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## THE COLLABORATIVE PROCESS - THE NEW PARADIGM

### Todd McClay

*Todd was born in Rotorua and raised in Reporoa and Taupo. He has created and owned a number of successful businesses and has worked in a political capacity internationally, in the European Parliament. In 2000 he was appointed the Cook Islands and Niue Ambassador to the European Union. He was first elected in 2008 as the National Party candidate for the Rotorua electorate.*

*Todd has worked hard to service the needs of both the urban township of Rotorua, and the large rural constituency that makes up most of the Rotorua electorate. He recognises the vital role that rural New Zealand plays in the economic and cultural fabric of the country, and is committed to being an active voice in Parliament for all parts of the electorate.*

**Todd McClay was to present this section but unfortunately was not able to come. Ian McLean spoke on Todd's behalf, drawing on his notes.**

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is obvious I am not Todd but on Todd's behalf, and my own, I would like to pay my respects to Maureen Waaka. She was not only beautiful, which is good in itself, but she was a great person, and we pay our respects to her.

I should say one thing about Todd not being here and that is that the whips will not let him go. The whips are somewhat mysterious figures; they wield immense power in Parliament. Their job is to make sure the Parliamentary system works effectively, and there is no appeal against their decisions. You will see this a bit as Todd now has assumed a ministerial post and they are particularly tough on junior ministers.

Todd sends his best wishes for the day and records his commitment to the lake and to farming; to the jobs, to the opportunities in the district. Todd would tell us that we have a unique opportunity here to do something that until now has not been accomplished anywhere in New Zealand. What has to be achieved is both a clean lake and jobs, and we cannot risk either. We cannot risk the quality of life which makes New Zealand a stand out destination for people to live and play.

The Land and Water Forum, in a wider context for all New Zealand, is about strong vibrant communities, responsible businesses and shareholders; stakeholders making decisions for themselves and for others. The Forum focuses on local economies, jobs, investments, income and clean water ways. In the Rotorua district a huge amount has already been done. Todd and I pay a tribute to those who have done this work. To the mayor and councillors, management and staff of Rotorua District Council, particularly for the great work with the sewerage, now almost right across the district. Kevin, you and your people are to be congratulated on that.

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Secondly, to Environment Bay of Plenty, now promoted to the Bay of Plenty Regional Council, congratulations for all that the Regional Council has done. We have a number of councillors here today: Councillors Thurston, Oppatt and Eru. Congratulations to Te Arawa, for the work they have done, for their leadership contribution and for the work that individual trusts have done across the catchments. I would also like to pay a tribute to Professor David Hamilton who has provided the basis of the science and the drive and intellectual understanding to move ahead.

With all that effort, about half the lakes are fixed or on the way; it has been a huge success almost unparalleled in New Zealand. But progress has stuck with Lake Rotorua, our most important lake. It is stuck for all sorts of reasons, but as Todd pointed out the various groups were arguing and shouting at each other. I was part of one of those groups. I spoke quietly, I thought, but Todd says rightly that we in LWQS and the farming community were not communicating with each other. Todd initiated and worked through the Waiora Agreement bringing understanding between environmental activists, (I suppose that is LakesWater Quality Society), and what he calls 'rampant farmers'. It would be interesting to see what a rampant farmer might look like: perhaps after the field days. We each found that the others often meant the same things but in a different language.

Today, two years on we are much closer together. Progress was built on the Oturoa Agreement and the Bay of Plenty Regional Council has joined in and contributed to that. The Oturoa Agreement, as Todd points out, was the beginning of the end of the hostilities. The arguing is over, and now it is time to agree and move ahead. The whole country is watching Rotorua, watching our model for agreement and achievement, because if and when we succeed it is likely to be mirrored in many other catchments up and down the country. For this reason Todd points out we must succeed.

### **Why are incentives needed?**

Incentives are needed because those who take action need to be involved with the process and own the outcomes. Every stakeholder must be treated equally as long as they are acting responsibly and in good faith and that includes the rural sector, the Regional Council and the District Council. Nobody has a right to put nutrients in the lake over and above their allocations.

It is important that there is certainty and people are not left not knowing where to invest, where to work and what their future will be in this district. It is important that there are incentives which will give farming a secure future and do it in such a way that incentives are far quicker than any strict rules alone could ever be to push a community to change.

### **What money could be on the table to incentivise nitrogen reduction?**

This is a decision for ratepayers, because most of the money comes locally either through rates or by ratepayers paying themselves and bearing the costs. Because of the cost it cannot be done too quickly and yet it must not be done too slowly either. Todd commits central government to helping where it can. He points out

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that we have already received a significant tax payer contribution, more than any other catchment is likely to receive in the future. He points out the tax payer funds cannot be reused to reduce rural productivity unnecessarily. That flexibility over the funding deed for Lake Rotorua has been agreed in principle; however funding availability is dependent upon progress. The progress is likely to be measured by government, not only on the speed of nutrient reduction but also on the co-operative approach to all decision making.

He challenges us all, central government, local government and the community to be on the same page. We have made progress but much more needs to be demonstrated. Writing rules will not solve the problem. We have to work together to solve the problems and that working together will involve a huge amount of detail. We will see some of the detail today in the TDRs. I suggest you do not get lost in the detail of the exact numbers. The target numbers are set, but do not lose the thread of the symposium by arguing over one particular number. The challenge for us is to look at the major policy issues behind each of the numbers. The TDRs are one of the many things that have to be worked through in the StAG Group and it is a challenge for us all.

Lake Rotorua is a wonderful lake, one that we have abused in the past, both city, lakeside and country. Around the lake most jobs are supported one way or another by our environment and much of our tourism and our attractiveness depends on the front-piece of the lake. Yet as a city and district we turned our backs on the lake. Now everyone is facing up to the problems and this is absolutely magnificent. I look forward in my life time to seeing significant improvement in Lake Rotorua, a beautiful lake set in a more prosperous district.

On Todd's behalf and my own I wish you well in the symposium.