



Ūawa Catchment Working Group

Meeting notes and actions

Hui 4 – 18 September 2024

Held at Tolaga Bay Fire Station at 09:30 AM

Chair	Pat Seymour
Working Group members present	Kel Blackman, Richard Powell, Andre Van Haandel, Phil Hope, Mere Tamanui, Victor Walker, Karauria Ratapu, Shaun Mitchel, Tim Jefferd, Tiahn Hooper, Desmond McGrannachan
GDC Staff and consultants	Janic Slupski, Ariel Yann le Chew, Dean Evans, Kerry Hudson Lois Easton, Kent Duston (Online)
Apologies	Horiata Raihania

Agenda

Session 1 – Freshwater	
1. Karakia and housekeeping <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apologies Previous minutes and actions – what we covered last time 	9.30 – 9.45
2. Recap process – values, outcomes, vision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirming FMUs, freshwater values Developing environmental outcomes, Long Term Vision 	9.45 – 11.00
3. State of environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where and what do we monitor? Current state and trends Baseline Attribute States (BAS), Target Attribute States (TAS) 	11.00 – 11.45
4. Wrap up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary of session Next steps – Action plans Thoughts, questions 	11.45 – 12.00
Lunch	12.00 – 12.30
Session 2 – Forestry	
5. Policy update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recap of harvest plan change Legislative update, policy update 	12.30 – 13.00
6. LO3B Transition workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recap Transition Advisory Group (TAG) Discussion 	13.00 – 14.15
7. Economic model – 4 wellbeing survey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline of survey approach Discussion 	14.15 – 15.15

8. Wrap up	15.15 – 15.30
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of discussion • Next steps • Thoughts, questions 	
9. Closing karakia	15.30

Supporting documentation

- Draft Hui 3 Official minutes
- Briefing paper: Vision, Values, FMUs and Environmental Outcomes
- Briefing paper: State of Environment, Baseline and Target Attribute States
- Supplementary Report: Baseline and Reference States
- Briefing paper: Proposed changes to legislation

Summary of actions

Future Action *Refer to Parked List for summary	Current task
---	--------------

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
U-T8	Provide digital copy of the wetland overlay (Ūawa catchment) to the Group	GDC	Actioned 27 September
U-T9	Provide Word version of Appendix 1: Draft Ūawa – Hikuwai FMU Values and Environmental Outcomes	GDC	Actioned 23 September
U-T10	Circulate the wellbeing survey briefing pack to the Group for feedback (Feedback due 25 September 2024)	GDC	Actioned 18 September

Minutes

Welcome and housekeeping

1. The hui commenced with a karakia at 9:40 AM. The Chair welcomed the Group and noted apologies.
2. The Chair led the discussion on the draft Hui 3 minutes. Members sought to add item 24.3 and amend item 15. The Group accepted the proposed amendments to the draft Hui 3 minutes for finalisation.

Session 1: Freshwater

3. Staff introduced the agenda for the day. Staff recapped the freshwater catchment planning process, which follows the National Objectives Framework to develop a catchment plan for the Ūawa catchment.
4. Staff recapped the forestry planning process to date, where the conversation in the afternoon session to cover the work that is currently underway with the Transition Advisory Group (TAG) and updates on the economic model work.

Long Term Vision

5. Staff explained that setting a Long Term Vision in a catchment plan is a requirement under the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM) 2020. Staff introduced

the draft Long Term Vision prepared for the Ūawa catchment, drawing largely on the Uawanui Project vision but with a freshwater lens.

6. The draft Long Term Vision is set for 30 years. The rationale for this timeframe is it includes a generation. However Long Term Vision in other catchments have different timeframes, such as the Mōtū catchment's Long Term Vision set for 50 years.
7. Members split into two groups to discuss the draft Long Term Vision. Feedback from the groups are recorded in **Appendix 1**.
8. The Group then paused for morning tea.

Freshwater Management Unit, Values, Environmental Outcomes

9. The session resumed with staff recapping the 2-Freshwater Management Unit (FMU) suggestion, adopted at Hui 3, for the Ūawa catchment. The 2 FMUs are:
 - 9.1. The Ūawa – Hikuwai FMU.
 - 9.2. The Mangahauini FMU – where further conversation with the whanau at Tokomaru Bay is still pending.
10. Staff have drafted Environmental Outcomes for values identified for the Ūawa – Hikuwai FMU. Each identified value must have environmental outcomes, which are important to achieve the Long Term Vision.
11. Similarly, staff have also drafted Environmental Outcomes for the compulsory NPS-FM values and the Tairāwhiti-wide values.
12. Comments on the draft Environmental Outcomes are recorded in **Appendix 2**.
13. The Group also discussed the following questions:
 - 13.1. What are the terms should we use: tangata whenua or mana whenua?
 - 13.2. Is it kaitiaki or kaitieki?
14. Discussion on item 13.1 includes:
 - 14.1. If tangata whenua should also include pakeha landowners/residents of the Ūawa catchment, or should tangata whenua only be used to refer to Māori.
 - 14.2. A member points out that caution is needed with the definition of tangata whenua under the current political climate.
 - 14.3. The Group collectively agreed that further discussion/workshop is needed on the definitions for tangata whenua and mana whenua, with the aim for consistency throughout planning documents.
15. For item 13.2, members note the use of kaitieki. Staff shared that this is the same with Tūranga iwi.
16. Staff asked that the Group to email their feedback on the draft Long Term Vision and draft Environmental Outcomes.

Water Quality – Baseline Attribute State, Reference State, Target Attribute State

17. Staff explained that Council currently collects water quality information at 2 State of Environment (SOE) monitoring sites – one at Hikuwai River, one at Mangaheia River. Ecosystem health is monitored at 6 further sites in the catchment area. There are gaps in understanding the environmental state of the Ūawa catchment area, but the known results are not too different from other catchments in the region.
18. Staff introduced and explained the difference between:

- 18.1. **Baseline Attribute State**, which the NPS-FM defines as the state of the water quality as of September 2017. The result uses a 5-year data set.
 - 18.2. **Reference State**, which is modelled data showing the state of water quality pre-land clearance.
 - 18.3. **Target Attribute State**, what we want water quality to be like in the future. This includes interim targets.
19. In the Ūawa catchment, the baseline state for water quality:
- 19.1. **Nutrient** – fairly good, not likely to be a major problem
 - 19.2. **Sediment** – poor, below the National Bottom Line for the Hikuwai River
 - 19.3. **E. coli (Bacteria)** – poor, below the National Bottom Line for the Mangaheia and Hikuwai Rivers
 - 19.4. **Macroinvertebrate health** – poor, below the National Bottom Line for 4 sites and in the C Band for 4 sites.
20. Staff explained that, even when compared with the modelled data from the Reference State, macroinvertebrate health will still be poor in large rivers. This is because the rivers would have been poorly shaded and still had sediment input from the soft geology of the catchment. This is true for all reference sites in the region – Waingake, Waihirere, Matawai conservation – where macroinvertebrate health was found to be B Band.
21. Staff noted that the reduced E. coli levels could be attributed to land use change from farming to forestry and improvement in farming practices. Staff recommended undertaking Faecal Source Tracking in the catchment to understand the proportion of the different E. coli sources. Sources include pest species, human, cattle, domestic pets.
- 21.1. When asked how frequent forestry companies undertake pest control in their forests, a member working in the forestry sector responded that they do pest control annually.
22. The Group had a lunch break at 12:05 PM.

Session 2: Forestry

Policy update – Forestry regulation

23. The Group reconvened after lunch at 12:37 PM.
24. Staff provided an update on the proposed legislative changes for the Group's awareness:
- 24.1. **Removal of stringency test** (regulation 6(1)(a), National Environmental Standards for Commercial Forestry (NES-CF) 2023) – this may affect Council's ability to introduce more stringent provisions than the NES-CF.
 - 24.2. **Changes to slash management** (regulation 69, NES-CF) – the implied changes have raised uncertainty on how slash should/will be managed in the region. There needs to be a consistent and reasonable approach to management.
 - 24.3. **Pause on Freshwater Farm Plans (FWFPs) rollout for amendment to the FWFP system** – government is keen to roll out FWFP that is less costly and robust system. Implementing Farm plans (either the FWFP or the existing Farm Environment Plans) and Catchment Forestry Plan (CFP) is an opportunity for meaningful change in our region.
25. In response to the definition of residual slash on the slide covering item 23.2, a Group member pointed out that there is a difference between slash and residual slash.

26. Staff explained that Council has two roles in implementing change:
- 26.1. **Regulatory pathway** – through the forestry harvest plan change, freshwater catchment plans, the wider Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan (TRMP) review.
 - 26.2. **Non-regulatory pathway** – involves the Land Overlay 3B feeding into the TAG discussions, which in turn informs the development of a digital dashboard showcasing the effects of FWFP/FEP and CFP in a catchment. This catchment information will then allow Council to develop a Catchment Master Plan as part of applying for governmental funding.
27. Comments on the regulatory and non-regulatory pathways for change include:
- 27.1. Clarification if Land Overlay 3B is incorporated into the TRMP, not only a tool to inform Transition solutions – staff confirms that this is still the case as part of the second phase of the TRMP review.
 - 27.2. The non-regulatory pathway is not too dissimilar to what was done back when the Catchment Board was still operative.
28. Staff shared that the Te Arai Catchment Group have mobilised and engaged a consultant to develop a dashboard for Te Arai Catchment. The dashboard looks to provide a better picture of land use in the catchment, how the hydrology changes when different proportion of land use is in place. The dashboard also helps to calculate the cost and benefits of different options or scenarios of land use types.
29. The development of a dashboard for Te Arai is a pilot, but staff is keen to introduce this pilot into the Ūawa catchment too. Should the pilots in Te Arai and Ūawa are successful, then this can be applied broadly across the region.

Transition Advisory Group (TAG)

30. Staff introduced the purpose of the TAG, which is a group of people with local expertise and knowledge coming together to discuss and identify options for transitioning land identified as Land Overlay 3B out of existing land use and into permanent vegetative cover.
31. The Group meets on a monthly basis. The membership includes tangata whenua, forestry interests, pastoral farming interests, indigenous vegetation expertise and community.
32. Staff noted that a key output of the TAG is to develop a Transition Guide. A draft table of contents for the Transition Guide is as follows:
- 32.1. **Chapter 1 Objectives and transition outcomes** – scene-setting, key outcomes the guide is trying to achieve, how does TAG sit with other regulatory and non-regulatory programmes.
 - 32.2. **Chapter 2 Potential land use scenarios you could transition from and to** – includes typology of existing scenarios, supported by images.
 - 32.3. **Chapter 3 Land use transition planning** – Making the most of existing industry/sector plans, what are the issues or challenges that need to be resolved.
 - 32.4. **Chapter 4 Transition budget, resourcing and timeframes** – guidance on the funding, management, resourcing and timeframes that are likely needed.
 - 32.5. **Chapter 5 Barriers to land use transition** – includes identifying and resolving challenges that will negatively impact transitioning.
 - 32.6. **Chapter 6 Transition implementation (doing the transition mahi)** – putting the plan in action.

- 32.7. **Chapter 7 Funding opportunities and incentives** – the funding options or incentives that are currently available, how they may be operationalised/administered.
- 32.8. Appendix 1 Transition case studies**
- 32.9. Acknowledgements.**
33. A Group member asked that the TAG would also discuss, as part of the TAG agenda, about funding, levers in the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS).
34. Staff presented to the Group on a presentation previously done at the July 2024 4-day forestry consent condition Council-Forestry sector workshop (see the PDF slides '23 July 2024 – Connectivity KNH' on the portal).
35. The main points of the presentation are:
- 35.1. **Council needs to use a new identification system for the morphometric landslide susceptibility-to-stream connectivity modelling** – not classes (as used in the Land Use Classification) nor colours (as used in the Erosion Susceptibility Classification Risk Zones).
- 35.2. Staff suggested using a series of letters for the morphometric landslide susceptibility-to-stream connectivity modelling. Example: High landslide susceptibility and high connectivity to stream would be labelled as **HH**.
- 35.3. Other considerations include the river bed level trends and associated bank erosion, and deep-seated slump movements.
- 35.4. While the field verification of the morphometric landslide susceptibility-to-stream connectivity modelling is underway, staff found that while comparing the model overlay on aerial images show that the model is quite accurate. Staff demonstrated by showing the Group several aerial images with the overlay of the model and the gully overlay (completed by Dr Mike Marden).

Economic model

36. Consultant provided an update on the wellbeing survey, where the information will be used to generate dollar-equivalent valuations for the non-monetary values (such as social and environmental wellbeing) in the economic model. This is a methodology called shadow valuation.
37. The economic model will be used to inform the financial implication (both positive and negative) on monetary and non-monetary values from the forestry harvest plan change.
38. The wellbeing survey references the [Tairāwhiti wellbeing framework](#). Questions start from high level and then narrowed into Ūawa catchment specific questions. The survey takes about 10 minutes to complete.
39. Consultant proposed two ways to carry out the surveys:
- 39.1. **Online survey**, to be hosted on SurveyMonkey. Consultant hopes that the Group will help to test out the survey.
- 39.2. **In-person survey**, recruit a local team to carry out surveys in Tolaga Bay and Tokomaru Bay. The team will be paid to carry out the surveys. Training will be provided.
40. Consultant showed a sample of the survey questions. The full list of survey questions will be included in the wellbeing survey briefing pack to be circulated for the Group's review.
41. Comments about the wellbeing survey include:
- 41.1. That the valuations should be done on a regional level and not national level.

- 41.2. When collecting information through the survey, that consultant and Council will ensure data privacy are well-protected.
 - 41.3. The survey questions should be tailored to different groups of people. For example, questions for contractors or those who work in the forestry sector should be different from questions posed to someone working in a school or dairy.
42. Consultant will circulate the wellbeing survey briefing pack to the Group for feedback. Feedback is due no later than 25 September 2024. Consultant will then refine the wellbeing survey according to the collated feedback received.

Closing, next steps

43. Staff thanked the Group for their interests and contribution for the day. The Chair invited the Group to share their thoughts of how the hui went.
44. The hui closed with a karakia at 3:24 PM. Hui 5 is scheduled on 15 October 2024.

Appendix 1: Discussion on draft Long Term Vision

Draft Long Term Vision

Freshwater in the Ūawa Catchment is the lifeblood of the whenua from the smallest puna to the largest awa. The catchment is cared for by kaitiaki in accordance with the traditions, ancestral practices and tikanga of tāngata whenua who retain their strong connections to the waterways. Over the next 30 years:

- a. *Changes in landuse practices mean that steep and unstable parts of the catchment are protected by forests that reduce erosion and improve the level of sedimentation of waterbodies;*
- b. *Riparian areas and wetlands throughout the catchment are restored in a network of habitat areas and linkages within a supportive agriculture and forestry production system;*
- c. *Freshwater plants, animals and ecosystems are a focus of restoration resulting in improved ability to support food gathering and mahinga kai;*
- d. *Water quality within the catchment is maintained or improved to a level that supports the health of people;*
- e. *Culture, traditions, access and whakapapa links to wai are revived enabling the people of the catchment to retain their identity;*
- f. *The mauri of wetlands, rivers and springs are maintained, or restored to a standard that provides for the relationship of tāngata whenua to wai; and*
- g. *Everyone who lives and works in the catchment is acknowledged for their role in enhancing the health of the wai.*

Group 1

- Want to see the vision reviewed every 10 years
- Change riparian/wetlands to freshwater bodies
- Culture etc are still active
 - Not revived but maintained & enhanced
- **(bullet item f)** mana and mauri of wetland + taonga tuku iho
- **(Add bullet item h)** Te Tiriti o Waitangi
 - Could be a front end
- **(bullet item a)** For the word “forests”, needs permanent vegetation but may not be forests as we now know
- Also need to clarify what plan for “forest” is
 - Protection may be use “permanent vegetation” instead
- Want some reference to hapu + iwi Iwi Management Plans. Will identify taonga etc.
 - Could be “planning documents”
- Vision needs to be reviewable
 - Want to see some differences in 10 years
 - Need to reflect the effects that we see from the actions taken
- Want something that reflects protecting infrastructure like bridges + access

- Drainage + other activity can undermine this
- Needs to support waterways
- Need planned, programmed maintenance of infrastructure, not reactive
- Health of awa relies on landowners working together include waka Kotahi, communities, government bodies coming together
- Relationships + trust
- Need to apply bespoke solutions, not 1 size fits all
- Recognise a mosaic landscape is needed
- Link between high country landowners + downstream impacts
- May need to be a longer term
 - So rather than 30 years, because time to do some of this action
- Needs to be staged
 - What will we see in 10-15 years
- Need to be considerate of opportunities for evaluation + enable us to pivot
- Should see true integration of exotics with natives + a more self managing system
- Concerned when big areas going into forestry monoculture
- Need a specific definition for “permanent vegetation”
- Need to recognise even with permanent vegetation still get impacts of massive events
 - Still need mitigations from our soft geology
- Need to recognise pest control + active management is needed for permanent vegetation areas, as there is significant sedimentation that comes from loss of understory.

Group 2

- 30 year – iteration need
- Project too short – 100 years?
 - Uawanui was 100 year
 - 100 = reasonable timeframe
- 100 years – monitoring can get traction
- Depends on lifecycle of what you’re doing, e.g. totara
- 100 year – regeneration will take that amount of time
- **(bullet item b and f)** Shorter and broader
 - Perhaps join these two items?
- Need to find balance that is acceptable to everyone
- LO3B – established thriving protects and enhances waterways + ecosystem health
- On areas 40 year regeneration – we have some of the best water
- Kaitiaki – used to be used in the other way.
 - Water looked after us

- Water improved while forestry was growing.
- Forestry is managed in a way that mitigates effects
- Everyone has a role to play – responsibility
- Don't agree with “acknowledged for”
 - Everyone has a role – obligation
- Economic model that supports community
 - Ecosystems supported.
- Dry gullies have to be considered
- Land has to be looked at holistically
- Birdlife, bird song, flourishing water ways, great habitat – economy that can support
- Resilient catchment
- Townships protected from storms + climate change effects
- **(bullet item b)** add infrastructure

Appendix 2: Discussion on draft Environmental Outcomes

Feedback at hui (Ūawa – Hikuwai FMU Specific values)

Kaitiekitanga

Value	Environmental Outcome
Kaitiekitanga is the obligation of tangata whenua to preserve, restore, enhance, and sustainably use fresh water for the benefit of present and future generations.	Everyone who lives and works in the catchment is acknowledged for their role in enhancing the health of the environment and downstream water quality

Responses:

- Certainly cultural obligation
- Inherent right
- Question if the word “obligation” is correct – either cultural obligation or guardianship
- Key point is that everyone has responsibility
- The value statement doesn’t match with the intent of the environmental outcome – value only notes tangata whenua who’s responsible, but environmental outcome notes everyone

Feedback at hui (NPSFM values)

Natural Form and Character

Value	Environmental Outcome
<p>Waterways within the Ūawa – Hikuwai FMU are valued for their natural form and character. While some parts of the FMU are highly modified, the headwater areas are relatively unmodified and able to express natural processes and patterns. Matauranga Māori through placenames and history contribute further to better understanding of natural form and character in place.</p> <p>Matters contributing to the natural form and character of an FMU are its biological, visual and physical characteristics, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - its biophysical, ecological, geological, geomorphological and morphological aspects 	<p>The natural processes, connectivity to riparian areas and wetlands of waterbodies in the Ūawa – Hikuwai FMU is retained and supported by a return to more natural rates of erosion.</p> <p>The resilience of waterways and riparian areas to mitigate impacts of climate change/ higher and more frequent rainfall is strengthened.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the natural movement of water and sediment including hydrological and fluvial processes - the natural location of a water body and course of a river - the relative dominance of indigenous flora and fauna - the presence of culturally significant species - the colour of the water - the clarity of the water. 	
---	--

Responses:

- Consider gully erosion – can’t put it back into the bag
 - Perhaps qualifier is that erosion is an ongoing process

Transport and Tauranga Waka

<p>Value The Ūawa River and parts of the Hikuwai and Mangaheia Rivers have places to launch waka and appropriate places for waka to land (tauranga waka).</p>	<p>Environmental Outcome The waka culture of the Tolaga Bay community continues and is able to thrive.</p>
--	---

Responses:

- Include consideration of water ski/jet ski
- Consideration of biosecurity risks

Fishing

<p>Value The numbers of kanae (mullet), inanga (whitebait) and tuna (long fin eel) are sufficient and suitable for people to consume.</p>	<p>Environmental Outcome The Ūawa River continues to support healthy populations of fish for fishing.</p>
--	--

Responses:

- Add “can be supported by riparian margins and fencing” to the environmental outcome

Animal Drinking Water

Value	Environmental Outcome
--------------	------------------------------

Water quality and quantity meets the needs of farmed animals, including where it is palatable and safe.	Stock are able to access safe and healthy drinking water, while not impacting on other values of the FMU.
---	---

Responses:

- The environmental outcome should be reworded to “drinking water is provided for stock”
 - Enabling access implies that stock can access waterways without regard to E. coli levels
- Should enable the ability to take water at certain times of the year – which would include supporting reticulation

Missing values:

- The interaction/impact of coastal waters on rivers and groundwater
 - Groundwater found to become increasingly saline
 - Tidal impact on freshwater where the river meets the coastal waters
- Ki uta ki tai
 - Staff notes that work is underway to embed ki uta ki tai (and Te Mana o Te Wai) as the overarching framework in the Regional Policy Statement
- Economics
 - Staff notes this has been captured in the NPSFM values
- Waste management
 - Need to fit this as value and environmental outcome somewhere
 - Starting with what’s coming down waterways
 - Septic waste – dealing with it within the catchment rather than transporting the waste to be dealt in someone else’s rohe