



Waiapu Catchment Technical Advisory Group

Hui 1 - Report 1 – Scope of Waiapu Catchment Plan

1.0 Introduction

This paper outlines key information about the scope of the Waiapu Catchment Plan. It introduces some key terminology that Advisory Group members will need to become familiar with, and includes an indicative programme of work for the roopu.

2.0 Waiapu Catchment Plan as part of the Joint Management Agreement

Council and Te Runanganui o Ngāti Porou (TRONPNui) are jointly developing the Waiapu Catchment Plan under the Waiapu Joint Management Agreement (JMA). The catchment plan is also likely to be a key driver of actions to implement Waiapu Koka Huhua – the 100 year project to restore the Waiapu Catchment, subject to the Waiapu Accord between TRONPNui, Council and the Crown.

The JMA and Waiapu Koka Huhua each have specific agreements in place around governance and decision making. TRONPNui and Council staff report jointly within this governance framework.

3.0 National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS – FM)

The Waiapu Catchment Plan is being prepared under the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020 (NPS-FM 2020).

Te Mana o Te Wai

Te Mana o te Wai has been part of the NPS-FM since 2014, though there's been changes introduced in 2020 to provide stronger direction on how Te Mana o te Wai should be applied when managing freshwater.

Te Mana o te Wai, directly translated, can be interpreted as the 'status of the water' - recognising the vital importance of water. Te Mana o te Wai thus refers to the inherent authority and integrity of water. It recognizes water as a taonga and acknowledges its vital role in sustaining all forms of life. It further emphasizes the holistic wellbeing of water bodies, including their ecological health, cultural significance, and the ability to meet the needs of present and future generations.

It expresses the special connection all New Zealanders have with freshwater - it ensures the health and wellbeing of the water is protected first and foremost, and human health needs are provided for, before enabling other uses of water.

The current government has signalled that it has plans to amend the NPS – FM and it is speculated that the provisions around Te Mana o Te Wai are likely to be weakened. However at this point in time Council is proceeding to develop its catchment plans with Te Mana o Te Wai being a strong driver of priorities, recognising the direction of the Tairāwhiti community.

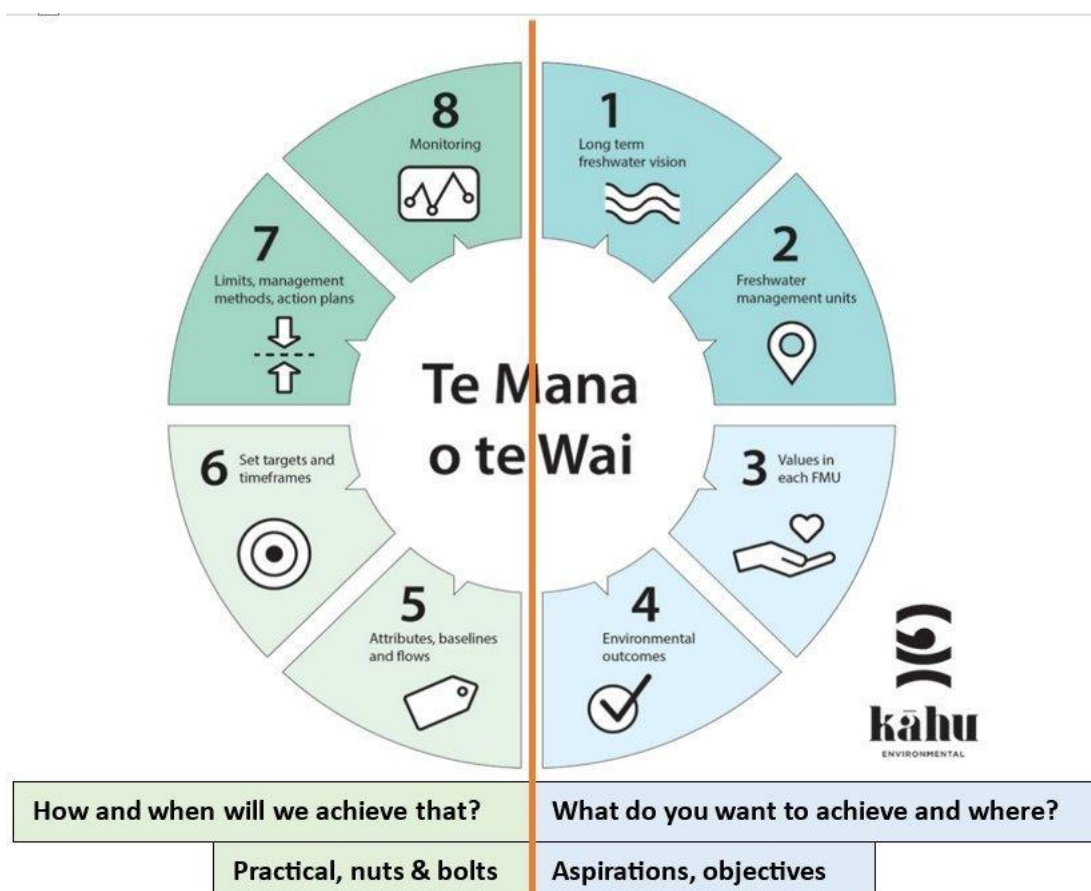
Through the development of the Waiapu Catchment Plan, Council and TRONPNui will determine how Te Mana o te Wai is applied within the catchment in the management of freshwater.

The two partners have been working together to develop the catchment plan for several years. This has involved undertaking research, creating a background document, engaging with hapū through hui and holding a public meeting in Ruatorea over 2022-2023. A draft Vision, Values, Environmental Outcomes and Attributes for monitoring these Environmental Outcomes were developed through this process.

NPS – FM Process

The **NPS – FM** has a very prescriptive set of requirements of what must be included in a catchment plan, known as the **National Objectives Framework (NOF)**.

There are two phases – firstly identifying what is important in the catchment and setting the vision and direction, and secondly setting out how the vision and direction will be achieved. This is shown in the graphic below:



The key parts of the NOF and the timeframe to undertake this work are set out in the table below.

NOF aspect	What is this?	Status and Next Steps
Set a long term vision for freshwater	<p>The long-term vision must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect long term wishes of community and tangata whenua for the waterbodies and freshwater ecosystems • Include a timeframe • Be ambitious but realistic • Recognise interactions between freshwater, land, waterbodies, ecosystems and receiving environments • Link to the environmental outcomes <p>The vision is required to be included in the Tairāwhiti Regional Policy Statement as an objective (s).</p>	<p>A draft vision has been developed.</p> <p>This will be discussed in Hui 1.</p>
Identify Management Areas	<p>Management Areas breakdown the catchment and provide a framework for developing specific policy/rules as well as the action plan.</p> <p>Management areas reflect that there are different issues, activities and communities of interest in the catchment.</p>	<p>Four management areas are proposed based on rohenga tipuna.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offers framework for consenting process (who to talk to). • Policy will direct how management areas are applied.
Identify Values for the catchment	<p>There are Nationally compulsory values (Ecosystem health, Human Contact, Threatened Species and Mahinga Kai), as well as other National values, Tairāwhiti – specific values, and Waiapu-specific values. For each value an environmental outcome must be set and the catchment plan is developed to achieve the environmental outcomes.</p>	<p>Draft Values have been identified. These will be discussed in Hui 1.</p>
Set Environmental Outcomes for each value	<p>Environmental Outcomes set out what the Plan is required to achieve. Policies, Rules and Actions must be set to achieve environmental outcomes.</p>	<p>Draft Environmental Outcomes have been identified and will be workshopped in Hui 1 and further discussed in Hui 2.</p>
Set objectives	<p>These will be in the Regional Plan, and are usually a summary of the environmental outcomes.</p>	<p>To be drafted once Environmental Outcomes are confirmed and will be discussed in Hui 2.</p>

Identify attributes for each value and identify baseline states	Attributes are what we use to measure progress in achieving the catchment plan. Baseline attribute states are what we are measuring from – generally what the catchment was like in September 2017. Examples of attributes are: ammonia levels, E.coli (bacteria) levels.	Draft attributes have been developed and will be discussed in Hui 3.
Set target attribute states	Set targets for what we are trying to achieve in relation to the attribute states. Includes timeframes.	Hui 4 discussion
Set environmental flows and limits – water quantity	Determines how much water can be taken from waterbodies and when water takes must stop. Includes groundwater, rivers, lakes, wetlands and springs.	Hui 5 discussion
Set environmental limits – gravel	Determines how much gravel can be taken from rivers, locations where gravel cannot be taken, and minimum bed levels for taking gravel.	Hui 5 discussion
Set Waiapu Specific policy and rules	Policies and rules for Waiapu specific issues where proposed Regional Plan provisions are not sufficient.	Hui 6 discussion
Identify water quality and flow monitoring sites	Locations where attributes are monitored and limit setting is located.	Hui 7 discussion
Outstanding waterbodies	Specific requirement to identify any outstanding waterbodies. Regional criteria have been developed for Tairāwhiti.	Hui 7 discussion
Location of habitats of threatened species	Specific requirement to identify any habitats of threatened species.	Hui 7 discussion
Location of natural inland wetlands	Desktop study completed. Work is underway to refine this.	Hui 7 discussion
Development of Action Plans	Specific actions that will be taken to achieve environmental outcomes. Can be actions undertaken by the Council, TRONPNui, hapū, whanau, landowners or other interests. A combination of the implementation of the Rules and Action Plan should be expected to achieve the Environmental Outcomes.	Hui 6 and Hui 7 discussion Likely to set a work programme for Waiapu Koka Huhua

4.0 Hearings and Decisions Process

The NPS-FM sets out a special “freshwater process” for hearings and decisions. This means that while TRONPNui and Council are preparing the catchment plan, hearings on submissions and decisions will be made through this “freshwater process”. The Council and TRONPNui will be able to nominate a freshwater commissioner to the panel that hears submissions, but most of the panel members will be specialist independent freshwater commissioners, not familiar with the issues and kaupapa of Tairāwhiti. **This means that the Waiapu Catchment Plan needs to be clearly explained and justified so that this panel of commissioners can understand why we propose the provisions that we include.**

Because of the JMA there is a certain amount of additional national interest in the catchment plan and it's likely that some large out-of-region organisations are likely to be interested in the catchment plan and any precedents that it might set.

This should not influence the Plan development but does mean we need to be careful to ensure that what we include in the Plan is sufficiently justified by evidence and cost-benefit analysis.

5.0 Role of the Advisory Group

This Advisory Group is not a decision-making group. It is intended as a technical roopu of individuals with knowledge of the catchment and its freshwaters and has been brought together to provide input into the development of the catchment plan. It is acknowledged that the roopu is not a “representative” group – and that the engagement with the roopu must be supplemented by wider community and hapū consultation.

The NPSFM has many complex technical requirements that are difficult for lay people to understand. It is hoped that this Advisory Group can become more familiar with the technical requirements of the NPS – FM and thereby provide input with their knowledge and experience of the catchment.

6.0 The Waiapu Catchment Plan Area

The Waiapu Catchment Plan area includes the Waiapu Catchment and all the coastal catchments from Kotonui Head to Waikori Bluff and includes Waipiro Bay, Whareponga, Tupuroa and Reporua. The Catchment Plan area is shown on the map over.

A technical background document has been prepared which describes the catchment plan area in detail and the issues identified within it. While this background report is a couple of years old, it represents a good summary of the understanding of the state of the environment in the catchment and some of the key matters that the catchment plan will need to address.

Advisory Group members are asked to familiarise themselves with the background document.

