



Email: info@sustainablewaikato.org.nz

Web: www.sustainablewaikato.org.nz

WRC candidate name: *Dirk Sieling*

Please type in the space below each question, and use as much space as you require for each answer.

Please email your responses back to info@sustainablewaikato.org.nz not later than **Monday, September 5th 2016**.

1. What do you think are the top three challenges facing the Waikato region that WRC could influence over the next five to ten years?

Cleaning up our rivers, especially sedimentation. Finding alternatives to the use of 1080. Addressing benthic disturbance of the seafloor. Implementing the Seachange marine spatial plan.

2. Do you believe the Regional Council has a role in economic development and in what ways?

It has a very large role in establishing aquaculture through the resource consenting process. Promoting sustainable changes of land use. Encourage marine recreational activities with appropriate infrastructure and safety.

3. What do you consider to be the main biodiversity and biosecurity issues within the Waikato region, and how can WRC best address them?

Destruction of biodiversity by possums, stoats and rats, try harder to develop alternatives to 1080. Incursion of pest plants, bugs and pathogens in the terrestrial environment and unwanted organisms in the marine environment. Step up vigilance and control and eradication efforts

4. What are the major challenges to improving freshwater quality in the Waikato region, and, as a councillor, what would be your priorities?

Follow the science, sedimentation is the biggest issue followed by nutrients and pathogens, implement the Healthy Rivers plan and implement the Seachange plan. Work with property owners.

5. What are the priority coastal marine issues in the Waikato region, and what do you think WRC needs to do to address them more effectively?

Loss of biodiversity through sedimentation, benthic disturbance and resuspension of sediments. Overfishing. Reduce sedimentation through riparian fencing, sediment traps and artificial wetlands. Remove bottom trawling and restrict dredging in our coastal waters. Create a separate fisheries management area for the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park.

6. Do you think WRC has a responsibility to have policies to mitigate climate change and manage its impacts? Could you please give some examples?

Monitor sealevels. Plan for the eventuality of rising sea levels, design defence structures before they are needed. Reduce reliance on fossil fuel driven vehicles, encourage use of electric cars. Encourage appropriate tree planting. High value long rotation timber plantings.

7. What do you see as the priorities for transport in the Waikato region over the next five to ten years, and how could WRC bring about transportation improvements?

Encourage use of public transport in Hamilton and in the regions make sure there is reliable and affordable public transport for the most needy and vulnerable.

8. How do you think WRC can best assist community groups and individuals who undertake environmental initiatives?

I am big fan of integrated catchment management and WRC has a big role to play in helping set up these voluntary groups and assisting them with materials (plants and fencing) and machinery where required. Assist with resource consents if needed. Collaboration is key to getting results.

9. What can WRC do to support businesses, schools, families and individuals to make more sustainable choices?

Education, more education and assistance. Use the science and increase awareness around environmental issues. Practical examples, hands-on stuff, field trips etc.

10. What have been your most significant contributions to enhancing environmental, social, cultural and/or economic wellbeing in the Waikato region?

Spent 3 years helping to put together the Seachange marine spatial plan which covers all of those. Have established two QEII bush covenants on our farm as well as an artificial wetland. Entered into a stock exclusion agreement for 90 ha of bush on another farm.