected by popular vote) and a subjective re-port by ex National M.P. Creech is simply Bainimarama with out the guns. A total outrage. We now pay rates to E.CAN. without any ability to alter the composition of the body. Anonymous bureaucrats called commis-sioners headed by Wairarapa resident with the inflated title of Dame come here do the governments bidding and <sup>the environment</sup> water is completely polluted as the rivers are now they will return from whence they came or die and leave the mess for our future generations. No principle guides their actions nor have they the wis-dom to see the only nest we humans have is being shit in till its unlivable.</p>	<p>document is nothing more or less than a public relations exercise from a complacent self congratulatory body that tinkers round the edges while Rome burns. I see it is not even on sustain-ably harvested paper. A disgrace for an organisation whose sole concern is supposedly to protect the environment. All this touchy feely stuff (kids with paper boats in water where?) fools no one in submissions. A total SHAM! We the people are not stupid.</p>

Continue your submission on additional pages if necessary.

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## THE PRESS

*This is a conservative newspaper*

### A modicum of ECan democracy

At last. It has taken the Government long enough but, finally, it has deigned to make changes that will bring back at least a degree of democracy for Cantabrians and Environment Canterbury.

Once upon a time, if you cast your minds back, Canterbury had a democratically elected regional council, for better or worse. This was in the far-off days before the earthquakes, but not so long ago that there weren't already dairy farms across the Canterbury Plains and Mackenzie Country, and that who controlled the region's freshwater wasn't an issue.

Spurred on by former Christchurch mayor Sir Bob Parker and his counterparts across the region, the National Government sacked the ECan council on the basis of a report by one of its own, former deputy prime minister Wyatt Creech – a document that has since been widely criticised by opponents.

Even the Ministry of Justice and the Department of Conservation vigorously opposed the subsequent legislation that installed commissioners, put off ECan council elections until 2013 (a promise later broken), gave commissioners extra powers over water and took away the right of communities to appeal to the Environment Court.

Environment Minister Nick Smith presided over those extraordinary changes in early 2010, claiming the report showed the council had become "dysfunctional". Last week Smith was again in charge as a plan was released to introduce a mix of elected members and government appointees to, as he said, "provide the necessary stability for Canterbury" from

next year's election.

Smith also said rather patronisingly the idea of having a fully elected council after a more than six-year hiatus carried "too many risks", with the Canterbury Water Management Strategy having reached a critical stage. For anyone who still needed proof the ECan issue was about anything other than water, this is it. But most Cantabrians have long realised that.

Given the Government hammered the pre-commissioner ECan for being too slow to develop policies, it seems somewhat ironic the Government has taken so long to come up with this proposal.

The plan is for seven elected and six appointed members, an idea which has been swirling about for a year or more, despite the Government refusing to confirm or deny it. *No it doesn't*

This proposal does have some merit. With six elected members, that would ensure a continuation of expertise in specific areas for an interim period, similar to the current situation. On the democracy side, there would be more elected than appointed councillors. The all-important chair, who would have the casting vote in a deadlock, would be chosen by all. *No it's not*

This is a sensible plan for the 2016 election. But we say from the next, 2019, election the council must be fully democratic. The only excuse for the council not being so is if the country's other regional councils are moving to a similar footing. Otherwise it is a glaring disparity and a strong anti-democratic signal from the Government that does Cantabrians a huge disservice.

## Ministers treated us with contempt over ECan

Environment Minister Dr Nick Smith and Associate Local Government Minister Louise Upston have treated us with contempt. While their sham discussion document on the future of our regional council calls for submissions, they have made it clear that their preferred option is for a mixed model of appointed and elected members.

Why then bother with a discussion paper when we know what the outcome will be?

The regional council of 2010 was replaced by appointed commissioners, not because it was dysfunctional, but because they were getting to grips with the over

allocation of the region's fresh water resources. Most of the former dysfunctional council had been thrown out in that election.

Our parliamentarians trust us to elect them to government but they don't trust us to elect our regional council. Why not abolish regional councils in favour of regional offices of the Ministry for the Environment? At least that would be honest.

TOM O'CONNOR  
St Andrews

### Freedom-loving

Memo to Nick Smith: Around 260 years ago colonists in America told

imperial Britain, "No taxation without representation". Thus was born the United States. Since then freedom-loving people everywhere have got used to the idea of democracy. Even in Canterbury the ideal lives on. Even if it means keeping some of our rivers flowing.

JEREMY AGAR  
Lyttelton

### Made it worse

Maybe Environment Minister Nick Smith did not read the letter sent to him in December from 20 farming families along the lower Hurunui River stating they no

longer had confidence in ECan. He might also be unaware of the unprecedented 300 landowners at the small town hall of Waikari expressing their concerns over ECan's water plan.

Sam Mahon (March 19) is right when he says ECan have pitted farmer against farmer but it is not only water that ECan have created a mess with.

ECan recently disbanded the Regional Biodiversity Strategy Group that had brought the range of farming and environmental interests together in a collaborative process. In its place ECan introduced directives onto the district councils requiring

them to force regulation onto landowners.

All of the district council submissions opposing this were rejected by ECan.

ECan also have disbanded their highly successful Resource Care group that was working positively with landowners on environmental issues. Trust of ECan is at an all-time low.

Contrary to what Nick Smith believes, ECan under commissioners has not "cleaned up one helluva mess" – they have actually made it significantly worse.

JAMIE McFADDEN  
Cheviot