



# THE WAIKATO REGIONAL POLICY STATEMENT

TE TAUĀKĪ KAUPAPAHERE  
O TE ROHE O WAIKATO



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May 2016

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# Waikato Region Policy Statement

## Update Record

Date	Change / Update	Provisions affected	Signature
19 December 2018	Insert Objective 3.27, as directed by the National Policy Statement Urban Development Capacity 2016	Objective 3	H.B

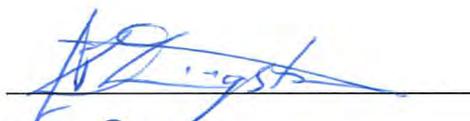
# Waikato Regional Council

## Regional Policy Statement for the Waikato Region

The Waikato Regional Council resolved, by resolution on 4 December 2018, to insert Objective 3.27 in accordance with the requirements of the National Policy Statement on Urban Development Capacity 2016.

The Waikato Regional Policy Statement was updated on 19 December 2018 to meet this mandatory requirement.

Signed by Waikato Regional Council by the affixing its Common Seal in the presence of



A Livingston  
Chairperson



V Payne  
Chief Executive Officer



**Dated** at Hamilton this 12<sup>th</sup> day of December 2018.

# Waikato Regional Council

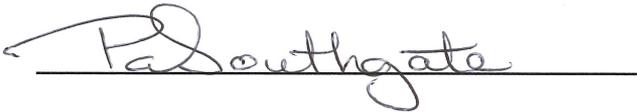
## Regional Policy Statement for the Waikato Region

Waikato Regional Council has prepared the Proposed Waikato Regional Policy Statement in accordance with section 60 and the First Schedule of the Resource Management Act 1991.

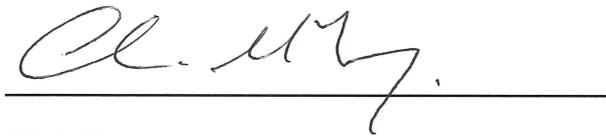
The Waikato Regional Council resolved, by resolution on 28 April 2016, to approve and make operative the Proposed Waikato Regional Policy Statement.

The Regional Policy Statement became operative on the 20<sup>th</sup> day of May 2016

Signed by Waikato Regional Council by the affixing of its Common Seal in the presence of



**PA Southgate**  
Chairperson



**CDA McLay**  
Chief Executive Officer



**Dated** at Hamilton this 28<sup>th</sup> day of April 2016.

## **Chairperson's foreword**

I love the Waikato region: its beautiful natural environment, its vibrant city and towns, and the excellent services and opportunities.

Looking after the health of our environment is especially important and, like me, the people of the Waikato have an amazing passion for it.

It's not surprising – we have iconic landscapes, rivers, mountains and coastal areas, and a strong desire for healthy water, soil and air.

These all need protecting to meet many of our economic, cultural and recreational needs – water for safe drinking and swimming, soil for agriculture and horticulture, land for housing, geothermal resources for energy generation, and clean air. But our needs and lifestyles place a heavy demand on these resources through pollution and waste from land use, industry and vehicle use.

There are many big and varied issues which need to be addressed – from climate change, ecological integrity and indigenous biodiversity to management of the built environment, natural hazards and geothermal resources.

That's where Waikato's Regional Policy Statement (RPS) has a major role to play so our region can be enjoyed by future generations.

It's a planning tool that will help the regional, city and district councils decide what needs to be done to keep and enhance the environmental conditions that drive our economy and provide us with the quality of life our region currently enjoys.

Importantly, it focuses councils on ensuring the way we use our natural resources doesn't tip the balance and compromise the ability of future generations to provide for their own needs.

It's been really important to us to hear the thoughts of the people in our region and the community has had a big influence on the RPS. We released the proposed Regional Policy Statement for public comment in 2010. Two years later, following four months of submissions and deliberations on the evidence, a hearings committee released more than 10,000 separate decisions.

A healthy environment is critical to our region's economy and ensuring everyone benefits from the quality of life most of us enjoy now.

We all have a part to play, because it's only by working together that we can ensure our region's natural resources are protected for a better and brighter future.

Paula Southgate  
**Chairperson**



# Table of contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1 Role and purpose of regional policy statements	1
2 Other relevant legislation	2
3 Relationships with other policies and plans	2
4 Integrated management	5
5 Policy horizon	5
<b>Reader's guide</b>	<b>7</b>
1 Structure of the Regional Policy Statement	7
2 General interpretation	7
3 Area covered by the Regional Policy Statement	8
<b>PART A</b>	
<b>1 Issues</b>	<b>1-1</b>
Issue 1.1 State of resources	1-1
Issue 1.2 Effects of climate change	1-2
Issue 1.3 Providing for energy demand	1-3
Issue 1.4 Managing the built environment	1-4
Issue 1.5 Relationship of tāngata whenua with the environment (te taiao)	1-6
Issue 1.6 Health and wellbeing of the Waikato River catchment	1-7
<b>2 Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato – Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River</b>	<b>2-1</b>
2.1 Waikato-Tainui Raupatu Claims (Waikato River) Settlement Act 2010	2-1
2.2 Ngati Tuwharetoa, Raukawa, and Te Arawa River Iwi Waikato River Act 2010	2-1
2.3 Nga Wai o Maniapoto (Waipa River) Act 2012	2-1
2.4 Waikato Regional Policy Statement	2-2
2.5 Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River	2-2
<b>3 Objectives</b>	<b>3-1</b>
3.1 Integrated management	3-1
3.2 Resource use and development	3-1
3.3 Decision making	3-2
3.4 Health and wellbeing of the Waikato River	3-4
3.5 Energy	3-4
3.6 Adapting to climate change	3-5
3.7 Coastal environment	3-5
3.8 Ecosystem services	3-6
3.9 Relationship of tāngata whenua with the environment	3-6
3.10 Sustainable and efficient use of resources	3-7
3.11 Air quality	3-7
3.12 Built environment	3-7
3.13 Mauri and health of marine waters	3-8
3.14 Mauri and values of fresh water bodies	3-9
3.15 Allocation and use of fresh water	3-10
3.16 Riparian areas and wetlands	3-10
3.17 Geothermal	3-11
3.18 Historic and cultural heritage	3-11
3.19 Ecological integrity and indigenous biodiversity	3-12
3.20 Outstanding natural features and landscapes	3-12
3.21 Amenity	3-12

3.22	Natural character	3-13
3.23	Public access	3-13
3.24	Natural hazards	3-14
3.25	Values of soil	3-14
3.26	High class soils	3-14
3.27	Minimum housing targets for the Future Proof area	3-15
<b>PART B</b>		<b>3-1</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Integrated management</b>	<b>4-1</b>
Policy 4.1	Integrated approach	4-1
Policy 4.2	Collaborative approach	4-6
Policy 4.3	Tāngata whenua	4-9
Policy 4.4	Regionally significant industry and primary production	4-10
<b>4A</b>	<b>Indicative coastal environment maps</b>	<b>4-13</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Air</b>	<b>5-1</b>
Policy 5.1	Improve degraded air quality	5-1
Policy 5.2	Manage discharges to air	5-3
Policy 5.3	Manage adverse effects on amenity	5-4
<b>6</b>	<b>Built environment</b>	<b>6-1</b>
Policy 6.1	Planned and co-ordinated subdivision, use and development	6-1
Policy 6.2	Planning for development in the coastal environment	6-4
Policy 6.3	Co-ordinating growth and infrastructure	6-6
Policy 6.4	Marae and papakāinga	6-8
Policy 6.5	Energy demand management	6-9
Policy 6.6	Significant infrastructure and energy resources	6-10
Policy 6.7	Mangatawhiri and Mangatangi municipal water supply bodies	6-13
Policy 6.8	Access to minerals	6-13
Policy 6.9	Information collection	6-15
Policy 6.10	Implementing the Coromandel Peninsula Blueprint	6-16
Policy 6.11	Implementing Taupo District 2050	6-17
Policy 6.12	Implementing Franklin District Growth Strategy	6-18
Policy 6.13	Governance collaboration in the Future Proof area	6-18
Policy 6.14	Adopting Future Proof land use pattern	6-20
Policy 6.15	Density targets for Future Proof area	6-22
Policy 6.16	Commercial development in the Future Proof area	6-23
Policy 6.17	Rural-residential development in Future Proof area	6-24
Policy 6.18	Monitoring development in Future Proof area	6-25
Policy 6.19	Review of Future Proof map and tables	6-26
<b>6A</b>	<b>Development principles</b>	<b>6-27</b>
<b>6B</b>	<b>Significant transport infrastructure maps</b>	<b>6-29</b>
<b>6C</b>	<b>Future Proof map (indicative only)</b>	<b>6-31</b>
<b>6D</b>	<b>Future Proof tables</b>	<b>6-32</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Coastal marine area</b>	<b>7-1</b>
Policy 7.1	Interests in the coastal marine area	7-1
Policy 7.2	Marine water quality	7-3
<b>8</b>	<b>Fresh water bodies</b>	<b>8-1</b>
Policy 8.1	Approach to identifying fresh water body values and managing fresh water bodies	8-1
Policy 8.2	Outstanding fresh water bodies and significant values of wetlands	8-4

Policy 8.3	All fresh water bodies	8-6
Policy 8.4	Catchment-based intervention	8-10
Policy 8.5	Waikato River catchment	8-12
Policy 8.6	Allocating fresh water	8-14
Policy 8.7	Efficient use of fresh water	8-16
<b>8A</b>	<b>Modified fresh water bodies</b>	<b>8-17</b>
<b>8B</b>	<b>Freshwater bodies and wetlands that have high water quality</b>	<b>8-17</b>
<b>8B</b>	<b>Map of fresh water bodies and wetlands</b>	<b>8-20</b>
<b>8C</b>	<b>Priority catchments map</b>	<b>8-21</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Geothermal</b>	<b>9-1</b>
Policy 9.1	Sustainable management of the Regional Geothermal Resource	9-1
Policy 9.2	Significant Geothermal Features	9-5
Policy 9.3	Development Geothermal Systems	9-7
Policy 9.4	Limited Development Geothermal Systems	9-9
Policy 9.5	Protected Geothermal Systems	9-10
Policy 9.6	Research Geothermal Systems	9-11
Policy 9.7	Small Geothermal Systems	9-12
Policy 9.8	Geothermal characteristics valued by tāngata whenua	9-13
<b>9A</b>	<b>Geothermal systems</b>	<b>9-14</b>
<b>9B</b>	<b>Significant Geothermal Feature types</b>	<b>9-15</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Heritage</b>	<b>10-1</b>
Policy 10.1	Managing historic and cultural heritage	10-1
Policy 10.2	Relationship of Māori to taonga	10-2
Policy 10.3	Effects of development on historic and cultural heritage	10-3
<b>10A</b>	<b>Historic and cultural heritage assessment criteria</b>	<b>10-5</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Indigenous biodiversity</b>	<b>11-1</b>
Policy 11.1	Maintain or enhance indigenous biodiversity	11-1
Policy 11.2	Protect significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna	11-5
Policy 11.3	Collaborative management	11-7
Policy 11.4	Safeguard coastal/marine ecosystems	11-8
<b>11A</b>	<b>Criteria for determining significance of indigenous biodiversity</b>	<b>11-10</b>
<b>11B</b>	<b>Significant indigenous biodiversity roles and responsibilities</b>	<b>11-12</b>
<b>11C</b>	<b>Opoutere and Wharekawa Harbour – Area of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna</b>	<b>11-13</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>Landscape (including seascape), natural character and amenity</b>	<b>12-1</b>
Policy 12.1	Outstanding natural features and landscapes	12-1
Policy 12.2	Preserve natural character	12-2
Policy 12.3	Maintain and enhance areas of amenity value	12-4
Policy 12.4	Maintain and enhance public access	12-5
Policy 12.5	Appropriate restrictions on public access	12-6
<b>12A</b>	<b>Outstanding natural features and landscapes</b>	<b>12-8</b>
<b>12B</b>	<b>Landscape assessment approach</b>	<b>12-26</b>
<b>12C</b>	<b>Natural character of the coastal environment: assessment criteria</b>	<b>12-28</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>Natural hazards</b>	<b>13-1</b>

Policy 13.1	Natural hazard risk management approach	13-1
Policy 13.2	Manage activities to reduce the risks from natural hazards	13-4
Policy 13.3	High impact, low probability natural hazard events	13-6
<b>14</b>	<b>Soils</b>	<b>14-1</b>
Policy 14.1	Maintain or enhance the life supporting capacity of the soil resource	14-1
Policy 14.2	High class soils	14-2
Policy 14.3	Soil contaminants	14-3
Policy 14.4	Contaminated land	14-4
Policy 14.5	Peat soils	14-6
<b>PART C</b>		
<b>15</b>	<b>Monitoring and evaluation</b>	<b>15-1</b>
15.1	General	15-1
15.2	Review existing procedures for monitoring	15-2
15.3	Tāngata whenua involvement	15-2
15.4	Environmental results anticipated	15-2
15.5	Giving effect to the Regional Policy Statement	15-7
<b>16</b>	<b>Principal reasons for adopting</b>	<b>16-1</b>
16.1	Background	16-1
16.2	Objectives	16-1
16.3	Policies and implementation methods	16-1
<b>Glossary</b>		<b>G-1</b>
<b>Appendix 1: Statutory acknowledgements</b>		<b>A-1</b>

## List of figures

Figure 1:	Planning framework	2
Figure 2:	Coverage of the resource management policy and planning framework	3
Figure 11:	Significant indigenous biodiversity roles and responsibilities	11-12
Figure 15:	Policy implementation, monitoring and review cycle	15-1

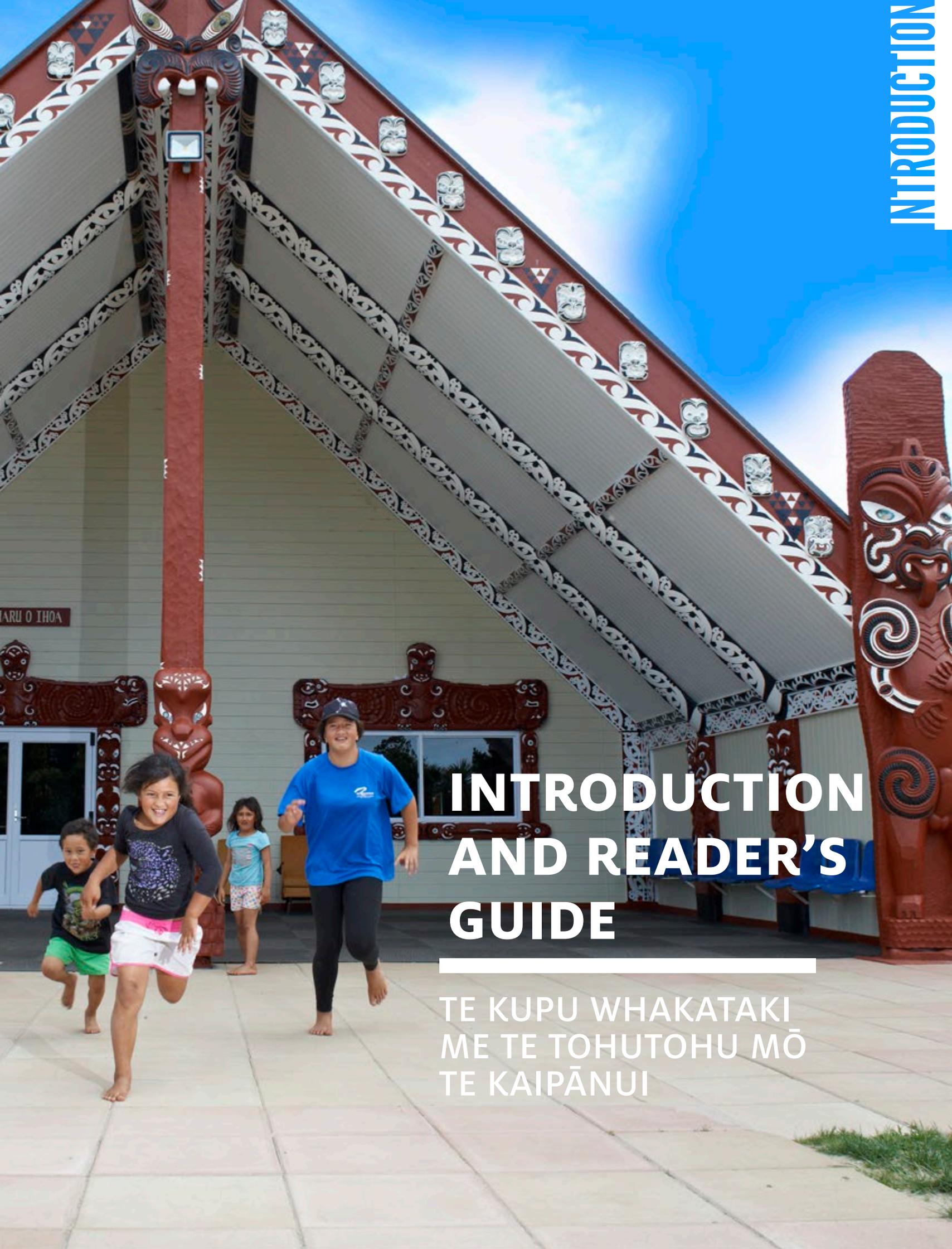
## List of maps

Map 1-1:	Waikato region	9
Map 2-1:	Area covered by the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato and Waipa Rivers	2-4
Map 4-1:	Overview of indicative coastal environment maps	4-13
Map 4-2:	Coastal environment 1	4-14
Map 4-3:	Coastal environment 2	4-15
Map 4-4:	Coastal environment 3	4-16
Map 4-5:	Coastal environment 4	4-17
Map 4-6:	Coastal environment 5	4-18
Map 4-7:	Coastal environment 6	4-19
Map 4-8:	Coastal environment 7	4-20
Map 4-9:	Coastal environment 8	4-21
Map 4-10:	Coastal environment 9	4-22
Map 4-11:	Coastal environment 10	4-23
Map 4-12:	Coastal environment 11	4-24
Map 4-13:	Coastal environment 12	4-25
Map 4-14:	Coastal environment 13	4-26
Map 4-15:	Coastal environment 14	4-27
Map 4-16:	Coastal environment 15	4-28
Map 4-17:	Coastal environment 16	4-29
Map 4-18:	Coastal environment 17	4-30
Map 6-1:	Significant transport corridors	6-29
Map 6-1A:	Significant transport corridors (Greater Hamilton)	6-30
Map 6-2:	Future Proof indicative urban limits	6-31
Map 8-1:	Fresh water bodies and wetlands to be considered by Method 8.2.1	8-20

Map 8-2:	Identified catchments for intervention (Policy 8.4)	8-21
Map 9-1:	Geothermal systems	9-14
Map 11-1	Opoutere and Wharekawa Harbour	11-13
Map 12-1:	Overview of outstanding natural features and landscapes (ONFL) maps	12-10
Map 12-2:	ONFL 1 – Tongariro National Park	12-11
Map 12-3:	ONFL 2 – Kaimanawa Mountains	12-12
Map 12-4:	ONFL 3 – Northern Herangi Range	12-13
Map 12-5:	ONFL 4 – Mount Karioi	12-14
Map 12-6:	ONFL 5 – Coromandel Range and Moehau Range	12-15
Map 12-7:	ONFL 6 – Mount Maungatautari	12-16
Map 12-8:	ONFL 7 – Mount Pirongia	12-17
Map 12-9:	ONFL 8 – Kaimai Range (north of Ngatamahinerua)	12-18
Map 12-10:	ONFL 9 – Lake Taupō	12-19
Map 12-11:	ONFL 10/1 – Cathedral Cove, Shakespeare Cliff and coastline south of Hahei	12-20
Map 12-12:	ONFL 10/2 – Northern tip of Coromandel Peninsula and western slopes of Moehau Range out to coast	12-21
Map 12-13:	ONFL 10/3 – Tuatēawa	12-22
Map 12-14:	ONFL 11 – Waiotapu Geothermal Area & Lake Ngakoro	12-23
Map 12-15:	ONFL 12 – Horohoro Escarpment	12-24
Map 12-16:	ONFL 13 – Opoutere Beach	12-25

## List of tables

Table 6-1:	Future Proof residential growth allocation and staging 2006-2061	6-32
Table 6-2:	Future Proof industrial land allocation	6-33
Table 6-3:	Industrial land allocation in the North Waikato	6-34
Table 6-4:	Future Proof hierarchy of major commercial centres	6-35
Table 8-1	Fresh water bodies – hydro electric generation	8-17
Table 8-2	Fresh water bodies – domestic and municipal water supply bodies	8-17
Table 8-3:	Freshwater bodies with high water quality – ecological health (inferred from water quality measurements)	8-17
Table 8-4:	Freshwater bodies – contact recreation purposes	8-18
Table 8-5:	Lakes with high water quality, based on condition and vulnerability	8-18
Table 8-6:	Wetlands identified as being of international importance	8-19
Table 9-1:	Significant Geothermal Feature types	9-15
Table 10-1:	Historic and cultural heritage assessment criteria	10-5
Table 10-2:	Māori culture and traditions assessment criteria	10-6
Table 11-1:	Criteria for determining significance of indigenous biodiversity	11-11
Table 12-1:	Outstanding natural features and landscapes (ONFL) of regional significance	12-8
Table 12-2:	Typical factors to consider when assessing landscapes	12-27
Table 12-3:	Natural character assessment criteria	12-28

A photograph of a traditional Māori building with intricate carvings and a group of people running in front of it. The building features a large, ornate wooden structure with a steep, gabled roof. The roof is supported by a central vertical post and several diagonal beams, all decorated with detailed carvings of faces and patterns. The walls are light-colored with dark wood accents. In the foreground, a woman in a blue shirt and black leggings is running towards the camera, followed by three children. The sky is bright blue with some clouds.

# INTRODUCTION AND READER'S GUIDE

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TE KUPU WHAKATAKI  
ME TE TOHUTOHU MŌ  
TE KAIPĀNUI



# Introduction

## 1 Role and purpose of regional policy statements

The purpose of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) is stated in section 5:

- (1) *The purpose of this Act is to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources.*
- (2) *In this Act, sustainable management means managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources in a way, or at a rate, which enables people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural wellbeing and for their health and safety while—*
  - (a) *sustaining the potential of natural and physical resources (excluding minerals) to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations; and*
  - (b) *safeguarding the life-supporting capacity of air, water, soil, and ecosystems; and*
  - (c) *avoiding, remedying, or mitigating any adverse effects of activities on the environment.*

The RMA requires every region to prepare a regional policy statement. The purpose of a regional policy statement is to achieve the purpose of the RMA by providing an overview of the resource management issues of the region, and policies and methods to achieve integrated management of the **natural and physical resources**.

The contents of regional policy statements are set out in section 62 of the RMA:

- (1) *A regional policy statement must state —*
  - (a) *the significant resource management issues for the region; and*
  - (b) *the resource management issues of significance to —*
    - (i) *iwi authorities in the region; and*
    - (ii) *the board of a foreshore and seabed reserve, to the extent that those issues relate to that reserve; and*
  - (c) *the objectives sought to be achieved by the statement; and*
  - (d) *the policies for those issues and objectives and an explanation of those policies; and*
  - (e) *the methods (excluding rules) used, or to be used, to implement the policies; and*
  - (f) *the principal reasons for adopting the objectives, policies, and methods of implementation set out in the statement; and*
  - (g) *the environmental results anticipated from implementation of those policies and methods; and*
  - (h) *the processes to be used to deal with issues that cross local authority boundaries, and issues between territorial authorities or between regions; and*
  - (i) *the local authority responsible in the whole or any part of the region for specifying the objectives, policies, and methods for the control of the use of land —*
    - (i) *to avoid or mitigate natural hazards or any group of hazards; and*
    - (ii) *to prevent or mitigate the adverse effects of the storage, use, disposal, or transportation of hazardous substances; and*
    - (iii) *to maintain indigenous biological diversity; and*
  - (j) *the procedures used to monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of the policies or methods contained in the statement; and*
  - (k) *any other information required for the purpose of the regional council's functions, powers, and duties under this Act.*
- (2) *If no responsibilities are specified in the regional policy statement for functions described in subsection (1)(i)(i) or (ii), the regional council retains primary responsibility for the function in subsection (1)(i)(i) and the territorial authorities of the region retain primary responsibility for the function in subsection (1)(i)(ii).*

- (3) A regional policy statement must not be inconsistent with any water conservation order and must give effect to a national policy statement or New Zealand coastal policy statement.

The planning framework is illustrated in Figure 1 below.

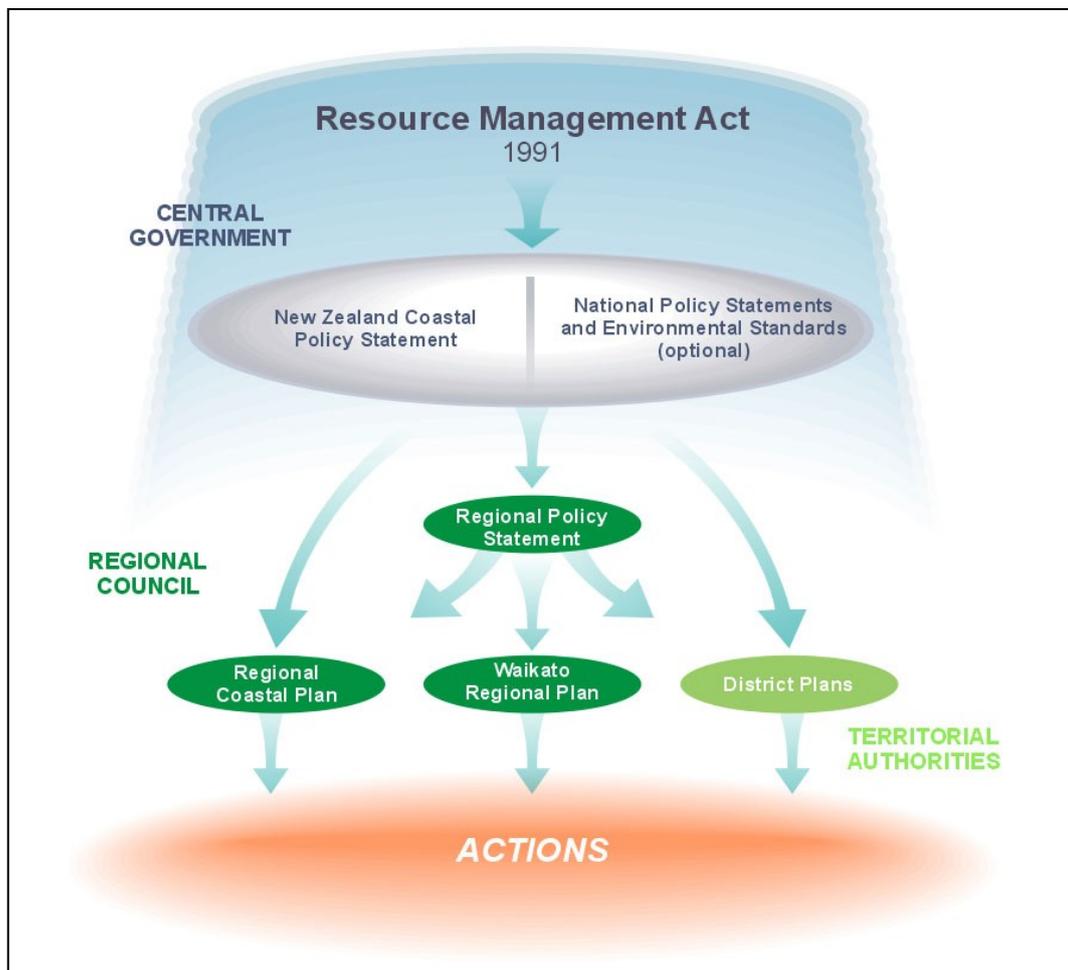


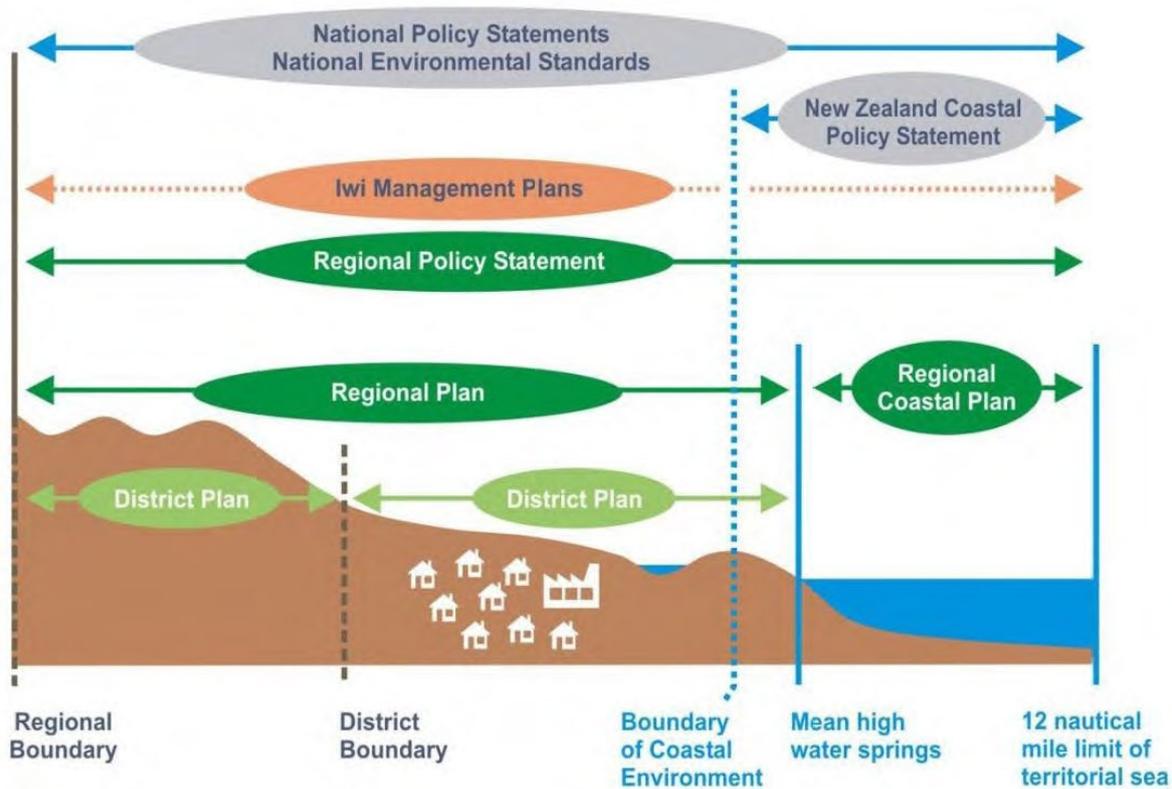
Figure 1: Planning framework

## 2 Other relevant legislation

- Land Transport Act 2003
- Local Government Act 2002
- Hauraki Gulf Marine Park Act 2000

## 3 Relationships with other policies and plans

The RMA establishes a system for resource management planning at the national, regional and local levels. The policy and planning documents provided for in the RMA are illustrated in Figure 2 below. Central to the purpose of each of these documents is the promotion of sustainable resource management.



**Figure 2: Coverage of the resource management policy and planning framework**

### 3.1 National policy statements

National policy statements are prepared by central government and cover matters of national importance. Regional policy statements must give effect to national policy statements. There are currently four national policy statements in effect:

- New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010, and Sections 7 and 8 of the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park Act 2000 are deemed to be a New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement;
- National Policy Statement on Electricity Transmission;
- National Policy Statement on Freshwater Management; and
- National Policy Statement on Renewable Electricity Generation.

One additional policy statement has been proposed by the Minister for the Environment:

- Proposed National Policy Statement on Indigenous Biodiversity.

### 3.2 National environmental standards

Central government can prepare technical standards relating to the use, development and protection of natural and physical resources (national environmental standards). These are a form of regulation (see section 3.2 below). Methods for implementing these standards can also be prescribed. This provides an opportunity to promote the use of consistent standards, requirements or recommended practices nationally. National standards override existing provisions in plans that require a lesser standard. However, where a plan specifies a higher standard it prevails over a national standard if the standard expressly says that a rule in a plan or consent may be more stringent than the standard.

Currently the following five standards are in effect:

- National Environmental Standards for Air Quality;
- National Environmental Standard for Sources of Human Drinking Water;
- National Environmental Standards for Telecommunication Facilities;
- National Environmental Standards for Electricity Transmission; and
- National Environmental Standard for Assessing and Managing Contaminants in Soil to Protect Human Health.

A further three are in various stages of development and relate to:

- ecological flows and water levels;
- future sea level rise; and
- forestry.

### **3.3 Regulations**

Regulations are a type of subordinate legislation. The power to make regulations under the Resource Management Act is contained in section 360. Current regulations in force include the Resource Management (Marine Pollution) Regulations 1998. Currently under development are regulations on the measurement and reporting of water takes, in place of the proposed National Environmental Standard for Measurement of Water Takes.

### **3.4 Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River**

As part of the Waikato River Settlement between the Crown and Waikato-Tainui, Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato – the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River has been developed. This Vision and Strategy was developed by the Guardians Establishment Committee, **iwi** and communities of the Waikato River **catchment** and will be periodically reviewed by the Waikato River Authority.

### **3.5 Iwi planning documents**

The RMA requires that planning documents recognised by an **iwi authority**, such as iwi management plans, be taken into account in the preparation of the regional policy statement, to the extent that it has bearing on the resource management issues of the region.

### **3.6 Statutory acknowledgements**

A statutory acknowledgement is a means by which the Crown has formally acknowledged the statements made by iwi of their cultural, spiritual, historical and traditional association with a statutory area. Local authorities must attach information recording statutory acknowledgements to all statutory plans that wholly or partly cover the area. The attachment of such information is not subject to the provisions of Schedule 1 of the RMA. Statutory acknowledgements are listed in Appendix 1 to this Regional Policy Statement.

### **3.7 Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Act 2011**

When preparing a regional policy statement a regional council must take into account, if it is lodged with the council, a planning document prepared by a customary marine title group under section 85 of this Act, to the extent that it has bearing on the resource management issues of the region. It must:

- recognise and provide for the matters in that document to the extent that they relate to the relevant customary marine title area; and
- take into account the matters in that document to the extent that they relate to a part of the common marine area outside the customary marine title area of the relevant group.

### **3.8 Regional plans**

Each region is required to produce a regional coastal plan to assist the regional council to exercise its functions in the **coastal marine area**. It must be approved by the Minister of Conservation. Other regional plans are optional and if prepared must give effect to regional policy statements, and any national policy statement. Regional plans may contain rules that have the force and effect of a regulation under the RMA.

### **3.9 District plans**

Territorial authorities are required to prepare district plans. District plans may contain rules to control the use of land, including subdivision. As with regional plans, district plans must also give effect to regional policy statements. It is through this that integrated management of regional council and **territorial authority** functions occurs.

In addition to the regional policy statement and plans mentioned above, the RMA also makes provision for the preparation of joint plans and for combined plans and regional policy statements. At this stage there are no joint plans within the Waikato region.

### 3.10 Other plans and strategies

Other plans and strategies prepared by local and central government agencies and other organisations are relevant to resource management and can contribute to achieving the objectives and policies of a regional policy statement. They may be prepared pursuant to other legislation, such as the Local Government Act or Civil Defence and Emergency Management Act, or they may be non-regulatory documents. Examples include:

- pest management strategies;
- structure plans;
- long-term plans;
- reserve management plans;
- conservation management strategies and plans;
- national energy efficiency and conservation strategies;
- civil defence and emergency management plans; and
- growth management strategies.

In addition, Waikato Regional Council must prepare a land transport plan for the region. The Land Transport Management Amendment Act 2013 requires that any regional land transport plan take into account any relevant regional policy statement.

## 4 Integrated management

Integrated management requires the adoption of an approach that recognises and accounts for:

- the natural processes and basic principles that support life;
- the complex interactions between air, water, land and all living things;
- the needs of current and future generations;
- environmental, social, economic and cultural outcomes; and
- the need to work with agencies, landowners, resource users and communities.

This is achieved through the hierarchical relationship of regional policy statements to other policy and planning documents developed under the RMA and other legislation (including biosecurity and transport legislation), the cross-linkages within the regional policy statement, and the relationships between the implementation methods.

## 5 Policy horizon

This Regional Policy Statement is forward looking and takes a long-term approach to the identification and resolution of resource management issues. It recognises that issues often emerge or evolve over time (from years to decades or centuries), and that it will similarly take time to address them and halt or reverse any adverse trends.

This Regional Policy Statement looks 100 years into the future. This accords well with the purposes of sustainable management of our natural and physical resources, and meeting the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations. It recognises the long life of community **infrastructure**, including the fact that many critical infrastructural elements in the region are either the same **structures** or have been in the same location for the last century. Additionally, the effects of current activities are projected to take many years for their full impacts to be realised. Notwithstanding the 100 year policy horizon applying generally to the management of resources in the Waikato Region, a shorter policy horizon typically applies when modelling Development Geothermal Systems. However, it must be acknowledged that the **Regional Geothermal Resource** should be sustained for future generations.

While the Regional Policy Statement adopts a long timeframe, it has a 10-year review cycle as set out in the Resource Management Act. More information on this can be found in Chapter 15.

# Reader's guide

## 1 Structure of the Regional Policy Statement

### 1.1 Outline

This Regional Policy Statement is set out in three substantive parts. This structure addresses the requirement for integrated management. In so doing it advances the understanding of the inter-connected nature of resource management through the explicit identification of objectives that are relevant to the management of more than one resource.

#### **Part A: Issues and Objectives**

Six significant resource management issues are identified. Twenty-six objectives address the issues. The objectives identify the desired end state of the region's **natural and physical resources**. In many instances they are enduring targets and will take longer than the life of the Regional Policy Statement to be achieved. Achievement will be through the actions identified as policies and methods in Part B. This section also contains Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato – the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River, which is the primary direction-setting document for the Waikato River and its catchments.

#### **Part B: Policies and Methods**

This is where the power of the policy statement lies. This section identifies what action is to be taken by whom and by what means to achieve the objectives identified in Part A. This enables an appreciation of the effects of implementation methods and provides an opportunity to measure success within the statutory 10-year review period. This is particularly useful in relation to long-term objectives.

#### **Part C: Monitoring and Evaluation**

This part identifies the procedures to be used for monitoring the effectiveness of the Regional Policy Statement in achieving the stated objectives. Where the objectives are aspirational in nature and are expected to endure beyond the life of the Regional Policy Statement, the environmental results anticipated will be used as a measure of success. This part also includes discussion of the principal reasons for adopting.

### 1.2 Issues of significance to iwi authorities

Regional policy statements are required to state the resource management issues of significance to **iwi authorities**. Waikato-Tainui, Maniapoto, Raukawa, Te Arawa, Ngāti Tūwharetoa and Hauraki have worked with Waikato Regional Council to ensure the issues of significance to them are reflected in Chapter 1 and addressed through the objectives, policies and methods in Chapters 3-14. Each of the six issues in Chapter 1 is significant to **tāngata whenua**.

## 2 General interpretation

The following are intended to assist the reader in the general interpretation and use of this policy statement:

- Objectives are intended to be achieved through the implementation of policies and methods in this document. Policies and implementation methods are to be interpreted as outlined in the Resource Management Act 1991, whereby the implementation methods are not part of the policy, but are a means to achieve the policy. The policies and methods are interrelated and are to be read as a package.
- Unless otherwise specified, the items included in bulleted or numbered lists are provided in no order or priority and all factors should be considered equal.
- For ease of reference the terms that are defined or further explained in a glossary are **bolded** the first time that they appear in each chapter.

- All consent holders are required, where practicable, to avoid the adverse effects of their activities, and to remedy or mitigate them if they have not been avoided.
- Regional policy statements do not contain rules. Any rules that stem from the implementation of policies must be translated through a district or regional plan. In general the term 'control' has been used in implementation methods in this document where it is anticipated that rules will be necessary to implement the method (this may or may not be in combination with non-regulatory methods).
- This Regional Policy Statement has adopted the following standard terminology:
  - 'Shall' has been used where methods are of a directive nature, where little discretion is intended to be exercised, and where it is intended that district or regional plans shall give effect to the method.
  - 'Should' has been used where it is intended that the direction should be followed, except where there are good reasons not to, as demonstrated in a s32 report or other appropriate evaluation or analysis.
  - 'Will' has been used in those methods that apply to only the Waikato Regional Council and where it is intended that the direction should be followed, except where there are good reasons not to, as demonstrated in a s32 report or other appropriate evaluation or analysis.
- Some activities will be deemed appropriate despite the fact they will or may create adverse effects. This will generally occur when the positive effects the activity will generate are considered to outweigh the adverse effects. This document refers to these adverse effects as 'unavoidable adverse effects'.
- Where a provision in this document refers to both regional plans and district plans, it is intended that the provision will be applied through both documents but within the functions and jurisdiction of the respective authorities as outlined in the Resource Management Act and this Regional Policy Statement.
- While district plans are required to give effect to the Regional Policy Statement, territorial authorities may choose to adopt a stronger or more restrictive management regime within the areas under their control. In this respect the provisions of this policy statement can be considered as 'bottom lines'.
- Chapter 4 of the Regional Policy Statement (Integrated management) relates to the management of natural and physical resources generally. As such, the provisions of this chapter should be read in conjunction with and in addition to all of the resource-specific chapters.
- Where lists are provided and the same conjunction (and/or) is intended for the entire list, the conjunction is placed only between the second to last and the last list items.

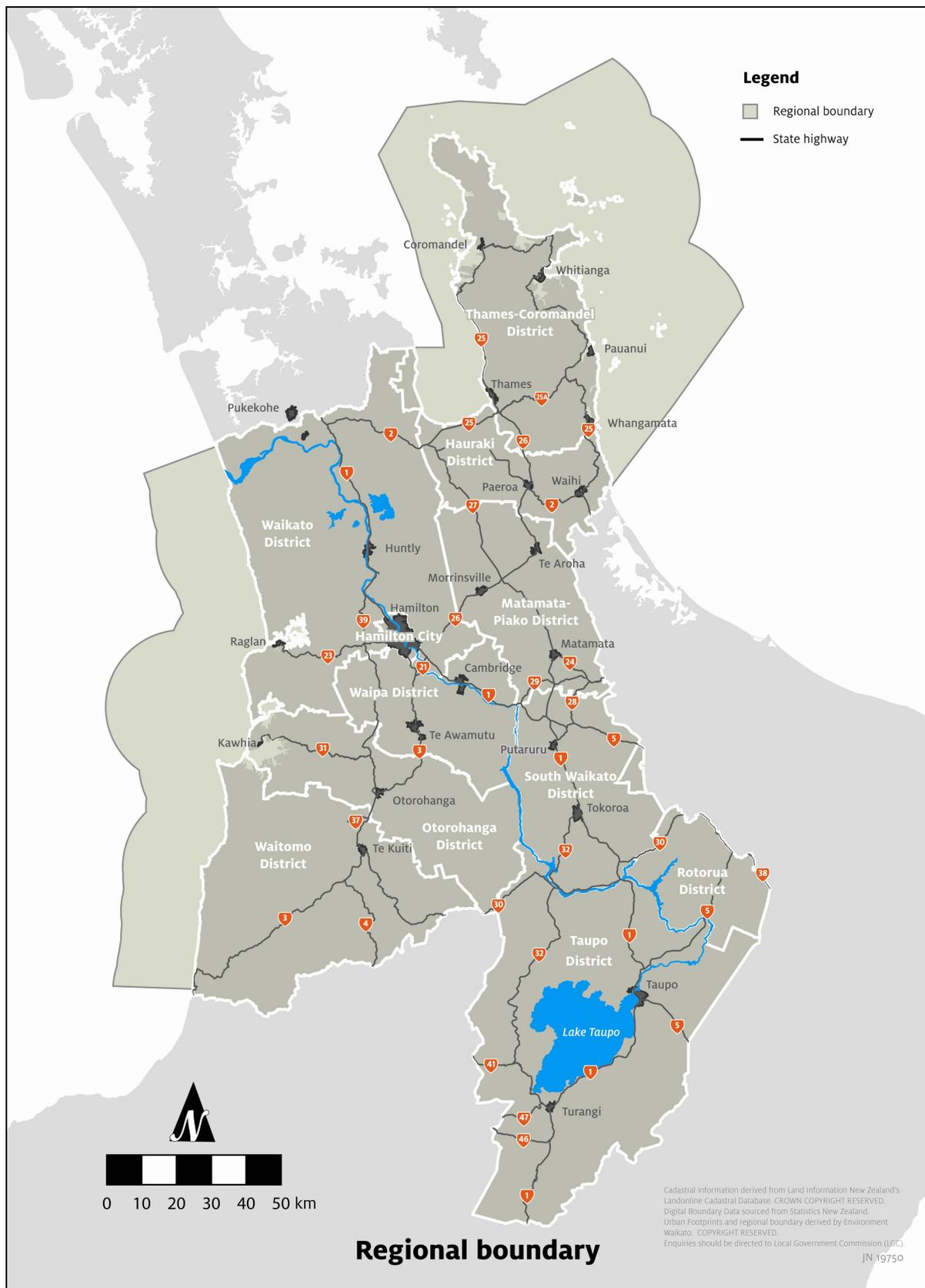
### **3 Area covered by the Regional Policy Statement**

This Regional Policy Statement is a statement of policy for the Waikato region as constituted by the Local Government (Waikato Region) Reorganisation Order 1989 (see Map 1 below). The local authorities comprising the Waikato region are:

- Waikato Regional Council
- the territorial authorities of:
  - a) Thames-Coromandel District
  - b) Hauraki District (including Franklin)
  - c) Waikato District (including Franklin)
  - d) Matamata-Piako District
  - e) Hamilton City
  - f) Waipa District
  - g) South Waikato District
  - h) Otorohanga District
  - i) Waitomo District

- j) Rotorua District (in part)
- k) Taupo District (in part).

Regional and district plans prepared by these authorities must give effect to the Regional Policy Statement for the Waikato region.



**Map 1-1: Waikato region**

