

Our experience

Dr Ngaire Phillips has more than 30 years experience as an aquatic ecologist, with expertise in both freshwater and marine ecosystems. Dr Mike Stewart has 25 years experience as a chemist with specialist expertise in chemical ecology and a broad ecological knowledge that he has applied to effects assessments projects. Many of our ecological projects also incorporate investigations on water and sediment quality, contaminants and ecotoxicity, reflecting the holistic nature of ecological investigations.

We provide ecological services to a diversity of clients, including government departments, CRIs, Regional Councils and Territorial authorities, iwi, industry and NGOs. These include both field-based and desktop investigations, primarily associated with effects on aquatic ecosystems.

Dr Phillips is an experienced field practitioner, with specialist expertise in macroinvertebrates (including functional traits). She was a co-author of the Stream Ecological Valuation (SEV) methodology and developed the original SEV calculator. She has also contributed to several large marine ecology research projects examining effects of contaminants on biota and on functional properties. In addition, Dr Phillips utilises her ecological expertise as an RMA Commissioner and HSNO Committee member.

Dr Stewart developed a novel chemical method for detecting pheromones in native lamprey which has applications in conservation.

Project examples

- Freshwater Commissioner, Ministry for the Environment (2020 – ongoing).
- Technical review of the Napier marine wastewater outfall seepage resource consent, Napier City Council (2020).
- Potential ecological effects of expansion of mining operations at Waihi, Waikato Regional Council (2019).
- Independent Commissioner, Special Tribunal for the Ngaruroro and Clive Rivers, Hawkes Bay (2017-2019).
- Accidental and overflow discharges of untreated sewerage to the Waimea Estuary, Nelson, Nelson City Council (2017 – 2018).
- Healthy Rivers Plan Change 1, Expert Witness on Shallow lakes, Hamilton, Department of Conservation (2019).
- SEV applicability to Waikato Regional Council Freshwater Ecosystem Services project, Waikato Regional Council (2018 - 2021)
- Novel method for quantifying lamprey migratory pheromone in New Zealand streams, various clients (2006-current)
- Reconsenting Kinleith Mill's wastewater discharge consents, Oji Fibre Solutions (2019-2021).
- Te Awarua-o-Porirua Collaborative Modelling Project, Greater Wellington Regional Council (2017-2018).
- Contaminants in New Zealand Estuaries, for Dairy New Zealand (2016).