

5.0 POLICIES

- 5.1 The discharge of dairy sludge and farm dairy washwater onto land shall be encouraged.
- 5.2 The discharge of farm dairy sludge and untreated farm dairy washwater into surface water shall be avoided.
- 5.3 The discharge of farm dairy washwater, untreated or treated, into any freshwater lake or into watercourses within a lake catchment shall be avoided.
- 5.4 Discharges shall be assessed against the following criteria:
- Permitted activities shall be assessed against the criteria listed in 6.2.1.
 - Controlled activities shall be assessed against the criteria listed in 6.3.1.
 - Discretionary activities shall be assessed against the criteria listed in 6.4.1.

Explanation of Policies

- 5.1 *This Plan advocates land disposal of farm dairy washwater for several reasons. Washwater is a valuable resource in terms of fertiliser value, and the application of washwater onto land at appropriate rates to enhance pasture growth is considered to be the best practicable option in dealing with what would otherwise be a potential pollutant of water. Such re-use of nutrients is also consistent with MAF's policy directives for sustainable agriculture and with the relevant regional plans by Environment Waikato and Northland Regional Council. Disposal incorporating a land application component is the only acceptable form of disposal to Iwi. Research commissioned by the ARC has confirmed previous research indicating that washwater discharges to surface water can have serious impacts on freshwater biota, mainly due to ammonia concentrations. Refer to Appendix A for more information.*
- 5.2 *The discharge of untreated farm dairy washwater to water is a prohibited activity because these discharges have significant adverse effects, as discussed in section 3.0, 'Issues' of this Plan.*
- 5.3 *The discharge of treated farm dairy washwater into freshwater lakes or their lake catchments is also prohibited because these lakes have an extremely limited capacity to assimilate such discharges without adverse effects.*

- 5.4** *All applications for controlled or discretionary activities will be assessed against all the above Policies. Policy 5.4 refers to the issues that will be given particular consideration by the ARC in assessing any application. The conditions, standards and matters in Section 6.0 list the mechanisms that can be used to adequately avoid, remedy or mitigate the adverse effects of washwater discharges. It is intended to implement this Plan in a staged manner, based on water catchments, so that all washwater discharges in each catchment can be considered at the same time. This is to ensure that the potential for cumulative adverse effects can be adequately avoided, remedied or mitigated.*

Supporting information is available from the ARC. Appendix B contains information about the resource consent process.