

PART VII: PLAN EFFECTIVENESS

This Part sets out the Environmental Results expected from the implementation of this Plan, the monitoring procedures for determining whether the Environmental Results have been achieved and this plan change and review provisions that may be used.

39. ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS ANTICIPATED

39.1 INTRODUCTION

Under s.67(1) of the Act, this Plan is required to state the environmental results anticipated from the implementation of the policies and methods specified in this Plan. This essentially requires a judgement of the extent to which the objectives stated will be achieved within the ten year term of this Plan. Some objectives may require longer than the ten year term to be realised.

39.2 SURFACE WATER

- The natural character of Northland's wetlands, rivers and lakes and their margins is preserved.
- No reduction in the biodiversity of Northland's indigenous wetlands.
- Water in surface water bodies of sufficient flow or level to allow aquatic ecosystems to survive in a healthy state and to safeguard the life supporting capacity of the water.
- Allocated water is taken and used efficiently.
- An increase in the volume of water stored in off-stream reservoirs.

39.3 GROUNDWATER

- No movement of the freshwater/seawater interface into shallow coastal aquifers as a result of groundwater takes.
- Adverse effects of any long-term reduction in groundwater levels as a result of groundwater takes are avoided, remedied or mitigated.

39.4 USE OF RIVER AND LAKE BEDS

- The natural character of Northland's wetlands, rivers and lakes and their margins is preserved.
- A reduced number of man-made barriers to fish migration in Northland's waterways.
- Ecological values of indigenous wetlands maintained.
- The reduction of erosion and associated adverse effects within water bodies due to the use, placement, alteration, removal or replacement of structures in, on, under or over the beds of rivers and lakes.
- Ecological values within and adjacent to rivers and lakes are maintained and enhanced.
- Adverse effects upon aquatic ecosystems are avoided, remedied or mitigated and where possible the aquatic ecosystem restored.

39.5 WATER QUALITY

- Surface water to be of a quality that allows aquatic ecosystems to survive in a healthy state.
- Groundwater to be of a standard that allows the water to be used for water supply purposes with a minimum of treatment.
- No untreated effluent being discharged into water.
- Any discharge of treated effluent to water represents the best practicable option.
- Urban stormwater discharges which meet specified receiving water quality standards.
- A reduction in solid waste being generated and therefore being disposed of in landfills.

39.6 LAND MANAGEMENT

- Increasing landholder awareness of possible off-site and on-site adverse effects of individual land management decisions; and of methods and techniques to mitigate and remedy such effects and their integration into normal day-to-day management decisions.
- Riparian vegetation retained where that would assist the prevention of sedimentation and eutrophication of water.
- Riparian vegetation enhanced where that would mitigate soil loss from stream bank erosion and from intensive land uses adjacent to water bodies.
- The maintenance of soil quality through the implementation of soil conservation.

39.7 CULTURAL NEEDS

- Increased awareness of cultural needs of Maori, including recognition of Maori as a partner to the Treaty of Waitangi.
- Identification and protection of sites of special value to tangata whenua in accordance with tikanga Maori including, where appropriate, the direct involvement of Maori in their management.
- Provision for the particular cultural concerns regarding the disposal of human and animal effluents to water.

40. PLAN MONITORING, CHANGES AND REVIEW

40.1 INTRODUCTION

In order to ensure that the environmental results set out in Section 39 of this Plan are achieved, there needs to be an on-going process of monitoring the effectiveness of this Plan and, if necessary, changing relevant policies and rules. The Act also requires that the whole Plan be periodically reviewed.

40.2 MONITORING OF PLAN EFFECTIVENESS

Under s.35 of the Act, the Council is required to monitor the suitability and effectiveness of this Regional Water and Soil Plan and to change or review this Plan where this is shown to be necessary. Under s.67, procedures for monitoring the effectiveness of this Plan are required to be specified.

Procedures to be used to monitor the effectiveness of this Plan will include:

1. An annual evaluation of the results of the Council's 'state-of-the environment' monitoring programme for the region, including specific attention to:
 - (a) Any new areas of environmental degradation; and
 - (b) The likely causes of any such degradation; and
 - (c) The effectiveness of any relevant policies, rules, and methods within this Plan which are intended to prevent, halt or minimise such degradation.
2. Regular communication with district councils, industry groups, residents and ratepayers associations, and any other relevant organisations to gain their assessment of the effectiveness of this Plan.
3. An annual analysis of the feedback obtained through the news media, meetings, and correspondence regarding the effectiveness of this Plan.

40.3 PLAN CHANGES

If the Regional Council's monitoring of the effectiveness of this Plan reveals the need for changes to this Plan, then these will be initiated by the Council and carried out in accordance with the First Schedule of the Act.

Notwithstanding the above, changes to this Plan can be proposed by any person in a written request to the Council. The Council must, within 30 working days of receiving a request:

1. Decide whether to accept the request in whole or in part; or
2. Decide to reject the request in whole or in part, but only on the grounds that:
 - (a) The request is frivolous or vexatious; or
 - (b) The substance of the proposal has been considered and given effect to, or rejected by the Council within the last two years; or

- (c) The proposal has little or no planning merit; or
- (d) The proposal and its environmental impact has not been described with sufficient clarity for it to be readily understood; or
- (e) The proposal would make this Plan inconsistent with either the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement, the Regional Policy Statement, the Regional Coastal Plan or any other Regional Plan that the Council may produce; or
- (f) The Regional Plan has been operative for less than two years.

If the request is agreed with, then the procedure set down in the First Schedule of the Act is followed.

If the request is refused or deferred, an applicant for a Plan change may appeal to the Environment Court.

40.4 PLAN REVIEW

Notwithstanding any changes which may be made to this Plan in the interim, the Council will commence a full review of this Plan not later than 10 years from the date that it becomes operative.