

Government Review of Overseer

August 2021

Summary of HortNZ's position

What is the Government Review of Overseer?

The Ministry for Primary Industries and the Ministry for the Environment commissioned an independent peer review of Overseer. The July 2021 [Science Advisory Panel report](#) concluded that, in its current form, it would not have confidence that Overseer's estimates of nitrogen lost from farms are suitable for use as a stand-alone measure of total losses.

The Government's August 2021 [Response to the Overseer](#) review notes:

- In the immediate term, regional councils will continue to implement their plans and administer consents to manage fresh water at the farm level. Councils will use all available evidence and will need to be careful not to rely solely on Overseer modelling for their understanding of total nitrogen losses.'
- In a compliance monitoring and enforcement context, Councils should use all available tools/data and be cautious in placing too much emphasis on Overseer modelling as a means of exercising control through the imposition of consent conditions. Conditions placed on any new consents should allow for compliance to be demonstrated using 'multiple lines of evidence.'

The Government has committed to ensuring regional councils and resource users have access to reliable and practical tools to effectively manage nutrient discharges through the planning and consenting framework.

Summary of HortNZ's position

HortNZ welcomes the review of Overseer as the review supports HortNZ's long-standing position on Overseer and its limitations. HortNZ supports using other methods such as N-budgets as an alternative to modelled leaching estimates and support allocation frameworks that do not rely on Overseer estimates.

HortNZ asks that the Government takes decisive action to provide a workable and certain regulatory framework in the transition to the 2024 National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM) Plan Changes.

WHERE TO GO FOR MORE INFORMATION

- [MPI Overseer technical review process page](#)
- [Keep an eye on HortNZ's website](#)