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Media Release

Fresh water vital to tourism industry growth

Clean fresh water is vital to the growth and sustainability of New Zealand's \$30 billion tourism industry, its peak industry organisation says.

Healthy fresh water ecosystems are fundamental to supporting the natural landscapes that are the primary reason visitors travel to New Zealand. They are also integral to many tourism activities such as rafting, jetboating, swimming and fishing, the Tourism Industry Association New Zealand (TIA) says in its submission to the Ministry for the Environment's fresh water legislation consultation.

Research shows that 20% of international visitors enjoy rafting, kayaking, canoeing, jetboating or fresh water fishing while they are in New Zealand. These visitors are high value, staying an average 29 days and spending \$4722, well above the norm.

TIA is calling on the government to recognise that fresh water is essential to the visitor economy, and reflect this in the priority it gives to fresh water protection and improvement.

"In a highly modified, resource-constrained world, New Zealand has a unique opportunity to show environmental leadership and integrity. Such a move would secure a high value competitive advantage for tourism and many other New Zealand industries, as well as ensuring we can pass on a healthy environment to the New Zealanders and visitors of the future," TIA Chief Executive Chris Roberts says.

As a long-standing member of the Land and Water Forum, TIA is disappointed that only some of the Forum's recommendations have been picked up.

"The Forum's recommendations under a national fresh water management approach should be implemented with urgency.

"The biggest flaw with the fresh water consultation document is what it doesn't say. There's little point in identifying a desire for improved outcomes when it's not backed up by a coherent, integrated and efficient water management system."

A healthy environment will underpin the tourism industry's [Tourism 2025](#) goal of growing its total annual revenue to \$41 billion, Mr Roberts says.

“Fresh water is an essential platform for the growth and sustainability of the tourism economy. New Zealand can achieve great things by consciously giving primacy to the preservation and enhancement of our natural resources.”

To read TIA’s submission, go to www.tianz.org.nz/main/policy-issues

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Key Facts

- Tourism in New Zealand is an \$81.6 million per day industry. Tourism delivers around \$32 million in foreign exchange to the New Zealand economy each day of the year. Domestic tourism contributes another \$49 million in economic activity every day
- Tourism is one of New Zealand’s biggest export industries, earning \$11.8 billion or 17.4% of New Zealand’s foreign exchange earnings (year ended March 2015)
- 12.1% of the total number of people employed in New Zealand work directly or indirectly in tourism. That means 295,908 people are working in the visitor economy
- The [Tourism 2025](#) growth framework has a goal of growing total tourism revenue to \$41 billion a year by 2025.

Visit www.tianz.org.nz for more information.