

Make Submission

Consultee	Mr Stephen Beuzenberg (77712)
Email Address	stephen.beuzenberg@yahoo.com
Address	122C Centaurus Rd Huntsbury Christchurch 8022
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Submission by	Mr Stephen Beuzenberg (77712)
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Whole Plan Support/Oppose	
Please select one of the following:	I generally disagree with the activity proposed for the Long-Term Plan.

Whole Plan Comments

Please provide any comments.

I oppose aspects of the Long term Plan (LTP) which asks us, as rate payers, to find an additional 4.5% each year for the next three years, and we are further advised that this value is being held down only because ECAN is plundering existing reserves. This is irresponsible. Due to the very short time allowed for submissions since the consultation document was distributed, I will only consider two parts of the plan, but many other parts are weak, including: Considerations of mitigating the effects of climate change, more definite strategies to maintain biodiversity and to enhance biosecurity, XXXXXXXX For me, the most egregious aspect is the Freshwater Management plan which continues the gifting of water consents to businesses and corporations for the purposes of increased profits. This represents a transfer of resource ownership from the citizen collective to private individuals or corporations. Put simply: We, the public, are giving our valuable resource to private individuals and corporations so they can become richer. Once again, this is a wealth transfer from the poor to the rich. What is worse, we are being forced to pay additional taxes to fund the system to do this. The very name, Environment Canterbury, states the organisation's responsibility to shepherd our environment into the future. ECAN councillors have been entrusted to perform this task, some elected by popular vote, the rest hand picked by the previous government. The very first paragraph of the consultation document includes the phrase "We are one of the few places in the world where there is an abundance of freshwater". This is clearly not the case, when many of our rivers have been reduced to green, slimy trickles and

our artesian aquifers are increasingly contaminated, or are running dry due to over-allocation. Some of the over-allocation is historic, but some is recent and inexcusable. I believe much more could be done by ECAN to protect and reclaim our freshwater for the long term public good, and the health of our children and our environment. A better LTP would include a determination to actively curtail any irrigation that cannot be proven to have no significant effect on its water source, to ban all water bottling for export, including existing consents, and to actively and urgently lobby central government to change any legislation that prevents these initiatives being implemented. But this will require a change in mindset, beginning with an acceptance that we do not have "an abundance of freshwater". The recent cases in which ECAN has granted consent for massive extractions from local bores to water bottlers is a clear example. ECAN has known for years that this situation would develop but has done nothing to prevent it happening. ECAN must be strongly proactive in protecting our last remaining and dwindling freshwater, including forceful lobbying of central government, and this should be the basis for freshwater management in the LTP. The other area I wish to submit on is the transport plan. This is very weak and essentially only considers cutting some routes as a cost saving. Where is the plan for dramatic increases in public transport to cope with the effects of increasing congestion in our cities and the clear signs of climate change? Normally, I cycle commute because the bus trip is too long. I have attempted to "do the right thing" when needing to get to other places in the city, eg. the airport, and have tried to take a bus, but have failed to find a realistic route/time and have ultimately given up and taken the car.

I believe that this is an area that ECAN has no interest in. The idea of integrated services makes perfect sense in theory, but I see no evidence of it in reality, and no tangible proposals for it in the LTP. ECAN should accept that transport is outside of its scope and should relinquish management to the city/town councils. Certainly, I am sure that Christchurch, which has an urgent need for improved and integrated public transport, would do a much better job than ECAN. There is a chicken and egg problem, that as long as the public transport remains so inadequate, people will be forced to use their cars, and as long as people use their cars they won't switch to a shabby public transport system. As a daily e-bike commuter, ECAN has done nothing to improve my life or to shelter me from the very real daily hazards from other vehicle commuters or from their toxic exhausts. If ECAN has any useful function in transport, it is outside of the main centres, but even here there appears to be no appetite to take a leadership role. Canterbury seems to be adopting a development sprawl with satellite developments such as Rolleston and more recently Pegasus, plus the large number of rural lifestyle block holders who all bring their cars into the city each day. But ECAN has provided no transport facilities, or even planning for public transport. Where is the plan for light rail to new areas, or reinstatement for areas such as Kaiapoi, Rangiora, Pegasus, Rolleston, and even Ashburton using railcars on the existing rails? Instead vast sums are committed to new roading. The argument that this is a central government function, or that the lines are not owned by ECAN does not mean that ECAN can't be a powerful advocate for Canterbury to make these liaisons operate. Again, what is the point of ECAN's existence, if it cannot successfully lobby and broker between city councils and central government. If ECAN is impotent or ineffective in this role, then it should bow right out, and let them reach agreements directly. In general, I find very little in ECAN's performance that impresses me or makes me happy to pay my rates. The one bright area is the steady progress on improving air emissions reductions from wood burners in the city, and I encourage any policy that makes progress in this direction, including retiring older burners and the development/introduction of ultra-low emission heaters such as electronically controlled wood burners with precise feed rates, air control, and prevention of burning damp fuel. But I see only a passing reference to this in the LTP, and I'm sure this function could be handled just as well by town/city councils. Thank you. I wish to have the opportunity to speak to this submission. Stephen Beuzenberg