



# TAIRĀWHITI

## WAIPAQA CATCHMENT PLANNING ADVISORY GROUP

Hui #9 agenda, minutes, and actions

Wednesday 10 July, 2024

Held at Rose Room, Lawson Field Theatre, Gisborne from 12:30pm

<b>Advisory Group facilitator</b>	Dr Jill Chrisp
<b>Advisory Group members present</b>	Stan Pardoe, Grant Vincent, Nick Briant, Dave Hawea, Samuel Lewis, Shanna Cairns, Murray Palmer, Jacob Harrison, Tim Rhodes, Joss Ruifrok, Stuart Davis, Tim Tietjen, Owen Lloyd, Phil Gaukrodger, Tash Irwin (on behalf of Dianne Irwin), Judith Robertson (on behalf of Leo Kelso)
<b>Council</b>	Janic Slupski, Ariel Yann le Chew, Sarah Thompson, Abi Wiseman, Paul Murphy, Katrina Ungco Lois Easton, Adele Dawson
<b>Apologies</b>	Dianne Irwin, Alan Haronga, Bella Hawkins, Hannah Kohn, Leo Kelso

### Agenda

<b>Session 1 – General overview</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Karakia and whakawhanaungatanga</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome</li> <li>Housekeeping</li> <li>Minutes and actions from hui #8</li> <li>Recap of themes in hui #8 discussion</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
<b>Session 2 – Water Quantity in the Waipaoa Catchment</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Minimum flows and allocation blocks – Draft Policy Direction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Background context</li> <li>Group exercise</li> <li>Report back</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
<b>Session 3 – Water Quantity in the Waipaoa Catchment (cont.)</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Environmental Outcomes and Scenarios</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Background context</li> <li>Group exercise</li> <li>Report back</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Next steps, wrap up, closing karakia</b></li> </ol>

## Supporting documentation

- **Report 1:** Water Quantity in the Waipaoa Catchment – Minimum Flows and Allocation Blocks – Scenarios for Analysis
- Expert Panel Questions (circulate for written feedback, due end July 2024)

## 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"><li>• Each task is allocated a unique identifier e.g. T2 for ease of reference</li><li>• The numbering continues from previous meeting minutes</li></ul>			
Task	Actions	Responsible	Due
T23	Provide further estimates for reliability of minimum flows between 1300 and 1733 l/s.	Freshwater Team	21 August
T24	Provide proposed schedule for next year's meetings.	Freshwater Team	TBC
T25	Provide feedback on draft questions for Expert Panel.	All members	31 July

## Minutes

### Session 1: General overview

1. The hui commenced at 12.30pm with an opening karakia and whakawhanaungatanga.
2. The group accepted the draft minutes for the Hui on 29 May as an accurate reflection. The Facilitator outlined housekeeping matters.
3. Staff confirmed they will report back to the group at the next hui regarding an outstanding action, **Task 5: Organising site visits.**

### Session 2 – Minimum flows and allocation blocks – Draft Policy Direction

4. Staff recapped key points from Hui 8 regarding timeframes, priorities and transitioning to new water quantity provisions.
5. Staff set out proposed short-term (5 year) priorities as set out in **Hui 9 Report 1 - Water Quantity – Minimum Flows and Allocation Blocks – Scenarios for Analysis** (Report 1).
6. There was discussion questioning the grounds for increasing minimum flows in the short-term, with members raising the following points:
  - a. Other Councils are using Government's extension of timeframes for further research. Staff clarified that national freshwater regulations were in part designed to prevent Council's from not acting by requiring decisions based on best available information.
  - b. While the groundwater report is decent science, the NIWA report draws assumptions that are, in some members' opinions, wrong.

- c. Questioned the rationale for the proposed shorter timeframe for raising flows, which we have less science on, but longer timeframe for groundwater actions, which we have good science on.
  - d. The NIWA report is ambiguous on higher flows to protect ecological values, stating uncertainty about how low river flows affect environmental outcomes in New Zealand.
7. Staff noted there is further science work being planned to inform decisions, in particular via the Expert Panel. Time is required to bring supply into action, to mitigate effects and give effect to TMOTW and a range of values.
  8. In response to a member's question regarding the proposed allocation of B block flows for MAR, staff clarified that the current plan is neutral for different types of use, with staff proposing a more targeted plan. A "C block" could be considered, though would likely only be available for winter months, have sediment, and not be reliable enough for MAR.
  9. A member raised that water storage is expensive and needs to be able to be used more than once.
  10. Staff presented the medium and long-term priorities as set out in **Report 1**. Members split into three groups to discuss the following questions:
    - Have we correctly identified the key short and medium-long term direction on water quantity?
    - What changes would you make?
    - Are we missing anything critical around priorities?
  11. Transcribed feedback from group discussions is included in **Appendix 1**. Groups reported back the following points:

Group 1

- a. Undertaking further science on the effect of increasing minimum flows should be the highest priority.
- b. MAR should be done before above-ground storage to find out if it works or if not. It may shift surface-water takes to groundwater.
- c. Consider implications of climate change bringing more heavy rain events.

Group 2

- d. Support the proposals in principle, but concerned about the validity of data, noting the need to build caution around the direction of travel.
- e. Quality needs to be managed alongside quantity: Why constrain quantity if quality is main driver of ecosystem health?
- f. Part of the solution must include avoiding further degradation.

Group 3

- g. MAR needs to be a short-term priority. As well as allocating water, the plan needs to establish outcomes that are needed for a MAR scheme.
  - h. Wetlands are missing from priorities.
  - i. The focus should be on the Makauri aquifer ahead of the Waipaoa river.
  - j. Longer-term, we need a framework that supports and enables lots of solutions.
12. There was a plenary whiteboard session on priorities. Transcribed points are included at **Appendix 1**.
  13. The group paused for afternoon tea.

### Session 3: Environmental Outcomes and Scenarios

14. Staff reminded the group of the draft Environmental Outcomes that were set at a catchment and an FMU scale. Staff invited members to consider these environmental outcomes in the context of the discussions to date on water quantity issues, and if any amendments would be appropriate.
15. Staff set out next steps including the establishment of the Expert Panel, reminding members to provide feedback by the end of July on proposed questions for the Expert Panel (for both water quality and water quantity). The next hui will consider Action Planning and provide an update on the latest science work on native fisheries in the catchment.
16. Members split into three groups to consider the following questions for the draft scenarios for either the Waipaoa River, the Te Arai river or groundwater systems:
  - Are there any missing scenarios or alternatives?
  - How we might consider both supply and demand side measures within the scenarios?
17. Groups reported back the following points.

#### Group 1

##### *Outcomes*

- (a) Ecosystem Health should be considered for the whole catchment. It doesn't refer to water management.
- (b) Regarding irrigation / food production – "maintained" should be replaced with "retained".
- (c) Concerned how the natural form and character outcome may burden landowners.
- (d) In general, balance is important through environmental outcomes. Clear, realistic expectations are needed.
- (e) Questioned if there is a priority to indicator species.
- (f) Questioned what is meant by "abundant in their natural habitat", and if it should instead be trending / increasing.

##### *Scenarios*

- (g) Questioned logic behind scenarios:
  - a. While average days have been considered, it is important to look at maximum days.
  - b. The responsiveness of the river to cut-off flows is unclear. 1733l/s is a meaningless cut-off level, and it takes ~30 days to reach 1300l/s. More scenario estimates between 1300 and 1733l/s are required.
  - c. NIWA's logic of adding the take to the minimum flow only makes sense if flows are measured downstream of takes – but measurement occurs upstream.

#### Group 2

##### *Outcomes*

- (h) It is hard to improve Ecosystem Health in the Waipaoa River, but big gains can be made if we focus on tributaries. That has not come through in outcomes.
- (i) Wetlands have not come through well in catchment-wide outcomes.
- (j) Comfortable with Turanga FMU outcomes, but need to make it more clear through the outcomes that MAR needs to be prioritised.
- (k) A "Plan B" is needed for if MAR does not work. The backstop option is above-ground water storage, but this takes time and money.

- (l) Consider that Council historically purchased land to build an additional water supply, with the advantage of not having the sediment issue.

### Group 3

#### Outcomes

- (m) Mahinga kai means different things to different hapu / marae, but in general this outcome captures it.
- (n) Swimming outcome conflicts with the mahinga kai value with regards to timing and location.
- (o) Support Animal Drinking outcomes.
- (p) Mauri outcome needs wordsmithing – the restoration of wairua and connection between mauri and people is important.
- (q) An additional outcome is required around freedom of physical access, which is also important for monitoring and kaitiakitanga.
- (r) Group 3 did not discuss Tūranga Flats Environmental Outcomes.

#### Scenarios for Te Arai

- (s) Group 3 is comfortable with proposed scenarios, noting management and efficiency of use is important.

#### Closing

- 18. Members were reminded to provide feedback on Expert Panel Questions by the end of July. As the Expert Panel will take time, staff propose that the next few hui will run through the planning process, then more technical work will be completed to bring back in further sessions next year.
- 19. Staff thanked members for their contributions, and the session closed at 15:00 with a karakia.

### **PARKING LIST**

The following matters have been captured from discussions during the **WAIPAEOA CATCHMENT 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.

<b>Parking List</b>			
<b>Reference</b>	<b>Item/Action</b>	<b>Date raised</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>T5</b>	Organise site visits to discuss topic-specific catchment issues	12/7/23	Staff to report back on 21 August

## APPENDIX 1: TRANSCRIBED FEEDBACK FROM GROUP DISCUSSIONS AND WHITEBOARD DISCUSSION

### Session 2 – Minimum flows and allocation blocks – Draft Policy Direction

- Have we correctly identified the key short and medium-long term directions on water quantity?
- What changes would you make?
- Are we missing anything critical around priorities?

#### Group 1

##### Short term priorities

- Need to have MAR in the short-term priorities > don't push this out
- Need to both allocate water + place our effort + focus on developing MAR > both to stabilise the aquifer + provide new water
- Need to establish the outcomes required for a MAR scheme
- Support wetland development & use as storage mitigation
- Focus short term on Makauri aquifer ahead of Waipaoa River.

##### Long term priorities

- Make sure we provide for a mosaic of water options – reuse, storage, storage at a range of scales from the individual to community scale
- Waipaoa River should be in longer term priorities.
- Concerned about the reuse of water/wastewater. Where does this sit within this framework? AUD needs to be considered as part of the storage > needs to be in the priorities.
- Would potentially be better treated to a level to offset drinking supply.
- Could this water be used as a MAR water source?
- Need to give more consideration to stormwater reuse
  - Much easier to clean, could be stored
- Wastewater is a very reliable source of water
- Need multiple options not eggs in 1 basket
- Understanding natural flows of rivers > impacts of deforestation > naturalised low flows

#### Group 2

- Priorities – MAR has to come first
  - MAR might move WS to WG reducing pressure on river. Incentivize.
- Preference for MAR then above-ground storage.
- Let's fail fast if it doesn't work .
- Have a "net" number for aquifer recharge?
- C.C more heavy rain events so many flushing events ▲ high flow harvesting
- Point 8 highest priority .

#### Group 3

- Some questions around NIWA data
- Alternative is status quo
- Massive effect on community from reductions
- Can look at quality aspects first
- Would like to compare reliability
- 1300 at Kanakanaia > most takes below.
  - Need to see effect of use of water
- Suggest build caution into plan > need to be certain
- Need timely info
- Precautionary approach in proportion to level of understanding
- Community will need to adapt
- Quality needs (B-block needed to flush) to be managed at same time as quality

- Consider avoiding further depletion
- Groundwater approach is probably appropriate

### **Whiteboard Session on Water Quantity Priorities**

*Following the group break-out sessions, the following points were raised in a full group discussion:*

- Good Science
  - Understanding river system
  - MALF + CLF – relationship
- Storage > MAR other schemes
  - AUD
  - Wetlands
    - Quality
    - Quantity
- Focus on Groundwater first may help solve surface water
- Understanding E.Os. [Environmental Outcomes]
- Understanding low flows prior to deforestation
  - Understanding impacts of land use changes
  - Matauranga
- Hydrological model – e.g. Te Arai
- Integrated surface + groundwater model
- Give effect to equitable allocation

### **Session 2 – Environmental Outcomes and Scenarios**

Members split into three Groups to each discuss the following questions regarding the scenarios for either the Waipaoa River, the Te Arai River or Groundwater systems:

- Are there missing scenarios or alternatives you would suggest?
- How could we consider both supply and demand side measures within the scenarios?

#### **Group 1: Waipaoa River**

##### Outcomes

- Ecosystem health
  - Doesn't refer to water management
  - Is there a priority to indicator species?
  - Abundant vs. "Increasing"/"trending"
  - Need some balance
  - More realistic / clearer expectations > too fluffy
- Irrigation / Food production
  - Retain high levels of food production, recognize growth due to importance to the region. Not aspirational
- Natural form + Character
  - What is connection to waterways?
  - Concern about the burden of this for landowners

##### Scenarios

- Need to consider max days – more important
- 2: Not clear on environmental flows > responsiveness of the river to cut offs. 1,733 may not be the right flow.
- Scenario between 1300 to 1733.

## **Group 2: Te Arai River**

- Any cutoffs not ok
- Preference to protect health of waterways
- We all need to share
- Management is important > Better usage solve surrender

### Turanga Flats – Draft Environmental Outcomes

- Irrigation / food production – It's about best practice

### Environmental Outcomes

- Eco-health – ok
- Threatened species – ok
- Mahinga kai – looks ok does mean different things to different marae
- Swimming – timing + location
  - Kind of conflicts with mahinga kai + rongoa practices. Connection between clear water + kai
- Animal drinking – re-directly water makes sense
- Mauri – is the restoration of the wairua. Relationship awa-environment-tangata .
- Access to waterways – being able to go down to river, have freedom of access. Values are provided for to enable access. Important for monitoring + maintaining health. Encourage and enable kaitiāhitanga

## **Group 3: Groundwater**

### Scenario 4

Should we take a cut now to avoid severe cuts by 2045

- Strong concern that this would kill parts of the industry > need to be fast tracking recharge
- Key issue that the scenarios recognise a need for a fast pace of change
- Backstop option if MAR doesn't work is surface storage > Punanga Dam should be considered > could be a joint community and irrigation scheme
  - Would need a new pipeline via the whareratas.

### Catchment Wide Environmental Outcomes

- Struggle with w.q. vs ecosystem health > how do we improve the Waipaoa River when we can't plant trees on the banks
- Land use / sediment issues
- Need to focus environmental improvements on tributaries + that doesn't come through in the environmental outcomes
- Wetlands not recognised > could they be included within the flood scheme + outcomes

### Turanga Flats FMU Outcomes

E.O Sound right

- How to get there + balance across these
- Aquifer recharge should be prioritised as an environmental outcome
- Could explore potential of localised freshwater pockets being created in the saline aquifer (localised MAR at Manutuke)