

Notice is hereby given of the

Strategy and Policy Committee - Rautaki me Mahere

Wednesday 31 July 2024 at 10:00 am

Environment Southland Council chamber, 220 North Road, Invercargill
24/S&P/39

Committee Members

Cr Lyndal Ludlow (Chair)
Cr Neville Cook
Cr Paul Evans
Cr Alastair Gibson
Cr Robert Guyton
Cr Peter McDonald
Cr Jeremy McPhail

Cr Jon Pemberton
Cr Phil Morrison
Cr Maurice Rodway
Cr Eric Roy
Chairman Nicol Horrell (*ex officio*)
Mr Stewart Bull (Mana Whenua Representative)
Ms Ann Wakefield (Mana Whenua Representative)

Agenda

This meeting will be livestreamed through YouTube and will be available to view on our website.
<https://www.es.govt.nz/about-us/live-stream>

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Lucy Hicks

General Manager, Policy and Government Reform



Rachael Millar

General Manager, Strategy, Science and Engagement

RECOMMENDATIONS IN COUNCIL REPORTS ARE NOT TO BE CONSTRUED AS COUNCIL POLICY UNTIL ADOPTED BY COUNCIL

Terms of Reference - Strategy and Policy Committee

Council assigns to the Committee responsibilities from time-to-time, and the Committee provides advice and reports back to Council on:

1. the provision of governance oversight into the development and review of plans, policies, strategies and by-laws;
2. the recommendation to notify proposed changes or variations to proposed plans, policies, strategies and by-laws;
3. the governance oversight of consultation related to regional policies, plans and strategies;
4. the appointment of hearing committees or panels to hear submissions on regional policies, plans and strategies;
5. undertaking Water and Land Plan associated project work;
6. the receipt, and if necessary endorsement of, scientific studies/reports; receipt of SOE reports and/or score cards;
7. the compiling of submissions to Government as needed (if the Council timetable does not provide for same).

1 Welcome I Haere mai

2 Apologies I Ngā pa pouri

Apologies were received on behalf of Cr Evans.

3 Declarations of interest

At the time of the agenda closing. No declarations of interest had been received for this meeting.

4 Public forum, petitions and deputations I He huinga tuku korero

The purpose of this item is to provide an opportunity for members of the public to convey concerns, make suggestions to, and have input with, the Council. For deputations and presentations a limit of 5 minutes is placed on a speaker making a presentation, or if there are two members of the deputation addressing the meeting, 5 minutes in total for the two speakers

The young enterprise company 'Treet Yourself' will be in attendance to speak on opportunities to work together with Environment Southland to get more trees planted.

5 Confirmation of minutes I Whakau korero

Attached are the minutes from the Strategy and Policy Committee meeting held 26 June 2024.

Minutes of the Strategy and Policy Committee - Rautaki me Mahere

Held at Environment Southland, 220 North Road, Invercargill
Wednesday 26 June 2024 at 10:00 am

Present:

Cr Maurice Rodway (Chair)
Cr Neville Cook
Cr Paul Evans
Cr Alistair Gibson
Cr Robert Guyton
Cr Peter McDonald
Cr Jeremy McPhail
Cr Jon Pemberton
Cr Phil Morrison
Chairman Nicol Horrell (ex officio)
Mr Stewart Bull (Mana whenua representative)
Ms Ann Wakefield (Mana whenua representative)

Ms Wilma Falconer (Chief Executive)
Mrs Lucy Hicks (General Manager, Policy and Government Reform)
Mrs Rachael Millar (General Manager Strategy, Science and Engagement)
Mrs Mikayla Wass (Meeting Secretary)

1 Welcome I Haere mai

The chairperson welcomed everyone to the Strategy and Policy committee meeting for Wednesday, 26 June 2024. A short video was shown for Matariki and Mr Dean Whaanga opened the meeting with a karakia.

2 Apologies I Ngā pa pouri

Resolved:

Moved Cr McPhail, seconded Chairman Horrell that apologies be accepted on behalf of Cr Ludlow and Cr Roy and that apologies for lateness be accepted for Ms Wakefield.

Carried

3 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest made by councillors.

4 Public forum, petitions and deputations | He huinga tuku korero

There were no public forum, petitions or deputations presented at the meeting.

5 Confirmation of minutes | Whakau korero

Resolved:

Moved Cr Evans, seconded Cr Morrison that the minutes of the Strategy and Policy Committee meeting held on 8 May 2024 be confirmed as a true and accurate record.

Carried

6 Notification of extraordinary items/urgent business | He panui autai hei totoia pakihi

Resolved:

Moved Chairman Horrell, seconded Cr Pemberton that pursuant to Section 46A(7) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, it is recommended that the following items be dealt with under Notification of Urgent Business:

Item 11.1 - Farm Plan Changes

The reason that this item was not included on the agenda papers is because the request for input was not received by the close off of the agenda.

The reason that this item cannot be delayed in because the agency involved has sought Council's position on this matter by today.

Pursuant to Section 46A(8) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act this item has been excluded from the reports made available to the public as it is expected that it will be discussed with the public excluded.

Carried

7 Questions | Patai

No questions were received.

8 Chairman and councillors reports | Ngā purongo-a-tumuaki me ngā kaunihera

The following verbal reports were received:

Cr Morrison updated the meeting on the progress of the Regional Climate Change Strategy consultation process and noted that deliberations had come to an end. The final Strategy document would be put to each of the Councils for endorsement over the next 8 weeks.

Chairman Horrell advised that he had spoken to a probus group and attended a Tiwai meeting discussion the remediation of the site over the next 20 years.

9 Reports

9.1 Options for Managing Commercial Forestry in Southland

This item was to inform the Committee that the Southland Mayoral Forum had recommended that Environment Southland investigate three regulatory and non-regulatory options to manage the anticipated adverse impacts from commercial forestry in Southland and to seek further instruction.

After a lengthy discussion it was noted that Council needed more time to think over the report and staff were asked to bring a more detailed report to a subsequent meeting that outlined information such as regulation within the RPMP and any alternative changes/regulation the could be covered in the W&LP, costs, and timeframes.

Resolved:

Moved Cr Morrison, seconded Cr McDonald that the Strategy and Policy Committee:

1. note the recommendation from the Mayor Forum;
2. support the initiation of the preliminary investigation to review of the Regional Pest Management Plan to enhance measures for controlling wilding conifers and the possible development of the best practice guideline and the voluntary accord.

Carried

9.2 Check Clean Dry advocacy messaging for 24/25 Freshwater invasive Clam inclusive / exclusive options

This item outlined Environment Southland's preferred approach to Check, Clean, Dry messaging for the 2024-25 summer season. The decision would contribute to the design of a full South Island response to freshwater invasive species prevention work, considering the Freshwater Clam incursions in the North Island.

Resolved:

Moved Chairman Horrell, seconded Cr Gibson that the Strategy and Policy Committee:



- 1 **Receive the report - Check Clean Dry advocacy messaging for 24/25 Freshwater invasive Clam inclusive / exclusive options.**
- 2 **Approve the messaging outlined in Option 2 - Environment Southland's preferred approach;**
- 3 **Approve a further request for Option 5 - A pathways management approach to be undertaken.**

Carried

9.3 Clean Air Loans Scheme - Discontinuation

This item provided the committee with background information regarding the discontinuation of the Clean Air Loans Scheme.

Resolved:

Moved Cr Cook, seconded Cr McDonald that the Strategy and Policy Committee:

- 1 **Receive the report - Clean Air Loans Scheme - Discontinuation.**
- 2 **Discontinue the current 'on-hold' Clean Air Loans Scheme, subject to final agreement with Invercargill City Council and Gore District Council.**
- 3 **Direct staff to work with Councils to progress and explore the options to improve air quality in the region.**

Carried

9.4 Submission on Resource Management (Freshwater and other matters) Amendment Bill

The purpose of this item was to gain approval on the Environment Southland submission on the Resource Management (Freshwater and other matter) Amendment Bill. A discussion took place and the following feedback was received:

- Uncertainty around the use of 'institution' when describing Catchment Groups;
- more clarity required on where the data was coming from;
- there was a lack of emphasis on Wetlands in the scenarios .

Resolved:

Moved Cr Cook, seconded Chairman Horrell that the Strategy and Policy Committee:

- 1 **Approve the submission on Submission on Resource Management (Freshwater and other matters) Amendment Bill.**

Carried



9.5 PCE Report Update - Land use change investigation

This report provided an update on the recent reports from the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment (PCE) that aim to clarify the multiple environmental challenges rural New Zealand faces and the 'trade-off' of meeting them, with a particular focus on land use changes.

It was advised that the PCE would be in Southland on 23 July 2024, and councillors would be able to address them directly. It was noted that any feedback or questions councillors had for the PCE should be sent to Ms Rachael Millar in advance of the meeting.

Resolved:

Moved Cr Cook, seconded Cr Evans that Strategy and Policy Committee:

- 1 receive this update and note the implications.**

Carried

The meeting adjourned from 11:53 am to 12:04 am for a 10-minute break.

Resolved:

Moved Cr Evans, seconded Chairman Horrell that the Strategy and Policy Committee meeting adjourn for a 10-minute break.

Carried

9.6 Our Role In Regional Transport Planning

This item provided Councillors with a briefing on legislation that sets out the responsibilities Council has for Regional Transport Planning. Mr Hawkes spoke to his presentation, a copy of which would be retained on file.

Resolved:

Moved Cr McPhail, seconded Cr Pemberton that Strategy and Policy Committee:

- 1 Receive the report - Our Role in Regional Transport Planning**

Carried

9.7 Land 2024 report update

This item informed Councillors of the findings of *Our Land 2024* report, published by the Ministry for the Environment in collaboration with Stats New Zealand, and noted implications for Southland and Environment Southland's operation.

12:19 At this time Ms A Wakefield left the meeting.



Resolved:

Moved Cr Evans, seconded Cr Cook that the Strategy and Policy Committee:

- 1 Receive this update.**

Carried

9.8 Water and Land Portfolio update

The purpose of this item was to provide an update on the water and land portfolio work that had advanced since the last update to the committee.

Resolved:

Moved Chairman Horrell, seconded Cr Evans that the Strategy and Policy Committee:

- 1 Receive the report - "Water and land portfolio update".**

Carried

9.9 Group Programme Update

The chairperson welcomed everyone to the Strategy and Policy committee meeting for Wednesday 19 June 2024. A short video was shown for Matariki and Mr Dean Whaanga opened the meeting with a karakia.

Resolved:

Moved Cr Cook, seconded Cr Evans that the Strategy and Policy Committee:

- 1 Receive the report - Group Programme Update.**

Carried

9.10 Update on Councillor Requests and Actions

This item gave an update on Councillor requests and actions that have occurred during Strategy and Policy Committee meetings and how they are being responded to.

Resolved:

Moved Cr Cook, seconded Chairman Horrell that the Strategy and Policy Committee:

- 1 Receive the report - Update on Councillor Requests and Actions.**

Carried

10 Extraordinary/urgent business | Panui autia hei totoia pakihi

There was an extraordinary item tabled for inclusion in the public excluded section of the agenda:

Item 11.1 Farm Plan Changes

11 Public excluded business | He hui pakihi e hara mo te iwi

Resolved:

Moved Chairman Horrell, Seconded Cr Morrison that in accordance with section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest/s protected by section 7 of that act, that the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely:

- **Item 11.1 Farm Plan Changes**

The general subject matters to be considered while the public is being excluded, the reason for this resolution in relation to the matter, and the specific grounds for excluding the public, as specified by Section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 are set out below:

GENERAL SUBJECT MATTER	REASON FOR PASSING THE RESOLUTION	GROUND UNDER S.48(1)
Item 11.1 - Farm Plan Changes	To prevent disclosure or use of official information for improper gain or advantage	S.7(2)(j)

Carried

12 Termination

There being no further business, the chair closed the meeting at 1:01 pm.

6 Notification of extraordinary items/urgent business I He panui autaiā hei totoia pakihi

At the time of the agenda closing, no notifications of extraordinary or urgent business had been received for this meeting.

7 Questions I Patai

At the time of the agenda closing, no questions were received for this meeting.

8 Chairman and councillors reports I Ngā purongo-a- tumuaki me ngā kaunihera

At the time of the agenda closing, no Councillor Reports were received for the meeting.

9 Reports

9.1 Regional coastal Plan update

Report by: Nick Ward, Team Leader Policy and Planning

Approved by: Lucy Hicks, General Manager Policy & Government Reform

Report Date: 31 July 2024

Purpose

Provide update of the Regional Coastal Plan review, including overview of historical work and current work streams.

Summary

The review of the Regional Coastal Plan for Southland (RCP) began in 2017, and significant work has been completed (**Appendix 1**).

Discussion papers were produced for fourteen topics. A bullet point summary of the contents of these papers is included in 'TABLE OF DRAFTING TOPICS' appended below (**Appendix 2**). The table outlines more detail on the work streams including direction given, next steps and highlights the targeted work.

There are some topics that, due to their complexity or developments since their discussion paper production, require further careful consideration. These have been called 'targeted workstreams.' These are shaded in the 'TABLE OF DRAFTING TOPICS.' Within these topics there are a range of approaches that may result in longer-term, broader work beyond the scope of the Regional Coastal Plan itself. Some of these are also detailed below.

Environment Southland (ES) continue to work with Te Ao Marama Inc. (TAMI) on the RCP review. Council have been previously briefed on the development of the cultural landscape methodology, Āpiti Hono Tātai Hono. TAMI (on behalf of Ngāi Tahu ki Murihiku) are preparing some guidance relating to this approach in Southland. These inputs are intended to ensure the RCP review aligns with rūnanga aspirations.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Strategy and Policy Committee resolve to:

- 1 Receive the report - Regional coastal Plan update

Targeted Workstreams

1. Biodiversity and Ecosystems

A workshop was held with Councillors and Mana Whenua representatives on general biodiversity and ecosystem obligations and potential approaches, both regulatory and non-regulatory. Within this topic, specific solutions will be needed to manage the protection of indigenous biodiversity including toheroa on Ōreti Beach. Staff are continuing to work with Te Ao Marama Inc. and with the Department of Conservation to develop robust options for consideration.

2. Bluff Harbour Zone

Engagement has commenced with South Port operational staff to support the development of policy solutions that will fulfil legal and policy requirements.

3. Fiordland

A Fiordland Working group is being established with key external stakeholders to test possible options to manage activities within Fiordland, including carrying capacity. Staff are currently in discussions with Fiordland Marine Guardians on this as it has synergies with their strategic direction.

4. Aquaculture

There is a suite of national regulatory changes currently being discussed. The importance of aquaculture as a potential growth industry, mean a policy framework and complementary management options are being developed. An initial conversation with Te Ao Marama has been had, to ensure an appropriate collaborative partnership approach, to develop future provisions, that ensure recognition of customary rights.

Background

See summary and appendices. Please find timeline overview below for the review of the Regional Coastal Plan.



Fit with strategic framework

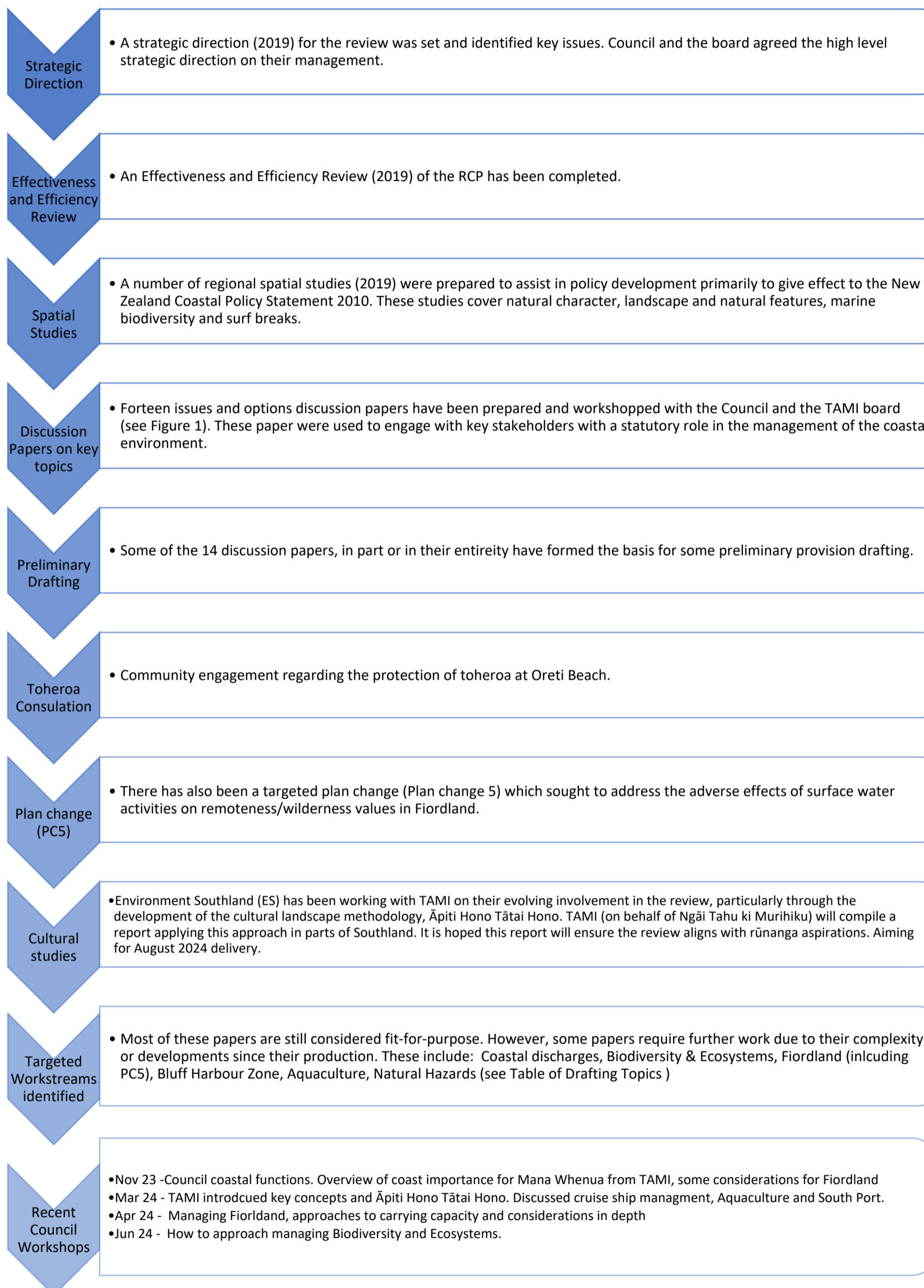
OUTCOME	CONTRIBUTES	DETRACTS	NOT APPLICABLE
Managed access to quality natural resources	X		
Diverse opportunities to make a living	X		
Communities empowered and resilient	X		
Communities expressing their diversity			X

Attachments

1. 2024 07 strategy and Policy committee RCP [9.1.1 - 1 page]
2. 2024 07 strategy and Policy committee (1) [9.1.2 - 6 pages]

APPENDIX 1 - HISTORY

General Chronology of the Regional Coastal Plan Review from 2019



APPENDIX 2 - TABLE OF DRAFTING TOPICS

The majority of these topics have a specific discussion paper, however some 'Targeted Workstreams (Shaded)' cover elements of multiple discussion papers. Either partially or in entirety.

Discussion Papers/ Targeted Workstreams	Councillor and Mana Whenua Representative Direction Given	What next?
<p>Tangata Whenua/ Mana Moana</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion paper was not finalised. • Development of the cultural landscape methodology, Āpiti Hono Tātai Hono. TAMI (on behalf of Ngāi Tahu ki Murihiku) will compile a report applying this approach in parts of Southland. This report aims to ensure the review aligns with rūnanga aspirations. 	<p>Council workshop Nov 2023: Co-management with TAMI & mana whenua. Māori names for Fiordland/ sounds should be used.</p> <p>Council Workshop March 2024: need for a clear central purpose or vision in coastal planning, aligning activities with the four wellbeing principles and managing associated issues effectively.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Once the Cultural Report is ready incorporate Mana moana values into the preliminary drafting ready for review.
<p>Occupation and Public Access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupation of, and access to, the CMA. • Provisions relate to vehicle access to beaches, recreational activities, and occupation of space. • Does not address structures or consent activities within occupied space. Anticipation of a mean sea level rise of 1m over the next 100 years. • Modified status quo for aircraft use. • Ships used as base/accommodation facilities. • Occupation charging regime. 	<p>Response to discussion paper: Prioritising public access and use of coastal resources while also recognising the need for some level of exclusive use under certain circumstances, all within a framework that ensures fairness and sustainability in coastal management.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Council to decide on whether to charge per area for Aquaculture farm or per farm (as current Coastal Plan). ➤ Draft provisions ready for consultation and pre-notification.
<p>Air Quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discharges from vessels. • South Port (Bluff Harbour) Discharge Agreement. • Tiwai Aluminium Smelter – NZAS resource consent • Bluff Port Zone - the Agreement manages the effects of minor discharges to air. Future management of this is discussed in 'Infrastructure and Structures'. • Discharges from industrial or trade premises 	<p>Response to discussion paper: To improve air quality in areas where it's degraded and maintain high standards. Focus on safeguarding human health by addressing or mitigating adverse impacts and taking precautionary measures while promoting the adoption of best practices to continually enhance air quality.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Draft provisions ready to incorporate Mana moana values once the Cultural Report is ready. ➤ Draft provisions ready for review, consultation and pre-notification.
<p>Historic Heritage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effects of climate change • Loss of knowledge • Activity-specific provisions (occupation, seabed and foreshore, and structures) 	<p>Response to discussion paper: Identify and document the CMA's historic heritage, safeguard it from inappropriate development, extend protection to unrecognized heritage, respect Māori cultural sites, acknowledge vulnerability to natural processes and climate change, and coordinate coastal heritage management with relevant stakeholders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Draft provisions ready for consultation and pre-notification.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southland Coastal Heritage Inventory Project (SCHIP) - risks of erosion and sea level rise; need for physical protection works (fencing, signage, and vegetation management). • Historic heritage provisions do not give full effect to the NZCPS and SRPS (required to be in the CE to be protected from inappropriate subdivision, use and development). 		
<p>Resource Use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dredging, excavation, drilling, tunnelling, drainage works. • Deposition. • Reclamation and impoundments. • Removal natural materials. • Shipwrecks. • Taking, using, damming, and diversion of water. • Oil and gas exploration. • Allows for appropriate level of oversight. • Broad application likely to capture all component activities. • Risk that Council is not seen to be managing these activities specifically. 	<p>Response to discussion paper: Manage the CMA as a public asset with clear limits on resource use, protecting significant natural and historical areas, promoting efficiency, and aligning with NZCPS guidelines on reclamation. Seek to improve policy usability without changing the direction, ensuring sustainable management balancing conservation and socio-economic interests.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Draft provisions ready for consultation and pre-notification.
<p>Infrastructure and Structures encompassing (Bluff Port Harbour Zone)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nationally and regionally significant and critical infrastructure (incl. ports) • Other infrastructure (incl. cables, drains and pipelines) • Whitebait stands and maimai • Vessel-related structures (incl. moorings, jetties, wharves, boat ramps and sheds, navigations aids). • Development beyond existing Bluff Port Zone. • South Port and NZAS agreements and suggested consent framework. • Anchorages and moorings within Fiordland and Rakiura/Stewart Island. 	<p>Response to discussion paper: Manage the CMA by balancing conservation, development, and public use. Strategies include zoning for infrastructure to protect landscapes, integrating with national parks, accommodating necessary activities, consolidating development, enhancing public spaces, and promoting efficient land use for sustainability and community benefit.</p> <p>Council Workshop March 2024: need for a clear central purpose or vision in coastal planning, aligning activities with the four wellbeing principles and managing associated issues effectively.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Exec to direct operations on drafting of interim Deed of agreement – see memo A1073620. ➤ Draft provisions for a consenting regime for the Port ready for consultation and pre-notification.
<p>Fiordland encompassing Surface Water Activities (SWA) discussion paper</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWA within the CMA including commercial SWA, research ships, vessels undertaking statutory functions and cargo ships. • SWA can cause effects on visuals, water quality, biosecurity and indigenous ecosystems, etc. with the CE. 	<p>Response to Discussion paper: Conserving the CMA by avoiding harm to its outstanding natural character, features, and landscapes. Balancing the use of commercial activities and its adverse effects through strict thresholds and a precautionary approach. Prioritising existing operators to manage resources effectively. Maintaining public access while encouraging responsible recreation and ensure research activities for balanced environmental stewardship.</p> <p>Council workshop Nov 2023: Co-management with TAMI & mana whenua.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Test and receive feedback on management options with the Fiordland working group (external stakeholders). The scope of activities is restricted to: Surface water activities (and associated aircraft); and Anchorages, moorings and other vessel associated structures. ➤ Engage with cruise ship agents on the future management of cruise ships.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial SWAs in 'outstanding areas' outside of Fiordland – a consenting framework including an objective, policy, and rule; a more permissive rule framework. Commercial SWA in Fiordland – Automatic Identification System on vessels. Recreational users in Fiordland – non-regulatory framework, e.g., a user's code of practice. Includes the content of Plan change 5 - surface water activities. 	<p>Māori names for Fiordland/ sounds should be used.</p> <p>The overall direction for managing Fiordland involves integrating environmental protection with sustainable economic development and community engagement. This approach includes clear regulations for tourism and maritime activities, robust measures for biodiversity conservation and biosecurity, and promoting local economic opportunities while preserving the region's natural and cultural heritage. Stakeholder involvement, scientific research, and adaptive management strategies will be critical in achieving a balance that ensures Fiordland remains a wilderness destination for future generations.</p> <p>Council Workshop March 2024: The direction is to enhance environmental stewardship and management in Fiordland's CMA. This involves regulating vessel sizes and emissions, promoting cleaner fuel technologies, and establishing clear guidelines for vessel navigation and mooring to protect the UNESCO-listed heritage area. Ensuring that the Agreement aims to address cumulative environmental impacts and confirms responsible behaviour from vessel operators, while also managing access for both commercial and private vessels through strategic regulations and controls.</p>	
<p>Fiordland encompassing</p> <p>Cruise Ships discussion paper</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cruise ship activity in the CMA Adverse effects on the essential characteristics (e.g., values of remoteness, isolation, wilderness) Visual impact – lighting <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cumulative adverse effects concerns Consistency with NZCPS Deed of Agreement – cruise ships. 	<p>Response to Discussion paper: Protecting the CMA by avoiding harm to its outstanding natural character and features, especially from cruise ships. Balancing conservation with economic needs, using precautionary measures to manage impacts responsibly and maintain environmental integrity.</p> <p>Council Workshop March 2024: proposed stricter controls on the number of cruise ships, enhanced compliance measures, and increased costs to mitigate environmental impacts and preserve cultural values.</p>	<p>➤ See above.</p>
<p>Natural Character, Features, and Landscapes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preservation of natural character (NC) Protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes (ONF/ONL) Meaning of 'outstanding'. Values are subjected. Cross boundary issues. Increasing pressures from e.g., tourism activities, aquaculture, and infrastructure, in the CE particularly in remote areas (Fiordland). 	<p>Response to discussion paper: Conserving natural character, landscapes, and features in the CE. Protect outstanding areas from development impacts, promotes restoration where needed, and recognise cultural landscapes' significance. This ensures compatibility with natural values in developed areas while adopting a precautionary approach, aiming for sustainable coastal management.</p>	<p>➤ Draft provisions ready to incorporate Mana moana values once the Cultural Report is read.</p> <p>➤ Draft provisions ready for review, consultation and pre-notification.</p>
<p>Water Quality (including discharges)</p>	<p>Response to discussion paper: Manage all discharges to protect water quality and ecosystems within the CMA. Ensuring that the smallest mixing zone necessary is used to</p>	<p>➤ Draft provisions ready for consultation and pre-notification. However, some parts re reliant on the</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point source discharges (contaminants from a single or multiple fixed points, e.g., a pipe or drain from sewerage, factory, and stormwater outfalls). • In some cases, RCP considers non-point source discharges (contaminants through or across land, e.g., pasture and urban runoff). • Ki uta ki tai approach • Discharges from vessels usually controlled by Marine Pollution Regulation • Nutrients and sediments – New River and Jacobs River Estuary • Sewage from ships – discharges of black/grey water from ships use as a base/accommodation into confined and sensitive areas of the CMA is an emerging issue. 	<p>achieve the required water quality, avoiding cross-contamination between sewerage and stormwater, and considering the effects on cultural values when discharging treated sewage. Ensuring stringent management of stormwater discharges and sewerage schemes to be designed and used in compliance with industry standards to maintain environmental sustainability.</p>	<p>intersect with the Southland Regional Water and Land Plan i.e. limit setting aspects as estuaries are in the Fresh Water Management Units.</p>
<p>Biodiversity and Ecosystems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of indigenous biodiversity and ecosystems • Biodiversity includes the variety of life and the diversity of ecosystems and their living and non-living components. • People and communities are a fundamental component of ecosystems. • Biogenic habitats – sensitive to environmental change and vulnerable to threats (overfishing, increased sedimentation, and pollution) • Ineffective provisions for indigenous biodiversity and ecosystems, and estuaries. • Climate change impacts – marine heat waves, ocean acidification, sea level rise and increased storm events. • Threats to Southland’s coastal indigenous biodiversity and ecosystems through land and sea activities, including Juvenile toheroa. 	<p>Response to discussion paper: Protecting the CE by conserving significant ecosystems and biodiversity, restoring indigenous flora and fauna, and adopting a precautionary approach to uncertain impacts. Acknowledging climate change vulnerabilities and encouraging collaborative management with councils, DOC, Ngāi Tahu, and kaitiaki for effective conservation efforts, especially to enhance indigenous biodiversity.</p> <p>Council workshop June 2024: Consider making some areas prohibited for certain activities, it could be location and time. Perhaps based on calendar? Depends on good information basis to manage this. Also communication and education opportunities with this -more social awareness is needed on the Coastal space. Recurring topics also included funding and cost, occupation charges, infringement fees.</p> <p>Concentration on conservation of habitats rather than individual species as may be more effective. Acknowledgement that everything is connected. What happens on land is going to affect the species and coastal environment. Ki uta ki tai – need to connect with the Water and Land Plan. Coastal Plan is high priority for mana whenua.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Oreti Beach Management group to provide recommendations to council after assessing implementation implications and logistics of policy options to manage Toheroa. ➤ Draft provisions ready for consultation and pre-notification. ➤ Council to feedback on initial drafting yet to be done which will incorporate the direction given.
<p>Biosecurity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biosecurity Act 1993: exclusion, eradication, and effective management of pests and unwanted organisms • Development of regional pest plans, regional pathways management plans, and small-scale management programmes. • Options for gear movement – disinfection of gear; awareness campaigns • Structures and moorings – biofouling within resource consents; prohibit new structures/moorings within a pest infested area. 	<p>Response to discussion paper: Coordinate national coastal management policies, focusing on integrating environmental protection, biosecurity measures, and cultural considerations, particularly emphasizing the management of pest species under the appropriate legislative frameworks. Highlighting the vulnerability of the coastal environment to biosecurity threats and acknowledging the importance of indigenous biodiversity and Māori cultural practices in protecting coastal ecosystems for future generations to come.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Draft provisions ready for review, consultation and pre-notification. ➤ Align where possible with the review of the Fiordland Pathway management plan.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Miscellaneous - ongoing coastal occupation charging regime; aquaculture activities; marine farming species listed as pests; discretionary consent of harmful treatment discharge. Vessel management – education and awareness; yearly vessel cleans; cleaning facilities on land; hull cleaning controls; biofouling discharge controls; performance standards. 		
<p>Marine Aquaculture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General – water quality, seafloor, sea birds and marine mammals, natural character, and navigation safety. Big Glory Bay – hydrodynamics may cause adverse effects on the water column and seabed. Open ocean aquaculture – NZ King Salmon consent application ONC and ONF and landscapes – operative Plan does not identify all these areas so cannot protect these from marine aquaculture. <p>Marine aquaculture in the Bluff Port Zone – non-complying activity status for marine farming does not reflect its potential adverse environmental effects.</p>	<p>Response to discussion paper: Taking a cautious and protective stance on marine aquaculture by prohibiting aquaculture in sensitive and outstanding areas, aiming to preserve biodiversity. Advocating for careful consideration and assessment of environmental impacts in other areas where aquaculture may be permitted, emphasising financial assurances to cover potential environmental costs. Overall, balancing the benefits of aquaculture with the preservation of natural ecosystems and biodiversity.</p> <p>Council Workshop March 2024: Need for a spatial management approach to designate suitable areas for aquaculture, ensuring traditional rights and preventing unsuitable developments like issues seen in the dairy industry.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council to decide on how to address customary rights for Aquaculture in the Plan. Council to decide on policy framework to enable and manage marine farming into the future Draft provisions ready for consultation and pre-notification.
<p>Coastal Hazards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RMA – managing coastal hazards landward of the CMA. NPS – broader coastal environment considerations. Hard protection structures - NZCPS discourages the use and promotes alternative like natural defences. Coastal erosion Storm surge Tsunami Climate change and sea level rise Rising sea-groundwater levels and impeded drainage Saltwater intrusion (salination of freshwater) Insufficient information Climate change effects on coastal ecosystems 	<p>Response to discussion paper: Long-term management of coastal hazards, focusing on identifying vulnerable areas, anticipating sea level rise, and guiding development away from risky zones. Prioritising the protection of natural defences, avoiding activities that increase hazard risks, and taking a precautionary approach to minimize adverse effects. Also, indicating readiness to adjust strategies based on robust information, to ensure for informed planning to protect coastal environments for future generations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop approach with TAs that collectively addresses Natural Hazards for the Regional Policy Statement, Water and Land Plan and the Regional Coastal Plan. Draft provisions ready for consultation and pre-notification.
<p>Miscellaneous</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental management concepts: functional need of activities; timing, frequency, duration and regularity of activities; multiple use; public value; consultation and info sharing; cumulative effects; social, economic and cultural issues. 	<p>Response to discussion paper: The overall direction is to refine the RCP by emphasizing environmental conservation, respecting cultural values, and enhancing safety measures. The recommendations aim to optimise management strategies to better protect the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft provisions ready for consultation and pre-notification.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues: amenity values; livestock in the CMA; navigation safety; recreational activities; surf break protection; shark cage diving; landfills within or near the CMA. • High-level environmental management concepts. • Amenity values. • Scattering of ashes and burial at sea. • Livestock in the CMA. • Navigation safety (structures) • Recreational activities. • Surf breaks. • Shark cage diving. • Landfills within or near the CMA. • Noise within the CMA • Signs 	<p>coastal environment, manage cultural practices sensitively, and ensure effective safety protocols are in place.</p>	
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9.2 Water and Land Plan Update

Report by: Liz Devery, Regional Planning Manager

Approved by: Lucy Hicks, General Manager Policy & Government Reform

Report Date: 31 July 2024

Purpose

To provide an update on the water and land planning and policy work that has advanced since the last update to this committee on 26 June 2024.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Strategy and Policy Committee resolve to:

- 1 Receive the report – Water and Land Planning and Policy Update

Proposed Southland Water and Land Plan (pSWLP) appeals

There are a few matters relating to the pSWLP that remain live with the Environment Court. Since our last report, there has been no changes in relation to the remaining water quantity matters that relate to the appeals on Policy 42 and Appendix L.5.

The parties to the High Court appeal relating to a proposed Rule 78A on 'Weed and sediment removal for drainage maintenance' have filed a memorandum seeking the adjournment of that appeal. A working group is being established to advance a resolution to these appeals. Invitations for the initial meeting of representatives from the parties is being scheduled.

We have filed the Notice of appeal with the Court of Appeal, on behalf of Environment Southland, appealing part of the High Court decision relating to Rule 24 Incidental Discharge. This appeal relates to the potential implications of the High Court's interpretation of s70 of the Resource Management Act and its application in the Southland context.

Proposed Southland Water and Land Plan Implementation

While technically we are to continue referring to the plan as being 'proposed', the majority of the proposed Southland Water and Land Plan (pSWLP) is now operative.

There continues to be five provisions subject to the appeals referred to above that are not yet resolved. The corresponding sections in the Regional Water Plan continue to have some weight for these activities.

There has been some communication and engagement on the implementation of the Plan, with the community and stakeholders, internal staff, rural professionals and consultants to ensure a detailed understanding of the technical implications. Some of these key messages being shared through this engagement, to date, include:

- Activities that were established lawfully and are continuing with no change in nature, scale and intensity, can continue for now. However, in accordance with s20A of the Resource Management Act, by 27 November 2024, these activities will need to either meet the operative provisions of the pSWLP or apply through a resource consent, in order to continue. Anyone proposing new or altered activities, will need assess their activities with consideration of the operative pSWLP provisions.
- There is some commentary in parts of the community that central government is removing regulatory barriers to rural activities. In Southland, in many cases, the removal of some of the central government legislation may remove regulatory duplication. However, our messages to the community have been

clear that until national direction changes have been made, we still need to apply the legislation as it stands.

- Through our plan development process, we have a Southland specific approaches for a number of these matters that the government is proposing to change. The regional plan provisions will continue to apply in Southland.

Fact sheets for a number of activities have been published and are available on the Council's website. These relate to stock exclusion from water bodies, intensive winter grazing, feedpads or feedlots, cultivation on sloping ground, pasture-based wintering, and sacrifice paddocks. These include answers to frequently asked questions, are available on Council's website:

<https://www.es.govt.nz/community/farming/plan-factsheets>

Farm Plans

The implementation of farm environmental management plans is progressing. Government has announced their intention to change elements of the national farm plan regulations and details of these changes are expected in the next few months. In the interim, all catchments in Southland have been 'turned on' through the Order in Council and are required to meet regulatory timeframes set in the national regulations. There also continues to remain a farm environmental management plan requirement embedded through various rules in the Water and Land Plan . A risk-informed approach to compliance, monitoring and enforcement of these plans for Southland is in development.

A number of rural professionals have now completed the certification training. The certifier training process involves both national and regional level training. The training is an important step towards ensuring that both the national objectives and those set out in the Proposed Southland Water and Land Plan are understood and pathways towards meeting these objectives are built into on-farm actions. We have received assessments from a number of strong applicants who are being recommended to be certifiers under both the national regulations and the Southland Water and Land Plan.

Staff have been continuing to work with rural industries to identify opportunities for alignment and extension of existing plans.

Winter farming activities

With the six-month existing activities provisions under s20 (of the RMA) as outlined above, the operative pSWLP decision rules on Intensive Winter Grazing and pasture-based wintering, will impact activities next season, in most situations. If there are any changes to the nature, scale and intensity of these activities this season, the provisions of the pSWLP will need to be considered. Where there are no changes, this season is being treated in a similar way to the last season. Communications relating to how the provisions will apply in the 2025 season are being developed.

Plan Change Tuatahi

As stated in the June Strategy and Policy Update report, a future plan change to set limits, will continue to sit within the wider body of land and water work across the organisation. Work needs to continue with the community towards defining this path to reach the existing pSWLP Objectives, including integrated management of resources and providing for te hauora o te tangata (the health of the people), te hauora o te taiao (the health of the environment) and te hauora o te wai (the health of the water body).

A broad Southland solution to freshwater management will involve a mix of regulatory and non-regulatory actions developed and implemented across a generation. It is acknowledged that the success of this action will require community understanding and ongoing engagement.

Fit with strategic framework

OUTCOME	CONTRIBUTES	DETRACTS	NOT APPLICABLE
Managed access to quality natural resources	X		
Diverse opportunities to make a living	X		
Communities empowered and resilient	X		
Communities expressing their diversity			X

Attachments

Nil

9.3 PCE Report Update - Review of Freshwater Models

Report by: Ewen Rodway, Team Leader-Science Strategy & Integration

Approved by: Rachael Millar, General Manager Strategy, Science & Engagement

Report Date: 17 July 2024

Purpose

To inform Council of a recent report by the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment (PCE). The report is titled “A review of freshwater models used to support the regulation and management of water in New Zealand”.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Strategy and Policy Committee resolve to:

- 1 Receive the report - PCE Report Update - Review of Freshwater Models.

Summary

The report identifies shortcomings associated with the devolved and siloed approach to resource management in NZ and the impacts on the use of freshwater models by local government. The report identifies the existence of numerous models, many with overlapping purposes and functions. Additionally, the Commissioner identifies the lack of guidance around model use and the difficulties for decision makers choosing between different models or understanding model outputs. These difficulties are often exacerbated by a lack of transparency associated with the models and that models are sometimes not systematically evaluated to assess if models are fit-for-purpose. As a result of the lack of guidance and model evaluation, the Commissioner identifies an elevated risk of legal challenge to decisions made utilising model outputs.

The Commissioner concludes that, at a national-level, freshwater modelling is not organised in a way that can best support the regulation and management of freshwater in New Zealand. As a result, national-level coordination and support is required to allow more effective and robust use of models for this purpose.

Summary of the report’s findings

- A large number of water models exist. Many of them are opaque and have overlapping functions. Rather than adding value, the proliferation of models confronts regulators with the quandary of having to choose the ‘best’ model and then defend that choice, which is not an easy task.
- Data underpinning models are frequently non-transparent or inaccessible.
- Model development is siloed and fragmented, hindering collaboration efforts.
- The strengths, weaknesses and suitability of models for their intended purpose are not systematically evaluated, making it hard to judge which models are best for any particular circumstances.
- Experimentation in model use and a failure to share or reuse models between or even within councils leads to a large number of expensive ‘single-use’ models that represent a poor use of scarce resources.
- Resourcing is thin and expertise is in short supply among model developers and model users.
- Guidance on model use (including judging if a model is fit for purpose) falls short of what is useful. Practical implementation support is lacking.
- There is a lack of commitment to and investment in mana whenua developed models and associated processes to involve mana whenua in the development and application of freshwater models.

Report recommendations

- The Ministry for the Environment (MfE) should further develop national guidance on the use of models in a regulatory context to support freshwater management across the country.
- MfE should establish a rōpū of experts to support the development and implementation of Māori freshwater models.
- MfE should ensure an evaluation of existing freshwater models against guidance on the use of models in a regulatory context is undertaken.
- MfE should lead the selection or development of a preferred suite of models adaptable to local circumstances.
- The Minister for the Environment should establish a national freshwater modelling support centre with a mandate to support regional councils, unitary authorities, and mana whenua. The Secretary for the Environment should prepare a report advising the Minister for the Environment on where and how such a centre could fit into existing institutional arrangements.

Interpretation of the findings specific to Southland

Many of the findings are relevant to the use of models for water management in Southland. For example, Environment Southland has had to pioneer the use of numerous models within a modelling framework to assist with water quality management and particularly implementation of the National Policy Statement for Freshwater (NPS-FM). This has required significant resource investment that may have been reduced if there were appropriate national-level strategies or guidelines in place. Subsequently, several other regions have followed a similar framework to that applied in Southland, allowing for some inter-regional collaboration and efficiency. However, model development and reporting has still been region specific. This regionally fragmented approach is time and resource intensive and at times was limited by availability of the experts/model developers. On a positive note, the subset of models that Environment Southland has relied on heavily to understand required regional nutrient and *E. coli* load reductions scored well in the evaluation undertaken within the report. On the other hand, the model used to estimate sediment load reductions scored lower regarding transparency (this does not imply anything about the reliability of the model outputs).

Contrary to some of the shortcomings identified at a national-level, the modelling framework adopted in Southland for the purposes of NPS-FM implementation has been thoroughly evaluated and reviewed by an independent panel and found to be conceptually sound and fit-for-purpose. Environment Southland applies the use of water models for purposes other than for NPS-FM implementation described above, and in some cases the report's findings are directly relevant to the use of these.

Recommendations made within the report are exclusively actions for central government agencies and therefore do not necessitate any immediate action from Environment Southland.

Fit with strategic framework

OUTCOME	CONTRIBUTES	DETRACTS	NOT APPLICABLE
Managed access to quality natural resources	x		
Diverse opportunities to make a living			x
Communities empowered and resilient			x
Communities expressing their diversity			x

Attachments

1. Summary [9.3.1 - 16 pages]

June 2024

A review of freshwater models used to support the regulation and management of water in New Zealand

Summary for policymakers

Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment
Te Kaitiaki Taiao a Te Whare Pāremata





June 2024

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Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment
Te Kaitiaki Taiao a Te Whare Pāremata

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Cover images: Catchments in the top of the South Island, bottom of the North Island.
Source data: MfE Data Service (data.mfe.govt.nz) and LINZ Data Service (data.linz.govt.nz).
Analysis and visualisation: Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand. This page: Lake Taupo, photo by Dougal Townsend, GNS Science.

A review of freshwater models used to support the regulation and management of water in New Zealand

Summary for policymakers

June 2024



Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment

Te Kaitiaki Taiao a Te Whare Pāremata

Why this 'dry', technical report matters

1

Freshwater is critical to every human being. In Aotearoa it also has an immense cultural significance to Māori and non-Māori alike. It is essential for our economy, from agriculture to power generation. Clean scenic rivers and lakes are backdrops to our tourism industry.

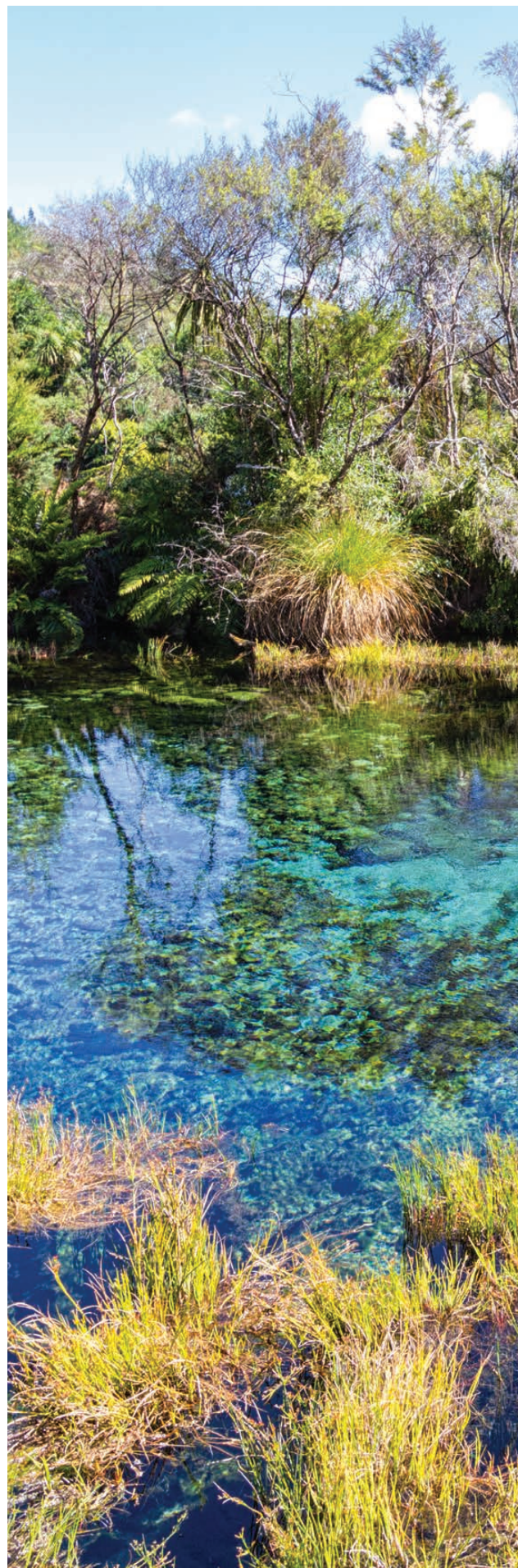
Yet the state of our freshwater resource is fragile – both in quality and quantity.

In our devolved environmental management system, regional councils are tasked with managing freshwater. For the most part they are left to their own devices for how to do that, although they need to comply with sometimes prescriptive central government requirements.

Modelling is an important tool that regional councils use to support their freshwater management responsibilities. This review of how councils use freshwater models to support their regulatory responsibilities found that there were inefficiencies, overlaps, gaps and inconsistencies across the sixteen different regional councils and unitary authorities. The challenges also included fragmentation, reinvention of the wheel and thinly spread modelling expertise.

We have a highly devolved – but inadequately supported – approach to environmental regulation. Thirty years ago, central government devolved responsibility for water and prescribed parts of those responsibilities, but it has not supported councils with the tools they need to manage their obligations. There is a need to strengthen central government’s capacity to support regional councils in their endeavours.

This summary for policymakers reviews the issues, diagnoses several problems and proposes some solutions. If councils are to turn around the declining state of New Zealand’s freshwater, they need all the help we can give them.



Te Waikoropupū Springs. Photo: Sebastian We, Flickr

Why review freshwater modelling?

While New Zealand has plenty of freshwater, we are heavy users of the resource. Many regions in Aotearoa have overallocated freshwater or are close to doing so. Less water means more pressure on freshwater species and higher concentrations of contaminants. Additionally, changing the flow and quality of water affects the mauri of the water and the health of the ecosystems it supports. Climate change is also re-dealing the cards and will have complex feedback effects on existing pressures, driving land use change and further impacting the quantity and quality of freshwater.

Water resource models that help predict freshwater quantity and quality are important tools to support robust, evidence-based freshwater management. A range of water quality and quantity models are currently used across New Zealand to support regulatory tasks such as managing contaminant discharges and water takes. Most models are used by regional councils and unitary authorities. Others have been, and are being, developed by mana whenua, industry and community groups for their own roles in water management.

Those who use models, or are affected by their use, need to know how much confidence can be placed in their outputs. Regulators must be able to defend their decisions to hapū, iwi, the community and ultimately in the courts, so they need to be sure that models used to reach those decisions are robust and reliable.

This investigation reviewed the suitability, strengths and limitations of water resource models that predict freshwater quantity and quality, and the way they are being used to support the regulation and management of water in New Zealand.

2

The investigation also involved an extensive literature review, wide-ranging stakeholder engagement, a survey of regional councils and unitary authorities on their use of freshwater models, and the commissioning of a report on freshwater models developed by, or in close collaboration with, mana whenua. The literature review included a model stocktake and a technical evaluation of the most commonly used biophysical freshwater models.



Te Waikoropupū Springs. Photo: Sebastian We, Flickr

What do models do?

Models provide insights about things that may be hard or impossible to measure. Models can fill gaps in monitoring data, identify trends, gain insights into processes within a system and provide predictions.

3

In the freshwater resource management context, models can help by:

- assessing trends
- estimating current water body health
- estimating required contaminant reductions
- establishing cause–effect relationships between resource use and the health of water bodies
- estimating the effect of freshwater improvement actions
- estimating the effect of climate change on water quantity and quality
- exploring scenarios and future outlooks.

Models come in many shapes and forms and range from very simple to very complex. While using a simple model detailed on a spreadsheet is sometimes sufficient, models used to imitate complex hydrological systems often involve mathematical equations to simulate the physical and chemical properties of that system.

Modelling and monitoring (i.e. field data and assessments) are interdependent. It is essential to have monitoring data to build, calibrate and use environmental models.

Used carefully, modelling can play a central role in improving environmental research. Observations help build a model, the model then deepens understanding of a process, which incentivises better and more detailed data collection, and in turn enables further model improvement.

In many instances models can also provide robust information to support the management and regulation of water, for example, in setting or meeting specific regulatory requirements.

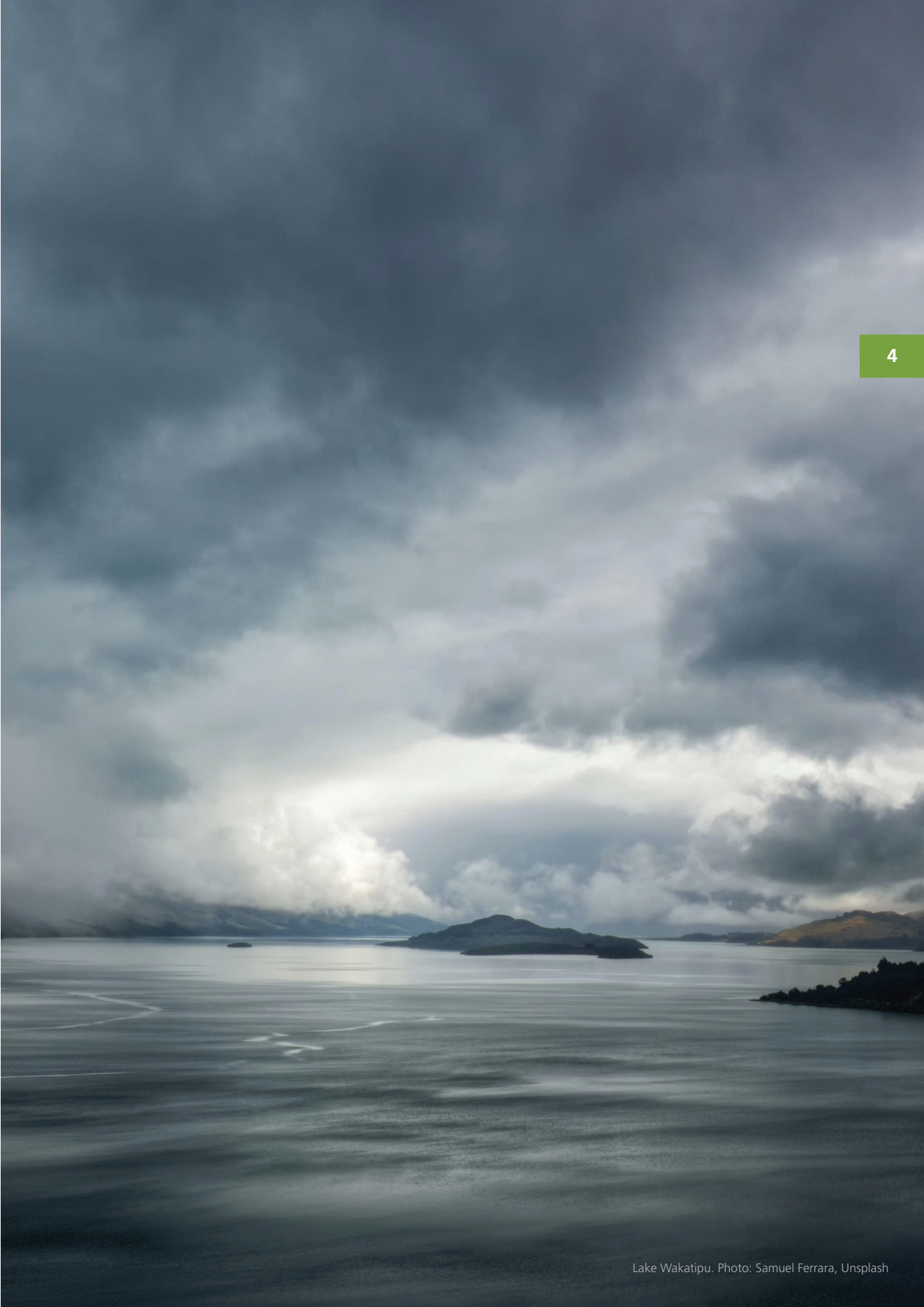
The current policy framework for managing water in New Zealand forms an intricate web of policies and rules that interact with each other. While the Government has signalled changes to the current framework, the models themselves will remain relevant, as robust models and data will be needed to manage freshwater in almost any policy framework.

Māori models

Models developed within a te ao Māori view encapsulate social, cultural, economic and relational parameters; the physical and the spiritual realms; as well as biophysical. Whakapapa is the basis for te ao Māori models, as it makes sense of the connections between all things and how they interact, allowing experts to predict an outcome based on the understanding of those interactions.

Although founded on the same principles, Māori models can vary significantly. Hapū and iwi have noted that biophysical models are unable to incorporate all of what is known of the world from a te ao Māori perspective. All-encompassing models have been developed to illustrate the holistic way te ao Māori is viewed. Hapū and iwi are reclaiming tools lost to colonisation that can be used to respond to new pressures and regulatory requirements.¹

¹ For a review of freshwater models developed by, or in close collaboration with, mana whenua, see Taylor, L., 2023. *Te Mana o te Wai, Te Oranga o ngā Tāngata*. Prepared for the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment. Auckland: E Oho! Awakening Aotearoa. <https://pce.parliament.nz/publications/a-review-of-freshwater-models-used-to-support-the-regulation-and-management-of-water>.



4

Lake Wakatipu. Photo: Samuel Ferrara, Unsplash

Key findings

A large number of models exist, and many have overlapping functions

5

A large number of water models exist. At least 75 biophysical freshwater models are used by regional councils and unitary authorities in a regulatory context to assist with water resource management. These models are used to support a variety of tasks, including managing contaminant discharges and water takes.

A further 34 freshwater models developed by, or in close collaboration with, mana whenua were identified.

Many of these models have overlapping functions, meaning they are used in the same environmental domain, sometimes for the same purpose. For example,

- 12 models are designed to model groundwater, covering groundwater quantity, quality or both
- 47 models are designed to model rivers and streams, covering river water quantity, quality or both
- 19 river water quality models are used to estimate nutrient loads in rivers and streams
- 13 models are used to assess sediment in rivers and streams.

As different models use different assumptions, principles and data sources, when multiple models are used for the same purpose within the same domain, they can produce different results. For example, recent predictions of total nitrogen loads based on two different but widely used models diverged at both national and regional scales. Divergent results can lead to very different management decisions.

Rather than adding value, the proliferation of models confronts regulators with the quandary of having to choose the 'best' model and then defend that choice, which is not an easy task. This choice is made harder when models lack transparency, are not systematically evaluated and there is a lack of guidance.

Model development is siloed and fragmented

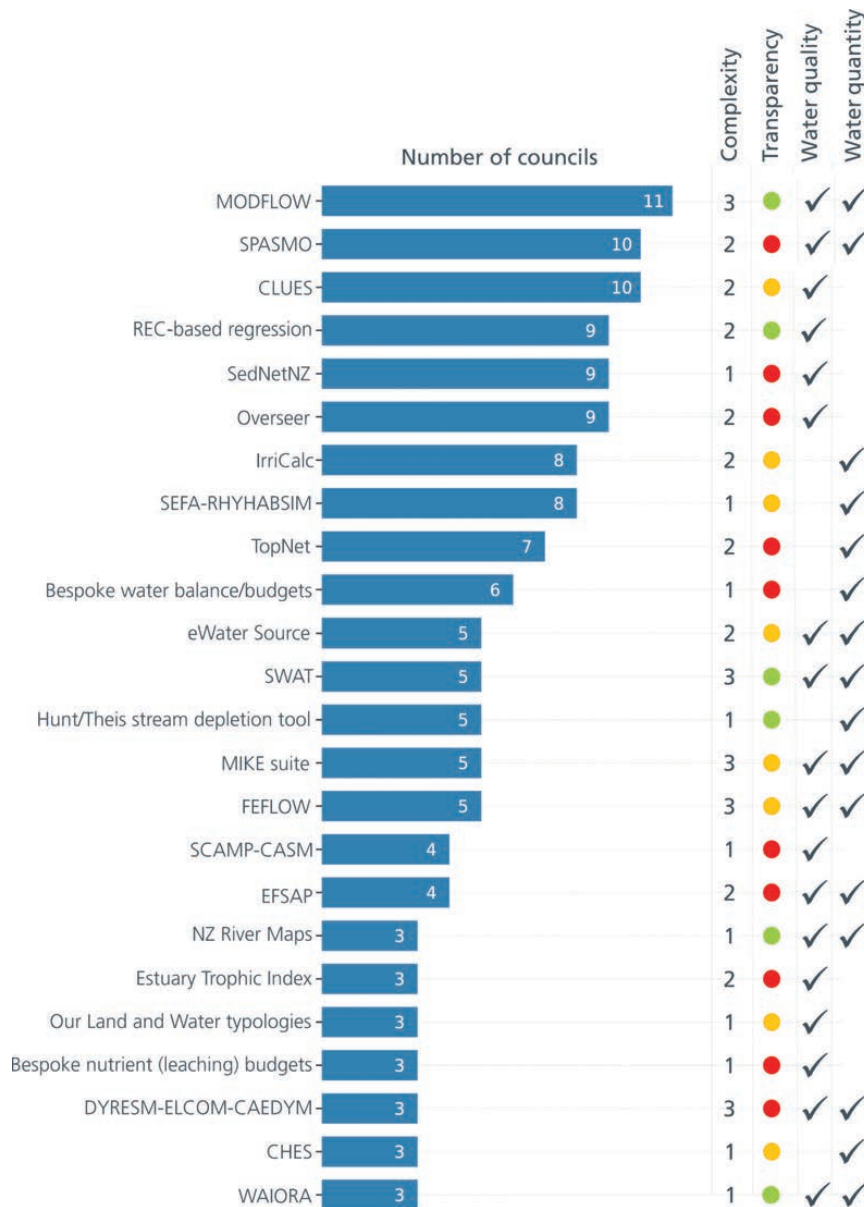
Model development is siloed and fragmented hindering collaboration efforts. Development often takes place in isolation within different institutions, and there is often a strong reluctance to share. Collaboration has suffered at the hands of a competitive desire to 'own' the model and underlying data. The result has been the development of competitive models (for example, sediment models developed by the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA) and Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research). That approach does not lead to well-supported, collaborative modelling work or more transparent models.

A lack of model evaluation

Models are not systematically evaluated, even though criteria for evaluation exist. This makes it hard to judge which models are best for particular circumstances, or if models are fit for their intended purpose.

As part of this report, a technical evaluation of the 24 most widely used biophysical freshwater models (in use by three or more councils) was undertaken. The evaluation found that most models have a good scientific basis (model structure, algorithms, peer review and validation). However, it also found many shortcomings with respect to transparency (Figure 1).

Many models are opaque and the data underpinning models are frequently non-transparent or inaccessible. This makes it difficult to link models or evaluate and verify them and their outputs. Additional shortcomings were found with regards to uncertainty and computational infrastructure. Combined, each of the weaknesses stands in the way of the comparability and interoperability of models, including the potential to reuse them.



6

Source: PCE

Figure 1: Technical assessment of the 24 most widely used models. The number in the bar denotes the number of councils that have reported the use of any specific model. Complexity is categorised as 1 = simple; 2 = moderately complex; 3 = very complex. Transparency is categorised as: fully transparent (green); moderately transparent (amber); not transparent (red). In addition, models are categorised as those that are focused on water quantity, water quality, or both.

Guidance on model use falls short

Guidance on model use – including judging if a model is fit for purpose – falls short of what is useful.

The National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM) 2020 requires that the best available information is used. It places a higher information requirement on science than its predecessors, and integration of other sources of information (such as mātauranga Māori) is needed to support its successful implementation.

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This means there is a need for better data, better models and better integration of models than currently exist. However, the NPS-FM 2020 does not prescribe specific models or modelling requirements for use. As a result, there is uncertainty about how to meet the requirements.

While the Ministry for the Environment released guidance in June 2023 for councils on developing and using models in the regulatory context, this document fell short in several ways. It is not well-known among modellers, and it is only one of several documents that contains model guidance.

Importantly, it does not provide specific guidance on freshwater models or technical assessments of existing models, so it is unclear if models currently in use actually meet the evaluation criteria and good practice process described in the guidance.

Practical implementation support is also lacking, and council staff are looking for help to support on-the-ground freshwater management.

Models are not used to their full potential

Lack of guidance, experimentation in model use, and poor collaboration, sharing and reuse of models have led to councils often opting to develop their own models. The investigation found that 60% (45 of 75) of the models used by councils were 'single use', meaning they had been developed for use by a specific council, often for a specific application in a specific location. These models were not used by other councils and were rarely reused within the original council for tasks such as evaluating relevant progress and plan effectiveness.

While specificity of local conditions may, in some cases, indicate the need for single-use model development, most of the more widely used models are sophisticated and sufficiently flexible to be used in a wide variety of settings and most catchments. However, only three models MODFLOW, SPASMO and CLUES – have been used by ten councils or more, indicating that many models are not being used to their full potential.

As a small country, New Zealand cannot afford to waste scarce modelling resources on forays into multiple, expensive and often ineffective model developments and applications, especially when suitable tools already exist.

Variable use of models in a regulatory context

The use of models to support the regulation and management of water in New Zealand is variable across the regional councils. The choice of models – and whether to use them at all – is determined by a range of factors, including resourcing and expertise, confidence in using models, previous experience and the specific task or regulatory requirement at hand.

While Bay of Plenty Regional Council, Environment Canterbury, Hawke's Bay Regional Council, Horizons Regional Council and Waikato Regional Council often use models in a regulatory context, West Coast Regional Council is only using a very limited number of models and Nelson City Council has not used any freshwater models at all.

The majority of the councils are using, or have recently used, models to support water quantity management (i.e. to set environmental flows and levels or identify limits on water takes). Likewise, most councils are using models to quantify catchment contaminant loads and any required reductions to meet desired outcomes. Models are used to establish cause–effect relationships, assess trends and explore options and scenarios.

While models play a useful role at many stages of the planning process, they have predominantly been used to inform the development of regional plans and other planning instruments. Only six councils have reported using models as part of a compliance package. No councils have reported using models for direct enforcement such as breaches of resource consent conditions or to formally assess plan effectiveness. The latter is a missed opportunity as reusing models in this way could help determine if the desired outcomes have been (or will be) achieved.

Further examination revealed that multiple models (often with overlapping functions) are used by regional councils to address the same regulatory requirement. For example, as part of determining baseline water quality states for a range of attributes listed in the NPS-FM 2020, at least 15 models are being used to predict nitrogen losses and movement from soil to water. Similarly, in identifying water take limits, at least eight different models are being used to estimate the soil water balance, i.e. to estimate how much water evaporates and how much drains down to recharge groundwater.

8

The variety of models used by councils range from very simple spreadsheets to highly advanced numerical solutions. In principle, this is good: councils need to make use of a range of models that cover different levels of complexity. However, many councils reported that they are yet to find the ideal level of model complexity for their needs. While most of the models in use were considered too simple by many, complex models presented challenges for staff and in some cases were abandoned for simpler alternatives. For example, in Canterbury, early attempts to use an advanced integrated Mike-SHE model for plan change 2 (Hinds) proved difficult to complete in the required timeframes and simpler bespoke models were resorted to for the plan change recommendations.

Thin resourcing

Resourcing is thin and there is a shortage of model developers and model users. When surveyed, staff from all councils signalled a shortage of freshwater scientists and a significant lack of inhouse technical modelling skills. Faced with a lack of inhouse skills, councils are often forced to subcontract much of their modelling work to external providers. Councils without the financial resources to subcontract, tend to make decisions based on the available observations and data. If these data are limited, and they often are, the resulting decisions may be inadequate.

An overall shortage of skills means that model development, application or maintenance is often left to one person, which is risky for the future use of that model.

Data shortcomings affect models

Models are an extension of data, so any shortcomings with data are carried over into models. Without robust data there will not be robust models.

Known data shortcomings include data paucity and data accessibility. Experts within councils generally agree that there is a shortage of data needed for freshwater policy and planning purposes. The general view is that, despite some recent improvements, databases within councils are still piecemeal and disconnected.

Another known shortcoming is limited data accessibility, as much of New Zealand's environmental data are not openly accessible or have limited accessibility. Much data on estimates of nutrient loss to our water are owned by the farming industry or Crown Research Institutes.

Data on soil, flow and climate are often not shared with regional councils. With limited access to data, modellers have to work with whatever they can access. As a result, there is a real risk that data from different time periods with different degrees of uncertainty are scrambled together. If the data being used are incongruent there is an increased risk of model incongruence.

Lack of commitment to mana whenua developed models

There is a lack of commitment to, and investment in, mana whenua developed models and associated processes to involve mana whenua in the development and application of freshwater models.

The report on Māori models commissioned for this investigation found that many whānau, hapū, iwi and Māori groups are already using a combination of traditional and contemporary tools and models to assist them with water management in their rohe. The stocktake identified 34 models that had either been developed by Māori or in collaboration with Māori. These models were assessed on whether they could be used as part of NPS-FM 2020 implementation.

While Māori freshwater models exist, the use of Māori models in a regulatory context is virtually non-existent. While some are in pilot stages, none of the 34 freshwater models identified in this investigation are in use by councils to support the full implementation of the national policy statement for freshwater management. To decide which models to use, more consultation needs to take place between councils and tangata whenua to identify what other information sources or models are needed.

The NPS-FM 2020 requires councils to engage with tangata whenua and facilitate their active engagement. This requirement is designed to overcome the historical experience of tangata whenua who have either been involved too late in the decision-making process or completely left out. Councils will need to help empower tangata whenua and be responsive to how tangata whenua would like to be involved in freshwater management.

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Summary of issues

The shortcomings identified in this review are in no small part a consequence of New Zealand’s highly devolved approach to environmental regulation, where each council has responsibility for managing freshwater in its regions and using models to do that. This has come at the price of an inefficient and siloed modelling environment. Despite their best efforts, council staff have been unsuccessful in establishing a more joined-up modelling environment.

The large number of models used by regional councils and unitary authorities to support the regulation and management of water poses further challenges. Rather than adding value, the proliferation of models confronts regulators with the dilemma of having to choose the ‘best’ model and defend that choice, which is not an easy task if you are not an expert in modelling or model development. It is a choice made harder when models lack transparency, are not systematically evaluated, and there is a lack of guidance. Nationally, New Zealand’s modelling resource is dispersed and unevenly spread among regional councils, publicly funded research institutions and some businesses.

Another consequence of the large number of models, combined with inadequate guidance on their selection and use and a lack of systematic model evaluation, is an elevated risk of legal challenge to council decisions based on modelling outputs. Councils are looking to central government for help, but the guidance currently available is generalised and not specific to the challenges of freshwater models. Further, there is a lack of practical implementation support to turn any guidance into practice and ensure a much more robust and confident use of fit-for-purpose models. On a national scale, freshwater modelling is not organised in a way that can best support the regulation and management of freshwater in New Zealand.



Dart River Te Awa Whakatipu. Photo: Samuel Ferrara, Unsplash

Recommendations

Better national-level coordination and support for freshwater modelling is needed if models are to be used effectively and robustly to support evidence-based water regulation and management.

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The first four recommendations focus on solutions that could be implemented in the short-term. While they can be progressed immediately, they would benefit from the establishment of a national freshwater modelling support centre, which is the most effective and efficient way of carrying the desired improvements into the future – the fifth recommendation.

1. The Ministry for the Environment (MfE) should further develop national guidance on the use of models in a regulatory context to support freshwater management across the country.
2. MfE should establish a rōpū of experts to support the development and implementation of Māori freshwater models.

3. MfE should ensure an evaluation of existing freshwater models against guidance on the use of models in a regulatory context is undertaken.
4. MfE should lead the selection or development of a preferred suite of models adaptable to local circumstances.
5. The Minister for the Environment should establish a national freshwater modelling support centre with a mandate to support regional councils, unitary authorities and mana whenua. The Secretary for the Environment should prepare a report advising the Minister for the Environment on where and how such a centre could fit into existing institutional arrangements.



Simon Upton

Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment
Te Kaitiaki Taiao a Te Whare Pāremata



Huka Falls. Photo: Coen Versluis, Flickr

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**Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment
Te Kaitiaki Taiao a Te Whare Pāremata**

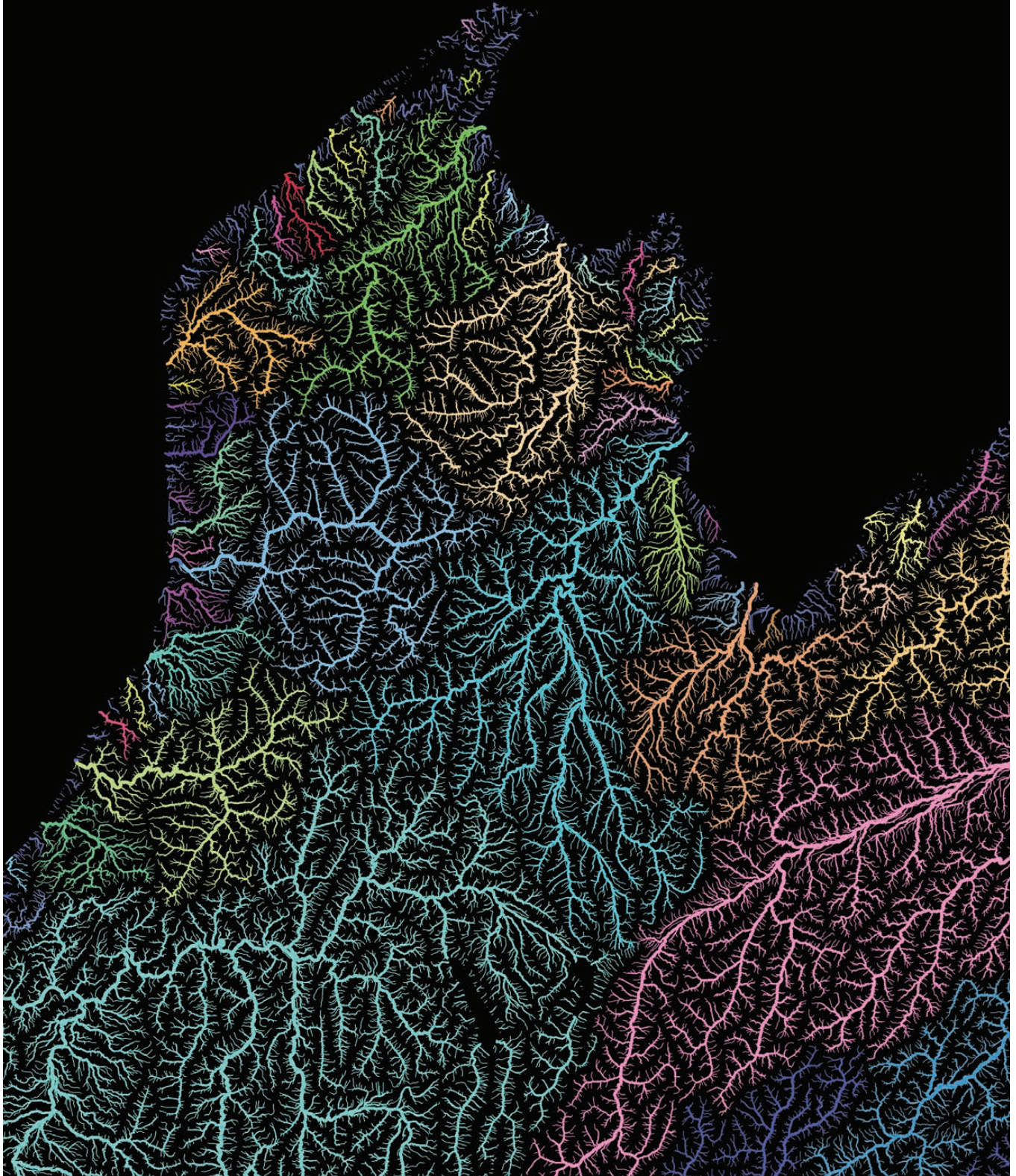
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June 2024



Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment
Te Kaitiaki Taiao a Te Whare Pāremata



9.4 Government Policy and Legislation Monitor

Report by: Shana Lee, Policy Planner

Approved by: Lucy Hicks, General Manager Policy & Government Reform

Report Date: 31 July 2024

Purpose

To introduce the monthly-updated Government Legislation and Policy Monitor to the Strategy and Policy Committee to ensure there is oversight of all legislative changes occurring.

Summary

As a statutory public entity, Environment Southland operates under complex regulatory frameworks that are continuously evolving. This Government Legislation and Policy Monitor has been developed to assist the Council in navigating the dynamic legal and political landscape. This will become a standing item for this Committee. It will provide a regular summary of new legislative developments and the anticipated impacts. This will enable early understanding and engagement on national policy. Internally, this will facilitate knowledge sharing, and promote alignment among teams and across various projects.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Strategy and Policy Committee resolve to:

- 1 Receive the report - Government Policy and Legislation Monitor

Background

As a statutory public entity, Environment Southland operates under various legislative frameworks, notably the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) and the Local Government Act (LGA). These statutes, alongside many other additional legislation and case law changes collectively shape the parameters within which Environment Southland functions. In recent years, there have been a raft of changes to existing legislation and policies and the introduction of new legislation as well.

Given the complex and dynamic regulatory landscape, it is important that decision-makers and staff have a thorough understanding of current legislation. Failure to do so could lead to operational inefficiencies and legal consequences, including judicial review. These sorts of risk underscore the critical importance of maintaining legislative compliance and awareness, amidst ongoing amendments and updates.

The Environment Southland Government Legislation and Policy Monitor has been prepared as a tool to support the organisation successfully navigate this challenge. It organises policy areas into key topics, providing succinct summaries of new legislative developments, and their anticipated impacts on Environment Southland's operations. The document will be updated regularly and continually evolve to meet the needs of users. A visual summary accompanies this document, providing an overview of all the legislative directions discussed. On this summary, upcoming changes have been highlighted with an asterisk. At the end of the document, we have summarised the key contents of legal cases relevant to Environment Southland's operations to aid understanding of trends in relevant legal changes.

The tool aims to assist Council (and staff) to grasp new policies swiftly, enabling informed responses and proactive engagement with stakeholders. Consequently, it will contribute to establishing positions on emerging policies early and enhancing Council's ability to influence national policy outcomes. Internally, the document can serve as a catalyst for constructive discussions, fostering a shared understanding of policies and promoting alignment across projects.

For example, being able to inform the organisation of the nature and potential implications of emerging policy is crucial for facilitating effective collaboration among teams in crafting a pathway forward. Having shared understanding will enable teams to efficiently anticipate and plan how to respond once the national policy gets implemented. Both policy and non-policy measures can be developed to address the impacts of changes to the regulatory framework. It is hoped that this will enable us to be more proactively responding, rather than reactively.

Fit with strategic framework

While this document may not directly contribute to achieving the immediate outcomes listed within the strategic framework, it is anticipated to bring indirect benefits to all areas over the long term. By enhancing the knowledge base of the teams involved, it will support the effective progression of all projects intended to achieve the four strategic outcomes.

OUTCOME	CONTRIBUTES	DETRACTS	
Managed access to quality natural resources	V		
Diverse opportunities to make a living	V		
Communities empowered and resilient	V		
Communities expressing their diversity	V		

Attachments

1. 2024 07 Government Policy and Legislation [9.4.1 - 14 pages]

Government Policy and Legislation Monitor

Updated: 16 July 2024

This monthly document monitors the most significant of the policy and legislation changes the coalition government is driving across various areas. All information is publicly available or received via formal channels such as letters from ministries and correspondence from LGNZ, Taituarā and Te Uru Kahika.

Index

The following colour coding is used throughout:

Resource Management	Climate Change	Te Tiriti/Te Ao Māori	Transport and other Infrastructure
Mining			

The format is as follows:

Policy area	
Legislation/policy name	Announcements, dates, and signals
	ES staff involvement and implications and next steps

Updates

Resource Management	
<i>Overview of RMA reform programme</i>	<p>The Coalition Government has committed to a three-phase reform of the resource management system, as follows:</p> <p>Phase 1: repeal the Natural and Built Environment Act (NBA) and Spatial Planning Act (SPA) (complete);</p> <p>Phase 2A: progress the Fast-Track Approvals Bill, a consenting and permitting regime for regionally and nationally significant projects;</p> <p>Phase 2B: progress targeted legislative changes to the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) by late 2024, along with proposals to amend, review or develop “over a dozen” national direction instruments; and</p> <p>Phase 3: replace the current RMA with new resource management legislation.</p> <p>Budget 2024 provides \$92.2m over four years to deliver the Government’s resource management reforms, including fast-track consenting legislation, Resource Management Act (RMA) 1991 amendments, updates to national direction and RMA replacement legislation.</p>

	<p>This is the only new funding provided under Vote Environment in Budget 2024.</p>
	<p>The ‘three phase’ language is a useful tool for understanding the components of the work programme. The impact and outlook for Environment Southland are outlined in separate sections below.</p>
<p><i>Fast-Track Approvals Bill (Phase 2A)</i></p>	<p>In March, the Environment Committee released the Fast-Track Approvals Bill for submissions. To access the fast-track approvals process, a project is either listed in Part A of Schedule 2 (which is yet to be released) or project owners apply to the joint Ministers. A project would then be referred to an expert panel to assess the project and make a recommendation to the joint Ministers, who would then determine whether the approvals should be granted or declined.</p> <p>Compared to the previous Covid-era fast-track regime, the process has been widened to include approvals (and bundles of approvals) under a range of legislation. Also new in this Bill is that Ministers (Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development) make the final decisions on the projects – the Expert Panel is simply making recommendations. Lastly, a broader range of projects will have access to the fast-track process including infrastructure, housing, resource extraction, aquaculture, and other developments, provided they are regionally or nationally significant, are consistent with the purpose of the Bill and meet the other eligibility criteria found in clause 17.</p> <p>The Environment Select Committee received approximately 27,000 written submissions on this Bill, with 2900 submitters asking to appear in-person. Following a ballot, two sub-committees heard from 1100 submitters across a six-week period. The Select Committee’s report is due on 18 October 2024, with enactment likely to follow shortly thereafter.</p>
	<p>The Chairman, CEO and GM for Policy and Government Reform presented Environment Southland’s submission orally to the Select Committee on Friday 17 May. They highlighted the need to balance environmental and economic benefits and to enable regional councils’ input through timely provision of relevant information regarding applications. The Select Committee asked about the adoption of a triage approach to consultation and the possible inclusion of a sunset clause.</p> <p>The detailed impacts of the Bill on Environment Southland will depend on its final form, and where and how often any new consenting powers are applied in our region. Once a project gets consented through the fast-track process, it would be the responsibility of the usual consenting authority to implement and monitor the consent, which would likely have significant resourcing implications. Staff are currently exploring the potential implications of the Bill and liaising with other regional and local authorities to gain a deeper understanding. An action plan will be developed soon to prepare the relevant teams ahead of the commencement of the proposed regime.</p> <p>Prior to the enactment of this legislation Environment Southland prepare processes to provide comment on Fast Track Approval applications in a</p>

	<p>compressed timeframe. Staff are currently drafting possible options and a proposed approach to respond.</p>
<p><i>RM (Freshwater and Other Matters) Amendment Bill (Phase 2B - RM Amendment Bill No.1)</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Government was planning to introduce two major RMA amendment Bills in 2024. Bill No. 1, released on May 23, proposes to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Exclude the NPS-FM's (National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management) hierarchy of obligations from resource consenting. b. Repeal the low slope map and related stock exclusion regulations. c. Repeal intensive winter grazing regulations from the NES-F (National Environmental Standard for Freshwater). d. Align coal mining provisions with other mineral extraction activities under the NPS-IB (National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity), NPS-FM, and NES-F. e. Suspend for three years the NPS-IB's requirement for councils to identify and include new SNAs (Significant Natural Areas) in district plans.
	<p>Environment Southland provided our written submission to the Select Committee and were invited to speak to the Committee on 17 July 2024.</p> <p>The proposed changes in the Bill relating to freshwater management are likely to have limited impact on Environment Southland's operations, as our regional plan (pSWLP) has Te Mana o te Wai incorporated, and already contains regional rules for managing intensive winter grazing and stock exclusion. Our written submission raised concerns regarding coal extraction, the risks associated with streamlining of consultation processes, and the suspension of SNA progress. Additional comments on these issues were made during the oral submission.</p>
<p><i>RM Amendment Bill No. 2</i></p>	<p>The second Bill is expected to be introduced in September/October 2024. Its scope is yet to be finalised but the Government has signalled it will include measures to electrify NZ, review housing rules relating to Medium Density Residential Standards and secondary units, consenting changes for forestry, minor freshwater changes for farming, excluding LUC (Land Use Capability) 3 from the coverage of the NPS-HPL (National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land), and emergency response regulation-making powers.</p> <p>In late March, the Minister responsible for RMA Reform sought feedback from the sector on what could be included in the second Bill. Te Uru Kahika provided high-level suggestions, with input from the Special Interest Group network.</p>
	<p>Staff are currently keeping a watching brief on this matter. Staff continue to support the Ministry in the policy development process by providing feedback through regular online meetings.</p>
<p><i>Changes to national direction (Phase 2B cont.)</i></p>	<p>In a recent speech to the New Zealand Planning Institute, the Minister for RMA Reform advised that, aside from the "straightforward priority amendments" that will be included in the RMA amendment Bills, all other work on national direction will be combined into a single process (the 'integrated national direction package') which will take 18-24 months to complete.</p>

	<p>The Ministry for the Environment’s indicative work programme advises that ‘targeted consultation’ for the integrated national direction package will take place throughout 2024, joint public consultation from January 2025, and final decisions in late 2025, with the new national directions put in place from early 2026.</p> <p>The implications of these various policy changes are set out in the next table. Environment Southland will work with and receive support from Te Uru Kahika, Taituarā and Local Government New Zealand to navigate the consultation process.</p>
<i>RMA replacement legislation (Phase 3)</i>	<p>The final component of the Government’s reform programme is a permanent replacement for the RMA. Early messages about the new legislation include that it will be based on ‘the enjoyment of property rights’, will promote access to housing and other basic human needs alongside environmental protection, and that there are likely to be two pieces of legislation, separating urban and spatial planning from environmental protection.</p> <p>The Minister for RM reform has advised that the ‘heavy lifting’ for the new legislation will be carried out by an Expert Ministerial Advisory Group, yet to be announced.</p>
	<p>The Ministry for the Environment’s indicative work programme estimates that cabinet decisions on new legislation will be taken in late 2024, the legislation drafted in the first half of 2025, a select committee process in the latter half of 2025 and the new legislation in place in early 2026.</p>
<i>Freshwater Farm Plans</i>	<p>On 10 April the Ministers for Agriculture and the Environment announced plans to review the rollout of Freshwater Farm Plans. The Government will also consider whether the requirements to complete a plan can be paused while changes are made.</p> <p>A principle of the review is that the time and cost of completing a plan should line up with the level of risk to freshwater from the farming operation.</p> <p>No formal timeframe has been provided for either the review or any changes to regulations.</p>
	<p>As part of a nationwide rollout, Southland and several other regions are currently implementing Freshwater Farm Plans in specific areas. The regulations became effective on 1 August 2023 in the Aparima and Fiordland and Islands freshwater catchments. Farm operators in these areas have until 18 months from this date to complete and submit their plans for certification. The Aparima area includes Pourakino, Aparima, Waimatuku, Taunamau, and Orepuki.</p> <p>The subsequent rollout for the other freshwater catchments follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 February 2024: Oreti and Waiau - 1 July 2024: Maituna and Waituna

	<p>The Government may consider pausing current requirements to complete a freshwater farm plan while improvements are developed.</p> <p>Environment Southland’s current focus is on the implementation of the Appendix N required (pSWLP) farm environmental plans.</p>
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National direction – individual policy statements

<p><i>NPS Indigenous Biodiversity</i></p>	<p>The first RMA amendment Bill proposes to suspend the NPS-IB requirement for councils to identify new SNAs for three years.</p> <p>In a letter to the sector, Ministry for the Environment has signalled that the Government will also conduct a review of the operation of SNAs, and that this review is currently being scoped. The full NPS-IB is signalled for review as part of the integrated national direction package, with decisions expected in the first half of 2025.</p>
	<p>The current obligation to map SNAs sits primarily with Territorial Authorities but Environment Southland has a strong interest in the wider objectives of the policy and expressed concerns about the continuing loss of indigenous areas in its submission. Staff will maintain a watching brief.</p>
<p><i>NPS Renewable Electricity Generation</i></p>	<p>In a December 2023 update, Ministry for the Environment advised that it (with Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment and Department of Conservation) was providing advice to Ministers on a work programme to progress the Coalition Government’s commitments to begin doubling renewable energy production, including updates to the National Policy Statement on Renewable Energy Generation. Further details are yet to be released.</p>
	<p>Opportunities for Environment Southland to respond to the proposal, and the impact of them, will be clearer when further details are released.</p>
<p><i>NPS Freshwater Management</i></p>	<p>Cabinet agreed in December 2023 to replace the NPS-FM. Councils will have until 31 December 2027, to notify their freshwater plan changes.</p> <p>The first RMA amendment Bill introduced in May, proposes to remove obligations for individual resource consent applications and decisions to apply Te Mana o Te Wai.</p>
	<p>The NPS-FM is central to Environment Southland’s work programmes. The Regional Policy Statement and all of Southland’s regional plans are required to be consistent with national direction, including the NPS-FM.</p>
<p><i>NPS Highly Productive Land</i></p>	<p>The Minister has – at a high-level – signalled changes to the existing NPS-HPL, whereby restrictions currently applying to LUC 1-3 will only apply to LUC 1-2. The Ministry for the Environment’s RM reform update in May, discusses these changes within the context of the Government’s Going for Housing Growth policy, part of which aims to increase greenfield land availability.</p>

	<p>Southland contains significant LUC (Land Use Capability) 3 land, so these changes will have a significant impact on the operation of this policy in our region.</p> <p>Environment Southland is currently involved in a regional mapping process as a response to the existing NPS-HPL. This process may be significantly simplified if LUC 3 is no longer captured.</p> <p>A recent Environment Court decision has provided clarity on a specific matter: landowners cannot seek to reclassify their land’s LUC classification ahead of the regional mapping exercise.</p>
<i>NPS Urban Development</i>	<p>Changes to the NPS-UD (National Policy Statement of Urban Development) are expected to be part of the RMA amendment Bill (Phase 2B), including changes to mixed-use zoning rules to encourage density and an increased mix of residential and business activities in some places, such as homes above shops and restaurants.</p>
	<p>The proposed changes to NPS-UB are expected to have a minimal impact on Southland, as the policies primarily target tier 1 and 2 centres, none of which are located within Southland. However, general rules aimed at enhancing land use efficiency and urban development could still influence the region. Staff will keep a watching brief and report.</p>
<i>NPS Natural Hazard Decision-making</i>	<p>From September to November 2023, the Government sought feedback on a proposed NPS-NHD (National Policy Statement for Natural Hazard Decision-making). This was described as a first step from Central Government to provide additional support for local government to manage risks to people and property from natural hazards such as floods, landslides and coastal inundation.</p> <p>The government is yet to signal whether it will progress the proposed NPS or pursue a different approach.</p>
	<p>Staff will continue to keep a watching brief.</p>

Coastal Matters	
<i>National Environmental Standards for Marine Aquaculture</i>	<p>Recognising the critical role of marine aquaculture in both regional and national economies, the government sought to achieve regulatory consistency for the industry by establishing this NES. It came into effect from December 2020 with a three-year review undertaken last year. It was in line with the Government's Aquaculture Strategy. The goals of NES-MA (National Environmental Standard for Marine Aquaculture) include enhancing regulatory consistency, ensuring proper environmental management, and fostering industry confidence to stimulate investment.</p>

	<p>Environment Southland provided written feedback in June 2024 during the three-year review, responding to various questions posed by the Ministry, many of which were addressing biosecurity concerns.</p>
<p><i>Introduction of 20-year extension to the duration of port consents</i></p>	<p>New Zealand's various ports existed before the introduction of the Resource Management Act (RMA) in 1991. With the implementation of the RMA, existing port activities were given a transitional period until September 2026, spanning 25 years. Activities initiated thereafter have been subject to standard application procedures for permits. With only two years remaining in the special transitional period for the basic port activities, the government is considering extending this adaptation period by an additional 20 years. This would necessitate amendments to the RMA. Specific legislative proposals have not yet been announced, and discussions are ongoing regarding the effectiveness of this policy.</p>
	<p>Environment Southland conveyed our input through an online meeting with the representatives from the Ministry of Transport in June 2024. A written submission will be prepared once the relevant Bill becomes available. Staff will keep a watching brief.</p>
<p><i>RMA (Extended Duration of Coastal Permits of Marine Farms) Amendment Bill</i></p>	<p>The Government introduced this Bill in May 2024 to implement one of the policy programmes set out in the Coalition Agreement which is to “deliver longer durations for marine farming permits and remove regulations that impede the productivity and enormous potential of the seafood sector”</p> <p>This Bill would extend the current duration of all coastal permits currently issued under the RMA authorising aquaculture by 20 years, but not beyond 2050. The extension would automatically cover all of the RMA consents needed for a marine farm. While the Bill provides a mechanism for consent authorities to review consent conditions of extended consents, its use is severely limited as cost recovery has not been provided for.</p> <p>The relevant Bill is likely to be passed into law within the next few months, as it is one of 40 actions the Government is committed to implementing by 30 September 2024.</p>
	<p>Southland currently has 55 existing consented aquaculture activities of which 85% are concentrated in Big Glory Bay, 18% Bluff Harbour and the remainder in several other areas in Foveaux Strait. Most have been established since the mid 1990's. 45 aquaculture consents will be expiring in January 2025.</p> <p>Environment Southland provided a written submission to the Primary Production Committee and the Chairman and GM Policy and Government Reform presented orally to the Committee on 24 June 2024, emphasizing that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the existing mechanisms are sufficient for supporting the re-consenting of marine farms (e.g. National Environmental Standards for Marine Aquaculture); - more scope is needed within the Bill to review conditions of marine farming permits;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - existing planning tools (such as spatial planning and plan making) should be used to identify opportunities and achieve well balanced outcomes; - retention of regional decision-making is important to provide for the four well-beings; and - cost recovery provisions are needed in the Bill. <p>It is not clear to what extent the above points will inform the content of the final Bill. The ensuing legislation is anticipated to influence the review of the Regional Coastal Plan. Throughout the review process, it will be crucial to establish adequate measures to safeguard the diverse environmental, cultural, and social values that could be negatively impacted by the inability to modify relevant permit conditions. Staff will report when the relevant legislation progresses.</p>
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Climate Change	
<i>Adaptation Inquiry</i>	<p>In late 2023, the Environment Committee sought submissions on an inquiry into community-led retreat and climate adaptation funding, started by the previous government. Environment Southland participated in the process by engaging with Taituarā and LGNZ, which provided written submissions to the Committee.</p> <p>The Minister for Climate Change Hon Simon Watts is currently undertaking a new climate adaptation inquiry, with support from political parties across the House. The purpose of the inquiry, led by the Finance and Expenditure Committee, is to develop guiding objectives and principles for the design of a climate adaptation framework for New Zealand.</p> <p>The approximately 150 public submissions made to the previous inquiry will be considered in the new inquiry; the Committee is currently considering the content of new/updated submissions. Any associated legislation is expected to be introduced in early 2025.</p> <p>The Ministry for the Environment has established an independent reference group to support policy development for the adaptation framework. Its website includes the following summary of what the framework will do:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The adaptation framework will set out the Government’s approach to sharing the costs of adapting to climate change. • It will help communities and businesses know what investment will happen in their area, for example whether the council will build flood protection infrastructure, and what support will be available to help with recovery from events like slips or floods. • It will cover proactive choices to protect from foreseeable risks, and long-term recovery after a severe weather event happens.
	<p>Environment Southland staff will continue to engage with officials and the rest of the Regional Sector on this work.</p>

<p><i>Second Emissions Reduction Plan</i></p>	<p>The Government recently announced that the Government’s second Emissions Reduction Plan (ERP2) will be released by 30 September. The public consultation commenced 18 July 2024. ERP2 will set out actions needed to reduce emissions to meet the second emissions budget for the years 2026–2030.</p> <p>Being ‘on track’ to meet the second emissions budget is one of the nine recently announced Government Targets – the only environmental target. This emissions budget is set at the national level with no regional specificity.</p>
	<p>The actions detailed in ERP2 will set the policy direction for Aotearoa’s low-emissions pathway and economic development. This includes the provision of public transport and, more broadly, the land use and land use change we can expect in our region.</p> <p>Environment Southland will engage with this programme of work to ensure it advances the interests of the Southland region and enables effective collaboration across central and local government.</p>
<p><i>Natural Hazards Insurance Act</i></p>	<p>This Act came into effect on 1 July 2024, replacing the Earthquake Commission Act 1993. It establishes the objectives, principles, and operational mechanisms for the newly named Natural Hazards Commission. The primary goal of the Commission is to minimise the impact of natural hazards on individuals, property, and communities. In alignment with this goal, the Commission assists homeowners affected by natural disasters, contingent upon them having private insurance coverage. To further support homeowners throughout the claims process, a Code of Insured Persons’ Rights and an external dispute resolution scheme have been introduced.</p>
	<p>This Act aims to enhance the efficiency of insurance claims processing for natural hazards such as flooding and earthquakes. This will benefit the community at large.</p>
<p><i>Climate Change Response (Emissions Trading Scheme Agricultural Obligations) Amendment Bill</i></p>	<p>This Bill was introduced to Parliament on 20 June, passed its First Reading on 25 June, and is now proceeding through the select committee process. Public consultation closed on 28 July 2024.</p> <p>This Bill amends the Climate Change Response Act 2002(CCRA) to remove agriculture activities from the New Zealand Emissions Trading Scheme. It supports the Government’s coalition agreements and the National Party’s manifesto commitment to keep agriculture out of the NZ ETS. It also aligns with Action 12 of the Coalition Government’s Action Plan for New Zealand for the second quarter of 2024.</p> <p>Under the current terms of the CCRA, agricultural processors must surrender New Zealand units (NZUs) for emissions starting January 2025, and animal farmers must report their emissions and surrender NZUs starting January 2027. The amendments are considered to be necessary because processor-level pricing may not effectively incentivise emission reductions, a single price for all gases conflicts with New Zealand’s split-gas targets, and including farms</p>

	in the NZ ETS would pose administrative and cost challenges contrary to the government's stance.
	The Bill could have substantial implications for the Southland region, as the presence and the rate of agricultural levy significantly influence future land use patterns and the makeup of the regional economy. At the national level, investments will be needed to identify and pursue alternative methods for achieving the necessary reduction in GHG emissions.

Mining of Minerals	
Draft Minerals Strategy for New Zealand to 2040	The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment is currently consulting on the draft Minerals Strategy for New Zealand to 2040 . The ministry aims to stimulate economic growth by achieving a twofold increase in exports from the minerals sector to \$2 Billion by 2035.
	<p>Policy changes on the extraction of minerals can have a substantial impact on Southland’s economy and environment. To ensure such gains do not come at the cost of damage to the environment, it is crucial to ensure safeguards are in place to assess, monitor, and manage the adverse environmental effects of mining.</p> <p>Staff will continue to keep a watching brief on this work.</p>
Amendment to the Crown Minerals Act 1991	<p>The Government is proposing a package of changes to the Crown Minerals Act 1991 to address gas security challenges and increase revenue from mining activities. The package includes the reverse of the 2018 ban on new petroleum exploration outside onshore Taranaki, changes to how petroleum exploration permits are allocated, and changes to signal to the international market that New Zealand is ‘open for business’.</p> <p>The Government appears to be currently engaging with stakeholders with a view to releasing a relevant Bill for public consultation in the second half of 2024.</p>
	Staff will report on any new developments and may consider submitting on the Bill when it is released in the second half of 2024.
Critical Minerals List & Stocktake of NZ’s known mineral potential	The Government is developing a critical minerals list and a stocktake of NZ’s known mineral potential to underly a strategic, considered approach to developing the country’s resources and strengthening mineral resilience. They will identify the domestic and imported minerals pivotal to the economy but which may be at risk of supply disruptions, and the potential opportunities to meet these needs domestically. It is anticipated that they will become available towards the end of 2024.
	Staff will keep a watching brief.

Te Tiriti legislation	
Treaty Principles Bill	<p>The National-ACT’s coalition agreement commits to introducing and passing a Treaty Principles Bill through a first reading in 2024. An ACT website launched to provide information on the Bill states that it will define the ‘principles’ of the Treaty, and that “the Treaty principles are often mentioned in legislation, but they have never actually been defined in law.”</p> <p>National and New Zealand First have agreed to support the Bill to the select committee stage but have refused so far to commit any support beyond that.</p>
	<p>Introducing the Treaty Principles Bill is likely to catalyse debate and discussion about the treaty in a range of settings, including local authorities. Depending on how the matter progresses, proactive engagement via Mana to Mana, Te Rōpū Taiao Otago and Te Rōpū Taiao Southland may be appropriate, as well as any opportunities for staff to become informed and take part in discussions.</p>
References in legislation	<p>The National-NZ First coalition agreement promises to review of all legislation, aside from Treaty settlements, that include reference to the “principles” of the Treaty of Waitangi. The agreement also includes a pledge to replace all such references with specific words relating to the relevance and application of the Treaty or repeal the references.</p> <p>It is not yet clear how this policy will be progressed or how it might interact with the Treaty Principles Bill.</p>
	<p>See discussion for the previous item. Any Environment Southland engagement on these changes would likely be conducted in partnership with mana whenua.</p>

Te Ao Māori legislation	
Māori wards	<p>The Justice Committee has reported back on the Local Government (Electoral Legislation and Māori Wards and Māori Constituencies) Amendment Bill; there were no major changes in response to submissions. The Bill proposes to reinstate the requirement for a local referendum on the establishment or ongoing use of Māori wards and Māori constituencies. This includes requiring a poll on any Māori wards and Māori constituencies established without a poll.</p>
	<p>The legislation does not directly impact Environment Southland. Council has appointed four mana whenua representatives to Committee roles, enabled under a different part of the Local Government Act 2002.</p>

Three Waters	
Local Water Done Well	<p>On 5 April, the Government made announcements on its replacement three waters policy, Local Water Done Well.</p> <p>Two Bills are expected. The first Bill, the Local Government (Water Services Preliminary Arrangements) Bill, is currently going through the select committee process. Public submissions on the Bill closed on 13 June 2024. It provides the framework and transitional arrangements for the new water services system, including a requirement for local authorities to submit a water services delivery plan within 12 months.</p> <p>The second will outline a regime of economic regulation and new structural and financial tools for councils, including a financially independent CCO. It will also set up the regulatory backstop powers referred to in the manifesto and consider the empowering legislation for Taumata Arowai. This Bill will be enacted in the middle of 2025.</p> <p>While there is little detail available regarding the planned CCO model, the Minister for Local Government has been reported as saying that he expected councils to join with at least two others to “dilute” the ownership of new CCOs. This and similar comments are motivating groups of councils to explore cross-council and cross-regional options for delivery.</p> <p>Local Water Done Well does not require any specific form of engagement with Mana Whenua. DIA’s guidance for water services delivery plans states that it will be up to councils to determine how best to engage with their communities as part of the development process.</p> <p>The policy apparently does not include financial support for councils either with infrastructure needs or with the cost of undertaking service delivery planning or making changes to delivery.</p>
	<p>The Joint Otago and Southland Mayoral Forum agreed in February 2024 to explore options for working together on water services delivery across the two regions.</p> <p>Otago and Southland Chief Executives have been jointly tasked with delivering a detailed scope of work, with timeframes still to be agreed. The scope of work will canvass options for assessing collaboration and shared services approaches as well as the implications of different entity/CCO models.</p>

Transport	
Transport Government Policy Statement (GPS)	<p>The Government Policy Statement (GPS) on land transport guides the NZ Transport Agency (NZTA), KiwiRail and local authorities on land transport investment. The Government released a final GPS in June 2024.</p> <p>It prioritises roads – including an overhauled Roads of National Significance programme – and reduced funding in real terms for public and active transport. The previous government had budgeted up to \$3.2b on public transport infrastructure and \$2.8b for public transport services over the next three years. The current Government has reduced this to \$2.1bn and \$2.3bn respectively.</p> <p>The GPS expects that local government will seek additional revenue from public transport fares and other third-party revenue.</p>
	The South Island Regional Transport Committee Chairs Group and the Otago and Southland Regional Transport Committees submitted on the draft GPS.

Other Infrastructure	
City/regional deals	<p>The Government has signalled interest in long-term city and regional deals as a way to partner with local government to create pipelines of regional projects and open the door to new funding mechanisms (for example tolls, PPPs).</p> <p>A new agency – the National Infrastructure Agency – is expected to play a key role in developing deals on behalf of Government.</p> <p>Officials are working to put together a suggested framework for future deals and Ministers have requested that regions wait until the framework is available before carrying out any work towards a possible deal. A first version of the framework is expected mid-2024.</p>
	This is a watching brief.

<p>Regional Infrastructure Fund</p>	<p>The National-NZ First coalition agreement includes a commitment to establish a Regional Infrastructure Fund (RIF) with \$1.2 Billion in capital funding over the Parliamentary term. The fund will be overseen by the Minister for Regional Development, Hon Shane Jones, and Minister for Infrastructure, Hon Chris Bishop.</p> <p>Budget 2024 includes details on the Fund, which provides a total of \$1.2b over four years. There are two main project categories for funding allocations: resilience infrastructure (“projects that improve a region’s ability to absorb, adapt and/or respond to stresses and shocks”) and enabling infrastructure (“shared services, innovations facilities and solutions that connect multiple businesses and communities”).</p> <p>Information from Kānoa (MBIE’s Regional Economic Development and Investment) on the fund states that “The RIF will create Crown regional assets, primarily through loan and equity investments, supported by grants in certain circumstances.” This is similar to Kānoa-administered funds of recent years, but differs from the Provincial Growth Fund (PGF, 2018-2021) which primarily offered grant funding.</p>
	<p>Environment Southland staff will consider any opportunities associated with the RIF as more information becomes available.</p>

9.5 Group Programme Update

Report by: Liz Devery, Regional Planning Manager

Approved by: Lucy Hicks, General Manager Policy & Government Reform

Rachael Millar, General Manager Strategy, Science & Engagement

Report Date: 31 July 2024

Purpose

This report is an update on the work being carried out by the Strategy, Science and Engagement Group and the Policy and Government Reform Group.

Summary

There are various projects progressing forward across the group from consultation to policy development.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Strategy and Policy Committee resolve to:

- 1 Receive the report – Group Programme Update.

Background

The Strategy, Science & Engagement Group are responsible for:

- Developing clear strategy, corporate plans and defined priorities
- Providing coordination and support for the management and successful performance of the organisation's key groups of activities/portfolios – air quality, biosecurity and biodiversity, climate change and community resilience, coast and marine, regional leadership, and water and land
- Leading the generation and reporting of data and insights
- Identifying and managing strategic relationships and partnerships
- Overseeing formal stakeholder and community engagement processes across the organisation
- Providing centralised communications functions
- Delivering science capability

The Policy and Government Reform Group are responsible for:

- Developing resource management and regional plan-making;
- Providing policy advice;
- Providing drafting leadership;
- Monitoring plan effectiveness;
- Managing the review of, and Council's response to, national direction and reform.

Matters of interest

Information about national and regional matters of interest is outlined below. Tables of current and future consultations are below.

National

Resource Management (Freshwater and Other Matters) Amendment Bill

This bill seeks to make a number of amendments to the RMA. These changes include the Te Mana o te Wai hierarchy, stock exclusion regulations, timeframes for mapping Significant Natural Areas, streamlining the process for creating national direction and providing a consenting pathway for coalmines. Environment Southland presented our submission to the Primary Production Select Committee on 17 July.

Climate Change response (Emissions Trading Scheme Agricultural Obligations) Amendment Bill

A new Bill has been introduced to parliament to amend the Climate Change Response Act 2022. The Bill seeks to keep agricultural emissions out of the emissions trading scheme.

The current Climate Change Response Act requires that agricultural processes begin to pay for emissions associated with the fertiliser and livestock that they process from 1 January 2025. Animal farmers will begin reporting their on-farm emissions from 1 January 2026 and paying for those emissions from 1 January 2027.

Regional

Transport planning – RLTP Update

The Otago Southland Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP) mid-term review process has now been completed. Council was presented a report to consider approving the submission of RLTP to NZTA in July. The due date for this to be completed is 1 August.

Proposed Gore District Plan

Hearing 3 of the proposed Gore District Plan is occurring on 22 July. Topics for this hearing are the Mana Whenua section and the Rural Zones (general rural, rural lifestyle and settlement zones). Environment Southland continues to present at the hearings and expand on points raised in the submission.

Local Water Done Well

Otago and Southland Councils have established a working group to explore collaboration and shared service opportunities for 3 waters infrastructure moving forward, while the Local Water Done Well work is progressing through government.

Fit with strategic framework

OUTCOME	CONTRIBUTES	DETRACTS	NOT APPLICABLE
Managed access to quality natural resources	X		
Diverse opportunities to make a living	X		
Communities empowered and resilient	X		
Communities expressing their diversity	X		

Attachments

1. 2024 July 24 - S&P Group Work Programme Update [9.5.1 - 6 pages]

Project / programme	Key objectives
Proposed Southland Water and Land Plan (pSWLP)	Completion of Environment Court hearings on the pSWLP appeals Topic B matters following mediation in 2021-22. Preparation for the future limit-setting plan change (Plan Change Tuatahi) to be notified.
Coastal Plan	Stage 2 includes discussion papers and workshops with Council and the TAMI Board on provision details. This further work will continue throughout 2024.
Air	A review of the Clean Air Loans Scheme. A further review of the Air Plan will be advanced once the revised NESAQ is released.
Hazards Management	Ongoing provision of hazard advice and support to communities. Work underway to automate advice.
Transport Management	Co-ordinate approach through the Combined Regional Transport Committees (RTCs). Manage stock effluent dumpsites across the Southland region. Completed development of new Regional Land Transport Plan.
Regional Policy Statement (RPS)	The RPS is being revised to include freshwater visions and implement the National Planning Standards.
Strategic Planning and Reporting	Including the Long-term Plan, Annual Plan and associated reporting, along with supporting tools such as a performance management and monitoring framework, insights programme, business planning tools and organisational strategies.
Climate Change and Community Resilience	The joint development and implementation of a Murihiku Southland Regional Climate Change Strategy with regional partners. A review of Environment Southland's Climate Action Plan.
Environmental Monitoring	Ongoing (and long-term) monitoring of the region's water, air, land and coastal resources.
Science Strategy and Investigations	Knowledge and strategic insights to facilitate good decisions.
Strategic Communications	Strategic communications relating to Environment Southland's activities and community engagement.

2023/2024 “Action ahead” summary

	Next milestones	Status	Relevant dates
1. pSWLP & limit setting	The majority of the provisions have been settled through the Court process. There remains a small number of matters that have not yet been resolved. The appeal relating to drainage maintenance is actively being worked on outside of the High Court process, with parties working towards an alternative means of addressing the various concerns.	In progress	Start 2024
	Staff are working towards a plan change that will implement the NPS-FM ahead of the statutory timeframe of 2027. In the interim, work will continue on reviewing the Water and Land Plan with the intention to make some changes to progress the Objectives set in the Plan in the first half of 2025.	In progress	April-2025
2. Coastal Plan	A Surface Water Activity Plan Change to address increasing intensification of activities in Fiordland. The provisions have been referred to the Minister for Conservation for approval of the provisions that have been accepted by Council.	In progress	August 2024
	Provision drafting for the RCP review continues using the substantial direction already received from councillors and TAMI Board members. Focussed conversations are continuing in relation to topics such as Fiordland and biodiversity.	In progress	Start 2025
3. Air	Council received and workshopped the Clean Air Loans Scheme (CALs) review reports in late 2023. It was resolved at the Strategy and Partnership Committee meeting on the 26 June 2024 to pursue an alternative approach to improving air quality in the region. The Clean Air Loans Scheme has been discontinued and staff are working with partner agencies on how this will be wrapped up, and to look at alternative options.	In progress	End 2024
4. Hazards Management	LiDAR capture for the region is complete. The raw data is available for technical users on the LINZ Data Service. For non-technical users, the data can be accessed in processed form in the following web applications, accessible from Beacon (https://maps.es.govt.nz/)	In progress	End 2024
	The Southland Natural Hazards Portal is live and will continue to be updated as further information is received. Existing town summaries are available for Winton, Wyndham, Lumsden and Limehills/Centre Bush.	In progress	Ongoing

	New town summaries are being developed for Otautau and Riversdale.		
5. Transport Management	The mid-term review of the Regional Land Transport Plan is complete	Complete	July 2024
6. RPS	Following the decisions in late 2022, the review of the Regional Policy Statement is focused on freshwater changes and is being developed as part of the freshwater management policy review process. Any potential changes identified as required through the Southland Coastal Plan Review process will also be considered.	In progress	End-2024
7. Strategic Planning and Reporting	Following the adoption of the 2024-34 Long-term Plan work is focused on its implementation and associated reporting. Work has begun on planning for the 2024/25 Annual Plan and further consultation on whether there is a local or regional rate to fund river management programmes. The 2023/24 Annual Report is under development with a three-week audit scheduled to commence in the week starting 19 August 2024. The Annual Report and associated audit report will be tabled at the Risk and Assurance Committee meeting on 9 October followed by it being adopted by Council on 23 October at an Extraordinary Meeting of Council.	In progress	Ongoing
8. Climate Change and Community Resilience	The Regional Strategy has been through a hearing process. The next steps will involve the strategy being adopted by each of the respective agencies. Phase two of the project is developing a framework for action.	In progress	Ongoing
9. Environmental Monitoring	Regular State of the Environment monitoring continues along with hydrological work and servicing of data requests.	In progress	Ongoing
10. Science Strategy and Investigations	Scientific work to inform and support policy development processes, advice and technical input into consent applications, compliance matters, submissions, national science projects, and working groups. In addition, state of the environment monitoring and science investigations continues. Key activities include: the delivery of Catchment Summaries that compile the available science information relating to freshwater and estuaries for each 'Reporting Catchment' (part of supporting PCT light), the Waiau River bioenergetic model, the Maitai overall allocation project, joint science and compliance investigations, project evaluations and reporting, and Waituna Lagoon monitoring, reporting and decision support.	In progress	Ongoing

11.Strategic Communications	Key activities include supporting community engagement at various events around the region and responding to emerging issues. The next Envirosouth is in development.	In progress	Ongoing
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Current, relevant initiatives open for consultation

Name of initiative	Lead agency	Due date	Description	Recommendation/action
Climate Change Response (Emissions Trading Scheme Agricultural Obligations) Amendment Bill	Primary Production Select Committee	28 July	Bill removes all agriculture from coverage of the NZ ETS (note He Waka Eke Noa was officially disbanded a few weeks back). https://bills.parliament.nz/v/6/9608f1d1-2216-4292-c788-08dc90c80755	Create a submission
Upcoming -				
Resource Management Act Amendment Bill #2	MfE	End of 2024	Current indications are that this Bill will likely include changes to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enable housing growth, including making the Medium Density Residential Standards optional for councils and secondary units – i.e. granny flats • speed up consenting timeframes for renewable energy and wood processing • support the government’s “Infrastructure for the Future” plan • speed up the process for making national direction under the RMA • amend national direction on highly productive land to allow more productive activities including housing • introduce emergency response regulations to enable effective responses to emergencies and contribute to long-term recovery. 	Watching brief
Consultation on proposals for inclusion in the next implementation plan for Te Mana o te Taiao – Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy and Aotearoa New Zealand's response to the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)	DOC	Late 2024	Consultation on proposals for inclusion in the next implementation plan.	Watching brief

Name of initiative	Lead agency	Due date	Description	Recommendation/action
Local Water Done Well Bill #2	TBC	December 2024	Framework for economic regulation and the more detailed powers and duties of the water CCOs (possibly including additional charging powers)	Watching brief
Integrated National Direction Package - RMA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend/replace NPS-FM • New Infrastructure National Direction • New NPS-FM 	MfE	Jan-March 2025	Priority content for this package likely to include replacing and rebalancing NPS-Freshwater Management, new infrastructure national direction, reviewing the existing NPS-indigenous biodiversity, and other national direction priorities. Work-Programme-for-Reforming-the-Resource-Management-System.pdf (environment.govt.nz)	Watching brief
New National Direction on Energy Infrastructure	MfE	TBC	Potential for New National Policy Statement on Renewable Energy Generation	Watching brief
Land Transport Management Act Amendment Bill	Ministry of Transport	TBC	Amending the Land Transport Management Act	Watching brief

9.6 Update on Councillor Requests and Actions

Report by: Mikayla Wass, Personal Assistant

Approved by: Rachael Millar, General Manager Strategy, Science & Engagement

Report Date: 4 July 2024

Purpose

This report captures Councillor requests and actions that have occurred during Strategy and Policy Committee meetings and provides an update on how these are being responded to.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Strategy and Policy Committee resolve to:

- 1 Receive the report - Update on Councillor Requests and Actions.

Report

The following table summarises requests from Councillors that have occurred in recent months:

Date	Councillor Request/Action	Update
November 2023	Action: To have a report presented at the next Climate Change sub-committee meeting on the 12-month work programme for meeting our emissions reductions targets.	This work is being progressed. The next Climate Change sub-committee is being held on 14 August 2024.
February 2024	Request: For a wetland development workshop with external experts.	Roger Hodson from the Waiau Fisheries and Wildlife Enhancement Trust spoke on this topic during the Waiau field-trip on 14 May 2024. Wetlands form part of the council workshop schedule and were last discussed on 12 June 2024. There will be further wetland discussions during the workshops over the coming month.
June 2024	Action: Staff to bring a more detailed report to a subsequent meeting on options for managing commercial forestry in Southland. Information to include regulation within the RPMP and any alternative changes/regulation that could be covered in W&LP, costs and timeframes.	This is being progressed as would be presented to a Strategy and Policy Committee meeting before the end of the year.

Attachments

Nil

10 Extraordinary/urgent business

No extraordinary or urgent business was notified.

11 Public excluded business | He hui pakihi e hara mo te iwi

In accordance with section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest/s protected by section 7 of that act, that the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely:

Confirmation of public excluded Strategy and Policy Committee minutes – 26 June 2024

The general subject matters to be considered while the public is being excluded, the reason for this resolution in relation to the matter, and the specific grounds for excluding the public, as specified by Section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 are set out below:

General subject matter	Reason for passing the resolution	Grounds under s.48(1)
Confirmation of public excluded Strategy and Policy Committee minutes – 26 June 2024	To prevent disclosure or use of official information for improper gain or advantage	S.7(2)(j)