

Introduction

The National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (as amended in August 2017) directs all regional councils (including unitary authorities) to set draft regional targets to improve the quality of fresh water so they are suitable for primary contact more often. This information sheet has been prepared to meet this requirement. "Primary contact" includes swimming, and means people's contact with fresh water that involves immersion in the water. Being suitable for primary contact more often includes improvements in water quality from one state to another (for example, orange to yellow, yellow to green, or green to blue).

All regional councils have worked together to use the best information available to identify:

- The improvements that will be made to water quality in rivers and lakes in the Southland region under programmes that are planned or underway
- When the anticipated water quality improvements will be achieved
- The likely costs of all interventions, and where these costs will fall

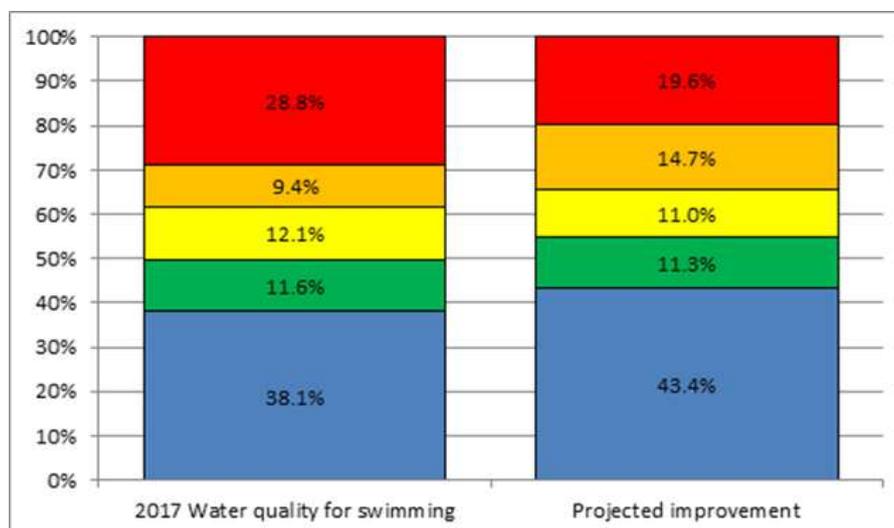
A report on these theoretical improvements and costs, presented region by region, is available on the Ministry for the Environment's website (<http://www.mfe.govt.nz>). The assumptions and limitations of the modelling approaches taken are described in the report.

Regional context and focus

The overall swimmable state of the Southland region's rivers is 62% swimmable (that is, 62% of rivers that are fourth order or larger are in the blue, green or yellow category in terms of *E. coli*). For lakes with perimeters greater than 1500 metres, 98% are in the blue, green or yellow category in terms of cyanobacteria based on the status quo. The regional priorities for Southland are to improve land and water management through the proposed Southland Water and Land Plan and then to work closely with our communities to integrate action on the ground with regulation (limit-setting).

Draft regional targets

The primary contact draft regional targets for Southland, based on the modelling of programmes underway, are for 65.7% of rivers that are fourth order or larger to be in the blue, green or yellow category in terms of *E. coli* by 2030.



Regional process from here

The first step for Southland will be to implement the proposed Southland Water and Land Plan from 4 April 2018. This will improve land and water management in the region and contribute to 'holding the line' on water quality. The next steps will come through Council's People, Water and Land programme. This programme will take a people-focused approach to integrating action on the ground with regulation (such as limit-setting). Council intends to work in partnership to support an implementation first approach to support a thriving Southland.