

Give us your feedback
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greater WELLINGTON
REGIONAL COUNCIL
Te Pane Matua Taiao

Regional plan review

NEWSLETTER NO 4, November 2012



Your environment, your future Tō taiao, tō oranga

This is the fourth of our regional plan updates, circulated twice yearly. In this newsletter we look at:

- Public presentations for Nov-Dec 2012 on progress to develop the regional plan
- Integrated catchment management
- Whaitua (zone) committees

Public engagement on regional plan provisions for managing the environment

The regional plan review is moving along with ideas being developed in consultation with key stakeholders. The work covers a range of topics including:

- Air quality
- Managing the Coastal Marine Area
- Managing natural hazards
- Options for managing water quality in urban and rural situations
- Allocating water

You can hear about these ideas at our upcoming public presentations. You will also hear about how the Greater Wellington Regional Council is responding to the National Policy Statement for Freshwater (the Central Government policy shaping the way water quality and allocation will be managed in the years ahead).

Presentations 7.30pm-9pm (doors open 7pm). For more information, see www.gw.govt.nz/your-environment

Area	Venue	Date
Masterton	Masterton Town Hall	Mon 26 Nov
Hutt Valley	Dowse Art Museum	Tue 27 Nov
Greytown	Greytown Library	Wed 28 Nov
Kāpiti	Kāpiti Boating Club	Thu 29 Nov
Porirua	Mungavin Hall	Mon 3 Dec
Wellington	Greater Wellington Regional Council, Committee Room	Tue 4 Dec
Ōtaki	Raukawa Marae	Thu 6 Dec

You will have the opportunity to give feedback on the ideas put forward by the Regional Council from 26 November to 16 December at www.gw.govt.nz/your-environment.

Integrated Catchment Management

A catchment is an area of land, bound by hills where all the water flows to the same low point. The low point may be a river, a lake or the sea. Obvious local examples are the Hutt River Valley and the Ruamahanga River Valley. The activities of all the people living, farming and working in the catchment have a potential effect on it. The quality of the water flowing out of the bottom of a catchment is often a good indicator of the catchment's health.

Integrated Catchment Management is attempting to manage all the activities in a catchment for a specified environmental result.

A number of different organisations have strategies for improving the region's environment or a specific catchment. Some examples are described below. The examples are not exhaustive and further information about them can be found on the relevant organisation's website.

Primary Industry example

Fonterra dairy company takes all the milk produced in the Wellington region from about 180 farms. All Fonterra suppliers are required to fence off waterways and prepare a farm nutrient budget so that they can better manage nutrients, reduce pathogen and nutrient loss to waterways, and increase their profit.

Fonterra is currently in talks with the fertiliser companies who hold farmers' nutrient budget information. They are working together to establish a database so that their supplier farmers can compare their efficiency results with other farmers.

Fonterra has doubled the number of sustainability specialists providing advice to dairy farmers. These specialists will assist farmers to adopt practices that can optimise effluent management and reduce the amount of nutrients being lost from farms into waterways.

Local Government example

The health of Porirua Harbour has been a concern for some time and extensive research over the last 30 years has been carried out to find solutions, especially since 2008.

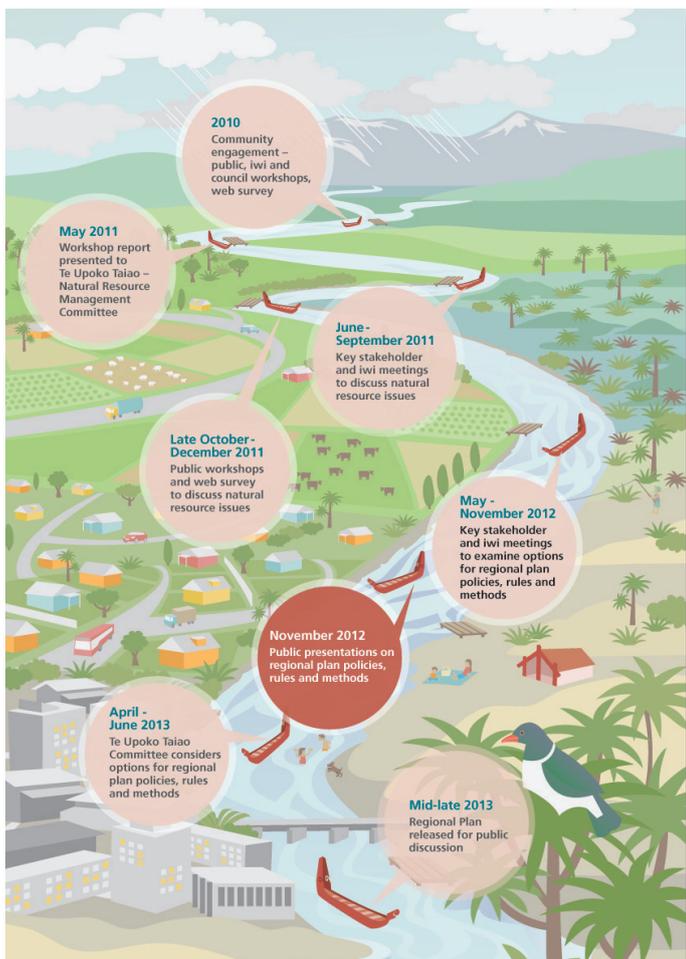
The "Porirua Harbour and catchment strategy and action plan" was signed earlier in 2012 by Porirua City Council, Ngāti Toa Rangatira, the Greater Wellington Regional Council and Wellington City Council. The strategy and action plan has three key objectives:

1. Reduce sedimentation rates
2. Reduce pollutant inputs
3. Restore ecological health

Porirua City Council, in its Long Term Plan 2012-22, significantly increased its investment in sewer and storm water pipeline replacement to improve the health of the harbour. Improvements are also planned to upgrade the Duck Creek wastewater pump station and the reticulation of Pauatahanui Village that will further protect Pauatahanui Inlet. The council has budgeted to implement the harbour strategy and action plan through environmental work, education and monitoring.

Community Care Group example

Members of the Waitohu Care Group have been restoring the dunes at Waitohu beach north of Ōtaki, and the banks of the Waitohu stream since 2000. They also run a community plant nursery, propagating eco-sourced plants for planting on the dune and along the sides of the stream mouth.



In the future: Whaitua (zone) committees – pulling all the strands together

If all the people living and working in a catchment potentially affect it, then they are the people that need to agree on any solutions for improving it. The days are gone when regional councils can just regulate the environment into shape. That is not to say regulation is unimportant, rather that it's only one tool of the many we have.

The community as a whole needs to find the solutions for managing the environment, particularly the way our land use practices – urban and rural – affect water quality. That's the best way to get a lasting approach and is what we are doing with the review of our regional plans.

As part of the regional plan review, we're looking to set up whaitua (zone) committees for the main catchments in the region. The word "whaitua" has been suggested rather than the word "zone" as it adds the understanding held by tangata whenua that all things are interconnected and mutually dependent, even at a small scale.

The committees will set environmental targets for water quality and allocation and, working with the Regional Council, set limits and methods to achieve these. It'll be a long conversation and everyone needs to be represented – farmers, householders, industry, iwi, those concerned with/about environmental outcomes, councils – the lot.

It would be very powerful to have all parties working towards the same goal and ultimately contributing to managing our environment and making improvements where required. We'll keep you posted.

Where can I go to find out more information?

- Background information about the regional plan review: www.gw.govt.nz/your-environment
- State of the environment report cards: www.gw.govt.nz/ser

You can email us at regional-plan@gw.govt.nz

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