



# REGIONAL FORUM

People Water and Land – *Te Mana o te Tangata, te Wai, te Whenua*

## RECORD OF WORKSHOP

Tuesday 1 and Wednesday 2 June 2021

Phase 3, Workshop 13 held at Southland Cricket Association Pavilion,  
Queens Park, Invercargill

### Present

Fiona Smith (chair)  
Phil Morrison  
Bernadette Hunt  
Cain Duncan  
Darren Rewi  
David Diprose  
Estelle Pera-Leask  
Ewen Pirie  
Hayden Slee  
Kelsi Hayes

Lisa Pearson  
Michelle Roberts  
Paul Marshall  
Rose Hanley-Nickolls  
Sean Bragg  
Steph Blair  
Vaughan Templeton

### Focus of the workshop

1. The Regional Forum's initial ideas on methods are developed
2. The Regional Forum explores a pathway for advice development
3. The Regional Forum has the opportunity to talk with stakeholders about their ideas and initiatives for achieving the draft freshwater objectives

### Sessions

#### **Day one**

#### **Start and welcome**

Chair Fiona Smith opened the workshop with a karakia. She led a discussion among the Regional Forum members on any matters they wanted to raise or reflect on since the last workshop at Hokonui Runanga in April.

### **Initial methods preference – survey results and follow up exercises**

At the February 2021 and April 2021 workshops members explored and considered a range of methods they would like to consider in their advice package. At the April workshop members were given a copy of a survey and were asked to give a rating value to each option and provide any additional commentary or additional preferred methods. These results were compiled into one document and shared with the group at the June workshop and developed further. The group explored why some things are more important to individuals than others and how different ideas are connected. They also explored using their assessment criteria to assess the ideas and methods. The Forum could see how their thinking is evolving, which will help them with developing their advice package.

### **Stakeholder sessions**

The Forum discussed the upcoming stakeholder sessions and that they look forward to hearing about various organisations' preferences and ideas for achieving, over a generation, the significant improvements needed in the region to deliver on the draft freshwater objectives. They are keen to understand what are the big actions, ideas and opportunities that organisations would recommend for achieving the nutrient reductions required, to ensure that the Forum are considering a range of methods when developing their package of advice. This was outlined in an email invite to industry groups and organisations on 6 May 2021.

Specific questions that the Forum identified that they want to ask stakeholders include:

- You will be aware of the gap between the current health of the waterways and the scale of change needed. What are your organisation's preferences for closing this gap?
- What are you most excited about in responding to environmental/freshwater challenges?
- How do you connect your work to Treaty of Waitangi? What are your organisation's thoughts on tino rangatiratanga?
- How you see your values aligning with Ngai Tahu?
- What are your long term plans that will contribute to improvements in freshwater?
- How do you currently incentivise environmental performance? And what changes do you see will be needed to take people beyond GMP?
- Tell us about your ability to work in partnerships. What recent experiences do you have working in partnerships on environmental issues?
- What are your views on Overseer as a method or tool?

### **Dairy NZ presentation and discussion**

As outlined above, industry and organisations were invited in May 2021 to speak to the Regional Forum about their preferences and ideas for achieving, over a generation, the significant improvements needed in the region to deliver on the draft freshwater objectives.

Graeme Doole (Principal Economist), Craig Depree (Principal Scientist Water Quality), Charlotte Wright (Senior Policy Advisor) from Dairy NZ and Mark Hamill (Lower Mataura Catchment Group), joined the Regional Forum. They outlined that Dairy NZ is the industry organisation that represents all New Zealand dairy farmers. They support farmers through investing in research, resource development, extension and advocacy. They acknowledged the need to improve freshwater in Southland and are committed to finding solutions e.g. the Sustainable Dairying: Water Accord. They focused their

presentation on the scientific work to identify the amount of contaminants that need to be removed from water bodies in Southland to achieve the draft freshwater objectives. The forum members discussed the content of the Dairy NZ presentation, and were informed that this work is led by Environment Southland and draft reports have been shared with a stakeholder science group (including Dairy NZ) for feedback over the past 9 months. The forum acknowledged that the work will help inform their work but noted that it is not directed or managed by the Regional Forum. Dairy NZ did not provide information on their preferences and ideas for achieving significant improvement in freshwater to achieve the draft freshwater objectives over a generation.

## **Day 2**

### **Methods preference – further work**

As Southland District Council put in an apology for their session at 9am, the group carried on the exercise they started on day 1 exploring different ideas and methods. They divided into 4 groups and each developed a proposal to present to the whole Regional Forum that:

1. Uses any of the ideas they have been working on to date or new ideas;
2. Will make significant reductions in losses of nitrogen and sediment from discharges across the landscape (i.e. point source and non-point source);
3. Considers mahinga kai and Ngai Tahu's preferences for methods (e.g. wetlands, discharges to land, returning sinuosity to rivers and streams);
4. Considers both the actions needed and the mechanisms for making those actions happen;
5. Identifies where ideas may build on the proposed Southland Water and Land Plan (2018);

The four groups each came up with a concept proposal and the four concepts encompassed a range of solutions, including mechanisms and guidance, risk assessments for catchments and/or individual land/business managers, interconnections across the landscape, co-governance, co-design, co-management, physiographics and land use, rewards schemes, and active protection.

The groups presented the concepts to one another and then had a collective discussion on them. There was an agreement to look at the commonality and differences across the concepts and continue to build on these at subsequent workshops.

### **Discussion with Invercargill City Council**

Adrian Cocker, Water Operations Technologist for Invercargill City Council joined the Regional Forum. He discussed in detail the wastewater treatment plants that ICC operate at Bluff, Omaui and Invercargill. Adrian also talked about ICC's storm water infrastructure. He noted the preference of the community and iwi to not discharge wastewater to water and talked through the work to look at, and the challenges of finding, suitable alternatives. The Regional Forum thanked Adrian for his openness and honesty about Council's challenges and opportunities. They noted how useful it was for them to develop a deeper understanding of the work being undertaken by the region's territorial authorities, both now and in the future.

### **Regional Forum Phase 2 report and links into LTP development**

Rachael Millar (Strategy and Partnerships Advisor) gave an overview of Environment Southland's Long-term Plan process and considerations. She thanked the Forum for their well thought out Phase 2 report and the recommendations that it contained.

Rachael outlined how the Regional Forum's recommendations have been included in the Long-term Plan. She gave examples of how the recommendations have been included in Council's performance measures:

1. Scope and design a collective values-led hauora approach and framework for integrated catchment management

Example of performance measure in the Long-term Plan: Co-design and implement a hauora approach to integrated catchment management that provides a stepped approach to achieving an iwi and community vision when giving effect to Te Mana o te Wai in the region.

- Project Plan to be developed in 2021/22.

2. Development and maintenance of a curated and current web-based information portal providing a trusted one-stop shop for information, advice and resources that will support enhanced decision making and increased update of mitigation measures known to be effective within Southland catchments)

Example of performance measure in the Long-term Plan: Develop a project plan for the investigation of new tools and methods to 'bring data to life' and improve access to data for the community.

- Project Plan to be developed in 2021/22.

3. Review and streamline selected consents and compliance processes where positive action is to be encouraged and facilitated

Example of performance measure in the Long-term Plan: Develop a structured programme of insight to determine effectiveness of consenting processes and collect baseline information.

- To be developed in 2021/22.

The forum members thanked Rachael for her update and were positive about the way the Regional Forum's report had been considered in the Long-term Plan development.

#### **Key messages from Regional Forum members**

- The Regional Forum members have valued the opportunity to engage with stakeholders, and hear their views on the future of Southland's freshwater.
- After two years of listening and learning, the Forum is now beginning to pull together thoughts and ideas on a range of solutions to improve freshwater in Southland. We will be shaping this into the bones of the framework for the package of advice for Environment Southland's Council and the Te Ao Marama Board.
- While uncertainty remains and the science will continually evolve, we know we have to be solution-focused. Waiting for certainty before taking action isn't an option.
- We appreciate that Environment Southland has reflected the Forum's early thinking from their first report into their Long-term Plan.
- Due to the Regional Forum's leadership role in the community, we have a strong sense of the importance of providing independent advice to Council and the Te Ao Marama Board.
- The Regional Forum members bring different backgrounds and skills and capabilities to the table. In focusing on what we want to achieve for Southland, we are aligned and functioning as one.