



REGIONAL FORUM

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

RECORD OF WORKSHOP

Wednesday 28 and Thursday 29 July 2021

Phase 3, Workshop 14 held at Mataura Community Centre,
Mataura

Present

Fiona Smith (chair) - absent day 2

Phil Morrison

Bernadette Hunt

Cain Duncan

Darren Rewi

David Diprose

Estelle Pera-Leask (left after lunch on day 2)

Ewen Pirie – arrived evening of day 1

Hayden Slee

Kelsi Hayes

Lisa Pearson

Michelle Roberts

Paul Marshall

Rose Hanley-Nickolls

Sean Bragg (left after lunch on day 2)

Vaughan Templeton

Focus of the workshop

1. The Regional Forum's develop their early thinking on concepts to inform their advice
2. The Regional Forum explores options to develop their advice
3. The Regional Forum has the opportunity to talk with stakeholders about their ideas and initiatives for achieving the draft freshwater objectives
4. The Regional Forum discusses a social assessment of Southland

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 Invercargill in June.

Methods preference development

At the June workshop in Invercargill four groups each came up with a concept proposal for the types of methods to tackle the freshwater challenge. 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.

Between the June and July workshops, a small group had looked at the overall intent behind each concept. They discussed how the concepts related to each other, including where concepts had approaches in common and identifying parts which could fit together. The forum and the forum then broke into small groups to think further about the mechanisms of the building blocks; actions and mechanisms for each concept. The small groups spent most of the morning working on their building blocks and reported back to the wider group.

Mataura Falls and discuss the Mataitai

After lunch the Forum walked to Mataura Falls and discussed the mataitai. The mataitai reserve is the first freshwater mataitai reserve in New Zealand designated in 2006. Its status as a mataitai identifies this as an important place for customary food gathering. It means commercial fishing is not allowed. Instead, the guidance of the kaitiaki manage recreational fishing and customary harvest.

The forum discussed Mataura Falls and tangata whenua's long history of traditional fishing in these waters especially tuna and kanakana (lamprey eels). The original Maori village of Tuturau stood near the left bank of the river about three miles downstream from the present town of Mataura. They also discussed the changing use of the area over time, the industrial development and recent topics of interest (e.g. ouvea premix storage and Alliance resource consent application).

Stakeholder sessions

The Forum discussed the upcoming stakeholder sessions (which are a continuation from the June workshop) 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 and follow up emails in June. The organisations presentations were pre-circulated to the forum with the exception of Fish and Game who presented theirs on the day.

Fonterra presentation and discussion

Mat Cullen (General Manager On Farm Excellence – Environment) and Richard Allen (Manager – Environmental Policy) joined the Regional Forum. They outlined Fonterra's advocacy approach and also how they support farmers and spent time talking through the importance of effective on farm support programmes –focussing on quality Farm Environment Plans as the primary delivery method.

From experience elsewhere in the country, they outlined their concerns around finding achievable and realistic (economic) implementation pathways with sensible transition timeframes.

Key ideas that they see as important for ensuring contaminant loss reductions occur and endure include methods such as:

- Purchased Nitrogen Surplus (PNS), PNS / physiographic zone matrix
- Aggregated Score to monitor decreased intensity associated risks
- Targeted Farm Environment Plan actions beyond Good Management Practices – a mitigation toolbox
- Regulation of high risk practices through clear conditions and / or resource consent
- Land use change controls
- Community / catchment group involvement and non-regulatory methods (recognising that all who contribute to an issue need to be part of the solution)

The forum members spent time questioning and discussing the presentation with Mat and Richard. They traversed Fonterra's incentive scheme (results so far and does it go far enough), global issues (emissions, biodiversity), other limit setting processes and outcomes, and issues of focus in Southland e.g. winter grazing. The forum members acknowledged and thanked them for their openness to engage on the topic and bringing their ideas to the table.

Fish and Game presentation and discussion

Zane Moss (Southland Manager) and Jacob Smyth (Resource Management Officer) joined the Regional Forum. They outlined that Fish and Game are responsible for the management of game bird and freshwater fish habitats and populations across the Southland region (and especially reducing sedimentation which they see as critical). They talked through their ideas about meeting the regions freshwater objectives including creating effective buffers along waterways (and potentially some sort of compensation for land utilised for this purpose), utilising physiographics in prioritising land use and retirement, deintensifying agriculture and transitioning away from intensive wintering practices. They were positive that Southland could reverse the degradation over time.

The forum members spent time questioning and discussing the presentation with Zane and Jacob. As with Fonterra, the forum members acknowledged and thanked them for their openness to engage on the topic and bringing their ideas to the table.

Ballance Agri-nutrients presentation and discussion (held at Croyden Lodge, Gore in the evening)

Jim Risk (Science Extension Nutrient Dynamics Specialist), Warwick Catto (Science Strategy Manager) and Sophie McLean (Sustainability Specialist) joined the Regional Forum. They talked about their focus on science-based nutrient products, services, and advice tailored specifically for farmers while minimising the environmental footprint. They explained on online farm systems software e.g. MitAgator, My Pasture Planner, that allow farmers to capture and analyse information for the farm for management. Ballance is investing in a green hydrogen project in Taranaki to support future decarbonisation of New Zealand's agricultural inputs by replacing the current use of natural gas (CH₄).

The forum and Ballance reps discussed good management practices (and how to move beyond GMP), the use of fertiliser at the wrong time of the year (when there is the least plant uptake),

the level of change needed in the region to improve water and how to incentivise this. The reps were very positive about finding Southland solutions and realising the benefits of considering the environment and economy. The forum members acknowledged and thanked the Balance team for giving up their evening to engage on the topic and bringing their ideas to the table.

Day 2

Social Assessment

Sam McLachlan (Science Coordinator) provided an overview of a social assessment of the Southland region that he has undertaken and was provided to the forum. The assessment comprises two main components:

- An assessment of Southland's history with particular focus on historical shocks and trends that have impacted Southland communities over the past 70 years; and,
- A description of the current social profile of the region.

The report has been structured to show how history has shaped the understood norms and societal expectations in the region today, providing context to the social indicators that are currently available. This context is important, as clear connections can be drawn between the past and the present.

The report serves multiple purposes. This work is intended to provide the Regional Forum with a resource to assist with understanding Southland's social context. It is also intended to be used in conjunction with the socio-economic indicators in the Southland Economic Project to inform social and economic impact assessments for the Regional Forum and the plan change to the proposed Southland Water and Land Plan. Finally, the report also will serve as a baseline for future social-based research, where relevant social statistics and indicators are required. Ultimately, it is hoped that this social assessment can be adapted to support relevant council projects and planning requirements.

The forum explored the shadow of previous shocks, how these have influenced the region. They discussed how to create a positive reaction to change and that the people most effected are often those that are least resourced and least resilient.

Structure of Advice

The forum discussed the development of their advice to Council and Te Ao Marama Board into a report (due mid 2022). They noted that having a structure (such as the examples provided by the kaituitui) will help guide their thinking. There was a recognition that the writing should start soon. In terms of structure the forum favoured providing the context first and enable the themes and reasoning to be clear that leads to the forums recommendations. They forum discussed who should write the report and were unanimous that they themselves would author the report. The forum filled out a chart (over the remainder of the day) to indicate their capability and time availability to contribute to the writing. This will form the basis of further planning and discussion.

Beef + Lamb NZ and Deer Industry

Two groups joined the Regional Forum. From Beef + Lamb NZ: Jane Crystal (Principal Science Advisor - Farm Systems & Environment), Ton Orchiston (Environmental Capability Manager, South Island), Dave Harrison (General Manager – Policy and Advocacy) and Lauren Phillips

(Environmental Policy Manager – South Island). From the Deer industry: Lindsay Fung (Environmental Stewardship Manager, Deer Industry New Zealand), John Somerville (Chair of NZDFA National Executive Committee), Bruce Allan (Chair of NZDFA Southland Branch) and Nic McGrouther (facilitator for the Southland Environment Advance Party).

The Beef + Lamb team presented an analogy for the challenge of how to remedy our water quality issues as ‘we’ve been partying hard for many years and now someone has to pay the bar tab’. Lauren talked through various options to address contaminants in Southland including 1) do nothing, 2) land use change, 3) targeted on farm action, 4) mosaic of land use and 5) catchment scale action. She focused on options 3, 4 and 5 and explored what this looks like and key considerations.

Lindsay and John gave an overview of the Deer Industry in NZ and Southland. They explained the Southland Environment Advance Party which are a group of farmers working to identify and apply opportunities to improve environmental outcomes on farm and to share the learnings with other deer farmers. They outlined options to bridge the gap including using a natural capital approach for sustainable land use, farm-based actions to address on-farm risks in conjunction with catchment priorities and catchment-scale activities. Catchment groups are key to improving water quality – interaction and collaboration on the ground.

The forum and reps discussed the best opportunities for innovation (e.g. genetics to reduce deed wallowing), how to use farm plans best, education around physiographics, use of catchment groups and some form of self-auditing of environmental performance. A key question that the group traversed was about providing options for people who have to change significantly how they manage the land and questioned whether the tools and support available? The forum members acknowledged and thanked the Deer Industry and Beef + Lamb NZ team for taking the time to engage on the topic and bringing their ideas to the table.

Key messages from Regional Forum members

- The Regional Forum appreciated the high quality stakeholder engagement that occurred at this workshop. We met with representations from Fonterra, Ballance Agri-nutrients, Beef + Lamb NZ, Deer Industry NZ, and Fish & Game. The stakeholder’s solutions-focused suggestions were well-received, prompted our thinking, and are being considered by the Regional Forum.
- We appreciated the opportunity to further explore approaches for our recommendations to Environment Southland and Te Ao Marama. This process demonstrated healthy levels of alignment in thinking across the Regional Forum membership. The Regional Forum will continue to develop concepts, and plan to seek some external feedback on these concepts before they are incorporated into our final recommendations.
- The Regional Forum encourages people to keep working on good management practices – these are incredibly important in moving towards our goals for freshwater in Southland.
- We recognise there’s been some good work and reported improvement in intensive winter grazing practices.
- The [Southland Social Assessment report](#) has been really valuable in providing context around any impact our recommendations might have.

The workshop was closed with a karakia.