



REGIONAL FORUM

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

RECORD OF WORKSHOP

Tuesday 19 and Wednesday 20 November 2019

Phase 2, Workshop 6 held at Salvation Army Hall, Winton

Present

Mata Cherrington
David Diprose
Kelsi Hayes
Bernadette Hunt
Joyce Kolk
Jade Maguire
Paul Marshall
Phil Morrison (deputy chair)

Lisa Pearson
Ewen Pirie
Michelle Roberts
Hayden Slee
Fiona Smith (chair)
Vaughan Templeton

Apologies

Estelle Pera-Leask
Ewen Pirie (Day 2)

Consensus was reached on:

1. It was agreed that Forum members would provide feedback on the draft text for the Phase Two report via email with the revised text brought back for review to the Regional Forum Chair
2. It was agreed to seek feedback on the draft vision from members which weren't present before taking it to the Waimumu Fielddays event in February for feedback to the community.

The group consensus aligned with the guidance laid out in Regional Forum Terms of Reference.

Other areas of discussion:

Mata Cherrington opened the workshop with a Karakia and the Chair, Fiona Smith led a discussion amongst the Forum members as to their experiences since the last workshop in Tuatapere in September. Fiona set the scene for the workshop, discussing the importance of contextualising all the information which would be received over the workshop within the context of ki uta ki tai (mountains to the sea) and kaitiakitanga (guardianship).

Regional Forum Project Update

Rhiannon Suter, Regional Forum Lead, outlined the approach for the second phase of the forum's work, which is focused on Southlander's values and objectives for freshwater. This workshop (Workshop 6) is the second of three workshops in Phase Two, which will conclude in February 2020. Following the conclusion of Phase Two, the Regional Forum will provide a report to Council. This report will accompany the Values and Objectives package and will include:

- A reflection of understanding of the community's values and objectives for freshwater
- A reflection of understanding of the challenge for Southland based on the current and future state of freshwater as defined by the draft freshwater objectives.
- Areas of focus for Phase Three
- Any recommendations for immediate practical action

Rhiannon overviewed the draft text for the Phase Two report which was put together following Workshop 5 and it was agreed that the Forum members would provide their feedback to the text over email.

Vision Statement

It was decided to develop a vision statement which would be the Regional Forum's expression of the community's values and objectives for freshwater. This vision would act as a guiding principle during Phase Three of the Forum's work as well as being a foundational element for the region required by the Essential Freshwater package.

The Forum members arrived at the following draft statement which there will be an opportunity to refine further:

"Waterways are respected and managed in an integrated way (ki uta ki tai) that balances a thriving and prosperous community and environment, supports our native taonga species as well as individual well-being.

People understand and practice their role as Kaitiaki guardians for future generations and enjoy access to waterways for recreation and mahinga kai."

It was agreed that the views of the two members who were not present would be sought, before discussing the vision statement with the public, including at Fielddays.

Values and objectives package – Iwi Values

Mike Trent, Cultural Kaitiuitui Lead, introduced the Iwi Values package which has been led by Te Ao Marama Inc.

Sue Cullen presented the results of a literature review, "Wai Ngāi Tahu ki Murihiku."

Following the presentation it was noted that in the Maori worldview, water should be discharged to land as part of the treatment process and not to water. There was a discussion of the benefits of mirroring the way ecosystems work as part of treatment processes.

Ngai Tahu aspirations to have cultural values and indicators working alongside scientific information to improve the quality of freshwater for all people.

In response to the concepts raised, the group discussed what can be done to return mauri to the water after it has been treated.

It was discussed that different Iwi have different geographies (coastal, river, lakes, mountains, flats) and have different ways of managing water in their spaces.

It was considered that the literature review of Ngai Tahu ki Murihiku values were largely in line with the national values expressed within the report from te Kahui Wai Maori.

Tyron Strongman presented interim results of survey and kano ki te kano (face to face) interviews with tangata whenua.

It was noted that the results were similar to the results of the community Share your Wai process, with ecosystem health and human health for drinking water and creation both high priorities, although the focus of tangata whenua as kaitiaki of the water was different. The results showed the importance of access to the water, with some people explaining that they no longer utilise the waterways for fishing or gathering because it is difficult to reach the water.

There was a discussion of the views of Maori to introduced fish species such as trout. Are they still seen as outsiders in the natural habitat? It was agreed they were and that customary rights and legal protection of introduced species can be out of alignment.

It was noted that some waterbodies, including Te Waewae lagoon, were not mentioned. Again, this was discussed in the light of access, as people live predominantly in the urban areas and may find it hard to reach more remote areas.

The full results will be available online when they are complete.

Field Trip – Regional Landfill and Dairy Farm at AB Lime

Forum members travelled to the AB Lime Regional Landfill and Dairy Farm ten minutes outside Winton. Fiona Smith spoke about the work which AB Lime, as a corporate farm, is able to do to improve water quality on farm. Programmes include a berm development programme which will look at creating forms in the landscape to slow the flow of water from the limehills in high rainfall events. This initiative has not been tested before in the South Island. The location and design of the berms have been chosen taking into account physiographics analysis. During the project AB Lime will record information about cost and effectiveness to help other farmers consider whether this technology could work for them.

AB Lime has also commenced a significant native seedling programme to support planting of trees to screen the landfill, on retired areas of land and for riparian planting. The seedlings have been eco-sourced and any which are left over will be made available for others in the community to use.

The process of filling the landfill utilising the space created by the lime quarry was explained. The landfill receives all of Southland's waste, including a range of special wastes which are hazardous such as meat processing waste, medical waste and waste such as infected cattle and oysters. All the landfill sites are lined. Up to 60% of the waste taken to landfill is plastic. Everyone in the region could be doing more to reduce the volume of waste. During rainfall events, leachate needs to be removed from the site to be processed at Clifton wastewater treatment plant. While AB Lime is exploring alternatives, the discharge options are limited.

Values and objectives package – Gap Analysis

Ned Norton presented the results of the Gap Analysis. These results will be made public following completion of the peer review process.

The National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management requires that water quality be maintained or improved. Analysis of the current state showed that in a number of areas (primarily nitrate toxicity) draft freshwater objectives need to be changed as the current state is already higher than the draft freshwater objectives.

However, all freshwater objectives are not 'equal' in their importance. For example, periphyton freshwater objectives may require higher standards of water quality than nitrate toxicity levels. Also, taking an approach of ki uta ki tai, greater improvements in the headwater may be needed to achieve DFWOs in the lower reaches of the river system.

The results were presented primarily by waterbody class. It is important to note that the results are those taken at discrete monitoring sites, rather than for a river as a whole.

Box and whisker charts were used to demonstrate the spread of results. It was questioned whether the size of the box and length of whiskers revealed a greater variability of results across this class. It was discussed whether this represented greater opportunity for improvement or greater challenges in managing outliers.

The challenge of ensuring that degradation within a band is not allowed was discussed. The technical team is recommending first level monitoring at band level, secondary monitoring would then look at degradation within the band.

The complexity of the information was discussed, as well as ways to communicate findings with the public – can we talk about drinkable, swimmable, wadeable?

The timeframes under which monitoring will be undertaken were considered. While the reviewed plan will have a ten year lifespan, Regional Councils will have regular monitoring for the long term.

Public session

The public session was opened by Fiona Smith who introduced Environment Southland Chief Executive, Rob Phillips to give some key updates about freshwater matters in the region. Barbara Nicholas facilitated the session, and Forum members were spread out across the working tables so they could engage in discussion with the 15 public members who attended.

The first question asked was, what do you love about the Oreti catchment and why do you care about it? Each table had the opportunity to report their most popular responses back to the wider group. Here are the responses:

- birdlife, braided style of the river and its path, natural habitat, new river estuary is a gem on a good day
- fishing, a nice place to relax and 'just be', great for family recreation
- love of the whole river including the water table level (water quality shouldn't be based on one thing), great place of leisure, the water is still drinkable, natural cycle of plumping and flushing and the old sound of it... flooding 1999
- swimming at the Lochiel bridge, cool river, recreational hub at upper river area, the river is the centre of our community
- Oreti and Makarewa rivers have the potential for data driven management
- linking the mountains to the sea
- the river was a fantastic swimming space at Centre Bush when I was a child
- to understand what was good – you have to go back in time and look at the history

The second question raised was, what are the challenges for looking after the Oreti and wider Southland freshwater? Again each table was invited to share their responses with the wider group.

Here are the responses:

- balance (how do we live as a family and undertake recreation activities on the river) while improving the river, realistic timeframes and expectations for improvement of the river are needed, intensification of land use (it's not just cows, there's other factors to consider (rubbish tip), working with and through bureaucracy
- the river is not a constant, its complex; flexibility to manage areas of the river - local areas need local action; and 'we' may try to do good but the outcome may cause other problems
- sustaining a long term goal or vision and not expecting quick fixes, buy in and shared understanding of whole community, breaking old habits, communication that uses common sense and science
- understanding where the water comes from and goes too, farmers debt levels drive production levels, farm ownership and succession, changing mindsets (metanoia – expanding your mind to new things)
- rural and urban dwellers are all responsible for the river and benefit from it, misinformation and a need for education is obvious, how does the future look like without direct discharge to water, managing the river within flood banks so fertile land isn't washed away,
- recognition that everyone is part of the problem, getting balance into a catchment
- 'we' need to move forward, we can't change back to stuff we've severely modified

Forum chair Fiona Smith closed the session by thanking all those for coming out, and encouraging everyone to keep engaged with the work of the forum. She commented that forum members want to hear their concerns, so people should feel free to get in touch with any of them at any time.

Project Update – Planning for Phase Three

Regional Forum Lead, Rhiannon Suter, discussed the plan for delivering Phase Three of the Regional Forum process which will conclude with a package of advice for Council and Te Ao Marama in 2022, prior to a plan change being notified in 2023 with a view to the plan becoming operational in 2025.

The proposed approach involves splitting the third phase of the Forum's work into five main sections:

- Principles and constraints (2 workshops) – During the first two workshops of Phase Three, the Forum members will discuss the principles which they want to utilise as they approach their discussions on limits and methods. Key inputs to these conversations include – principles of Council and TAMI for the People, Water and Land Programme, principles from the pSWLP and principles from other processes contained in the draft Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research Allocation Methodology report. Technical advice will be provided to ensure the Forum's conversations take place within the constraints of legal and regulatory requirements.
- Region wide limits and methods (5 workshops) - These workshops will work through the five priority system stressors (contaminants) which have been identified during the development of the Values and Objectives package – *E.coli*, Nitrogen, Phosphorus, Sediment, and Environmental Flows (Water quantity). It is anticipated that nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment will be dealt with as one package, which due to its complexity will be dealt with over three workshops. It is recommended to start with *E.coli* which is likely to be more straightforward to deal with. This portion of the process will be critical for providing the Planning team with the information they need to populate the plan change with those policies and rules which will apply across the whole region.
- Catchment/ sub-catchment limits and methods (3 workshops) – There are both environmental and social factors which may vary at catchment or subcatchment level. These three workshops will deal with specific issues which cannot be dealt with at a region wide level and result in catchment specific approaches if and where required. Region wide limits and methods will be reviewed and adjusted if required to take into account the outcomes at a catchment/ sub-catchment level.
- Unique situations (2 workshops) – These workshops will deal with special situations which sit outside the region or catchment/ sub-catchment level. These may be “hot spots” where system stressors are having a particular impact or “hot times” where there is seasonal variation which needs to be dealt with. The previous two stages will be reviewed to deal with any issues raised for region-wide or catchment level limits and methods by the unique situations discussed.
- Reporting wrap-up (1 workshop) – This final workshop will deal with finalisation of the reporting package to Council, including the advisory report, review and sign off of the technical documentation including inputs to the Section 32 analysis, process and consultation documentation.

There will be an opportunity during the public sessions at future workshops to gather information which is important to local communities and bring this forward to the later workshops focusing on catchments and unique situations.

It should be noted that the number and/ or order of workshops for Phase Three may change following the gathering of information regarding when technical inputs will be available.

Recommendations for practical action

Rhiannon Suter, the Regional Forum Lead presented some tools for considering what recommendations for practical action the Forum may like to make to Council and Te Ao Marama in their report at the end of Phase Two. Some draft criteria for selection were considered. Ideas about change were discussed and a matrix for considering how change can be influenced: who will make a change and where this change will happen was reviewed.

The Forum workshopped six ideas for practical change:

- Analysis and information sharing around mitigation options
- Utilising new ways of reaching people with key education messages
- A catchment experience activity to connect people in a catchment with their receiving environment
- Scoping work to develop framework for catchment action plans
- Enhanced support for engagement with land users
- Refinement of consents and compliance framework to support positive actions

Feedback will be brought back to the Forum from Environment Southland and Te Ao Marama prior to the next workshop. The Forum may then choose to include some recommendations to Council in their report following the final phase two workshop in February.

Key messages from the Regional Forum members

- We thank those that have been able to come along to the public sessions and talk to us about their values, concerns and vision for their river.
- We've started to articulate this into a vision and we're keen to check that back with the community in the new year.
- A greater understanding of Te Mana o te Wai and our iwi community's values is emerging.
- We want our advice to council to be focused on practical actions that will support all the good work that is underway in our community to get the results in improving water quality that we all want.
- We know that solutions can't be focused only on regulation.
- We are aware of particular challenges in different areas, but recognise that the whole catchment is going to need to make changes to see improvements from mountains to the sea.
- We know maintaining and improving water quality and quantity will be a challenge and it will take time to achieve the community's vision.
- Collaboration and partnerships will be important to achieve the change that's needed.
- We've had some insight into the technical information that will guide our work to achieve the communities' aspirations for water and look forward to sharing this with you in the New Year.

The next workshops is scheduled for Tuesday 25 and Wednesday 26 November at Murihiku Marae. This workshop will focus on the current and future state of the environment, and Iwi values. Details of the public session are yet to be finalised.