



**Media Release**  
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**Environmental Defence Society seeks more urgency in cleaning up our waterways**

The Environmental Defence Society notes with concern the slow progress being made in cleaning up our waterways but welcomes the commitment by the dairy industry to introduce new best practice guidelines.

Both the annual report on the 2003 Dairying and Clean Streams Accord and a new Sustainable Dairying Water Accord have been released today.

“The annual snapshot shows that the sector is underperforming on many of the targets with just 56% of farms having nutrient management plans and 11% of farms still in serious breach of their consent conditions,” said EDS Chairman Gary Taylor.

“The report also shows that some regions are doing a lot better than others.

“New Zealanders expect farming to be environmentally responsible and most industry leaders acknowledge there is still some distance to go before the whole sector is brought into best practice compliance. Many are doing the right thing but there are still persistent rogue outliers revealed in the statistics.

“We note that the dairy industry has released a new Accord to replace the 2003 one. We will take some time to evaluate this but the overall pathway is one of continuous improvement and the whole dairy sector is now included.

“The new Accord seems to contain greater commitments to implementation from Fonterra than from other dairy companies. We think they should all be using their supply contracts to enforce compliance – following the Fonterra lead.

“As the new Accord notes, it is not a substitute for regulatory compliance. We are still waiting for the government’s response to the Land and Water Forum recommendations and in particular for the National Water Quality Objectives Framework to be released.

“The framework will set measurable limits on dairying within which regional variations will be allowed depending on catchment characteristics. Getting the framework right is crucial. Weak or uncertain water quality standards would threaten the integrity of the Land and Water Forum’s prescription for managing freshwater,” Mr Taylor concluded.