

# Freshwater values

## Ngā mātāpono waimāori

### Overview | Tirohanga whānui

Waikato Regional Council is carrying out a Freshwater Policy Review in response to central government's Essential Freshwater package, which is about stopping further degradation of New Zealand's fresh water and improving its quality and ecosystem health.

A key element of the package is an update to the *National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020* (NPS-FM), which provides direction on how we manage fresh water under the Resource Management Act (RMA).

To give effect to the NPS-FM and as part of this policy review, we want your input to help identify and understand the values you

have for the rivers, streams, lakes and other freshwater bodies in your area. Knowing what freshwater values need to be protected will enable us to set environmental outcomes which will be included as objectives in the *Waikato Regional Plan*, a policy tool used by the council and other authorities to manage the natural and physical resources of our rohe.

To do this, we'll be following central government's National Objectives Framework (see figure 1), a process connecting the values and aspirations for fresh water held by tangata whenua and communities with potential solutions to realise these values.

### What is a freshwater value?

#### Mō ngā mātāpono waimāori

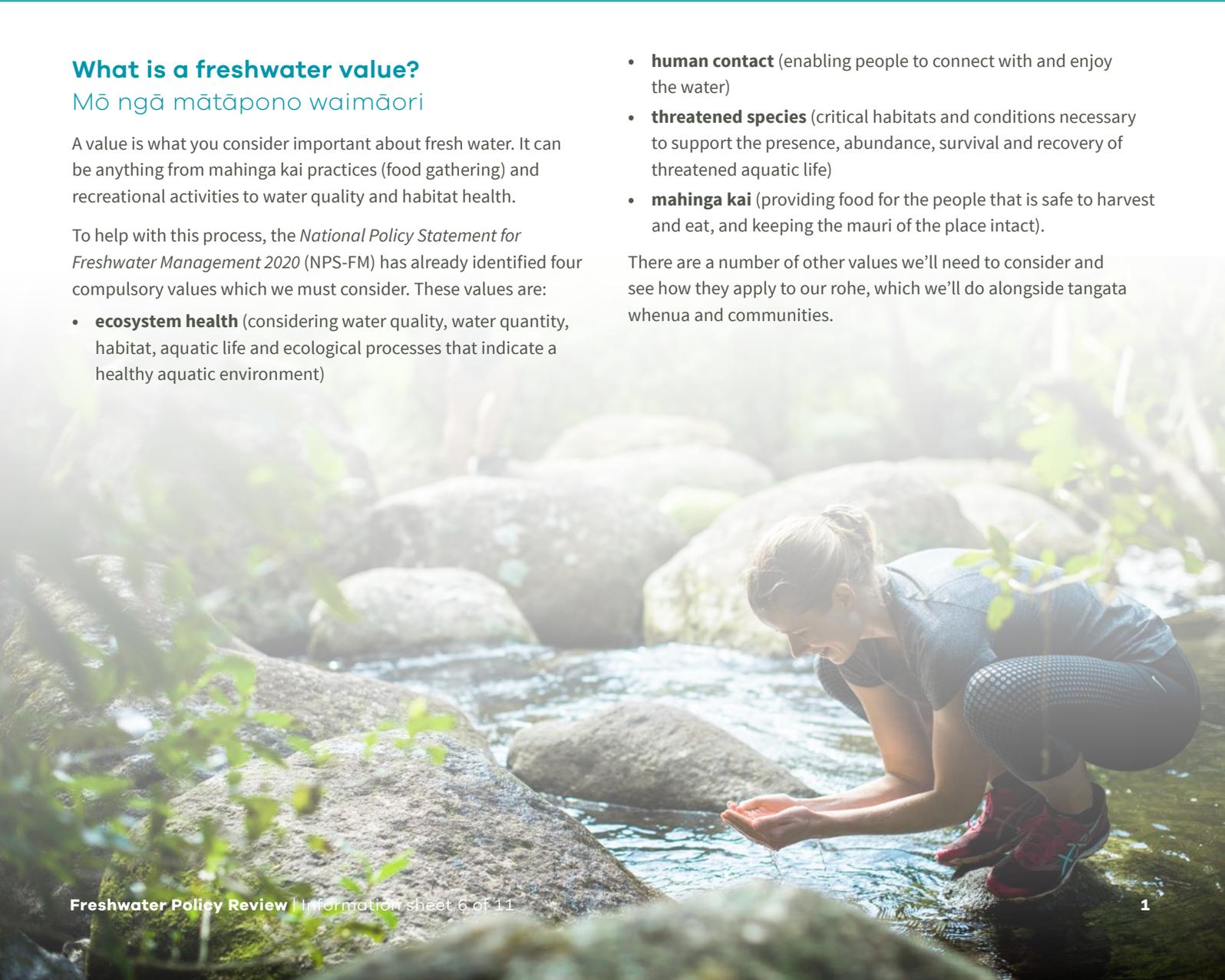
A value is what you consider important about fresh water. It can be anything from mahinga kai practices (food gathering) and recreational activities to water quality and habitat health.

To help with this process, the *National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020* (NPS-FM) has already identified four compulsory values which we must consider. These values are:

- **ecosystem health** (considering water quality, water quantity, habitat, aquatic life and ecological processes that indicate a healthy aquatic environment)

- **human contact** (enabling people to connect with and enjoy the water)
- **threatened species** (critical habitats and conditions necessary to support the presence, abundance, survival and recovery of threatened aquatic life)
- **mahinga kai** (providing food for the people that is safe to harvest and eat, and keeping the mauri of the place intact).

There are a number of other values we'll need to consider and see how they apply to our rohe, which we'll do alongside tangata whenua and communities.



## Why do we need to identify freshwater values? | Mō te mōhio i ngā mātāpono waimāori

Identifying freshwater values held by tangata whenua and communities is a step towards developing a plan for maintaining or improving the state of fresh water in our rohe, and giving effect to the NPS-FM.

Freshwater values will enable clear objectives to be developed followed by measurable targets, rules and methods, which will then be included in an updated *Waikato Regional Plan*.

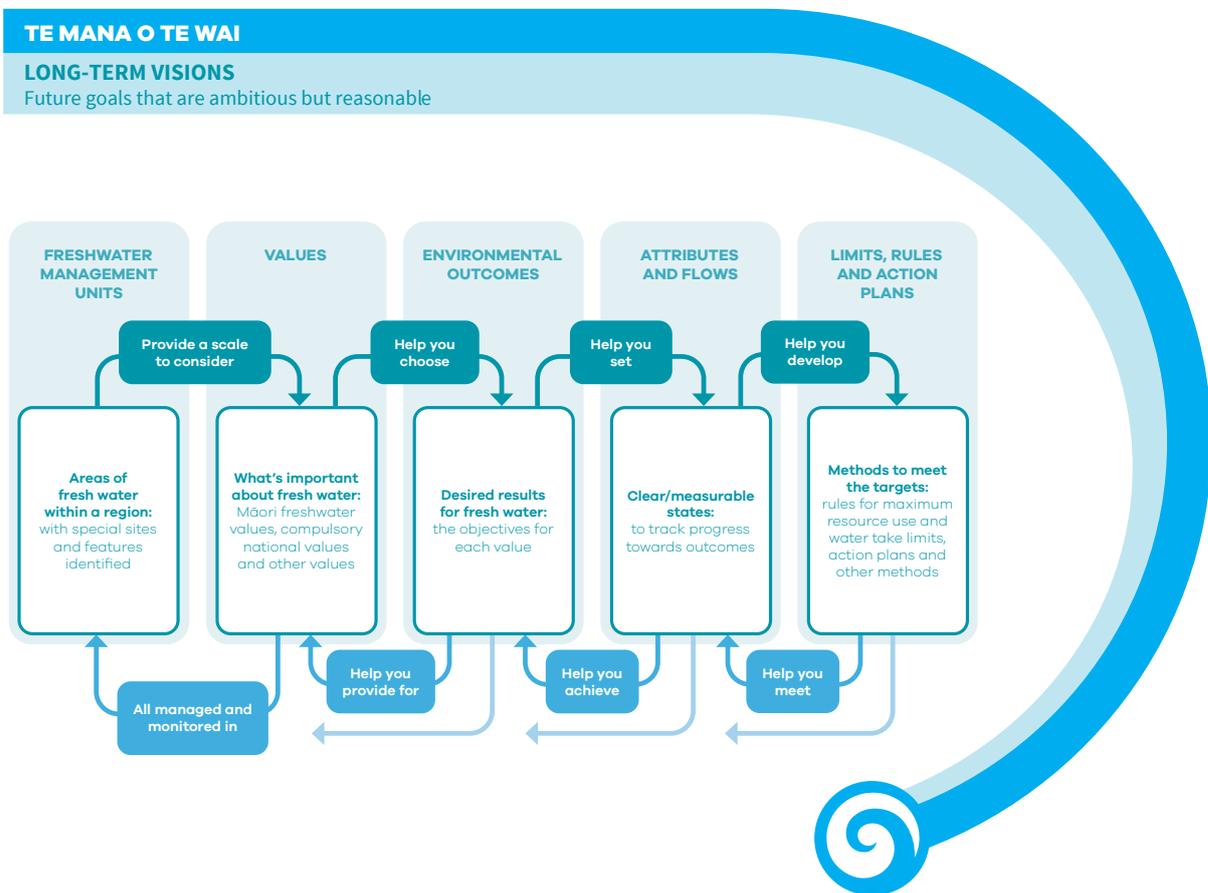
## What do we want to know from tangata whenua and communities?

Mō te wāhi ki te tangata whenua, hapori rānei

The NPS-FM requires Māori freshwater values to be identified and reflected in the management of fresh water in our rohe. To do this, we will be working with tangata whenua, including iwi and hapū authorities as well as mana whenua groups, to identify the freshwater values that need to be protected, maintained or improved. We'll also follow this same approach with communities throughout the Waikato.

But we won't be starting from scratch. Tangata whenua and communities have already expressed to us some of their freshwater values through other consultations and work carried out by the council. We will be building on this information as we carry out engagement for the Freshwater Policy Review.

Figure 1



## Where can I find more information? | Mō te puna kōrero

Check out [waikatoregion.govt.nz/freshwater-policy-review](http://waikatoregion.govt.nz/freshwater-policy-review) to find:

- information sheets breaking down the Freshwater Policy Review
- how to share your views
- a summary of key milestones
- update on our progress.

You can also email us at [policy@waikatoregion.govt.nz](mailto:policy@waikatoregion.govt.nz) or call 0800 800 401 to speak to a member of our Freshwater Policy Review team.