

## Report To: Council



**Meeting Date:** 26 November 2024

**Subject:** Resource Management Reform, Fast Track Approvals Update and the Waikato Biodiversity Accord

**Type:** Decision required

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### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this business paper is to provide an update to Council on Resource Management Reform and Fast Track Approvals and to seek approval from Council to participate in the Waikato Biodiversity Accord.

### 2. Suggested Resolutions

- 2.1 The following are suggested resolutions only and do not represent Council policy until such time as they are adopted by formal resolution.
- 1 The business paper on Resource Management Reform and Fast-Track Approvals Update be received.
  - 2 Council agree to endorse the Waikato Biodiversity Accord and note that there is no funding commitment.

### 3. Background

- 3.1 The Government is currently undertaking a three-phased approach to the resource management reform. These three phases include:
- Phase One - Repeal of the Natural and Built Environment Act and the Spatial Planning Act. This was completed in December 2023.
  - Phase two - Started with the introduction of the Fast-track Approvals Bill. The Bill had its second reading on 13 November 2024, and it is expected to be passed into law before the end of this year.
  - Phase Two - Also includes two amendment Bills. The first Bill was targeted at:
    - Making changes to the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA), focused on reviewing what the government considers to be the most significant resource management issues. This Bill made changes to the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management, National Environmental Standard for Freshwater and the associated regulations (i.e. stock exclusion and intensive winter grazing), the National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity, and some targeted changes to speed up the process for preparing and amending national direction (National Policy Statements and National Environmental Standards). The Bill became the Resource Management (Freshwater and Other Matters) Amendment Act and commenced on 25 October 2024.
    - The second Bill will be accompanied by a number of changes to national direction and will be grouped into four packages:
      - Infrastructure and energy;
      - Housing;

- Farming and the primary sector; and
  - Emergencies and natural hazards.
- Phase Three - The Government is proposing to replace the RMA with two new acts. One act will focus on managing the environmental effects that arise from activities we use natural resources for. The other act will focus on enabling urban development and infrastructure and will be aligned with the Government's Going for Housing Growth Plan and its 30-year National Infrastructure Plan.

## 4. Commentary

### 4.1 **FAST TRACK APPROVALS BILL**

4.2 The Committee received nearly 27,000 submissions on the Bill. The following key changes were recommended by the Environment Select Committee on the Bill:

- The removal of the power of Ministers to make the final decision on projects in favour of the Panels, and the Minister for Infrastructure becomes the sole referring Minister.
- The extension of timeframes for invited parties to comment on applications from 10 working days to 20 working days.
- More specificity around a Panel's decision-making parameters including a direction that a Panel may decline an approval if it forms a view that a project has one or more "adverse impacts", and those adverse impacts are sufficiently significant to outweigh the purpose of the Bill even after conditions have been imposed. However, what constitutes 'adverse impacts' or 'sufficiently significant' remains open for interpretation, and it is likely that future applications will provide more clarity on how these terms will be applied in practice.
- A new provision that clarifies projects of significant regional or national benefit include proposals that would enable the continued functioning of existing regionally or nationally significant infrastructure (i.e. maintenance and upgrades).
- Clarification around Panel expertise, which now requires knowledge, skills, and expertise relevant to the approvals sought in the substantive application, in environmental matters and te ao Māori and Māori development. The makeup of a Panel has also been amended to remove an iwi nominated member as a mandatory requirement (leaving a nominee from the local authority as the sole mandatory nominee). The removal of the express requirement for an iwi nominated Panel member does remove an element of the protections for iwi in the Bill, however there are other clauses enabling iwi to nominate or influence the nomination of panel members if an arrangement is provided for by a Treaty settlement or an equivalent mechanism.
- An increase in the proposed lapse date from two years to a date specified by the Panel (with a default lapse period of five years). This assists large-scale and complex projects which often need a longer lead in time.
- An extension of the Panel's decision-making timeframe on referred projects. While the standard 25 working day timeframe remains, the Panel may now extend this as it thinks fit.
- An express direction to Panels that conditions must not be imposed that are more onerous than necessary to address the purpose for which it is set.
- Amended cost-recovery provisions to make it clear that local authorities can recover actual and reasonable costs of providing information requested (from the EPA) and can recover from the applicants' actual and reasonable costs incurred in performing functions, duties or powers in relation to a referral or/and a substantive application.
- The requirement to provide information on past decisions in referral applications.

4.3 The following key matters have not changed since the first reading:

- The scope of the Bill has not been widened to include private plan change applications.
- The hierarchy of criteria for decision-making under the Bill has not changed. The greatest weight will still be given to the slightly amended purpose of facilitating the delivery of infrastructure and development projects.
- The categories of parties invited to comment on resource consent applications has not been amended to include community groups or NGOs.

4.4 **WHAT PROJECTS HAVE BEEN LISTED IN THE WAITOMO DISTRICT**

4.5 We are aware of three projects that have been listed in the Waitomo District. These are:

Company Name	Project Name	Activity	Proposal
Taharoa Ironsands Limited	Pit 1 Mining Project	Mining and Quarrying	The Pit 1 Mining Project is to establish and operate the staged development of a mine site for mineral sand extraction activities over a 23-hectare area.
	Central and Southern Block Mining Project	Mining and Quarrying	The Central and Southern Block Project is to continue the existing mineral sand extraction activities over a 911-hectare area.
	Northern Block Mining Project	Mining and Quarrying	The Northern Block Mining Project is to undertake mineral sand extraction activities over a 1397-hectare area (excluding Pit 1 and avoiding the urupa).

4.6 Once the Bill has passed its final reading the process obligations of the Council will be able to be confirmed. This will likely include pre-consultation, commenting on applications and providing feedback on proposed conditions as well as representation on the Hearing Panels as required. New delegations will be required to accommodate this Act.

4.7 **PHASE TWO AMENDMENT BILLS**

4.8 As noted above, the first of two RMA amendment bills, the Resource Management (Freshwater and Other Matters) Amendment Bill, was passed into law in late October.

4.9 The new Act:

- Excludes the hierarchy of obligations in the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM) from resource consenting.
- Repeals the low slope map and associated requirements from stock exclusion regulations.
- Repeals the permitted and restricted discretionary activity regulations and associated conditions for intensive winter grazing from the National Environmental Standards for Freshwater (NES-F).
- Aligns the provisions for coal mining with other mineral extraction activities under the National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity (NPS-IB), NPS-FM and NES-F.
- Suspends for three years requirements under the NPS-IB for councils to identify new Significant Natural Areas (SNAs) and include them in district plans. The Act also extends some implementation timeframes to 31 December 2030. Please note this does not affect the Proposed District Plan as the Act specifies that it has no effect on:
  - Any SNA included in the Proposed Plan before 25 October 2024 (Section 20 (s78(6)(a))).
  - Any obligations of local authorities to give effect to provisions in policy statements relating to indigenous biological diversity. The Proposed Plan must give effect to the Waikato Regional Policy Statement which requires the identification of SNAs. This requirement prevails over the Act. (Section 20 (s78(4)(b))).

- Speeds up the process for preparing and amending national direction, including national environmental standards, national planning standards, national policy statements and the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement.
- 4.10 The second RMA amendment bill is expected to be introduced to Parliament before the end of 2024 and be passed into law in mid-2025. The second RMA amendment bill will be accompanied by four packages of changes to national direction and consultation is expected to begin in early 2025.
- 4.11 The infrastructure and energy package will:
- Develop further national direction to enable energy and infrastructure projects, including a new National Policy Statement for Infrastructure.
  - Provide a consistent approach to quarrying across the resource management system.
  - Extend the duration of port coastal permits by a further 20 years.
  - Change the National Environmental Standard for Telecommunication Facilities to give greater certainty and reduced consenting costs as they upgrade their infrastructure.
  - Give effect to the Government's Electrify NZ reforms to make it easier to consent renewable energy.
- 4.12 The housing package will:
- Enable the first pillar of the Government's Going for Housing Growth policies.
  - Require councils to demonstrate compliance with the 30-year Housing Growth Targets.
  - Provide councils with the flexibility to opt out of the Medium Density Residential Standards (not applicable to Waitomo District).
  - Simplify heritage management.
  - Develop new national direction to enable granny flats and papakāinga.
- 4.13 The farming and primary sector package will:
- Amend the National Policy Statement on Highly Productive Land to make it clear that indoor primary production and greenhouses are permitted on highly productive land (completed).
  - Specify that farmers are allowed to build new specified infrastructure such as solar farms on highly productive land.
- 4.14 The emergencies and natural hazards package will:
- Provide a nationally consistent framework for addressing the risks posed by natural hazards, including risks from climate change, as a single instrument.
  - Include improved emergency provisions to better enable rapid responses to disasters.
- 4.15 **PHASE 3 – REPLACING THE RMA**
- 4.16 The Government is proposing to replace the RMA with two new laws. One law will focus on managing the environmental effects on natural resources. The other law will focus on enabling urban development and infrastructure. Cabinet has agreed that the new resource management system should:
- Achieve efficiencies by requiring one regulatory plan per region jointly prepared by regional and district councils.
  - Narrow the scope of the effects it controls.
  - Strengthen and clarify the role of environmental limits and how they are to be developed.
  - Provide for greater use of national standards to reduce the need for resource consents and to simplify council plans.

- Shift the system focus from consenting before works are undertaken to strengthened compliance monitoring and enforcement.
- Use spatial planning and a simplified designation process to lower the cost of future infrastructure.
- Provide for resolution of disputes between neighbours and between property owners and councils, with a Planning Tribunal (or equivalent) providing an accountability mechanism.
- Uphold Treaty of Waitangi settlements and the Crown's obligations.
- Provide faster, cheaper and less litigious processes within shorter, less complex legislation.

#### 4.17 **WAIKATO BIODIVERSITY ACCORD**

- 4.18 For some months staff have been in discussion with the Waikato Regional Council (WRC) regarding the development of a Waikato Biodiversity Accord. The purpose of the Accord is to guide the preparation of a regional biodiversity strategy which WRC has a statutory obligation to develop as part of its duties under the National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity 2023. Regional biodiversity strategies must set out the objectives and aims necessary to achieve landscape-scale restoration of indigenous biodiversity.
- 4.19 The Accord is a voluntary agreement between WRC, territorial authorities, iwi, the Department of Conservation, Ministry for Primary Industries and QEII National Trust to collaborate on biodiversity issues. There is no funding commitment, although limited staff time has been requested to help draft parts of the strategy over the next two years. This commitment can be accommodated within our existing resources. On balance, given the effect the strategy could have on our district, it may be prudent to participate in the Accord and provide input into the development of the strategy contents.
- 4.20 The key parties are invited to demonstrate their support by agreeing to endorse the use of their logo on the Accord. The Accord is enclosed as **Attachment 1** for your information.

## **5. Analysis of Options**

- 5.1 No analysis of options is required for the resource management reform and fast track approvals update portion of this paper.
- 5.2 **WAIKATO BIODIVERSITY ACCORD**
- 5.3 Council can resolve to either be a part of the accord or not. However, it is considered that it would be prudent for Council to participate given that approximately 35% of the Waitomo District is identified as a Significant Natural Area, and there is no funding cost to participating in the Accord.

## **6. Considerations**

- 6.1 **RISK – RESOURCE MANAGEMENT REFORM AND FAST TRACK APPROVALS BILL**
- 6.2 It is noted that the changes in legislation and the fast-track consenting applications could have an impact on Council officer workloads given that there is uncertainty about our scope of involvement in any fast-track applications.
- 6.3 Council officers will continue to update Council about the reform process and any applications we receive for fast-track approval. Council officers will also draft submissions on the amendments as the opportunities arise, and where Council considers this is necessary.
- 6.4 **RISK – WAIKATO BIODIVERSITY ACCORD**
- 6.5 While we will still have involvement in the regional biodiversity strategy should Council resolve not to be part of the Accord it is considered that it would be advantageous for

Council to commit to being a party to the accord given the amount of significant natural areas in the District.

6.6 **CONSISTENCY WITH EXISTING PLANS AND POLICIES**

6.7 A decision by Council to consider this matter is in accordance with Council's plans and policies.

6.8 **SIGNIFICANCE AND COMMUNITY VIEWS**

6.9 This decision is not a significant decision in terms of the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy.

<b>7. Recommendation</b>
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7.1 The business paper on Resource Management Reform and Fast Track Approvals Update be received.

7.2 Council agree to endorse the Waikato Biodiversity Accord and note that there is no funding commitment.



Kawenata Rerenga Rauropi  
ā-Rohe o Waikato

## **Waikato Biodiversity Accord**

*Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari he toa takitini*  
*My strength is not as an individual but as a collective*





## Te aronga Purpose

The Waikato Biodiversity Accord brings together organisations with the common goal of creating and putting into action a regional biodiversity strategy. The Accord signatories share a commitment towards maintaining and restoring the full range of ecosystem types to ensure healthy, functioning indigenous biodiversity in the Waikato region.

The Accord is a voluntary agreement and is not legally binding. It does not restrict any person in the exercise of any power or discretion under any statute.

The Accord and the regional biodiversity strategy will be reviewed every five years.

## Tangata whenua me te Kawenata Tangata whenua and the Accord

The principal iwi groups in the Waikato region are Waikato, Ngāti Maniapoto, Raukawa, Hauraki, Te Arawa, and Ngāti Tūwharetoa. These groups include many related iwi and hapū.

The Māori worldview recognises that all parts of te taiao (the environment), both living and non-living, possess spiritual qualities. These qualities are known as tapu, mauri, mana, and wairua. Whakapapa (genealogy) connects and binds tangata whenua to the environment. The Accord recognises the mana of tangata whenua and their role as kaitiaki to safeguard indigenous biodiversity. Kaitiakitanga, inherited through whakapapa, ensures tangata whenua maintain this intergenerational guardianship over their rohe.

The care and protection of te taiao inherent in kaitiakitanga does not preclude using resources in a sustainable way. This traditional resource management knowledge (a component of mātauranga Māori) and responsibilities passed down through generations are all part of this inter-connected relationship.

The environmental management plans of various iwi within the Waikato region highlight a commitment to restoring and protecting natural and cultural heritage through traditional knowledge and modern scientific methods.

The Accord signatories acknowledge that local iwi and hapū have a strong cultural interest in protecting and sustainably managing biodiversity in the Waikato region. While these interests may differ by iwi, hapū and rohe (tribal area), the partners seek to reflect these interests in both the principles of this Accord and in the regional biodiversity strategy framework.



# Ngā mātāpono

## Principles

The following principles will guide the actions of signatories to this Accord:

### Te Tiriti o Waitangi and treaty settlements as a foundation

We acknowledge that tangata whenua are kaitiaki at place and that they wish to exercise their tino rangatiratanga (authority and self-determination) over their land. We respect their mana, kawa, tikanga, mātauranga and whakapapa.

The Accord honours the deep connection between tangata whenua and the natural world through whakapapa. It will ensure that mātauranga Māori informs our biodiversity vision while upholding tikanga (protocols) and addressing historical breaches of Māori land rights. We are guided by the principles of partnership, protection, participation and shared decision-making.



Hāpaitia te ara tika e pūmau ai te rangatiratanga  
mō ngā uri whakatipu  
**Foster the pathway of knowledge to strength,  
independence and growth for future generations**

### Collaboration and partnership

Shared responsibility, working together, and forming partnerships are essential for maintaining, restoring and enhancing indigenous biodiversity.

Nā tō rourou, nā taku rourou ka ora ai te iwi  
**With your food basket and my food basket,  
the people will thrive**

### Integrated and coordinated approach

We will achieve a greater positive impact on habitat connectivity and ecological integrity by coordinating our collective efforts, resources, expertise, funding and actions (including working within resource and financial constraints) beyond administrative boundaries.

Mā te rongō ka mōhio; mā te mōhio ka mārama; mā te  
mārama ka mātau; mā te mātau ka ora  
**Through resonance comes cognisance; through  
cognisance comes understanding; through  
understanding comes knowledge; through  
knowledge comes life and wellbeing**

### Honesty, trust and accountability

Transparency, honesty, and accountability will be maintained in all biodiversity management actions and decisions. This includes respecting the interests and mandates of all signatories.

Tā te tika ka hua, tā te pono ka toha  
**From truth comes growth, from honesty  
comes generosity**

### Inclusiveness and participation

All signatories will be involved in and participate in delivering actions to foster a sense of collective responsibility for managing indigenous biodiversity.

Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari he toa takitini  
**My success is not the work of one, but the work  
of many**

### Long-term commitment and adaptability

We need a long-term, inter-generational and adaptable strategy that is regularly reviewed to acknowledge the need for sustained effort and flexibility when circumstances change.

Ko te pae tawhiti, whāia kia tata; ko te pae tata,  
whakamaua kia tīna  
**Seek out distant horizons and cherish  
those you attain**

# Anga a te Rautaki Rerenga Rauropi ā-Rohe

## Regional Biodiversity Strategy Framework

The Accord signatories will develop a collaborative regional biodiversity strategy. This strategy will have community buy-in and meet the statutory requirements under the National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity and the Waikato Regional Policy Statement.

The strategy will:

- Set out a landscape-scale vision and holistic approach to the restoration<sup>1</sup> of indigenous biodiversity. This will provide the overarching direction for local indigenous biodiversity strategies and other relevant plans, policies and strategies required or provided for in legislation.
- Be achievable in practice across the region for the benefit of the full range of regional ecosystems.
- Record the actions intended to promote the maintenance and restoration of the full range of regional ecosystems<sup>2</sup> for current and future generations, including the prioritisation of areas of high biodiversity value while considering all biodiversity values and ecosystem services.
- Recognise the interactions between people and species, the connections between rural and urban environments, and the connections across ecological districts.
- Recognise biological and physical connections within, and between the terrestrial environment, fresh water and the coastal marine area (a “ki uta ki tai – mountains to the sea” approach).
- Consider and promote the wider benefits of protecting biodiversity, such as protecting taonga and wāhi tapu, improved water quality, healthier freshwater habitats, carbon sequestration, hazard mitigation, biosecurity and amenity values.
- Recognise and involve treaty partners, whānau, hapū, iwi and Māori organisations as central leaders in the biodiversity system.
- Acknowledge the historical barriers faced by tangata whenua and respect their right to prioritise development over indigenous biodiversity protection in certain situations, as per their exercise of kaitiakitanga and rangatiratanga.
- Explore incentives for private landowners and Māori landowners as kaitiaki of indigenous biodiversity.
- Include effective community actions to build knowledge, skills and capability, empowering people to be active guardians of biodiversity.
- Provide for actions that increase resilience to the biological and environmental changes associated with climate change.
- Follow an efficient and effective strategy development and implementation process that recognises the varying capacity and resource constraints of the Accord signatories and wider community to participate and enables sharing of costs and leveraging of resources across partner organisations.



<sup>1</sup> As defined in Section 1.6 Ministry for the Environment (2023) *National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity*

<sup>2</sup> As defined in Section 1.6 Waikato Regional Council (2016) *Waikato Regional Policy Statement: Te Tauāki Kaupapahere Te-Rohe O Waikato*

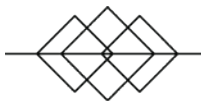
# Te oati Commitment

We, the undersigned, commit to actioning the Accord's principles and regional biodiversity framework to strengthen our collaboration and build a strategy to improve the indigenous biodiversity of the Waikato region.

## Ngā kīwai Accord partners

### Iwi partners

Pare Hauraki



TE KOTAHITANGA  
o Ngāti Tūwharetoa



### Local and regional authorities



Te kaunihera o Kirikiriroa



Ōtorohanga  
District Council



ROTORUA  
LAKES COUNCIL  
Te Kaunihera o ngā Roto o Rotorua



Te Kaunihera ā Rohe o Waikato



### Agencies



Department of Conservation  
Te Papa Atawhai

Ministry for Primary Industries  
Manatū Ahu Matua



QE II National Trust  
For open space in New Zealand  
Ngā Kaiwhāki Papa

The Waikato Biodiversity Accord is a living document – anyone who is passionate about biodiversity and wants to commit to maintaining and restoring indigenous biodiversity in the Waikato region can join at any time.

# Ngā mahere taiao a ngā iwi – ngā whāinga Iwi environmental management plans – ambitions and goals

The iwi environmental management plans within the Waikato region aim to achieve a healthy and sustainable environment for all by combining traditional knowledge with contemporary practice and working together. The key focus areas include:

- Biodiversity and Habitat Restoration: All plans address the protection of native plants and animals, restoring and reconnecting habitats, and managing threats like habitat loss, invasive species, and land degradation.
- Freshwater Management: Protecting and restoring rivers, streams and wetlands is a common goal, as clean water is vital for a healthy environment.
- Collaboration: All plans emphasise the importance of working together with government agencies and communities to achieve sustainable environmental outcomes.

## Hauraki iwi

Mauri Hauraki Whānui is about protecting and improving the mauri (life force) of ecosystems, habitats, species, and natural resources in the Hauraki region. Their goals include:

- Protecting historical sites, places, landscapes, and traditional knowledge.
- Supporting the kaitiaki role of Hauraki Whānui.
- Making informed decisions about the environment and heritage based on tikanga.
- Building partnerships that uphold the Treaty of Waitangi.
- Raising community awareness about the contributions of Hauraki Whānui to environmental management and heritage protection.

### Whāia te Mahere Taiao o Hauraki – Hauraki Iwi Environmental Management Plan

- Aims to protect the natural and cultural heritage of the Hauraki rohe over 50 years.
- Focuses on restoring wetlands and forests which are crucial habitats for native species and “in a way that reconnects the ngahere so that the food supply, habitat and ecosystems of Tāne Mahuta are increased and plentiful” (p.17).
- Recognises the need to work alongside government and the community for effective environmental stewardship.

## Ngāti Maniapoto

Ngāti Maniapoto have always maintained their mana whakahaere (authority) to manage their rohe according to their kawa and tikanga. Their rohe includes their land, mountains, rivers, water (especially the Waipā River), flora and fauna and other taonga (treasures). These resources have their own mauri, which reflects the spiritual and physical wellbeing of Maniapoto.

For biodiversity, “the protection and enhancement of indigenous species and their genetic diversity, and the habitats and ecosystems that support them are essential to the health and wellbeing of Maniapoto and the exercise of rangatiratanga and kaitiakitanga” (p.89).

### Ko Tā Maniapoto Mahere Taiao - Maniapoto Environmental Management Plan

- Focuses on maintaining, enhancing, restoring and protecting native species and ecosystems.
- Promotes the development of inter-connected networks of indigenous habitats and ecosystems, regional biodiversity conservation initiatives and monitoring frameworks.
- Sets clear goals to protect biodiversity and recognises the importance of working with national and local government in a way that recognises the relationship that Maniapoto have with natural heritage and biodiversity including traditional uses.





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## Ngāti Tūwharetoa

Ngāti Tūwharetoa are descendants of ancestors who have lived in the Taupō region since arriving on the Te Arawa waka. Their whakapapa connection to their land and taonga gives them mana whenua (authority over the land), kaitiakitanga, and rangatiratanga, including the right to manage their relationship with their land and taonga.

Ngāti Tūwharetoa are represented by two governance entities that work as kaitiaki to protect and improve the mauri and physical and spiritual health of their environment, including Taupō Waters and the Waikato River.

### Ngāti Tūwharetoa Environmental Iwi Management Plan

- Integrates traditional values with modern practices to protect the mauri (life force) of tribal taonga.
- Focuses on protecting biodiversity and habitats, addressing land degradation and invasive species
- Aims to “assert and exercise tino rangatiratanga and kaitiakitanga of ngā hapu o Ngāti Tūwharetoa over ngā otaota me ngā aitanga kararehe within the Ngāti Tūwharetoa rohe” (p.38).
- Encourages creating connections between ecosystems and ensuring “that the views of ngā hapu o Ngāti Tūwharetoa are an integral part of all initiatives that seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity” (p.38).

### Te Kaupapa Kaitiaki - Taupō Catchment Plan

- Highlights Ngāti Tūwharetoa’s commitment to protecting biodiversity in their rohe.
- Focuses on sustainable land and water management practices that recognise the interrelationship between land, water and biodiversity.
- Aims to reverse biodiversity decline through restoration, protection, and addressing climate change impacts whilst recognising the need for landowners to use their land.
- Emphasises collaboration and partnerships to achieve these goals.

## Raukawa

Over many generations, Raukawa developed tikanga that show deep respect for their land, plants, animals, and all living things within it. Their tikanga says that if people take care of the environment, the environment will take care of them in return.

As kaitiaki in their rohe, Raukawa has a special responsibility under tikanga to protect, preserve, and sustainably manage their natural and cultural resources. Their goal is a future where cultural, social, environmental, and economic wellbeing are balanced for everyone in their tribal area.

### Te Rautaki Taiao a Raukawa - Raukawa Environmental Management Plan

- Combines traditional knowledge and modern science to care for the environment.
- Aims to create, restore, enhance and protect native plants and animals and their habitats, including addressing issues like habitat fragmentation and invasive species.
- Emphasises collaboration with local authorities and other stakeholders to share resources and knowledge.



## Te Arawa River Iwi

The Waikato River, from its source to its mouth, is a taonga of great significance to Te Arawa River Iwi: Ngāti Tahu-Ngāti Whaoa, Ngāti Kearoa Ngati Tuarā and Tūhourangi Ngati Wāhiao. It includes the water, banks, beds, streams, tributaries, lakes, fisheries, vegetation, wetlands, floodplains, islands, springs, geothermal areas and mauri.

Te Arawa River Iwi has a cultural, historical, traditional, and spiritual connection to the Waikato River. This connection gives them a responsibility to protect the river and its mauri, following tikanga to ensure its wellbeing. They continue to exercise their mana whakahaere and customary rights as kaitiaki of the Waikato River within their rohe.

### Te Arawa River Iwi Trust (TARIT) Environmental Plan

- Prioritises restoring and protecting the Waikato River's health and wellbeing, particularly the upper river catchment.
- Advocates for no further degradation and protection of native plants and animals, lakes, wetlands, riparian river margins, geothermal taonga, mahinga kai and the connections between them.
- Emphasises working with agencies and landowners to lead or be involved in mana taiao projects and incorporate customary knowledge to achieve environmental goals and balance development needs with protection.



## Waikato-Tainui

For Waikato-Tainui, mana whakahaere has long been exercised under the mana (prestige) of the Kiingitanga. Mana whakahaere embodies the authority that Waikato-Tainui have established in respect to the environment and they view the holistic integrated management of all elements such as flora and fauna, land, air and water as of utmost importance. Management of resources, including the fisheries and lands, is done in a sustainable manner guided by mātauranga, tikanga and kawa.

To Waikato-Tainui, the Waikato River is a tupuna (ancestor) which has mana, and in turn represents the mana and mauri (life force) of the tribe. The river has its own mauri, its own spiritual energy and its own powerful identity. It is a single indivisible being. The health and wellbeing of Waikato-Tainui and its special relationship with the Waikato River is inherently connected with the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River. To this end, Te Ture Whaimana o te Awa o Waikato – the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River is of paramount importance as it identifies abundant life and prosperous communities as the positive consequence of a healthy river. It is intended to be the primary direction-setting document for the Waikato River and activities within its catchment that may affect the river, including effects on water quality and indigenous flora and fauna.

The principle of co-management, as set out in Waikato River Settlement Act 2010 and the Kiingitanga Accord, includes the highest level of good faith engagement and consensus decision-making. This includes maintaining positive, co-operative and enduring relationships with other agencies, and early and effective engagement when developing strategies and other instruments that may potentially impact on the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River.

### Tai Timu Tai Pari Tai Ao – Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan

- Takes a holistic approach, aiming to restore the environment to its former healthy state as observed by King Taawhiao.
- Seeks to ensure that the full range of Waikato ecosystem types found throughout the Waikato-Tainui rohe are robust and support representative native flora and fauna.
- Addresses key threats to biodiversity, such as habitat loss and pests and the impacts on the ability of Waikato-Tainui to provide for their environmental, social, cultural, spiritual and economic aspirations.
- Emphasises using traditional knowledge alongside modern methods for pest management and biosecurity.
- Recognises the importance of collaboration with others to achieve environmental goals, including the involvement of Waikato-Tainui in local indigenous biodiversity strategies.

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