



REGIONAL FORUM

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

What is it about Southland?

This note outlines two related exercises that together will make up a session of the Regional Forum's Riverton workshop. The purpose of this session is to use questioning to stimulate the critical thinking needed to develop advice around methods for Phase Three. By the end of this session we should have a clearer idea of Southland's characteristics (the environmental, cultural, economic and social features) and have practiced ways of defining root causes of problems.

Exercise 1

Fresh water issues are prevalent across New Zealand and yet they are playing out differently in each region and, taking this a step further, in each catchment within a region. In Southland there are some important characteristics about the region that need to be considered in developing a targeted policy response. These characteristics will be social, cultural, economic and environmental but they are likely to all be connected in some way or another.

The two questions for the workshop exercise are:

1. *What is it about Southland that determines its use of resources and*
2. *What is it about Southland that influences the resilience (or sensitivity) of the environment to this resource use?*

The point of this exercise is to spend some time thinking about what is it that shapes Southland as a first step in problem definition. Clearly defining an issue is the starting point for policy development and it will help inform the methods to be explored in Phase Three.

The output from this exercise will be a list of specific characteristics that the Regional Forum will explicitly consider in the development of its advice to Governance.

The essential reading for this exercise is from the Southland Economic Project reports (hard copies provided to you previously):

- Part A of The Agriculture and Forestry Report – pages 10 to 24 and pages 38 to 57.
- Part B of The Urban and Industry Report – pages 62 to 71.

Exercise 2

With any issue there is always an urge to jump to the solution. However, that can lead to either a misdiagnosis or treatment of the symptoms without understanding the root causes. The next exercise follows the idea that a well-defined problem can contain its own solution.

Without over-complicating it, there are three basic steps to problem definition:

1. Describe the current situation
2. Stating the problem that needs solving
3. Ask why solving that issue is a problem

If the answer to step 3 is another problem then there had been a shift from a symptom towards a deeper problem, and eventually a root cause.

In the workshop exercise we will try out Toyota's 'five why's' technique, which explores cause and effect relationships underlying problems.

An example of a problem is: The vehicle will not start.

1. Why? – The battery is dead.
2. Why? – The alternator is not functioning.
3. Why? – The alternator belt has broken.
4. Why? – The alternator belt was well beyond its useful service life and not replaced.
5. Why? – The vehicle was not maintained according to the recommended service schedule.

Keeping Southland's characteristics in mind from Exercise 1, the 'five whys' problem statements for Exercise 2 are:

- *Some of Southland's estuaries are filling up with sediment and nutrients.*
- *Excess nutrients are causing rivers and streams to be choked up with periphyton (i.e. slime algae);*
- *Faecal runoff is making waterbodies unsafe for recreation (e.g. swimming, boating etc);*
- *Extensive drainage and vegetation clearance is causing a loss of streams and wetlands, and a subsequent loss of biodiversity.*

The point of this exercise is to practice developing a line of inquiry (by drawing out ideas and underlying assumptions) based on our knowledge about Southland from Exercise 1.

There is no essential reading for this second exercise.