

RMA monitoring and reporting

A national workshop series based on the material on the Quality Planning website

Handbook for participants November 2006

Please bring this handbook with you to the workshop as we will refer to the attachments included.

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What participants need to do prior to the workshop

Prior to the workshop it is expected that all workshop participants will:

1. Look at and read this handbook and the information on monitoring and reporting, particularly the guidance notes, in the Monitoring One-Stop-Shop section of the Quality Planning website, at www.qualityplanning.org.nz.
2. Familiarise yourself with the web-based examples for which the handbook provides links.
3. Reflect on the following key questions:
 - What type of monitoring/reporting does your council do?
 - How does your current monitoring measure up to what's required under the RMA?
 - What barriers are you facing and how could you overcome these?
 - What successes have you achieved?
 - What opportunities are there to do better next time?
 - What information or assistance do you require?

You will be encouraged to discuss these questions at the workshop.

1. Purpose and background of workshop series

The purpose of this national workshop series is to:

1. Provide practitioners involved in monitoring and reporting with practical tools and guidance towards more efficient and effective RMA monitoring and reporting
2. Identify what further guidance on monitoring and reporting would be useful
3. Assist with integration of RMA and community outcomes monitoring and reporting
4. Facilitate discussion and exchange of information between participants.

The material for this workshop series builds on the useful baseline material on monitoring and reporting that was presented and discussed at the monitoring and reporting seminars that were held in January and February 2006 by Local Government New Zealand, the Department of Internal Affairs and Statistics New Zealand. For a copy of the presentation slides and handouts from these seminars please refer to the LGNZ website at www.lgnz.co.nz. (On the home page refer to "current projects" [click] and then go to "monitoring and reporting" for a copy of all of the power point slides and some of the handouts provided at these seminars). Thank you to Local Government New Zealand, and in particular Jane Johnston, for being able to refer to these useful resources.

This Ministry for the Environment monitoring and reporting workshop series focuses on the RMA and on applying information and looking at examples of approaches being used i.e. monitoring and reporting practice rather than theory. It is also a forum for sharing information and ideas about what is working for you.

Participants in the workshops should leave feeling some acknowledgement of and empowerment about the vital job they do.

The workshop design and format and this workshop handbook and was prepared by Karen Bell of Enviro Solutions NZ Ltd, on behalf of the Ministry for the Environment, with feedback and assistance from Gina Sweetman, Donna Caddie and Amanda Moran from the Ministry for the Environment, Sandra McIntyre from Schema and a core team of practitioners. The input of these practitioners is greatly acknowledged. The practitioner group comprised:

Warren Adler	Auckland City Council
Michael Bathgate	Dunedin City Council
Gary Bedford	Taranaki Regional Council
Kerry Grundy	Whangarei District Council
Beat Huser	Environment Waikato
Steve Markham	Tasman District Council
Leigh Robcke	Thames-Coromandel District Council
Paula Rolfe	Matamata-Piako District Council.

2. Target audience and presenting team

The national workshop series is aimed at any professional who assumes a monitoring or reporting role on behalf of a council (i.e. council managers and staff and their consultants). This will include professionals from a wide range of professions, including planning, resource analysis, environmental science, policy, strategy, consents and compliance/enforcement.

The presenting team includes Sandra McIntyre, Warren Adler, Paula Rolfe and Michael Bathgate from the workshop development team above. Amanda Moran will act as facilitator.

3. Scope of training

As indicated in Section 1, the workshop series focuses on providing practical tools and guidance to those involved in council monitoring and reporting under the RMA. It promotes an integrated approach for monitoring requirements under the RMA and one that links RMA monitoring, evaluation and reporting with other legislative requirements for monitoring and reporting, including those in the Local Government Act (LGA).

Integrated monitoring in this sense encompasses integration of consents, complaints, enforcement, plan effectiveness and efficiency and state of the environment monitoring and reporting; ensuring there is integration across the council organisation and with other organisations (such as other councils, MfE, DoC, Statistics New Zealand); ensuring an integrated approach in geographic sense (locally, regionally, nationally and possibly internationally), as well as integration with other monitoring and reporting requirements.

The workshop comprises four key sessions that focus on:

- An integrated monitoring strategy
- Fitting monitoring to purpose
- How to monitor and
- Reporting and review.

There is plenty of legitimate variation and discretion in just how monitoring and reporting is conducted and implemented and how the results are used, and it is not our intention to enforce a "correct" means of doing things. Rather the workshops will, by way of instruction, interaction, and example, assist with emerging good practice for monitoring and reporting. This emerging good practice will build on the guidance, resources and links provided on the Quality Planning (QP) website at www.qualityplanning.org.nz and in the Local Government New Zealand monitoring and reporting workshops that were conducted in January and February 2006. The current workshop series also aims to gather information to update the guidance material provided on the QP website and workshop participants will be asked to contribute ideas on what guidance would be most useful to practitioners.

4. The workshop programme

The workshop series features a mix of presented and interactive sessions. The three scheduled workshops are limited to 35 participants each, to enable interaction. The workshops are one full day (9:00 am to 5:00 pm). More detail about the workshop programme is provided below.

Session one – An Integrated Monitoring Strategy

Session one focuses on developing an integrated monitoring strategy and how to sell it (i.e. how to get your council's commitment to monitoring and reporting). This is the planning, visioning and strategy part of the process of monitoring and reporting. The session will include a slide presentation, a group brainstorm, a discussion in pairs, a small group exercise and information sharing on developing an integrated monitoring strategy.

By the end of this session participants will:

- Understand how to communicate why monitoring is important and how to sell it
- Know the legal requirements for monitoring and where there is discretion
- Understand some key barriers to monitoring and have discussed how to overcome these barriers and what can work
- Know what integration means in theory and practice and how collaborative partnerships can help with achieving integration
- Know the key attributes of an integrated monitoring strategy – know about and be able to apply the Six Pillars of Wisdom to monitoring practice.

Note the handouts relevant to this session that are included as attachments at the end of this handbook. Please read these prior to the workshop and bring them with you:

1. Legislative requirements
2. Types of monitoring
3. What is monitoring? – definitions

The following weblinks also provide some useful examples which it is not practicable to attach to the handbook. Please make yourself familiar with these prior to the workshop.

1. Example of an integrated monitoring strategy – Queenstown Lakes District Council: <http://www.qldc.govt.nz/Documents/ContentDocuments/QLDC%20Monitoring%20Strategy%20-%20Ammended.pdf>
2. Example of an integrated monitoring strategy – Whangarei District Council: www.wdc.govt.nz (click on "Documents", then "Environment", then "Monitoring", then "Monitoring Strategy")
3. Example of an integrated environmental monitoring strategy – Manukau City Council: <http://www.manukau.govt.nz/monitor.htm>. In particular, Chapter 1 of this draft strategy sets out the case for an integrated monitoring strategy.
4. Example of a collaborative approach – Southland: www.ara.org.nz. This website, administered by Environment Southland, presents the outcomes of collaborative SOE monitoring between local government and other agencies in Southland.

Session two – Fitting monitoring to purpose

Session two is about purposeful monitoring. This is the design stage in the process of monitoring and reporting, when we consider what needs to be monitored and what process will be followed. How do we implement the various aspects of an integrated monitoring strategy, such as consents, complaints, policy and plan effectiveness and efficiency, and state of the environment monitoring? This session will include a slide presentation, a small

group exercise on how to design a monitoring plan, a facilitated full group discussion and an information sharing session on fitting monitoring to purpose.

By the end of this session participants will:

- Understand that it is important to start with the critical information needs and evaluate and provide for them first
- Learn ways to prioritise monitoring and how to apply discretion
- Learn the importance of a good implementation plan
- Feel more confident about making decisions on available information
- Learn about the importance of integrating the different types of monitoring
- Be able to apply the Six Pillars of Wisdom to monitoring practice.

Note the handouts relevant to this session that are included as attachments at the end of this handbook. Please read these prior to the workshop and bring them with you:

1. Process development: plan effectiveness monitoring – Matamata-Piako District Council
2. Process development: plan effectiveness monitoring – Dunedin City Council
3. Process development: consents/compliance monitoring – Whangarei District Council
4. Process development: consents/compliance monitoring – Auckland City Council
5. Prioritising monitoring (consents) – example from Auckland City Council

The following weblink also provides a useful example. Please make yourself familiar with this prior to the workshop.

1. Prioritising monitoring – example from Manukau City Council:
<http://www.manukau.govt.nz/documents/envstrat/chap3.pdf>.

Session three – How to monitor

Session three focuses on how to monitor and in particular on information needs, monitoring indicators and data collection and analysis. This is concerned with deciding what and how to monitor, which often includes, but is not limited to, selecting indicators. The session will include a slide presentation, two small group exercises on how to monitor and data management, and information sharing on how to monitor.

By the end of this session participants will:

- Understand that there are many different monitoring methods that can be used
- Have considered how indicators and various monitoring methods can assist with monitoring and reporting
- Have worked through a process of deciding what monitoring methods to use
- Learn how not to get bogged down in detail
- Understand some key elements of data management and the importance of good data management systems

Note the handouts relevant to this session that are included as attachments at the end of this handbook. Please read these prior to the workshop and bring them with you:

1. Examples of indicator selection criteria – from Ministry for the Environment, Canterbury Region Community Plans Group, The Sustainability Institute
2. Examples of metadata templates – Ministry for the Environment, Environment Waikato
3. Example of a data collection form – Matamata-Piako District Council

The following weblink also provides a useful example which it is not practicable to attach to the handbook.

1. Using the Cultural Health Index: How to access the health of streams and waterways: <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/water/cultural-health-index-for-streams-and-waterways-feb06/index.html>

Development of Maori cultural indicators is a challenging area in RMA monitoring. While there is not enough time to cover this in the workshop, the link will take you to a report describing one way it has been approached.

Session four – Closing the loop: reporting and review

Session four is about 'closing the loop' – reporting and review arising from monitoring. This is the stage of actually using the results of monitoring for management and communications purposes. The session will include a slide presentation, a small group exercise and information sharing on closing the loop, reporting and review.

By the end of this session participants will:

- Have considered how to tailor reporting on monitoring to purpose and audience
- Have gained some useful ideas for different reporting techniques
- Understand how monitoring and reporting can help decision making and stakeholder participation
- Learn the importance of monitoring results in "closing the loop"
- Have considered how monitoring might be used to review plans and policy statements

Note the handouts relevant to this session that are included as attachments at the end of this handbook. Please read these prior to the workshop and bring them with you:

1. Example of reporting and review approach - Taranaki Regional Council

The following weblinks provide some useful examples which it is not practicable to attach to the handbook. Please make yourself familiar with these prior to the workshop.

1. Web-based reporting - Environment Waikato:
<http://www.ew.govt.nz/enviroinfo/indicators/index.htm>
2. Web-based reporting - Matamata-Piako District Council:
http://www.mppdc.govt.nz/link_policyplans.htm
3. Using monitoring results in reviewing plan effectiveness – Dunedin City Council:
<http://www.cityofdunedin.com/districtplan> (click on "Changes to the District Plan – Details", then "Evaluation Report" under either Plan Change 8 – Landscape or Plan Change 5 – Heritage)

Session 1 – An integrated monitoring strategy

Attachment 1: Legislative requirements *(Source: Adapted from MARCO report, Nov 2005)*

Organisation	Legislation	Monitoring Requirement	Mandatory	Timeframe & Reporting Requirement
Regional, city and district councils	LGA 2002	Monitor progress towards community outcomes (<i>outcome monitoring</i>)	Yes	Report annually on the results of any measurement undertaken during the year of progress towards the achievement of community outcomes (Schedule 10 S. 15(c)) Report not less than once every three years on the progress made by the local community in achieving community outcomes (S. 92)
		Compare actual Council activities and performance against intended activities and levels of service as set out in the LTCCP (<i>output monitoring</i>)	Yes	Reported on in the Annual Report (Schedule 10 S. 15(e)).
		Describe the effects of Council activities on the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of the community (<i>mixture of output and outcome monitoring</i>)	Yes	Reported on in the Annual Report (Schedule 10 S. 15(d)).
	RMA 1991	Monitor the efficiency & effectiveness of any policy statements and plans prepared under the RMA (<i>mixture of process and outcome monitoring</i>)	Yes	Reports required every five years
		Monitor the state of the environment (<i>outcome monitoring</i>)	Yes, discretion on extent	Not specified (as required)
		Monitor the exercise of resource consents/ complaints (<i>mixture of process and outcome monitoring</i>)	Yes	Not specified
		Monitor the exercise of any delegations (<i>process monitoring</i>)	Yes	Not specified
		(Regional councils only) Monitor the exercise of any recognised customary activity (<i>outcome monitoring</i>)	Yes	Not specified
	Land Transport Management Act 2003	Requirements incorporated into Local Authorities LTCCPs and annual plans that are subject to monitoring (<i>mixture of process and outcome monitoring</i>)	Yes, through the LGA	As required under the LGA
	Transport Services Licensing Act 1989	Collect information on and register all passenger transport services provided by commercial operations (<i>output monitoring</i>)	Yes	Register must be maintained and made available to the public
Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987	Keep, maintain and issue records on Land Information Memoranda (LIMs) (<i>process monitoring</i>)	Yes	As required	
TLAs (city and district councils)	Building Act 1991	Gather information as necessary to carry out functions under the Building Act (<i>process monitoring</i>)	Yes	As required
		Monitor performance of Council in achieving functions under the Building Act (<i>process monitoring</i>)	Yes	As required
	Historic Places Act 1993	Keep and maintain records of archaeological sites (<i>outcome monitoring</i>)	Yes	As required
Regional councils	Biosecurity Act 1993	Monitor to determine whether or not there are pests, pest agents and unwanted organisms present in the Region (<i>outcome monitoring</i>)	No	As required
		Monitor and review Pest Management Strategy no later than five years after its adoption (<i>mixture of process and outcome monitoring</i>)	Yes	Not stated
	Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002	Civil Defence Emergency Management Group to monitor and report on compliance with the Act (<i>process monitoring</i>)	Yes	Not stated

Session 1 – An integrated monitoring strategy

Attachment 2: Types of monitoring

Type of monitoring	Monitoring function
State of the Environment	Identifying and assessing state of resources or features of concern http://www.qualityplanning.org.nz/content.php?id=241
Policies and plans	Evaluating and reviewing the effectiveness of policies and planning instruments http://www.qualityplanning.org.nz/content.php?id=242
Plan compliance (including resource consents and complaints)	Performance accountability for resource users and Council http://www.qualityplanning.org.nz/content.php?id=243
Transfers of delegations and functions	Performance accountability for resource users and Council http://www.qualityplanning.org.nz/content.php?id=244
Level of service	Performance accountability for Council
Progress towards community outcomes	Identifying and assessing state of resources or features of concern, evaluating and reviewing the effectiveness of Council policies and activities

Session 1 – An integrated monitoring strategy

Attachment 3: What is monitoring – definitions

Indicator – A measure or combination of measures, either qualitative or quantitative, against which performance or progress can be assessed.

Integrated monitoring – A comprehensive monitoring programme that measures levels of social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being using pre-determined indicators – see above.

Integrated monitoring is likely to involve coordination and collaboration between and within different agencies due to the wide range of aspects being measured.

Measure – Lowest useful data units or standards of measurement for assessing performance or progress. Building blocks for indicators. Often treated as synonymous to indicators.

Metadata – Definitional data that provides information about or documentation of data, such as where it is located, how frequently it is published, etc. May include descriptive information about the context, quality or characteristics of the data.

Monitoring – The act of observing something and keeping a record of it. Generally includes aspects of data analysis, interpretation and reporting of results.

(Source: MARCO report, November 2005)

Session 2 – Fitting monitoring to purpose

Attachment 1: Example of plan effectiveness monitoring – Matamata-Piako District Council

Synopsis: From Strategy to Reporting

Council developed its Environmental Monitoring Strategy in 1999. This was developed for a number of reasons, one of which was “to assess the effectiveness of the objectives, policies, rules and other methods in the District Plan at achieving specific environmental outcomes”.

Implementation of the Strategy

- Upon commitment of a Strategy with Council, obtain commitment from all those identified in the strategy to collect and share the information, whether it be through internal agreements (if needed) or partnership agreements from external agencies.
- Outline the commitment to collect information in the LTCCP and identify the reporting to the community by a specific date as a performance measure.
- Assist in designing methods and templates to collect information (from basic forms for use by officers to databases where information can be inputted and stored).
- Prepare structure for reporting each issue as identified in the Strategy. For example: Natural Environment - Overview, Our Pressures, Our Situation, What Council Is Doing, What Else is Happening, What You Can Do to Help, Useful Links
- Prepare reports for the website and include first year of data after collecting from internal and external sources. Include links to indicators used. This provides a basis for on-going reporting on a yearly basis
- Put on website which also provides for a review.

What worked well and why:

Strategy – Having a strategy to begin with to identify what, who, how, and when we monitor

Collection of Data – Partnership agreement with Environment Waikato for the commitment to the collection and sharing of information so as to make our collection of data more efficient and cost effective. Assistance with “how to” collect data and Quality Assurance (ISO 2000) helped with embedding the collection and storage of data into internal processes.

Reporting Structure and Website – Having a reporting structure has enabled Council to update the report on an annual basis with ease.

Hot Tips for Success:

- Establish effective links across your organisation to implement
- Assist in the design of processes for the collection of data for other teams within your organisation
- The on-going collection of data should be embedded into everyday processes
- Work with your Regional Council and others for the sharing of information
- Website is efficient and cost effective for continuous reporting to the community.

What did not work well and why:

Initially we asked various teams to collect the information without assisting them to identify how they would go about it. It wasn't until assistance was provided to design forms and databases that information began to be collected.

Pitfalls to Avoid:

- Don't get bogged down with theories on what is plan effectiveness to develop your strategy
- In the first year or two reporting may not show much. This can be demeaning of the process and questions asked about why we are doing this. Trends over time do show what's happening and if not much is happening then good arguments start to appear as to whether or not an issue is being effectively dealt with or not.

What were the critical factors in getting approval for this process in terms of decision making?

- Strategy provided for integrated monitoring, not only for issues but also with other authorities
- Effective and efficient information provides reduced costs of gathering information for policy development. Also provides an on-going source of information for use throughout the organisation.
- Provides ongoing information suitable for community education to raise awareness of the state of the District, and what Council is doing and achieving towards the outcomes.

References

Matamata-Piako District Council Environmental Monitoring Strategy 1999

Forms for Building Consent Officers, Subdivision and Land Use (see example attached for session 3)

www.mpdc.govt.nz – Policies and Plans – Our Environment

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Session 2 – Fitting monitoring to purpose

Attachment 2: Example of plan effectiveness monitoring – Dunedin City Council

Synopsis:

A resource management monitoring strategy was developed, in consultation with key stakeholders and elected representatives. This set the framework for prioritising issues for monitoring, development of indicators and reporting.

A series of topic-based monitoring reports was developed, each examining different aspects of the district plan. While to some extent these were SOE in style, they were developed with monitoring of plan effectiveness in mind.

To date, monitoring information from these reports has been employed in three plan evaluation reports. Public and stakeholder consultation also fed into the evaluation reports, along with other available information such as research, case law, legal opinions. The evaluation reports reviewed the efficiency and effectiveness of individual sections of the district plan.

What worked well and why:

The monitoring strategy provided a good basis for prioritising issues for monitoring. The topic-based reports provided useful tools for raising community awareness about the district plan, as well as input into plan effectiveness monitoring. Good media response to these reports helped to get the message across.

Monitoring data (e.g. indicators) formed a building block for value-added work such as the evaluation reports. It has been very useful for both policy development and consents processing. In addition, research reports have been used to examine in greater depth particular areas of interest (e.g. inner-city apartment living, vacant industrial land, residential capacity study). Having these branded as part of the overall monitoring programme helps to promote the overall package.

Hot Tips for Success:

- Start monitoring today – there is no better time.
- Expect the sands to shift, this is very much an iterative and evolving process.
- Use a project management approach to define roles, secure resources, set milestones.
- Find a monitoring champion amongst senior management or elected representatives.
- Use students wherever possible to help with surveys and other monitoring work.

What did not work well and why:

Limited resources means that some tasks are always going to suffer. In this case, data management could have been better – for instance, a wish list item of an integrated monitoring database accessible to other staff and the public has never been fulfilled. Also more stringent quality assurance systems – for instance, to more thoroughly assess quality of data obtained from other Council departments.

Linkages to Community Plan outcomes and monitoring has to date not been as good as they could have been. Recent efforts to align the two sets of monitoring requirements will help to promote resource management monitoring as a key aspect of community outcome monitoring.

Pitfalls to Avoid:

- Don't reinvent the wheel - plagiarise other Council's monitoring strategies and copy processes used for indicator selection and development.
- Don't underestimate the amount of time required for data collection and management.
- Don't over-promise/under-deliver - avoid long lists of indicators and collecting data for its own sake.
- Producing large written reports of little value – be tightly focused in your output and consider the target audience.

What were the critical factors in getting approval for this process in terms of decision making?

- Development of a monitoring strategy with input from a range of Council departments.
- Emphasising the statutory requirement to monitor.
- Promoting monitoring as part of the bigger picture – how monitoring information and outputs can be used by a range of staff and stakeholders.
- If starting now, emphasise the relationship with and contribution to community outcomes monitoring required for the Community Plan.

References

Monitoring and evaluation reports available at www.cityofdunedin.com

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Session 2 – Fitting monitoring to purpose

Attachment 3: Example of consents and complaints monitoring – Whangarei District Council

Synopsis:

Start at the bottom and work up. Start simple and increase complexity. Start with a strategy about what you are going to do and how you are going to do it.

1. Determine what you need to do under the legislation (i.e. section 35 RMA).
2. Determine what further information would be useful to feed back into policy formulation, plan administration, plan evaluation and state of the environment monitoring and reporting.
3. Formulate appropriate indicators based upon the issues under consideration and information required.
4. Determine how to collect and store this information. Develop templates for site visit forms, complaints records, and collecting other information. Develop databases for storing and analysing information.
5. Decide on how to report and review the data obtained. Report monthly and/or annually.
6. Incorporate results (where relevant) into district plan evaluation and state of the environment monitoring and reporting. Collate annual reports at 5 year intervals to coincide with district plan evaluation and state of the environment monitoring and reporting.

What worked well and why:

Developing a comprehensive strategy to begin with. Strategy sets out what to do and how to do it, as well as how to integrate different aspects of monitoring under RMA. This is important, because if staff leave the strategy remains and new staff don't have to repeat the work.

Brief monthly reports are useful for reporting to council committees e.g. Environmental Services Committee. Annual reports are useful for internal analysis and feedback into policy formulation and plan administration. Five yearly collation of annual reports is useful for district plan evaluation and state of the environment monitoring and reporting.

Hot Tips for Success:

- Get buy-in from management and adequate on-going resources to carry out necessary functions. For medium sized council (e.g. WDC /70,000 residents) one complaints staff (dealing only with RMA complaints), one consent monitoring staff, one state of the environment coordinator and one Team Leader who can assist with district plan evaluation.
- Start with the basics. Set in place a consents and complaints monitoring regime along with data management system. Then work up from there.
- Try to integrate the information gained from consents and complaints monitoring with plan evaluation and state of the environment monitoring and reporting.

What did not work well and why:

Staff turnover -attracting and retaining staff for consents and complaints monitoring. This work sometimes lacks excitement and often involves dealing with difficult people in difficult situations.

State of environment monitoring and reporting is a big task and with limited resources, particularly staff, producing a regular comprehensive report is difficult. So tailor the report accordingly or lobby for more staff.

Pitfalls to Avoid:

- Being too ambitious with limited resources.
- Trying to do too much too soon.
- Raising expectations unrealistically.

What were the critical factors in getting approval for this process in terms of decision making?

- Stressing statutory requirements.
- Emphasising usefulness of information gained both for other aspects of monitoring under the RMA and for other council functions, e.g. information on development pressure for provision of infrastructure and services.
- Emphasising educational and publicity value of information gained, particularly in relation to state of environment monitoring and reporting.

References

Whangarei District Council Monitoring Strategy 2001

Annual Consents and Complaints Monitoring Reports 2003, 2004, and 2005

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Session 2 – Fitting monitoring to purpose

Attachment 4: Example of consents and compliance monitoring – Auckland City Council

Synopsis:

In 2002 Auckland City reviewed consent monitoring. It decided to prioritize staff time on the basis of environmental risk, and improve data collection for feedback. In 2005 an enforcement projects team was employed to review complaints response to better target it towards environmental priorities, and undertake proactive enforcement on specific planning objectives.

Consent monitoring

- Discussion paper resulted in a new framework for targeted consent monitoring and impact assessment, and business case for additional staffing funded 75% by new fees.
- Staff increased from 4 to 8, incl admin function to process data and issue invoices.
- Staff trained in impact assessment using live and photographic situations, with specialist training for urban design assessment. Assessment done by checklist.
- New cross-council software to include category-based recording of approved infringements, monitored development impacts and consent condition breaches.
- Planners advised to prioritise for monitoring, based on "design failure" scenario
- 3-level priority monitoring introduced: High, Standard, Audit. Deposit fees set to priority, based on average staff time for routine monitoring at each level.

Incident response

- Internal discussion paper set out framework for new projects team: compliance strategy, data sources for setting priorities, methods of response (e.g. education plans, enforcement projects), and annual cycle for reviewing activities and budget.
- Consultation with compliance staff, community board chairpersons, and councillors helped to formulate the first year of project work.
- Council support resulted in funding for small team of project staff, as well as additional consent monitoring and incident response officers.
- Project team began first assignments: effectiveness of compliance approach to signs and tree protection, necessitating area-wide enforcement trials, surveys, and some analysis of effectiveness of rules
- Incident response began recording breach data for both RMA and bylaw categories

What worked well and why:

Consent monitoring

- Compliance staff recruited with relevant backgrounds e.g. geography. Motivated by "value added" i.e. compliance + development impacts assessment.
- Consistency in impact assessment assisted by expert workshops, ongoing team discussion, joint inspections.
- Data fell relatively well into categories, because tested against officer experience.
- Reporting was promising, due to software ability to draw together all land use and building applications, infringements, and consent monitoring data.
- Monitoring priorities allowed staff to plan their time better, and justify their focus
- Approach was flexible, allowing priorities to change on inspection.

Incident response

- Political consultation attracted significant interest that assisted funding.
- Taking a topic/area/industry project approach to compliance helped innovation and broad solutions e.g. "footpath meetings" with retailers e.g. photo modelling of before and after scenarios.

Hot Tips for Success:

General

- Get political input from staff who can translate your proposals in terms of what they know about councillors' experience and policy standpoints.
- Set protocols about monitoring for consistency of method and interpretation.
- Schedule regular refresher training to deal with staff turnover and update approach.
- Ensure data categories are revisable in the database, to allow improved capture.
- Don't spend significant resources on database report writing. Extract data from queries and explore what it can tell you in multiple combinations and summaries.
- Get the ball rolling: start with a pilot model and improve it with experience; start in one area and roll it out with adaptations to other topics/areas.
- Warm your target communities to the changes - e.g. change in fees, new focus on their activities. Provide good reasons; define the community interest in compliance.

Consent monitoring

- Increase interaction between planning and monitoring officers to assist effective priority setting, condition writing, impact assessment. Joint site visits can help.
- Re-organise existing files to the new priorities so staff can reap the time management benefits of a targeted workload.
- Use the Audit category wisely, to avoid inefficient monitoring.

Incident response

- Include existing complaints staff in the set up for a proactive team; they legitimately feel that the new structure is coming on to their territory and have wisdom to share
- Identify other staff with monitoring and plan effectiveness functions; they have resources to share and toes to stand on!

What did not work well and why:

Consent monitoring

- Difficult to maintain the levels of knowledge regarding impact assessment.
- Relations between consent planners and monitoring did not improve significantly.
- Data mounted up, but time to analyse it and report on it was constrained.
- Cost recovery affected by staff adjustment to time recording, and timing of invoicing.

Incident response

- Political interests were stronger than expected, and though legitimate, resulted in some adjustment to project priorities as perceived by officers and available data.

Pitfalls to avoid:

- Lack of ongoing support for new functions and staff. Consider how compliance can be integrated in resource management structure and professional development program.
- Data with no place to go: no point increasing capacity for collection if no increase in capacity for reporting, evaluation, and action.

What were the critical factors in getting approval for this approach or process or product in terms of decision making?

- Reports with principles drawn from relevant literature; cost-benefit analysis.
- Cost recovery ability.
- Political interest and consultation.

References available from this work?

Procedures manual for resource consent monitoring will be available at the workshop.

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Session 2 – Fitting monitoring to purpose

Attachment 5: Prioritising monitoring (consents) – example from Auckland City Council

Priority Matrix

Category	Question	Scale (0-3)	Score	Minimum scores	Minimum Outcomes
Adverse effects on environment	What adverse effects is the consented land use likely to have on the environment without the proposed mitigating measures, which are incorporated in the application and imposed by conditions?	0 = no effects 1 = marginal effects 2 = moderate effects 3 = major effects		Notified non-complying → 2 (S.128 review condition → Special Projects monitoring)	2 or 3 → PRIORITY rating
Strategic priority	How relevant is the consented land use to strategic priorities? Strategic priority includes a matter identified <ul style="list-style-type: none"> in Auckland City's current State of the Environment report or as a high priority by staff in the priority list for the Rolling Review of the District Plan. 	0 = no relevance 1 = marginal relevance 2 = clearly relevant to one strategic priority 3 = clearly relevant to multiple strategic priorities		Non-complying activity → 2	2 or 3 → STANDARD rating
Compliance history	To what extent has the consent holder been involved in previous breaches under the RMA?	0 = no past involvement 1 = marginal involvement 2 = involvement in at least one past breach 3 = involvement in multiple past breaches			2 → STANDARD rating 3 → PRIORITY rating
		TOTAL SCORE			Consider if other minimum outcomes do not apply: 0 → NO monitoring 1-4 → AUDIT rating

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Attachment 1: Indicator selection criteria

Ministry for the Environment criteria

Policy relevant	
The indicator will monitor the key outcomes or policy or legislation, and measure progress towards goals	
The indicator will provide information to a level appropriate for policy decision making	
Analytically valid	
The indicator is measurable	
The indicator is representative of the system being assessed	
The indicator is reproducible and based on critical attributes of the system	
The indicator was developed within a consistent analytical framework	
The indicator is credible and robust	
The indicator is helpful in relating causes, effects and responses	
The indicator is responsive to environmental change	
Data collection will use standard methodologies with know accuracy and precision (statistical accuracy)	
The indicator is able to detect human-induced change from natural variations	
The indicator is responsive to environmental change, and allows trend analysis or provides a baseline for future trends	
The indicator has predictive capabilities	
Cost effective	
The indicator requires limited numbers of parameters to be established	
The indicator uses existing data and information wherever possible	
The indicator is simple to monitor	
Simple and easy to understand	
The indicator is simple to interpret, accessible, and publicly appealing	
The indicator clearly displays the extent of the issue.	

Indicator selection criteria for Canterbury Community Plans project

Criterion	Description
Validity	Is the indicator a true reflection of the issue under investigation? Is it defensible?
Relevance	Does the indicator measure trends and patterns in our theme areas? Does the indicator measure what we might consider to be a priority issue?
Data availability and measurability	Is the indicator measurable? Are data sets available to measure it?
Time related and repeatability	Are time series available to measure trends over time?
Understandability	Can the indicator be presented in an easily understandable way and is it meaningful?
Comparability	Can the data be standardised across all cities and districts taking part in the project? Can the indicator be accurately compared with the same or similar indicators from other relevant monitoring projects to assist in the 'whole of government' approach to monitoring?
Disaggregation	Can the indicator be disaggregated by city and districts and by key target variables (such as age, sex and ethnicity)?

Source: "Indicators for monitoring community outcomes: Methodology and process for developing indicators", Canterbury Region Community Plans Group, July 2005

Indicator selection criteria from the Sustainability Institute

Criterion	Description
Clear in value	No uncertainty about which direction is good and which is bad
Clear in content	Easily understandable, with units that make sense
Compelling	Interesting, exciting, suggestive of effective action
Policy relevant	For all stakeholders in the system, including the least powerful
Feasible	Measurable at reasonable cost
Sufficient	Not too much information to comprehend, not too little to give an adequate picture of the situation
Timely	Can be compiled without long delays
Appropriate in scale	Not over- or under-aggregated
Democratic	People should have input to indicator choice and have access to results
Supplementary	Should include what people can't measure for themselves (e.g. satellite imagery)
Participatory	Should make use of what people can measure for themselves (e.g. local biodiversity) and compile it to provide geographic or time overviews
Hierarchical	So a user can delve down to details if desired but can also get the general message quickly
Physical	It's best wherever possible to measure in physical units rather than monetary values, to avoid inflation issues
Leading	So they can provide information in time to act on it
Tentative	Up for discussion, learning and change

Source: Meadows, D. (1998) *Indicators and Information Systems for Sustainable Development*, The Sustainability Institute, Hartland Four Corners, VT.

Note: For a definitive list of criteria agreed by international experts refer to The Bellagio Principles: <http://www.iisd.org/measure/principles/bp.asp>.

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Attachment 2: Examples of metadata templates

Ministry for the Environment – regional water quality metadata

Database Title	12.2.3 Bay of Plenty Marine Water Quality Database
Keywords	<i>Water quality; Bay of Plenty; dinoflagelletes; containinants; water chemistry; microbiology</i>
Abstract	<p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Detailed coastal water quality (monitor 10 sites for 6 times per year)</i> • <i>Bathing water quality at 32 sites (monitor risk sites every year and other sites every 3 years)</i> • <i>Shellfish (monitor 54 sites for microbial/bacterial contamination every 3 years with a subset of 9 sites also test for metals and organic substances)</i> • <i>Dinoflagelletes (monitor for the presence of dinoflagellete cysts at 5 Tauranga Harbour sites in the Port area.</i> • <i>Offshore open water quality</i>
Geographical Coverage	Bay of Plenty Region
Dataset start date	1990
Dataset end date	In progress
Status/currency	Current
Update frequency	Varies
Maintenance	Environment Bay of Plenty
Technical Evaluation	
Parameters- what is measured	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1+ 5 coastal and ocean water quality- nutrients (dissolved phosphorus, oxidised nitrogen; total phosphorus; total nitrogen); conductivity; clarity (where sufficient water depth); temperature; suspended solids; chlorophyll; turbidity: faecal coliforms; enterococci. • bathing beaches- microbiological - enterococci. • shellfish- faecal coliforms; enterococci; heavy metals; organic compounds; PAH's; organotin; pesticides. • dinoflagellete cysts -species present
Parameters- what is calculated	N/A
Methods to measure parameters	Various analytical techniques. All standard methods by certified laboratories.
Scale of use	Various
Number of records	Unknown
GIS compatibility	Spatially referenced data
Available formats for users	Data queries output to Excel.
Access constraints	Not known
Measurement Accuracy	Various
Completeness of dataset	Results generally available within 3 mths.
Positional accuracy	<i>To be completed by database manager.</i>
Database steward	Environment Bay of Plenty
Database custodian	Environment Bay of Plenty

Database custodian contact person	Dave Bassett, Mark Langridge
Database custodian Contact Address Phone Fax Email	PO Box 364 Whakatane 0800 368 267 0800 ENVFAX mark@envbop.govt.nz
References	-
Date metadata record prepared	June 2000
Author of metadata record	Victoria Froude / Stephen Park
Management Evaluation	
Original purpose.	To address Environment BOP's responsibilities under RMA to monitor the state of the environment. The parameters measured are considered sufficiently sensitive to use for long term monitoring to identify the effectiveness or otherwise of plan policy and implementation.
Relationships with classification systems	N/A
Relationships with other databases	N/A
Database uses?	Environment BOP, Ministry of Health, district councils, consultants, public.
Public awareness of the database	Results of monitoring programmes reported and publicised and all reports are sent to district and school libraries.
Database strengths.	Includes regular measurements for a range of parameters from throughout the coastal part of the region.
Database limitations	-
What are the Current and Emerging Uses of the Database for:	
Assisting with determining historic state/baseline	Yes - For the time records have been collected (1990 to present day)
Assisting with determining current state/baseline	Yes
Assisting with modeling possible future outcomes	Yes - possible
Risk assessment	Yes. Sites potentially at risk of poor water quality can be identified
Monitoring site selection and sample design	Yes - possible
Aggregating and reporting data locally, regionally or nationally	Possible at local and region level.

Environment Waikato – land use indicator metadata

(Source: www.ew.govt.nz/enviroinfo/indicators/land/use/land1/techinfo.htm)

Land Use

What this indicator is about

Environment Waikato uses the Land Cover Database¹ (LCDB) to monitor changes in land use. This indicator describes and quantifies six major land use types:

- pastoral farming
- plantation forestry
- indigenous vegetation
- horticulture and cropping
- urban
- other (coastal dunes, bare rock, mines and quarries).

Changes in land use can indicate where pressures on our soil resources are intensifying. Intensification of land use can decrease soil quality and increase erosion.

Why we monitor

The Waikato Region contains some of the most productive land in New Zealand and the world. The landscape and soils vary in versatility and production capacity. Different types of land use affect our soil resources differently.

We monitor land use change to get information on where development pressures are likely to be greatest, and to help us identify policy responses to avoid or remedy damage to our soil and water resources.

Where and how we collect the data

Environment Waikato monitors changes in land use in the Waikato Region using data from the Ministry for the Environment's Land Cover Database (LCDB). Monitoring land cover over time provides information on changing land use.

Monitoring sites

We measure the area in different land use types for the entire Waikato Region.

Monitoring frequency

The Ministry for the Environment intends to update the LCDB every five years. Environment Waikato's monitoring of changes in land use is dependent on the release of the updated LCDB by the Ministry for the Environment.

Monitoring history

The LCDB data was derived from SPOT satellite imagery collected over two time periods:

- The bulk of the data was collected in February and March 1996.
- Data covering the Coromandel Peninsula and lower Hauraki Plains was collected in November 1994.

Measurement technique

We use the:

- LCDB to find out the Regional land use.
- The LCDB minimum mapping unit is 1 ha and the data are suitable for applications down to 1:25,000 scale.

How this indicator is compiled

We use Geographic Information System (GIS) tools to calculate the extent of land use types within the Waikato Region, and by district council area.

Guidelines and standards

This indicator re-categorises the LCDB land cover classes in the table below into six major land use types in the Waikato Region (with the exception of the land cover class "Inland Water"). The table below shows the categories of land use type derived from land cover class.

¹ Land cover data supplied by Terralink International Limited. COPYRIGHT RESERVED.

Landcover class	Land use type
Primarily horticultural	Horticultural and cropping
Coastal dune vegetation	Indigenous vegetation
Coastal wetland	Indigenous vegetation
Indigenous forest	Indigenous vegetation
Inland wetland	Indigenous vegetation
Mangrove	Indigenous vegetation
Shrubland	Indigenous vegetation
Tussock grassland	Indigenous vegetation
Bare ground	Other
Coastal sand	Other
Mine, pit, or quarry site	Other
Primarily pastoral	Pastoral farming
Planted forest	Plantation forestry
Urban open space	Urban
Urban settlement	Urban

Limitations

The LCDB database has classification errors of plus or minus 10 percent. Any changes in land cover less than this cannot be identified with confidence. Therefore, a large change in Regional land cover (plus or minus 60,000 ha) must occur before it can be detected using this method. However changes may be detectable at a larger scale, for example by district council areas.

Some vegetation types are incorrectly identified electronically in the LCDB satellite imagery. Errors in classification have been identified in the Waikato Region, for example, some young kahikatea stands have been classified as plantation forest.

The class “shrubland” does not distinguish between native and exotic cover - for example, it may include vegetation dominated by gorse or woolly nightshade.

The LCDB gives a “snapshot” of vegetation when the data were collected and should not be considered the definitive current vegetation cover.

The data was presented as percentage of each district council area in the Region by major land use type. However, the data do not allow for a breakdown of land use type by activity, for example, separating pastoral farming into different types such as dairy farming or sheep and beef farming.

Note that Franklin, Waitomo, Rotorua and Taupo districts all extend beyond the Regional boundary, the analysis of this indicator is limited to the Waikato Region. Therefore, Environment Waikato’s information on this indicator may not represent the entire area of these four districts.

Further indicator developments

The Ministry for the Environment will be releasing an updated version of the LCDB in 2004. Improved satellite image interpretation means the new LCDB database will have more landcover classes than present. This will allow us to describe the major land cover classes using more detailed land use types. For example, the land cover class “pasture” will be broken down into specific farming activities such as dairy and beef farming. Improvements using analysis of satellite images will also allow Environment Waikato to more accurately analyse information on the land use type “cropping”.

When this indicator is updated

Because the time scale at which land use changes occur it is unlikely that changes will be monitored any more frequently than five yearly. We will assess whether a five yearly cycle will provide information sensitive to land use change.

The Ministry for the Environment intends to update the LCDB every five years. Therefore, the updating of this indicator is also dependent on production of the updated LCDB and Environment Waikato's continued purchase of this data. This indicator will be updated following the release of the updated LCDB in 2004.

More information

Check out the summary statistics on this indicator for each district council area.

Useful links

- [Environment Waikato - Land and Soil](#)
- [Environment Waikato - What Wetlands Have We Got?](#)
- [The Ministry for the Environment, Performance Indicators – Change in Land Cover](#)
- [Terralink - Land Cover Database](#)

Contact person

Soil Scientist, Resource Information Group, Environment Waikato

Quality control procedures

For information on data quality (lineage, positional accuracy, attribute accuracy, logical consistency and completeness) see the updated metadata for the LCDB available on the Terralink International Limited website - [Land Cover Database](#).

Related indicators

- [Soil Quality](#)
- [Fertiliser Use on Farms](#)
- [Sources of Nutrients in Rivers](#)
- [Nitrogen Losses from Land](#)
- [River Water Quality for Contact Recreation](#)
- [Coastal water quality for contact recreation](#)
- [River Water Quality](#)

Session 3 – How to monitor

Attachment 3: Example of data collection form

Land use consent data collection form – Matamata-Piako District Council

LAND USE

RC..... Valuation Number:.....

Applicant Name:

Applicant Address:.....

Legal Description:

Application Date: Decision Date:

Further Info Requested: Further Info Received:

Application Status: In Progress Approved Declined Withdrawn

Additional Dwellings: 1 2 3 4 5 Other

Zone: Residential Rural / Rural Residential Industrial Business Kaitiaki

Type: Controlled Restricted Discretionary Discretionary Non Complying

Description:.....

Activity Category:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yard reductions | <input type="checkbox"/> Density building reductions coverage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary Activity | <input type="checkbox"/> Education facilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Place of assembly | <input type="checkbox"/> Accommodation facilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dwelling or dwellings with option to identify a no. | <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial in relation to DCP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial | <input type="checkbox"/> Depot |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mining/Quarrying | <input type="checkbox"/> Packhouses/coolstores/storage/warehousing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Offices/Canteen/ablution facilities/childcare facilities & recreational | <input type="checkbox"/> Activities on public reserves where no mangmt plan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marae Developments Iwi housing | <input type="checkbox"/> Any alteration within the Kaitiaki zone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Buildings on public reserves | <input type="checkbox"/> Cleanfill activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Comm services/medical facilities/offices/retailing | <input type="checkbox"/> Boarding/breeding of domestic pets |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial stockyards/sale yards | <input type="checkbox"/> Harvesting of forestry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Intensive farming | <input type="checkbox"/> Farming in indigenous areas over 1 ha |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Effluent disposal | <input type="checkbox"/> Works and network utility as per Sect. 8 of Dist Plan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stock underpass/crossing | <input type="checkbox"/> Heritage protection (trees) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heritage Protection (buildings, Waahi Tapu) | <input type="checkbox"/> Signage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nat. hazards (flood, fire, peat soils, land instability) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

State Highway or Main Arterial Route:

- | | | | | | | |
|---|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> None | <input type="checkbox"/> SH1 | <input type="checkbox"/> SH24 | <input type="checkbox"/> SH26 | <input type="checkbox"/> SH27 | <input type="checkbox"/> SH28 | <input type="checkbox"/> SH29 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marshall Street | <input type="checkbox"/> Allen Street | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waverly Avenue | <input type="checkbox"/> Tahuna-Ohinewai Road | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tauhei Road | <input type="checkbox"/> Paeroa-Tahuna Road East and West | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Awaiti Road | <input type="checkbox"/> No 1 Road | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ngutumanga Road | <input type="checkbox"/> Tautiti Road | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Piako Road | <input type="checkbox"/> Kurunui Road | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Morrinsville-Walton Road | <input type="checkbox"/> Kereone Road | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ngarua Road | <input type="checkbox"/> Stanley Road North | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stanley Road South | <input type="checkbox"/> Alexandra Road | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wardville Road from SH27 to Alexandra Road | <input type="checkbox"/> Tower Road from Broadway to bridge on Okauia Springs Road | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Te Poi Road | <input type="checkbox"/> Hinuera Road to SH27 to Hopkins Road | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hopkins Road | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bowler Road | | | | | | |

Soils and Zones:

- Flood
- Sites that contain or adjoin Culturally significant Site
- Fire
- Industrial
- Heritage
- Kaitiaki
- Instability
- Te Aroha Character area
- Business
- Slope/Erosion
- Riparian

Soil class: N/A I II III IV V VI VI VII

Iwi Consulted:

- Yes Response received
- No

Consent Conditions:

- Vehicle Entranceways
- Protection Bush/Trees
- Site Suitability
- Restriction on Land Use
- No Further Buildings
- Esplanade Reserve
- Noise
- Dust
- Glare
- Hazardous Substances
- Signage
- Other
- Restriction Vehicle Entranceways
- Minimum Floor Levels (Flooding)
- Yard Restrictions / Building Envelope
- Protection Waahi Tapu
- Specific Engineers Design Effluent System
- Access to Council
- Odour
- Vibration
- Rehabilitation
- Spray Drift
- Protect Iwi Interests

Parking spaces created by development?

- Yes No
- Number of spaces created

Contributions:

- Heritage \$.....
- Roading \$.....
- Parking \$.....
- Reserves \$.....

Development Controls:

- Approved: Declined:
- N/A N/A
- Yards Yards
- Maximum height Maximum height
- Density Density
- Building coverage Building coverage
- Recreational space Recreational space
- Daylight admission Daylight admission

Cost: \$

Total Working Days:

Session 4 – Reporting and review

Attachment 1: Example of reporting from Taranaki Regional Council

Synopsis: Effective reporting and closing the loop from monitoring to decision making

Taranaki – Our Place Our Future: Report on the State of the Environment of the Taranaki region 2003

This was the Council's second state of the environment report following the first released in 1996. Steps undertaken in preparing the report were as follows:

1. Council agreement to process.
2. Workshop with TRC, the region's TAs, other regional council staff to discuss reporting approaches.
3. Review of state of the environment report by independent consultant to identify best practice approaches.
4. Project guidance team with Council's senior management established to provide high-level support and guidance.
5. Project Manager appointed.
6. Project Team was established (regional and territorial staff).
7. Detailed project brief developed and approved by the Project Guidance Team. The brief included a table of contents, a summary of content, information sources, contributors and a completion deadline. Writing instructions were developed for the contributing authors.
8. Regular meetings held with contributing authors to integrate contributions and iron-out any problems.
9. Internal editing and reporting.
10. External review.
11. Layout and publication.
12. Launch (high profile with celebration and media).

The report included aspects of the environment that the TRC was responsible for and information on environmental matters addressed by district councils. It also used a 'pressure-state-response' framework and included comparisons where available.

A summary of progress in implementing regional objectives and policies (from the RPS) was included to link the regional policy and the environmental results/outcomes. The report included information from external parties (DoC, NIWA etc) and compliance monitoring information and research.

Case studies were used to demonstrate practical initiatives in the topic area and to encourage local ownership and action on issues. The case studies also provided added interest for the reader.

The report made links to the broader context of sustainable development – drawing together the actions of the wider community towards environmental sustainability in Taranaki. This broader context was noted as being in line with the direction for local government signaled in the Local Government Act 2002.

The launch of the report was an important part of the project. A high profile launch involving the Minister for the Environment, leaders, representatives and other invited guests from throughout the Taranaki community and the media was carried out to create a 'front page' for the environment. This emphasised the importance of the environment to daily life and made it clear that a high quality environment is achieved by hard work and solid investment.

What worked well and why:

- ❖ **Report writing and production and the high quality of the final product** both in content and form. This was achieved through a high level of commitment to the project by the Council and senior management as well as staff involved in writing, managing and compiling the report. The CEO took an active interest in the project and was determined that it be a high quality report in every sense.
- ❖ **Coordination and integration of information** from different Council departments and from external sources – district councils, DoC etc. The benefits of a comprehensive regional report were emphasised and accepted by other Councils. A clear project brief with set timelines and a Project Team that meet regularly and monitored progress maintained interest and momentum.
- ❖ **The official launch** created interest throughout the region and the country and had a positive flow-on effect in the community.
- ❖ **Links to issues in RPS** – provided a good basis for review of RPS (now underway).

Hot Tips for Success:

- Obtain Council and senior management commitment with appropriate time and resourcing
- Develop a clear project brief with timelines and stick to them as far as possible
- Appoint a Project Manager with responsibility for the project
- Establish a project team to coordinate inputs from different departments and other councils
- Pay attention to content and presentation to ensure ease of access and understanding by the public - but maintain the (scientific) integrity of the report
- Link results to policies and objectives to assist with evaluating the efficiency and effectiveness of council policies.

What did not work well and why:

Some difficulties in integrating information from outside agencies - because of a lack of data or different monitoring and data collection systems.

Different writing styles of contributing authors - presented challenges for project manager.

High demands of other work on staff meant occasional slippage in timelines.

Pitfalls to Avoid:

- Underestimating the time it takes to complete a comprehensive report. Resource the process properly. Look possibly at other reporting options – smaller, more frequent updates, issues based reports, better data analysis techniques and smarter ways of presenting information
- Failing to obtain the political support from Council and commitment from CEO/senior management
- Using highly technical language and complicated formats
- Not linking results to outcomes - what do we want to achieve and how far have we got?
- Don't think it's a small job that someone can do in spare time
- Using data that is not fit for the purpose - either don't use it and explain there is an information gap or make it clear what the limitations of the data are.

Taranaki - Our Place, Our Future. Report on the state of the environment of the Taranaki region 2003 is available as a full or summary report or CD ROM. Ten years on – A review of the Regional Policy Statement for Taranaki may also be of interest.