



## Education

PhD – Environmental Science, Griffith University, Brisbane, 1994

M. Sc (Hons) – Zoology, University of Auckland, New Zealand, 1987

B.Sc. – Zoology and Marine Biology, University of Auckland, 1985

GradDipT (Secondary) University of Waikato, 2012

PRINCE2 Practitioner Certificate in Project Management, 2016

Making Good Decisions: Certification as RMA Decision Maker, 2014; Recertification, 2017, 2020, Chair Endorsement, 2020.

Certificate in Company Direction, Institute of Directors, 2020

## Experience Highlights

- Freshwater Commissioner, MfE, 2020-present
- HSNO Committee member, EPA, 2015 - present
- RMA Commissioner, 2014 - present
- Director, Streamlined Environmental since January 2014
- Over 30 years' experience working in scientific consultancy, research, management, education and government roles in New Zealand and Australia
- 7 years as Research Programme Leader, NIWA
- 9 years as Group Manager/Scientist (Freshwater Ecology), NIWA,
- 9 months teaching experience at Liggins Institute (University of Auckland)
- 3 years as Principal Scientist, Aquatic Ecology, NIWA Australia, Brisbane,
- 3 years as Principal Conservation Officer (Aquatic Ecology and Planning), Queensland EPA, Brisbane,
- 5 years as a Senior Environmental Consultant, Natural Resource Assessments. Queensland

## Ngairé R. Phillips, PhD.

*Director/Aquatic Ecology & Ecotoxicology Specialist*

Dr Phillips is an experienced environmental scientist with specialist expertise in aquatic ecology and environmental toxicology. She is also co-owner of a specialist science consultancy. She has experience through roles in consulting, research, science management, project management and education. She has a wealth of knowledge based on practical and extensive experience in a wide range of scientific disciplines, including freshwater and estuarine ecology, customary fisheries management, water quality and land management associated with rivers, lakes and estuaries. Ngairé has considerable experience in leading and participating in multi-disciplinary teams. She is a registered RMA Independent Commissioner, an appointed member of the HSNO Committee for the EPA, was the specialist science Commissioner on a Special Tribunal to consider a Water Conservation Order (MfE/EPA) and has also been appointed as a Freshwater Commissioner for the Ministry for the Environment.

Specialty areas:

*Application of the RMA*

*Independent commissioner*

*Freshwater and estuarine ecology*

*Ecotoxicology*

*Ecohealth (human health/environmental health links)*

*Iwi Resource Management issues, especially customary fisheries*

## Selected Examples of Relevant Experience

### ***Application of the RMA and other Resource Management Legislation***

Much of my work is conducted within the RMA space, through my role providing technical support to regional and local council consenting officers (including reviewing the adequacy of scientific information provided in support of consent applications), preparing and presenting evidence on behalf of regional councils, developers, iwi, and undertaking scientific investigations in support of resource consent applications by industry and private developers. I regularly undertake technical reviews of resource consent applications for territorial authorities throughout New Zealand. A selection of project examples is presented below.

**Warkworth WWTP discharge consent - ecological assessment for short-term consent, Watercare Services Ltd (2021 - current).** Undertook water quality trend analyses and drafted Ecological Effects report to

support an application for resource consent for the Warkworth WWTP discharge consents.

**Snells-Algies WWTP discharge consent - ecological assessment for variation to short-term consent, Watercare Services Ltd (2021 - current).** Undertook water quality trend analyses and drafted Ecological Effects report to support an application for a variation to the Snells-Algies WWTP discharge consents.

**Reconsenting of wastewater discharge consents for Ravensdown Napier plants, Ravensdown Fertiliser, Napier (2020-current).** Freshwater ecology and ecotoxicology expert, responsible for scoping and conducting scientific investigations and producing a report that will contribute to an Assessment of Ecological Effects report.

**Kinleith Mill reconsenting, Oji Fibre Solutions, Tokoroa (2019-2021).** Project manager and freshwater expert for reconsenting Kinleith Mill's waste water discharge consents, coordinating investigations on mixing dynamics, stream ecology, water quality and contaminants in sediment and eel tissue. Responsible for drafting an Ecological Effects Report.

**Reconsenting of wastewater discharge consents for Motenui and Waitara Valley plants, Methanex Ltd, Taranaki (2020).** Aquatic (marine and freshwater) ecology and ecotoxicology expert, responsible for scoping and conducting scientific investigations. After initial investigations this project was discontinued as a consequence of the effects of Covid19 and the changing priorities of the client.

**Healthy Rivers Plan Change 1, Expert Witness on Shallow lakes, Hamilton, Department of Conservation (2019)** Prepared and presented evidence on the department's submission on the implications of the proposed plan change for the management and sustainability of Waikato's shallow lakes.

**Provision of support to s42a officer on potential ecological effects of expansion of Martha Mine, Waihi, Waikato Regional Council (2019).** Project includes peer review of assessment of effects report submitted as part of resource consent applications, production of a report to assist development of the section 42a report. Also includes attendance at hearing to provide technical support to the Hearings Panel and contribution to consent conditions.

**Provision of support to s42a officer on potential ecological effects of accidental and overflow discharges of untreated sewerage to the Waimea Estuary, Nelson City Council (2017 - 2018).** Project includes peer review of assessment of effects report submitted as part of resource consent applications, expert conferencing and production of a report to assist development of the section 42a report. Also includes attendance at hearing to provide technical support to the Hearings Panel and contribution to consent conditions.

**Okura development proposal, Expert Witness, Okura Holdings Ltd (2017).** Presented expert evidence on ecological values of the freshwater systems of a development area north of Auckland, including predictions in changes in values associated with the proposed development.

**Healthy Rivers 1 (Waikato/Waipā) - implications for Port Waikato, Waikato Regional Council (2016).** Think piece on the potential implications of decisions made through the Waikato Healthy Rivers Plan on the estuarine environment at Port Waikato.

**Assessment of Ecological Effects on the receiving environment from the discharge of treated wastewater from the Omaha WWTP, Watercare Services Ltd (2016).** Undertook field and desktop investigations to determine the potential effects of population growth on nutrient levels reaching the sensitive Whangateau Harbour, which was integrated into an AEE for resource consent applications by Watercare Services.

**Waikato Byproducts Re-consenting, Graeme Low Corporation (2014-2015).** Ecology, water quality and ecotoxicology expert for the re-consenting of Waikato Byproducts discharge permit. Prepared an assessment of the current status of the receiving environment, the effects environmental health associated with the plant (including an assessment of mixing zone characterization) and proposed consent conditions, for integration into the AEE.

**Te Kahu Mine, Department of Conservation (DOC) (2014-2015).** Ecology/ecotoxicology expert on a proposed coal mine west of Westport, which includes a requirement obtain a concession and an easement on DOC land. Reviewed applicants AEE, especially in relation to freshwater ecology, water quality and water management strategies. Advised DOC on other legislative implications.

## ***Freshwater and estuarine ecology***

In addition to all projects listed under the above section on Application of the RMA, the following are other examples of my experience in freshwater and estuarine ecology.

**SEV applicability to Waikato Regional Council Freshwater Ecosystem Services project, Waikato Regional Council (2018 - 2021)** Assessed the applicability of the Stream Ecological Valuation (SEV) methodology as a semi-quantitative framework from which to derive functional scores of Freshwater Ecosystem Services (FWES) using the Waikato Regional Council's (WRC) State of the Environment (SOE) monitoring data.

**Te Awarua-o-Porirua Collaborative Modelling Project, Greater Wellington Regional Council (2017-2018).** Leading the development of Bayesian Belief Networks and narrative descriptions to use in making predictions of freshwater and estuarine attributes under different development scenarios. The research project outputs supported the implementation of the Porirua Whaitua process.

**Okura Freshwater Assessment, Okura Holdings Ltd (2017).** Undertook field assessment using the Stream Ecological Valuation (SEV) method to assess ecological functioning under existing and proposed development options.

**Kaipara Sediment Mitigation Study, Northland Regional Council (2016-2017).** Project Manager and contributor to a research investigation involving a consortium of researchers that has developed a model of Kaipara Harbour and its catchment for assessing costs and benefits of sediment mitigation. The model predicts the extent to which various objectives framed in terms of sediment "attributes" may be achieved by different sediment mitigation strategies, and the associated costs to the public, landowners and sector groups.

**Literature review of risks and adverse effects of discharge in the Otago region, Otago Regional Council (2016 - 2017).** Contributed ecological effects expertise to a literature review of the risks and adverse effects to aquatic ecosystems (marine, freshwater) from discharges of stormwater, wastewater, industrial and trade waste, and other hazardous substances in Otago.

**Management framework for identifying and prioritizing monitoring in the Waikato Coastal Management Area, Waikato Regional Council (2016).** Led the development of a flexible framework for identifying and prioritizing collection of monitoring data within the CMA, based on an understanding of key drivers in the catchment. The framework integrates a range of interrogation and decision support tools and is able to accommodate variations in data quantity/quality.

**Contaminants in New Zealand Estuaries, Dairy New Zealand (2016).** As part of a review of contaminant in estuaries, I undertook a review of metrics and indexes that are in use for quantifying estuary ecological condition. The review also identified issues and areas where there are deficiencies, especially as they related to the dairy industry.

**Assessment of ecological effects of discharge of treated wastewater, Watercare Services (2016).** Contributed to the assessment of effects on coastal environments associated with re-consenting of discharges from existing wastewater treatment facilities (WWTPs) operated by Watercare Services, including Snells Beach and Warkworth, Clarks Beach, Waiuku and Kingseat WWTPs and Omaha WWTP.

**Healthy Rivers 1 (Waikato/Waipā) - implications for Port Waikato, Waikato Regional Council (2016).** Think-piece on the implications of the proposed water quality rules under the Healthy Rivers Plan for the coastal environment at Port Waikato.

**Ecological effects of Tasman Mill on the Tarawera River, Aquatic Environmental Services (2015 and 2017).** This project involved the analysis and interpretation of macroinvertebrate and water quality data collected at sites upstream and downstream of the Tasman Mill discharge point. Previous data were incorporated to address two key questions, namely a) what is the significance of changes in macroinvertebrate communities downstream of Tasman Mill and b) how do these changes relate to water and habitat quality? The approach taken was to consider multiple lines of evidence for a relationship between ecological health and water quality downstream of the Tasman Mill discharge.

**Wastewater and catchment nitrogen sources to Whangateau Harbour, Watercare Services Ltd (2014).** Undertook an assessment of wastewater and catchment nitrogen sources to Whangateau Harbour and assessed the ecological significance of proposed changes in discharge characteristics associated with an upgrade of the wastewater treatment facility.

**River Ecology Status and Trends, Auckland Council (2013).** Undertook data analysis and reporting of temporal trends in macroinvertebrate indices derived from Auckland Council's River Ecology Monitoring Programme.

**Biological traits: application to regional monitoring programmes, Waikato Regional Council/Auckland Council (2011-2012).** Led an research project investigation the response of macroinvertebrates metrics and traits to a gradient of pastoral development (% pastoral) for Waikato streams and in comparison to Auckland streams. Also investigated the potential use of traits as a mechanistic tool.

**Interactions between heavy metals, sedimentation and cockle feeding and movement, Auckland Regional Council (2008-2009).** Part of a research team examining the effect of cockle feeding and movement on sediment resuspension in heavy metal-impacted estuaries. Undertook field and lab-based experiments to examine the interactions between these components.

## ***Independent Commissioner***

See my Commissioner cv

<https://streamlined.co.nz/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Ngaire-Phillips-Streamlined-Commissioner-CV-May-2021.pdf>

## ***Ecotoxicology and Ecohealth***

**Technical Audit – Ngāti Tūwharetoa Geothermal Assets (NTGA) – Discharge to Tarawera River, Bay of Plenty Regional Council (2020-2021).** Provide ecotoxicology expertise to s42a officer on an application to extend a consent to discharge spent geothermal fluids to the Tarawera River. My role was to review the ecotoxicological report supporting the application..

**HSNO Committee member,** for Environmental Protection Agency (2015-current). I am an appointed member of the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms (HSNO) Committee, which makes decisions on

applications under the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms (HSNO) Act 1996. Decision Making Committees (DMC) are formed from a pool of 8 decision makers for each individual application. The types of resource management issues that I have been required to consider include the proposed introduction of biocontrol agents for pest or disease control, the registration for use of a range of pesticides and fungicides, and the approval of alternative, more environmentally-friendly chemicals, such as vehicle heat transfer fluids. These are evaluated for potential risks to the environment, human health, the relationship of Māori to the environment, society, community, and to the market economy. Currently I am involved in several nationally significant applications associated with the timber industry.

**Chatham Rock Phosphate deep sea mining proposal, Expert Witness, *Ngai Tahu* (2014).** Ecotoxicology expert on a submission by Ngai Tahu (as submitter) on the application to mine phosphorite nodules on the Chatham Rise. Provided an assessment of potential ecotoxicity associated with the proposal, as well as a review of methods employed by the applicant to determine toxicity.

**Determining the contaminant health risk of kai moana, kai roto and kai awa, *Health Research Council of New Zealand* (2007-2011).** Lead investigator for a research project aimed at characterising the risks to Māori associated with consuming kai collected from rivers, lakes and coastlines. Using quantitative risk assessment methods, we developed guidelines for safe consumption of a range of aquatic fauna and flora species, focusing on potentially at-risk communities (Rotorua, Temuka) and employing culturally-focused methods. A large part of the role was in building and maintaining relationships with our iwi partners and participants. [Project website](#)

**Interactions between heavy metals, sedimentation and cockle feeding and movement, *Auckland Regional Council* (2008-2009).** Part of a research team examining the effect on feeding and movement estuarine bivalves (cockles) on sediment resuspension in heavy metal-impacted estuaries. Undertook field and lab-based toxicity experiments to examine the interactions between these components. Contributed to the development of a complex systems model.

**Intergenerational responses to stormwater contamination, *Auckland Regional Council* (2007 – 2009).** Lead investigator on a research project aimed to provide a tool for detecting the effects of chronic, low-level contamination in streams on multiple generations of aquatic biota, using changes in genetic structure as a marker. Combining field and laboratory experiments ranging from acute (4 days) to chronic (38 days) exposure periods, the effects on both adult and juvenile populations of a “model” organism (the freshwater clam *Sphaerium novaezelandia*) were examined. Significant chronic effects of stormwater contamination on aquatic organisms were identified.

**Estuarine Ecodiagnostics, *New Zealand Foundation for Research, Science and Technology* (2006-2010).** Co-lead a research project that aimed to develop a suite of tools based on multiple levels of biological organisation and used to determine resilience of estuarine communities from contaminant exposure. Undertook field and lab-based toxicity experiments in the Auckland region to examine genetic responses to contaminant exposure in estuarine bivalves.

**Ngakawau River Chronic Ecotoxicity Testing, *Solid Energy* (2005).** Designed and conducted acute and chronic toxicity tests on fingerling Rainbow Trout and stream invertebrates (mayflies, snails) using naturally acidic field-derived water samples. Calculated a site-specific trigger value for aluminium based on these results.

## ***Iwi Resource Management issues, especially customary fisheries***

**Recommendations for a Tangata Whenua Values Monitoring (TWVM) Framework, *Greater Wellington Regional Council* (2014).** Proposed a monitoring framework for Tangata Whenua Values which could be applied at multiple planning scales and which integrated Mātauranga and Western Science approaches to resource management.

**Barriers to Environmental Sustainability for Iwi Resource Managers, New Zealand Foundation for Research, Science and Technology (2008-2011).** Lead investigator of a research team assessing the impacts of invasive aquatic plants on koura or freshwater crayfish, a significant taonga for Te Arawa. We also investigated the toxicity of cyanobacterial or blue-green algal blooms to koura and kakahi (freshwater mussels). Their toxicity to these significant taonga species had not been investigated previously. The outcomes of the project were used to guide the development of management plans for customary fisheries being developed by Te Arawa. We worked closely with iwi on all aspects of the research, including using traditional harvesting methods as a monitoring tool for koura (the tau koura).

**Determining the contaminant health risk of kai moana, kai roto and kai awa, Health Research Council of New Zealand (2007-2011).** See above.

**Sustainability Management framework for Te Arawa Lakes' customary fisheries, New Zealand Foundation for Research, Science and Technology (2005-2008).** Lead investigation of a research team that developed tools and a management framework to support iwi management of 5 native aquatic species (namely, freshwater crayfish or koura, freshwater mussel or kakahi, and the fish species koaro, smelt and eel or tuna) in the Rotorua lakes, which was identified as a need through Te Arawa's settlement process. A major task of the project was a review of existing information of these culturally important customary fisheries species. We also developed a number of scenario-testing tools for use by iwi in their decision-making process around management of water quality in the lake.

## Recent Peer Reviewed Publications

Cyr H, Phillips N, Butterworth J (2017) Depth distribution of the native freshwater mussel (*Echyridella menziesii*) in warm monomictic lakes: towards a general predictive model for lakes. *Freshwater Biology* 62, (8) 1487-1498.

Verburg P, Hickey CW, Phillips N 2014. Mercury biomagnification in three geothermally-influenced lakes differing in chemistry and algal biomass. *Science of the Total Environment* 493C:342-354.

Phillips NR, Stewart M, Olsen G, Hickey CW (2014) Human health risks of geothermally-derived metals and other contaminants in wild caught food. *Journal of Toxicology and Environmental Health Part A, Current Issues* 77(6): 346-365.

Clearwater S, Wood S, Phillips N, Parkyn S., Van Ginkel, R, Thompson, K (2014) Toxicity thresholds for juvenile freshwater mussels *Echyridella menziesii* and crayfish *Paranephrops planifrons*, after acute or chronic exposure to *Microcystis* sp. *Environmental Toxicology* 29(5): 487-502.

Wood SA, Phillips NR de Winton M, Gibbs M (2012) Consumption of benthic cyanobacterial mats and nodularin-R accumulation in freshwater crayfish (*Paranephrops planifrons*) in Lake Tikitapu (Rotorua, New Zealand). *Harmful Algae* 20: 175-179.

Wood S, Kuhajek J, de Winton M, Phillips N (2012) Species composition and cyanotoxin production in periphyton mats from three lakes of varying trophic status. *FEMS Microbiology Ecology* 79: 312-326

Stewart M, Phillips NR, Olsen G, Hickey CW, Tipa G (2011) Organochlorines and heavy metals in wild caught food as a potential human health risk to the indigenous Maori population of South Canterbury, New Zealand. *Science of the Total Environment* 409, 2029-2039.

Doledec S, Phillips N, Townsend C (2011) Invertebrate trait community responses to land use effects at a broad spatial scale: a case study in New Zealand. *Freshwater Biology* 56(8):1670-1688.

Wagenoff A, Townsend CR, Phillips N, Matthaei CD (2011) Subsidy-stress and multiple-stressor effects along gradients of deposited fine sediment and dissolved nutrients in a regional set of streams and rivers. *Freshwater Biology*, 56(9):1916-1936.

Reid DJ, Chiaroni LD, Hewitt JE, Lohrer DM, Matthaei CD, Phillips NR, Scarsbrook MR, Smith BJ, Thrush SF, Townsend CR, van Houte-Howes KSS., and Wright-StowAE (2011) Sedimentation effects on the benthos of streams and estuaries: a cross-ecosystem comparison. *Marine and Freshwater Research* 62, 1201–1213.

Magbanua FS, Townsend CR, Blackwell G L, Phillips N, Matthaei CD (2010) Responses of stream macroinvertebrates and ecosystem function to conventional, integrated and organic farming. *Journal of Applied Ecology*, 47:1014–1025.

Phillips NR, Hickey CW (2010) Genotype-dependent recovery from acute exposure to heavy metal contamination in the freshwater clam *Sphaerium novaezelandiae*. *Aquatic Toxicology* 99, 507-513.

Stark J, Phillips N (2009) Seasonal variability in the Macroinvertebrate Community Index: are seasonal correction factors required? *NZ J Mar FW Res* 43: 867-882.

## **Relevant Consultancy Reports**

Phillips, N. (2020) Technical Audit – Ngāti Tūwharetoa Geothermal Assets (NTGA) – Discharge to Tarawera River. BPR2001, 6 pp.

Phillips, N., De Luca, S., Stewart, M., Leitch, K., McDermott, K., Eivers, R. (2021) Ravensdown Napier Baseline Technical Investigations. RVD1901, Streamlined Environmental, Hamilton, 157 pp.

Phillips, N., Boubée, J., Cox, T., Dada, C., Eivers, R.S., Leitch, K., Stewart, M. (2020) Kinleith re-consenting AEE: Technical Reports, Streamlined Environmental, Hamilton, 292 pp.

Phillips, N., Eivers, R., Leitch, K. (2020) Further Investigations into Stormwater Discharges from Pacific Aerospace facilities. Report PAS1901, Streamlined Environmental, Hamilton, 37 pp.

Phillips, N. (2020) Review of stormwater discharge information from Pacific Aerospace facilities. Report PAS1901, Streamlined Environmental, Hamilton, 6 pp.

Phillips, N. (2020) Napier marine wastewater outfall seepage resource consent variation - review of report. Report NPC2001, 2 pp.

Phillips, N.; Borman, D., Eivers, R and Hill, R. (2019) Pukorokoro/Miranda Catchment Prioritisation Project. Report DOC1801–1, Streamlined Environmental, Hamilton, 41pp.

Phillips, N. and Smith, B. (2018) New Zealand Freshwater Macroinvertebrate Trait Database. NIWA Client Report 2018079HN, April 2018. 25pp.

Stewart, M. and Phillips, N. (2017). Risk assessment of antiscalant chemicals at Ohaaki, Wairakei and Tauhara Power Stations. CON1601–FINAL, Streamlined Environmental, Hamilton, 49 pp.

Neale, M.W., Moffett, E.R., Hancock, P., Phillips, N and Holland, K (2017). River ecology monitoring: state and trends 2003-2013. Auckland Council technical report, TR2017/011

Cooke, J., Stewart, M., Dunsmuir, A., Phillips, N. (2017) Healthy Rivers – Waikato. Review of additional literature relevant to sheep and beef contaminant loads. Report BAL1602-2, Streamlined Environmental, Hamilton, 17 pp.

Stewart, M., Cooke, J., Phillips, N., Freeman, M. (2017) Literature review of the risks and adverse effects from discharges of stormwater, wastewater, industrial and trade waste, and other hazardous substances in Otago. Report ORC1601-FINAL-v2, Streamlined Environmental, Hamilton, 153 pp.

Green, M.O., Phillips, N.R., Cornelisen, C.D., Stewart, M. and Dunsmuir, A.K. (2016) Contaminants in New Zealand Estuaries: Effects, Sources, Current State, Management and Research Needs. Report WRC1601-1, Streamlined Environmental, Hamilton, 210 pp.

James, M., Stewart M., Phillips N, Cooke, J (2016) Assessment of Ecological Effects on the receiving environment from the discharge of treated wastewater from the combined Snells Beach and Warkworth WWTPs. Prepared for Watercare Services Ltd, May 2016.

James, M and Phillips N (2015) Ecological significance of changes in macroinvertebrate communities downstream of Tasman Mill discharge. Prepared for Carter Holt Harvey Pulp and Paper, Norske Skog Tasman and Bay of Plenty Regional Council. CHH1502, August 2015.

Neale, M.W., Storey, R.G., Rowe, D.K., Collier, K.J., Hatton, C., Joy, M.K., Maxted, J. R., Moore, S., Parkyn, S.M., Phillips, N. and Quinn, J.M. (2011) Stream Ecological Valuation (SEV): A User's Guide GD2011/001.

Storey, R.G., Neale, M.W., Rowe, D.K., Collier, K.J., Hatton, C., Joy, M.K., Maxted, J. R., Moore, S., Parkyn, S.M., Phillips, N. and Quinn, J.M. (2011) Stream Ecological Valuation (SEV): a method for assessing the ecological function of Auckland streams. Auckland Council Guideline Document 2011/001.