

Report 17.37
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Committee Council
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Revised Programme of implementation for the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management

1. Purpose

To seek revision of the Council's staged implementation Programme for the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2014 (NPS-FM).

2. Background

The NPS-FM includes a requirement that its provisions must be implemented by December 2025 [Policy E1(b)]. The same NPS-FM policy requires the Council to formally adopt a staged Programme of implementation [Policy E1(d)]. The Council adopted such a Programme in October 2012 (Report 12.531) and revised it in June 2015 (Report 15.268).

The NPS progressive implementation Programme (the Programme) adopted by the Council, has the following key elements:

- Region-wide regulatory provisions in the Natural Resources Plan (the Plan) that implement the NPS-FM.
- Catchment-specific regulatory provisions developed using collaborative processes for each catchment in the region by whitua committees that implement the NPS-FM. Once each whitua committee has completed its task, recommended catchment specific provisions will be included in whitua chapters of the Plan.
- Non-regulatory proposals (including recommendations from whitua committees) that will be implemented (funded) through the Council's Long Term Plan.

The Council has been monitoring the Programme since it was adopted in 2012, including the collaborative whitua process. Progress towards implementing the NPS-FM is recorded in the Programme as each step of the region-wide and catchment specific components are completed.

Five whitua (areas) identified in the Programme are the Wairarapa Coast, Ruamahanga River, Wellington/Hutt, Te Awarua-o-Porirua, and Kapiti. Whitua committees will prepare Whitua Implementation Programmes (WIPs) that include recommendations to the Council on plan changes/variations to give effect to the NPS-FM in full.

Timing is an important part of successfully implementing the progressive implementation programme. Because the whitua process is new, at the start the Council could only estimate how long the process for completing each WIP would take. Each whitua has resource management issues that sometimes differ significantly, and timing for each may vary. Examples of such differences are the nature of urban and rural populations or the extent of water quality and water quantity problems in different places.

Hearings on the proposed Plan begin in April this year and officers are currently preparing reports to assist the Hearing Panel in its consideration of submissions on the proposed Plan. It will be important that the Hearing Panel has a good understanding of how the Council will give effect to the NPS-FM through an up-to-date version of the Programme.

The sequencing of whitua is also important. At the start of the Programme the Ruamahanga Whitua and Te Awarua-o-Porirua Whitua were identified as the first two cabs off the rank. The timing for beginning collaborative processes for Wellington/Hutt Valley, Kapiti and Wairarapa Coast is not identified specifically for each whitua in the current Programme but should now be included. The Council has indicated its intention to proceed with the Wellington/Hutt Whitua next. We can also establish timing sequence for the remaining Kapiti Whitua and Wairarapa Coast Whitua.

3. Revised timing

When the Programme was first decided, an estimate of 2016 was made for completion of the Ruamahanga Whitua Implementation Programme. The Ruamahanga Whitua faces a number of complex and diverse resource management issues. There are urban and rural issues, and significant water quality and quantity problems have to be addressed. It will take additional time to complete this work. Revising the timeframe for Ruamahanga WIP completion to 2017 is appropriate.

The time estimate in the Programme for the Te-Awarua-o-Porirua Whitua is 2017 and it is appropriate that this date should remain. In addition, with two whitua now well advanced, it will be helpful to include the sequence for each remaining whitua in the region. The beginning of the process for the Wellington/Hutt Whitua has already been signaled for mid-2017 by the Council. Starting dates of February 2019 and mid 2020 for the Kapiti Whitua and Wairarapa Coast Whitua respectively will be appropriate.

The full version of the revised Programme is attached as **Attachment 1** with the above suggested changes.

4. Communication

The role of whitua committees has already been widely communicated as part of the ongoing process for establishing and operating the existing whitua committees. Established whitua committees already have web-pages with information on their responsibilities, what they are doing, and how people can be involved. The revised NPS Programme of implementation will be posted on the Council's web-page with links to current whitua committee web-pages. As work starts with additional whitua similar engagement and communication will occur.

5. The decision-making process and significance

The matter requiring a decision in this report has been considered by officers against the requirements of Part 6 of the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA). Part 6 sets out the obligations of local authorities in relation to the making of decisions.

5.1 Significance of the decision

Part 6 of the LGA requires the Council to consider the significance of the decision. The term 'significance' has a statutory definition set out in the Act.

Officers have considered the significance of the matter, taking the Council's significance and engagement policy and decision-making guidelines into account. Officers recommend that the matters be considered to have low significance.

Officers do not consider that a formal record outlining consideration of the decision-making process is required in this instance.

6. Engagement

Changes to the NPS-FM Programme are minor and for information. The engagement approach being followed for this matter is set out in this report.

7. Recommendations

That the Council:

1. **Receives** the report.
2. **Notes** the content of the report.
3. **Adopts** the revised Programme of time-limited stages as set out in **Attachment 1** to this report for implementation of the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2014.

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Attachment 1: Programme of time-limited stages for implementation of the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2014 (NPS-FM) and progress to February 2017