



TAIRĀWHITI

REGIONAL FRESHWATER PLANNING ADVISORY GROUP

Wednesday 21 August, 2024

Hui #10 agenda, minutes, and actions

Held at Rose Room, Lawson Field Theatre, Gisborne at 9:00am

Advisory Group facilitator	Dr Jill Chrisp
Advisory Group members present	Stan Pardoe, Taylor Howatson, Colin Kerlake, Samuel Lewis, Joss Ruifrok, Jacob Harrison, Seanne Williams, Dave Hawea, Laura Watson, Leo Kelso, Bella Hawkins
Council	Ariel Yann le Chew, Sarah Thompson, Abi Wiseman, Paul Murphy, Katrina Ungco Ian Mayhew, Lois Easton, Wolfgang Kanz
Apologies	Alan Haronga, Mere Tamanui, George Horsfall, Shanna Cairns, Janic Slupski, Murray Palmer, Hannah Kohn, Owen Lloyd, Phil Gaukrodger, Tash Irwin

Agenda

Session 1 – General overview	
1. Karakia and whakawhanaungatanga	09:00
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome Housekeeping Minutes and actions from hui #9 	
Session 2 – Water Quality	
2. Feedback to date	09:10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation Questions 	
Leg stretch & cuppa tea	10:15
Session 3 – Water Quality	
3. Diffuse Discharges	10:25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation Group Discussion 	
4. Closing karakia	11:25
5. Shared lunch	11:30 – 12:30

Supporting documentation

- Report 1:** Water quality

Summary of actions

	Future Action *Refer to Parked List for summary		Current task
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Tasks to be actioned

Notes:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each task is allocated a unique identifier e.g. T2 for ease of reference • The numbering continues from previous meeting minutes 			
Task	Actions	Responsible	Due
T27	Circulate revised Expert Panel questions following feedback from members	Freshwater Team	TBC
T28	Provide details for upcoming public meeting on Land Overlay 3B.	Laura Watson	Actioned 22 August 2024
T29	Provide link to Land Overlay 3B map.	Freshwater Team	Actioned 22 August 2024
T30	Circulate case study on the effectiveness of Farm Plans on water quality (upload onto portal)	Freshwater Team	Actioned 28 August 2024

Minutes

Session 1 – General overview

1. The hui commenced at 9:00 with an opening karakia.
2. Minutes and actions from the hui held on 10 July 2024 were taken as read and accepted as an accurate reflection. Staff outlined housekeeping matters.
3. Staff reminded the group of the invitation to an additional afternoon session with Bridget Bosworth, GDC Hydrologist, to dive deeper into questions raised regarding the NIWA report “Flow requirements of Te Arai and Waipaoa Rivers”.
4. Staff have received feedback on the Expert Panel Questions from eight members. Staff will consider this feedback and circulate a revised list of Questions to the group in due course. The Expert Panel process is expected to commence in February 2025, so any further feedback on the questions is welcome over the coming months.
5. Staff provided an update regarding Task 19 (extending the invitation to identify any emerging topics that can be explored in more detail within a smaller group), noting that refining the scenarios to test with the Expert Panel and Quadruple Bottom Line assessment is top of mind and there is still an opportunity to shape this thinking.
6. Staff noted that the Waipaoa Catchment Planning Advisory Group expressed an interest in site visits relevant to the kaupapa. Tim Rhodes has invited members of the Waipaoa and Regional Advisory Groups to visit Tangihanga as an opportunity to see a wide range of land and water uses on a working farm. This is expected to be incorporated with the hui scheduled for November and members will be updated closer to the time.

Session 2 – Water quality feedback to date

7. Staff introduced the focus of this session on discharges: To recap discussions and thinking to date at a high level, and to seek any further input or questions from the group.
8. Staff recapped previous feedback from the group as summarised in **Report 1: Water quality and discharges to land and water** regarding the topics of Urban Stormwater, Wastewater

Overflows, Tile Drainage, Bore drilling / Managed Aquifer Recharge, Fertilizers and Solid Discharges, and Agrichemical Use and Contaminated Land.

9. Members raised the following additional points and questions on these topics:

Urban Stormwater

- a. Consider the role of educating people to do the right thing. Staff agreed this is an important component as we cannot rely on compliance, and it would sit alongside (not in) the Plan rules.
- b. Questioned the role and contribution of road run-off. Staff noted Stormwater catchment plans will focus on this issue.

Wastewater overflows

- c. GDC should be engaging with the Taumata Arowai project team about their Kaupapa (now includes wastewater) to ensure alignment with the TRMP where there's an overlap.
- d. Iwi have provided relevant recommendations to Taumata Arowai that may influence on Plan targets and timeframes.
- e. Consider how wastewater may factor into conversations about water supply.
- f. New developments that increase housing density should avoid increasing overflows. Staff noted that relevant rules sit in the land-use provisions.
- g. Staff clarified that when new plan provisions are introduced, existing consents will stand for now (many are issued for five or ten years), but some will have difficulty meeting new rules at renewal.

Tile Drainage

- h. There was some discussion around improving information and knowledge regarding tile drainage, with the following points raised:
 - i. Improving information should not be limited to mapping tile drains – research is required on the relationship between tile drainage and water quality.
 - ii. Staff noted science from NIWA showing that tile drainage speeds up the process of nitrates reaching waterways, turning it into a point source discharge rather than a filtered discharge.
 - iii. Causality is difficult to determine. For example, the introduction of tile drainage is linked to land intensification.
 - iv. Focus on the cause of the issues (Is tile drainage itself the issue to water quality? Or is what is being transported through the tile drainage system the issue to water quality?) – which may mean managing nitrate inputs rather than tile drainage. GDC is aware of HBRC work on this topic.
 - v. There is currently no record or mapping of tile drainage.
- i. Endorses a “bespoke” approach instead of one-size fits all approaches.

Bore Drilling / Managed Aquifer Recharge (MAR)

- j. Ensure that the TRMP does not create additional obstacle to MAR in further down the TRMP review.

Fertilizers and Solid Discharges

- k. The three-yearly audit process for Farm Environment Plans (FEPs) requires data collation that can inform rules. Staff noted that FEPs would be part of demonstrating compliance with Plan rules.
- l. Regarding a question about transfer stations, staff confirmed this is an industrial activity managed through land-use provisions.

- m. Transfer stations up the coast are well managed.

Agrichemical Use and Contaminated Land

- n. Opposition to the return of the contaminated Paokahu landfill land to Rongowhaakata when the lease expires.

On-site wastewater

- o. Innovative approaches for wastewater management in constrained areas are required. This should allow for community voice about what works, and recognize the compliance and maintenance burden on low socioeconomic communities.
 - p. One-size-fits-all approach is not suitable for rural communities.
 - q. Consider a simplified consent and compliance process for approved on-site wastewater systems, to reduce the excessive time and cost associated with the existing approach.
 - r. Question if the consent and compliance process can be simplified according to risk profiles, or using an agreed system.
 - s. Moving to a reticulated network entails significant cost and process, with constraints on funding. Support for consistent cost-distribution across the benefiting community.
 - t. People are not aware of their responsibility to maintain on-site wastewater systems.
 - u. Land Information Memoranda (LIMs) should be enhanced to incorporate all information about the property including associated future costs (e.g. on-site wastewater system maintenance, FEPs), to ensure informed investment decisions.
 - v. Consider the Mahia wastewater scheme as a positive example, with different payment structures to enable repayments.
 - w. Support for an approach that makes it easier to have on-site wastewater systems when the risk is low – recognizing that these can be really effective solutions.
10. The group paused for a morning tea break.

Session 3 – Water quality diffuse charges

11. Staff introduced the purpose of the session: To seek feedback on what we should be exploring for this region regarding diffuse discharges, as discussed in **Report 1: Water quality and discharges to land and water**.

Sediment

12. Staff sought views on the next 'big' manageable sources and priorities to focus on regarding sediment, other than the work currently underway to address the worst eroding land and the forestry plan change. Members raised the following points:
- a. Compliance is not there (e.g. in northern catchments).
 - b. Riparian revegetation needs to be the right type of plants.
 - c. Pest management is an important factor for hill country management and soil conservation, as pest browsers often devastate understory vegetation that is critical to hold the soil together.
 - d. There are strong financial incentives to shift land-use from farming to carbon forestry.
 - e. Comfort that proposals will help to address the issue.
 - f. Consider moving towards a system in which investment in land management is retrievable and outcomes are measurable. This highlights the importance of Land Information Memorandum.
 - g. There must be work on setbacks and fencing particularly in areas of intensification.

- h. The forestry harvest methods of mass clearance is where the issue arises – other places such as in Australia use selective harvesting, which has more costs but also benefits.
 - i. Focus should be on 'day-to-day' erosion as opposed to severe weather events (as less can be done about this).
 - j. A nuanced response is required in different catchments, but regional standards can be set.
 - k. Significant erosion is occurring within riparian margins, noting the destructive impact of deer on vegetation.
 - l. The Plan should recognize and incentivize practices that generate measurable outcomes, as reflected in Farm Environment Plans. Incentivization includes biodiversity credits, Emissions Trading Scheme.
 - m. Credit to GDC for opening the discussion around Land Overlay 3B to landowners.
 - n. There was some discussion around the connection between high sediment deposits and rising flood levels.
 - i. Member asked how sediment aggradation is measured and suggesting that sediment aggradation at the Waipaoa rivermouth has contributed to rising flood levels.
 - ii. Stopbank upgrade buys time, but this Group need to discuss how to manage sediment aggradation sustainably going forwards.
 - iii. Dredging may be required but need to consider the knock-on effects of transferring sediment from one place to another.
13. Staff noted that the regional provisions should provide the bottom line, with the localized nuance reflected in catchment-level plans with a seamless connection.

E.coli

14. Staff sought views on the priorities and regulatory approach to address elevated e. Coli levels. Members raised the following points:
- a. Learn from success stories for improving e.Coli.
 - b. Regionally e.coli levels are improving, starting from a low bar.
 - c. Addressing e.coli is difficult in hill country – priority should be to fence flat land, noting that in some cases this is cost-prohibitive particularly where it is likely to get washed out.
 - d. Solutions include fencing, planting the right type of filter vegetation alongside streams and addressing drain issues.
 - e. Dung-beetles provide a highly effective solution, with researched benefits in terms of soil drainage, nutrient cycling as well as managing e.coli levels.
 - f. Using eDNA as a tool to revitalize waterways.
 - g. Plan should be preemptive of farming intensification on Tūranga Flats.
 - h. Data collection and sharing is vital – consider how Council might integrate different plan requirements (FEPs, potential LO3B plans) in a way that supports the collection of key data.
 - i. In response to a question regarding how Farm Environment Plans have worked to date, staff noted that compliance has been positive with regards to development of plans but less so with their implementation.
15. Staff thanked members for their contributions. The next step is for staff to process the feedback received, noting the emphasis on focusing on the root issues, ensuring

implementation and considering the role of technology in how we manage compliance and data going forward.

Closing

16. The hui closed at 11:30am with a karakia and a shared lunch.

PARKING LIST

The following matters have been captured from discussions of the **TAIRĀWHITI REGIONAL FRESHWATER PLANNING ADVISORY GROUP** hui. They are captured here to be incorporated as supplementary recommendations in the Group's final report and/or responded to directly.

Ref	Item/Action	Date raised	Status
T21	Revisit discussion on beds of rivers and lakes.	13/12/23	To be discussed in Hui 12 in November 2024.