
THE WAIKATO COMMUNITY-BASED
ENVIRONMENTAL SECTOR PHASE II
RESEARCH REPORT

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SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Research was commissioned by Trust Waikato and Waikato Regional Council (WRC) to provide information on the community-based environmental sector in the Waikato region. For the purposes of this research, the geographical coverage was that of the local authorities of the WRC, and unless otherwise specified, the 'region' referred to in this document is the geographical area of the study.

RESEARCH PURPOSE

This research is a follow on from research about the community-based environmental sector, which was undertaken in 2015 ('the October 2015 research')¹. The purpose of the current research was to continue informing the discussion around the challenges and opportunities facing the community-based environmental sector in the Waikato by providing information on: (i) national and international funding for the community based environmental sector, and (ii) perceptions of environmental community sector groups in the region regarding their needs, opportunities for collaboration, coordination, and capacity.

METHODOLOGY

The research was undertaken between September 2016 and February 2017 by Ruth Hungerford of Momentum Research and Evaluation Limited and included:

- Forty nine qualitative interviews, both group and individual, with 65 people from 60 organisations either face to face (19) or over the 'phone (30) with a spread across the following factors: 'conservation/ restoration' and 'prevention/ sustainability' groups²; 'umbrella' groups and/or 'co-ordinators' of initiatives across the region; urban and rural and a range of districts; iwi and 'mainstream'; non-government organisations (NGOs) and 'government'; large and small groups; and funders and other 'support' organisations.
- Collating information from relevant websites, online sources and documents regarding local and central government, iwi, environmental agencies, interest groups, community groups and funding sources.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

FUNDING SOURCES

The research identified a range of funding sources for community-based environmental work in the region. These ranged from central and local government funds and grants through to national and international and local trusts and funds and including corporate sponsorship and in-kind support from a range of different sources. Of the 65 organisations within the research sample, most typically operated with a mix of different funding sources from grants and donations through to social enterprises and commercial arms, fees for work and in-kind support. The extent to which an organisation used all or some of these funding options, depended on the work and the organisation. In addition most organisations relied on some, if not all, volunteer labour to undertake a lot of the work. There was also a range across the organisations as to how 'financially solvent' they were and there was no 'typical' way that a group was set up or organised.

¹ The 2015 research was commissioned by Trust Waikato and WRC and was focused on "describing the community-based response to environmental activity, and how this is organised and funded, and identifying the relevant local and central government, iwi, philanthropic and other groups in operation in this area, and any opportunities for collaboration to maximise available funding." The 2015 report is available online at www.trustwaikato.co.nz/Resources/Research.

² See 1.3 (page 4) for a definition of terms used.

NEEDS OF THE SECTOR

When asked about key needs or challenges for organisations undertaking community-based environmental work, there were two main themes; financial security and human resources.

In regards to financial security, the following were the main points that were identified from the interviews:

- **Relationships with funders and sponsors.** Having local funders who were committed to the region, had staff who understood the sector, and had initiated a range of different options such as, multi-year funding, multi-rounds in a year and easy- to-complete applications were valued. Both Trust Waikato and WRC were highlighted as funders who had these attributes.
- **Financial stability.** Having some level of 'stable' funding enabled groups to plan ahead, to be more efficient and/or to provide a level of certainty for staff. This stability was attained via 'multi-year' funding, donation or sponsorship, having a key funder or sponsor, and/or having efficient, easy to complete processes for contestable funds which enabled groups to access funds quickly, and have time to locate all funds, particularly in a 'part-funding' situation.
- **Meeting funding criteria.** Overall, interviewees reported that 'operations and administration' funding was often more difficult to source than funding for 'projects' and that getting funding for something 'new' was easier than getting funding for ongoing or monitoring work.
- **Sustainability.** Being financially sustainable in order to continue the work was a challenge for many groups. The extent to which a group could be sustainable depended on a number of factors, such as the type of work they were doing, that is for some groups the 'work' could attract contracts, fees for work and/or social enterprise options while for other groups this was less of an option.
- **Social enterprise.** Expanding and developing social enterprise options was of interest to many groups to enable them to be less grant-dependent, however the extent to which an organisation could be achieve this differed across the types of organisations and the type of work. In general, the findings indicated that the groups which were set up primarily to work on environmental work, with the social enterprise developing as a secondary role, tended to need other funding streams as the social enterprise itself has costs and as such had to make a greater profit over and above the running costs to fund the other work.

In regards to 'human resources', the following were the main points that were identified from the interviews:

- **Volunteers.** The sector is reliant on volunteers and for many groups, both iwi and mainstream, there are challenges related to volunteers that are also areas of opportunity for providing support. Key challenges were related to recruiting and retaining volunteers, specifically: availability of volunteers particularly for rural areas; managing volunteers in order to support and retain them; attracting and retaining younger volunteers; preventing fatigue and burnout; and having volunteers with the needed skillsets.
- **Skills.** A number of iwi groups³ identified needing access to up-skilling or expertise in operations activities, specialist skills and professional skills. Mainstream groups also identified access to professional skills as being needed and whilst some had access to these skillsets within their groups, others did not. Overall findings showed that the extent to which a group was able to successfully undertake their work and/or be sustainable was often related to the skill base they had within their group.
- **Succession planning.** Planning for the future was an area of need and a challenge for many groups. There were examples given of 'founder's syndrome', the reliance on one or two key people in a group, and a need for assistance with succession planning.

³ In order to highlight issues that are specific to iwi and to ensure that these do not get lost in the wider discussion within the report, there are times when the terms 'iwi organisations' or 'iwi groups' is used to identify when the information is from an iwi trust, trust board or other organisation. The terms were created to protect confidentiality and ensure that the different individuals, trusts, trust boards or iwi and hapū groups that exist in the region and from whom interviewees were sourced, cannot be readily identified in the text. Approximately 11 interviewees from the research sample were affiliated to an iwi organisation or group.

Overall, in terms of needs of the sector, the following quote sums up the main themes that were identified:

Staying solvent and not burning out. Everything else is secondary to that. If they can have enough funding to keep the wheels turning and enough skilled people to share the load, then they can succeed.

OTHER NEEDS

As well, as the above needs the land claims settlement process was raised by some interviewees, both mainstream and iwi. Groups who were working in areas where settlement processes were still in progress were interested in what the settlement process would mean for the long term sustainability of their project. There are examples in the region of post-settlement structures (e.g. MOUs) between local hapū and organisations as well as examples of current (pre-settlement) working partnerships between community groups and local iwi and hapū and as such, they may be examples to look at for ideas and/or 'best practice'. Managing the transitions post-settlements is likely to be a significant area of need in the future.

COLLABORATION AND CO-ORDINATION

The research identified the following ways that collaborating, coordinating and networking occurs within the region: regional networking, 'umbrella' co-ordination or support organisations; local collaborative groups or organisations; NGO and government relationships; and local level collaborations and networks including cross-sector, working with iwi and general networking.

In relation to the various collaborative and co-ordination models, the following were key findings:

- **Regional 'umbrella' organisations** were considered to be beneficial, were valued by interviewees, were providing for the sector but were limited by funding structures (i.e. project-based funding), current capacity and resources.
- **Local collaborative groups** were valued and beneficial, provided support for local needs, and were more likely to succeed if they originated from within the community as a local response to a local need as they typically have, by definition, more buy-in from the community.
- **NGO and Local Council** relationships ranged from 'very supportive' to 'needing some improvement', and overall for both mainstream and iwi organisations, having a working relationship and support from local government was viewed as important and beneficial.
- **Iwi organisations and WRC** relationships varied, with interviewees reporting experiences ranging from frustration with WRC in regards to resource consents, resourcing, and "internal politics", concerns that WRC was not being responsive to local needs, not considering IEMPs and was 'focused' on the Waikato River and less so on other areas (water and/or land) through to having a 'good working relationship' with WRC and support from staff and Māori councillors.
- **Mainstream groups and WRC** relationships were positive in relation to the approach of WRC 'on the ground' staff and funding options, and were less positive in regards to other parts of the organisation.
- **NGO and Central Government** relationships ranged from national to local level, and across a range of different agencies and there were examples of 'good' relationships and partnerships as well as examples of frustrations and challenges, with relationships at a local level more likely to be positive. Some of the challenges for community groups who worked with central government agencies were: three year political cycles; restructuring and staff turnover in government agencies; negotiating with different government agencies and having to prepare legal responses with limited resource to do so; and concerns about post-land claim settlements, structures and support in relation to project sustainability.
- **Cross-sector collaborations** occurred in different ways including collaborations between NGOs, government agencies, iwi, and community organisations from different sectors working together, and there were a number of examples of positive and mutually beneficial partnerships.
- **Working with iwi** occurred at a number different levels including: at governance levels, with local authorities and central government; at 'community' levels with locally-based groups as supporters,

committee members and partners; and at 'iwi' levels with varying levels and types of support, such in-kind, funding and/or resource from iwi trusts. Interviewees identified that iwi groups may have a focus that can be different to and/or can impact on relationships with other groups or organisations, such as: having a long term vision or commitment to the area; a wider vision beyond just 'environmental' outcomes; cultural heritage priorities as part of the environmental focus; different pressures, such as managing 'social issues'; a mātauranga Māori approach; and a kaupapa of kaitiakitanga and/or kaitiaki roles and responsibilities.

- **Networking**, both formal and informal was valued, although at times interviewees reported that they struggled to find the time and resource to 'network'. Types of networking included: community network meetings; informal networking amongst different groups; providing advice to other groups, particularly those starting up; and combining with similar groups for specific training.

The research identified examples of where collaboration and/or co-operation did *not* occur amongst environmental groups even though on the surface it would appear that these groups could work more together. For example, groups doing similar work and/or working in the same area or district. Interviewees provided the following explanations for why these groups might not work closely together:

- **Different mandates**. They did not necessarily have the same reasons for what they were doing.
- **Different approaches**. They have different approaches which may be incompatible.
- **Different structures and needs**. They have different structures and needs and different foci which whilst not necessarily incompatible, might not overlap.
- **Not resourced to collaborate**. They were not resourced to 'collaborate' and/or used the resource and time that they had to work directly on their specific project.
- **Competitive funding environment**. They may be either currently or historically in a competitive funding environment which sets them up in opposition.

That is not to say that the various groups did not 'get along' but that unless there were tangible, direct benefits to them of being more closely connected, they might not work together. As well, the findings reported that in terms of whether 'like' groups should collaborate there are benefits to 'cross-group' networking and/or collaborations and benefits to other types of cross-sector collaboration. For example, linking groups who have human or other resources together with the groups who need volunteers or resourcing.

CAPACITY BUILDING

The research identified the following overall capacity building needs for groups and organisations in the region's community based environmental sector:

- Access to support and/or mentoring;
- Access to professional expertise;
- Support with sourcing, recruiting and retaining human resources;
- Support with governance and planning; and
- Increased networking and collaboration opportunities.

Iwi organisations were asked to identify capacity building needs for their organisation and/or iwi in relation to community-based environmental work. These were:

- Up skilling and/or support in operations and project management;
- Opportunities to increase knowledge in specialist areas;
- Access to professional expertise;
- Support for iwi to become engaged in the mahi;

- Support and resourcing for consultation activities;
- Support to ensure the 'human resource' has the incentive to engage; and
- Support with local needs and aspirations.

Meeting the above needs could include both resourcing of the groups themselves and resourcing, strengthening and widening the scope of existing umbrella organisations to provide support and access to expertise.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

This research has provided an overview of the perceptions of the community-based environmental sector in the Waikato Region, and the challenges and opportunities they face.

The overall conclusions that can be drawn from the research are that there is a significant amount of environmental activity occurring in the community sector across the region with a number of valued co-ordinating groups and networks operating at regional and local levels, a variety of funding sources and structures, and a lot of active community groups, numerous iwi, hapū and marae, and local and national government agencies who partner and work with groups in various ways.

The research identified a range of funding sources for community based environmental work in the region. These ranged from central and local government funds and grants through to national and international and local trusts and funds and including corporate sponsorship and in-kind support from a range of different sources. In addition most organisations relied on some, if not all, volunteer labour to undertake a lot of the work.

There were a range of needs and challenges for the sector that were identified by the research including issues around funding and accessing funding, recruiting and retaining both paid and unpaid human resources, and ensuring that people do not 'burnout'. There were also a range of different ways that groups collaborated, co-ordinated and worked together and some gaps and areas for development to strengthen and maximize potential were identified, including cross-sector collaborations and cross-agency partnerships for mutual benefit, up-skilling, training and support.

Iwi groups and organisations often had a wider vision than 'just environment, related to iwi development, succession and kaitiakitanga and as well, many faced significant and specific challenges, such as being under-resourced for kaitiaki and consent tasks, requiring support to access 'expertise' across a range of kaupapa and to create pathways and opportunities to enhance skills to mobilise and sustain the workforce. There are also settlement agreements in the region which will be finalised in the near future and, there will be post-settlement impacts for iwi in regards to the ongoing management, future plans and opportunities for working together with groups already in place.

Overall, the research identified that there are untapped opportunities (for example, projects, groups and ideas) that could be realised with some targeted support. There are some established umbrella groups and networks, which are valued and accessed by interviewees, and which could be strengthened and resourced to increase their capacity to support and access the sector. In addition there are areas that funders and government agencies could consider streamlining (for example, funding processes, resource consents) or providing (for example, in-kind support, such as advice) which would further support the sector.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Summary..... i

 Tables and Figures vii

1.0 Introduction 1

 1.1 This Report 1

 1.2 About the Research 1

 1.2.1 Background 1

 1.2.2 Purpose 1

 1.2.3 Research Questions 1

 1.2.4 Methodology..... 1

 1.2.5 Limitations 2

 1.2.6 Geographical Coverage 3

 1.3 Definition of Terms..... 4

 1.4 This Document..... 5

2.0 Funding..... 6

 2.1 Introduction..... 6

 2.2 How the Sector is Funded 6

 2.3 Available Funding Sources..... 7

 2.4 Summary: Available Funding Sources 9

3.0 Needs of the Sector 10

 3.1 Introduction..... 10

 3.2 Financial Security 10

 3.2.1 Relationships with Funders and Sponsors 10

 3.2.2 Financial Stability 11

 3.2.3 Meeting Funding Criteria 14

 3.2.4 Sustainability..... 15

 3.2.5 Social Enterprise 17

 3.3 The Human Resource: People 19

 3.3.1 Volunteers..... 19

 3.3.2 Recruitment and Retention of Volunteers..... 19

 3.3.3 Skills 22

 3.3.4 Succession..... 24

 3.4 Summary: Needs of the Sector 25

4.0 Collaboration and Co-ordination..... 27

4.1 Introduction.....27

4.2 Collaboration, Co-ordination and Networking27

4.2.1 Regional Networking, Co-ordination or Support Organisations27

4.2.2 Local Collaborative Groups31

4.2.3 NGO and Government Relationships.....32

4.2.4 Local Level Collaborations.....39

4.2.5 Reasons for Non-collaboration43

4.4 Summary: Collaboration and Co-ordination.....45

5.0 Capacity Building 47

5.1 General Capacity Building Needs47

5.2 Iwi- specific Needs48

5.3 Summary: Capacity Building.....50

6.0 Concluding Comments 51

TABLES AND FIGURES

Figure 1: WRC Regional Boundaries Figure 2: Trust Waikato Regional Boundaries.....3

Figure 3: Tribal Areas of the Principal Iwi in the Waikato Region.....4

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 THIS REPORT

This document presents the findings of research commissioned by Trust Waikato and Waikato Regional Council (WRC) and carried out by Momentum Research and Evaluation Limited (Momentum Research) on the community-based environmental sector in the Waikato region.

1.2 ABOUT THE RESEARCH

1.2.1 BACKGROUND

This research is a follow on from research about the community-based environmental sector, which was undertaken in 2015 ('the October 2015 research')⁴ by Momentum Research. The current research took place between September 2016 and February 2017.

1.2.2 PURPOSE

The purpose of the current research was to continue informing the discussion around the challenges and opportunities facing the community-based environmental sector in the Waikato by providing information on:

- i. National and international funding for the community based environmental sector, and
- ii. Perceptions of environmental community sector groups in the region regarding their needs, opportunities for collaboration, coordination, and capacity.

1.2.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions that the research aimed to answer were as follows:

- i. What national and international funding is available to environmental groups in the Waikato?
- ii. What are the characteristics of and gaps in the sector?
- iii. What does the sector want or need in terms of capacity building or co-ordination?
- iv. What are the opportunities for collaboration by organisations, agencies or funders to maximise available environmental funding?

1.2.4 METHODOLOGY

Key methodologies for this research project included in-depth interviews and desktop review.

1.2.4.1 INTERVIEWS

The primary methodology for this research was a series of in depth key informant interviews with the aim to cover a range of different groups, organisations and/or agencies who are involved within the community-based environmental sector in the region. The intent was not to talk with people from every group working in the region, but rather to get in-depth information from as wide a range of people, groups, areas and types of work as possible. Potential interviewees were identified from the previous (2015) research information, resources such as Naturespace and as well, interviewees were asked for recommendations of others to include (i.e. snowball technique).

⁴ The 2015 research was commissioned by Trust Waikato and WRC and was focused on "describing the community-based response to environmental activity, and how this is organised and funded, and identifying the relevant local and central government, iwi, philanthropic and other groups in operation in this area, and any opportunities for collaboration to maximise available funding." The 2015 report is available online at www.trustwaikato.co.nz/Resources/Research.

Overall a total of 71 people from 71 organisations were contacted. Of the 71 people contacted, seven declined to be interviewed, 11 did not respond⁵ and four did respond but a suitable interview time was unable to be arranged within the available timeframe and 49 responded and interviews were arranged.

Although 71 people were contacted, and of these interviews were arranged with 49, some people represented more than the one organisation, and some were group interviews with more than one person from the same organisation, and some were separate interviews with people from different parts of an organisation. Therefore, in total 49 interviews were carried out with 65 people from 60 organisations, so there were 65 interviewees in the sample and 60 organisations.

Nineteen interviews were face to face and 30 were phone interviews. The interviews were qualitative and took between 30 minutes and two hours each. Forty four of the 49 interviews were individual interviews and five were group interviews. The numbers in the group interviews ranged from two to ten people. For three of the group interviews, the interviewees were people from the same organisation or agency, and for the other two, the interviewees represented different organisations or agencies, although they were working together in different collaborative arrangements.

In terms of the range of people or organisations who participated, there was a spread across the following factors.

- 'conservation/ restoration' and 'prevention/ sustainability' groups⁶;
- 'umbrella' groups and/or 'co-ordinators' of initiatives across the region;
- urban and rural and a range of districts;
- iwi and 'mainstream';
- non-government organisations and 'government';
- large and small groups; and
- funders and other 'support' organisations.

The above factors are not mutually exclusive; that is some interviewees represented more than one organisation or group (i.e. they had 'multiple hats') and organisations could fit into more than one factor. For example they might an iwi group, working across two or three districts and undertaking both conservation and prevention work.

1.2.4.2 DESKTOP INFORMATION REVIEW

Information was also sourced from relevant websites and online sources and included documents and other information regarding for example, local and central government, iwi, environmental agencies, interest groups, community groups and funding sources.

1.2.5 LIMITATIONS

The research team has attempted to answer the research questions as thoroughly as possible and every effort was made to meet this goal, but there will still be some gaps. In particular while the intent was to ensure the sample covered a cross-section and a range of different groups and organisations across the region and the sector, including multiple attempts to make contact and follow up with key people and/or groups, there will still be groups that could have been included but were not.

⁵ First contact was usually made via email, with follow up emails and / or phone calls made, as needed. Messages were left on answering machines or with reception staff, where possible, if there was no reply to phone calls. In the emails and/or phone messages people were given the option to decline, and they are asked to let the researcher know if they did not wish to participate.

⁶ See 1.3 (page 4) for a definition of terms used.

1.2.6 GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE

The regional boundaries of Trust Waikato and the WRC are slightly different, with WRC including Taupō and part of Rotorua Districts (but not Ruapehu) and Trust Waikato including part of Ruapehu District (but not Taupō or part of Rotorua) (see Figures 1 and 2).

The principal iwi who have tribal areas within the Waikato Regional Council area are Waikato-Tainui, Ngāti Maniapoto, Ngāti Raukawa, Hauraki, Ngāti Tūwharetoa, and Te Arawa (Ngāti Tahu - Ngāti Whaoa; Ngāti Kearoa - Ngāti Tuarā; Tūhourangi - Ngāti Wāhiao).⁷ Within these iwi there are numerous hapū⁸. The rohe of the iwi and hapū extend beyond, and across regional and local council boundaries (see Figure 3).

For the purposes of this research, the geographical coverage will be that of the WRC (see Figure 1). The research within this report therefore pertains to the areas of the following local authorities:

- Thames/ Coromandel District
- Hauraki District
- Matamata/ Piako District
- Waikato District
- Hamilton City
- Waipa District
- South Waikato District
- Otorohanga District
- Waitomo District
- Rotorua District (partial)
- Taupō District

FIGURE 1: WRC REGIONAL BOUNDARIES



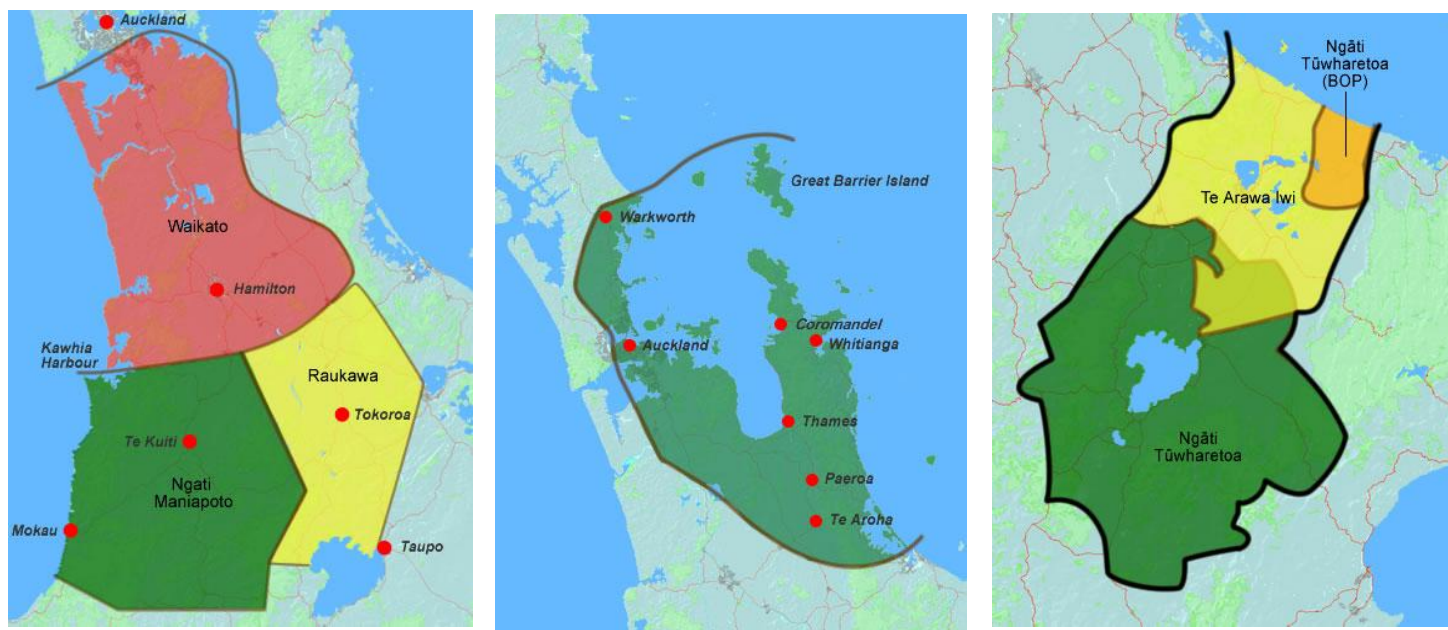
FIGURE 2: TRUST WAIKATO REGIONAL BOUNDARIES



⁷ Source: Te Kāhui Māngai (Directory of iwi and Māori organisations) www.tkm.govt.nz/

⁸ Source: waikatoregion.govt.nz.

FIGURE 3: TRIBAL AREAS OF THE PRINCIPAL IWI IN THE WAIKATO REGION



Left: Waikato-Tainui, Ngāti Raukawa, Ngāti Maniapoto. Middle: Hauraki. Right: Te Arawa and Ngāti Tūwharetoa ⁹

1.3 DEFINITION OF TERMS

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITY

For the purposes of this research environmental activity was categorised into two main categories¹⁰: (i) activity focused on either restoring or conserving natural heritage (for example, restoring habitats, cleaning up waterways); or (ii) activity focused on prevention of harm to the natural environment by encouraging more efficient and or sustainable use of natural resources (for example, recycling, environmental education). The following are examples of the types of activities included in each category:

CONSERVATION/ RESTORATION

- Tree planting
- Gully planting
- Pest control
- Weed control
- Riparian management
- Fencing
- Walkways/ board walks
- Research - restoration / pest control
- Native Plant Nursery

PREVENTION/ SUSTAINABLE LIVING

- Environmental education
- Community gardens
- Signage for heritage areas
- Research - sustainable living / waste management
- Waste minimisation / management
- Educational workshops / programmes /events
- Cycle/walkways

The activities may include physical activities (for example, planting trees, running workshops), academic activities (for example, research), and management and co-ordination activities (for example, co-ordinating volunteers, developing newsletters, writing submissions). As well, it is acknowledged that there may be some overlap between the two categories and that one project may include activities within both categories. Of

⁹ Source: Te Kāhui Māngai (Directory of iwi and Māori organisations) www.tkm.govt.nz.

¹⁰ Note that these definitions and categories were used in the 2015 research and to ensure some consistency, have been retained for this research.

note is that other activity (for example, retrofitting homes with electric heating options which as a secondary benefit improves air quality) is not included in the above.

COMMUNITY-BASED

For the purposes of this research, community-based was defined as activity that is occurring within the community, for the benefit of the community, and not for profit. Of note is that WRC funds both groups and individuals, and will fund work on private land. Trust Waikato generally does not fund individuals and does not fund either groups or individuals to undertake work on private land.

1.4 THIS DOCUMENT

The document is divided into five more chapters:

- Chapter 2.0 Funding, presents the results from the research in relation to funding;
- Chapter 3.0 Needs, presents the results from the research in relation to needs;
- Chapter 4.0 Collaboration and Co-operation, presents the results from the research in relation to collaboration, co-operation and networking;
- Chapter 5.0 Capacity Building, presents the results from the research in relation to capacity building; and
- Chapter 6.0 Concluding Comments, presents final conclusions.

2.0 FUNDING

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The research aimed to collate information on national and international funding and answer the following research question: “What national and international funding is available to environmental groups in the Waikato?” This section presents the research findings in relation to this question. A summary of the key findings completes the chapter. Information for this section was sourced from the October 2015 research report, online sites such as Naturespace, Waikato Biodiversity Forum, funders’ websites, the Charities Register, and information from interviewees.

2.2 HOW THE SECTOR IS FUNDED

The interviewees from non-government organisations involved in undertaking environmental work were asked to comment on how their work was funded. Findings showed that organisations typically operated with a mix of different funding sources. These included:

- Grants (i.e. from contestable funds);
- Donations (i.e. from individuals or local businesses);
- Membership subscriptions;
- Sponsorship from businesses and/or individuals (for example, ‘sponsor a hectare’);
- Fundraising activities (for example, raffles, crowd funding, small scale retail);
- Social enterprise (for example, environmental work that generates an income, retail, selling plants, tours, entry fees);
- Commercial arm (for example, a separate part of the organisation that generates income);
- Fees for work (for example, to consult, to collect waste) including government or local government contracts (for example, contracted to clear gullies) and directly from consumers;
- Community Loans (for example, community members ‘loan’ the money and get a return on their investment); and
- In-kind products or services from businesses (for example, compost or accountancy services).

The extent to which an organisation has all or some of the above as funding options, depended on the work and the organisation, although typically most organisations had a mix of the different types.

In addition to the above monetary or in-kind products or services, most interviewees reported that their organisations relied on some, if not all, volunteer labour to undertake a lot of the work of the organisation. Some organisations are run and staffed solely by volunteers, while others have some paid staff and some volunteers.

There was also a range across the organisations as to how ‘financially solvent’ they were and there was no ‘typical’ way that a group was set up or organised. Essentially, the research found the following:

- some groups are more 'grant dependent' than others;
- some groups are more financially solvent than others;
- some groups had multi-year funding;
- Some had a ‘key funder’ (i.e. one main funder who funded the majority of the work).

Interviewees raised a number of other needs, issues and challenges that they face in regards to funding, and these are discussed in more detail in Section 3.2 Financial Security (p. 10).

2.3 AVAILABLE FUNDING SOURCES

In terms of who funds the sector, a collation of data from the October 2015 report, online sites and information from interviewees identified the following sources of funding, grants, sponsorship and donations for groups and organisations within the Waikato Region.

NOTES:

- i. The following list does not include funding sources that only support work on private land only and/or only support individuals rather than groups¹¹.
- ii. The fact that a Fund or funding source is in the list does not necessarily mean that it has provided funds for community-based environmental work in the Waikato Region, only that it is an available funding source for which a group undertaking 'community-based environmental work' is eligible.
- iii. Each Fund has different eligibility criteria and its inclusion in the list does not mean that all community-based environmental groups would be eligible to apply for it, although, dependent on the work or project, most Funds listed are open to applications from non-government organisations (NGOs).

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

- Department of Conservation (DOC): Community Fund (CF); Waikato Community Conservation Fund (WCCF); Ngā Whenua Rahui Fund; Mātauranga Kura Taiao Fund; Natural Heritage Fund (NHF);
- Department of Corrections: in-kind support (for example, prison nurseries growing plants, work groups doing tree-planting, weed clearing)
- Department of Internal Affairs (DIA): Lottery Grants (i.e. Significant Projects; Community; Environment and Heritage; Minister's Discretionary Fund); Crown Grants (i.e. Community Organisation Grants Scheme; Community Development Scheme; Support for Volunteering Fund); and Trust Grants (i.e. the Pacific Development and Conservation Trust);
- Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA) Low Emission Vehicles Contestable Fund;
- Ministry for the Environment (MfE): Community Environment Fund (CEF); Waste Minimisation Fund (WMF); Te Mana o te Wai Fund; Environmental Legal Assistance Fund; Contaminated Sites Remediation Fund¹²;
- Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI): Afforestation Grant Scheme (AGS); The Sustainable Land Management (SLM) Hill Country Erosion Programme¹³; and
- Other ministries, departments and agencies (for example, Social Development, Health, Education) who may fund or support a group, dependent on the extent to which the recipient organisation has 'other' outcomes like social, education or health for example.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- WRC: Natural Heritage Partnership Programme (NHPP) which includes the Environmental Initiatives Fund (EIF), Small Scale Community Initiatives Fund (SSCIF), Natural Heritage Fund (NHF); the Enviroschools Grant Fund; and Honda TreeFund;
- Waipa District Council: WMF, Heritage and Community Discretionary Funds;
- Hamilton City Council (HCC): Community Grants; Vibrant Hamilton Fund (VHF)¹⁴; Waste Minimisation Fund (WMF);
- Thames Coromandel District Council (TCDC): Community Grants;

¹¹ For example the following have been excluded from the list: WRC Dr Stella Grant Scholarships Fund (provides scholarships to University students); South Waikato Environmental Initiatives Fund (funds conservation work on privately owned land with money from Carter Holt Harvey Pulp and Paper and administration assistance from South Waikato District Council). However Fonterra Living Waters has been included as this is a joint approach between Fonterra and DOC in order to work across private/public ownership boundaries.

¹² The Contaminated Sites Remediation Fund is only available to regional councils, unitary authorities and territorial authorities and the Environmental Legal Assistance Fund is only available for non-profit groups.

¹³ The Sustainable Land Management (SLM) Hill Country Erosion Programme is only available to regional councils.

¹⁴ Note that the Vibrant Hamilton Fund is, as far as could be ascertained is still in operation.

- Taupō District Council: Community Grants;
- Waikato District Council: Discretionary Grants, Heritage and Conservation Funds;
- Waitomo District Council: Community Development Fund;
- South Waikato District Council: Community Development Grant;
- Matamata-Piako District Council: Significant Natural Features Fund; and
- Contracts or other arrangements with local Councils who, for example, might provide materials (for example, plants) or other resources (for example, equipment, planting plans) to local groups who work in areas that are Council owned or managed (for example, gullies, lakes, wetlands).

PHILANTHROPIC TRUSTS AND OTHER SOURCES OF GRANTS AND DONATIONS

- Air New Zealand Environment Trust;
- BP Petrol Vouchers for Volunteers;
- Brian Perry Charitable Trust (BPCT);
- D.V. Bryant Trust;
- Fish and Game New Zealand New Zealand Game Bird Habitat Trust;
- Fonterra Grassroots Fund;
- Foundation North¹⁵;
- Gaming Machine Trusts;
- Grassroots Trust;
- Len Reynolds Trust;
- Lion Foundation;
- Living Waters Fund;
- Million Metres Streams Project (crowd funding for stream planting);
- Momentum Foundation;
- Next Foundation;
- Project Crimson Trust;
- Royal New Zealand Forest and Bird Valder Conservation Grants;
- SkyCity Hamilton Community Trust;
- Tindall Foundation;
- Transpower Community Care Fund;
- Trust Waikato;
- Waikato River Authority (WRA) Waikato River Clean-up Trust;
- Waikato Catchment Ecological Enhancement Trust (WCEET);
- WEL Energy Trust
- World Wildlife Fund (WWF);
- Various small legacy trusts (for example, E.B. Firth Charitable Trust; J.S. Watson Trust; Norah Howell Charitable Trust);
- Various Iwi trusts, for example Māori Land Trusts or Trustboards who have scholarships and grants for 'members'.

CORPORATE OR INDUSTRY SPONSORSHIP OR FUNDING

- Power Companies (for example, Mighty River Power sponsors Waikato River Trails; Genesis Energy sponsors who protection);
- Business providing funding for a local group for resource habitat protection, for example, as part of a resource consent (for example, dairy companies, landowners, mining companies);

¹⁵ Note that the area covered by Foundation North includes the Hauraki Gulf and parts of the northern boundary of the WRC region and as such groups within those areas may apply to Foundation North (rather than Trust Waikato for example) for funding.

- Business sponsoring a local project with money or in-kind (for example, products) and/or donate staff time to a local project (for example, planting for a day);
- Relevant business and/or association providing funding for specific activities (for example, funding for research from an institute, industry partner or association); and
- Māori Land Trusts¹⁶ who may provide resources (monetary and/or in-kind) for environmental, sustainability and conservation work on trust land and/or other tribal or beneficiary lands or initiatives.

OTHER

- Organisations who provide in-kind support such as: schools who might help with planting days or pay fees to attend educational programmes; youth organisations (for example, Duke of Edinburgh Award) or other charity organisations (for example, Rotary) who might fundraise on behalf or help out with providing volunteers for working bees.

2.4 SUMMARY: AVAILABLE FUNDING SOURCES

The research identified a range of funding sources for community based environmental work in the region. These ranged from central and local government funds and grants through to national and international and local trusts and funds and including corporate sponsorship and in-kind support from a range of different sources. Of the 65 organisations within the research sample, most typically operated with a mix of different funding sources from grants and donations through to social enterprises and commercial arms, fees for work and in-kind support. The extent to which an organisation used all or some of these funding options depended on the work and the organisation. In addition most organisations relied on some, if not all, volunteer labour to undertake a lot of the work. There was also a range across the organisations as to how 'financially solvent' they were and there was no 'typical' way that a group was set up or organised.

¹⁶ Note that Māori Land Trusts have been included both under NFP funding sources as well as 'business' in recognition that trusts have different structures. Some are entirely NFP and others function more as corporate structures or 'for profit' businesses, for example.

3.0 NEEDS OF THE SECTOR

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The research aimed to collate information on “perceptions of environmental community sector groups in the region regarding their needs and opportunities for collaboration, coordination, and capacity.” This section presents the research findings in relation to ‘needs’. Information for this section was primarily sourced from the key informant interviewees, from which data was collated and key themes identified. The following sections provide detail on each of the key themes. Quotes from interviews, presented in italics or quote marks, have been used to illustrate key points. A summary of the key findings completes the chapter.

3.2 FINANCIAL SECURITY

When asked about key needs or challenges for organisations undertaking community-based environmental work, ‘financial security’ was a key theme that emerged. As noted by one interviewee the biggest challenge for community-based environmental groups is “staying solvent” followed by “not burning out”.

Staying solvent. Financial solvency. Staying solvent and not burning out. Everything else is secondary to that. If they can have enough funding to keep the wheels turning and enough skilled people to share the load, then they can succeed.

There were five key financial themes identified. These included: relationships with funders and sponsors; financial stability; meeting funding criteria; sustainability; and social enterprise. The following provides further detail in regards to the financial themes.

3.2.1 RELATIONSHIPS WITH FUNDERS AND SPONSORS

‘Relationships’ was a key theme, whether with current or potential funders or those who might be able to provide in-kind support. A number of interviewees spoke highly about having local funders who were committed to the region, had staff that understood the sector, and had initiated a range of different options such as, multi-year funding, multi-rounds in a year and easy- to-complete applications.

It's fantastic to have Trust Waikato, a trust that is committed to funding Waikato groups.

Kudos to Waikato Regional Council for committing to multi-year funding bids. Over the last couple of years that they have done that. They are employing staff that understand that these projects take time, need time and that they often don't achieve much in the first few years they are running.

I love working with Trust Waikato and WEL Energy Trust. Minimal bureaucracy and they have divided up the grants with different funding rounds. Also if they believe in and support the project they provide nearly all the funding¹⁷.

Trust Waikato has had a long association with our Māori Trust Board and the Māori Community Groups in our area. Relationships over many years have been positive. Their awareness, networks and Māori staff have been much more understanding and collaborative [than others].

Years ago we were working based on small grants. Now Trust Waikato has supported us hugely with capacity building. [Another Funder] provided grants to support our work with tributaries and build capacity. Also helped us with a business mentor. COGS grants have been helpful. DV Bryant Trust – real advocates for us and what we are trying to achieve,[and] a tribal trust supported us to help purchase [a] building.

¹⁷ See next section, Financial Stability, for more discussion on issues around ‘partial funding’.

Maintaining relationships with funders, including potential sponsors or in-kind supporters was important and valued but required time. Even groups who had some paid staff often found it difficult to put in the amount of time needed to maintain and extend the relationships they had. For example:

We try and stay close to Lions and Rotary because they are good supporters, close to our schools because we provide education programmes (although this is probably an under-exploited area), some local businesses. It takes quite a bit of effort.

Funders – need to be more open to dialogue and the people doing the work need to be empowered to talk to the funders; setting the boundaries around that. There is a power imbalance between funders and those applying - which is actual or perceived. If your staff is busy – they don't have time to build the relationships with the funders – don't have the time to do that, they are not paid to do that. It falls back on the committee. If you have committee members who have time, and are savvy on the funding game then they can do that. ... Practically, the person who is the [Funder] contact on the funding application form - and they are normally really cool and want to help you - but the issue with building the relationships is that they are not the decision-makers, they are the administrator. How do you get to the committee, who are a nameless faceless crew? I'd like to see resources on both sides for relationship building on both sides – it's hard to find committee members who have time to dedicate to this; to build developing and maintaining funding relationships into administration.

In another example, an interviewee from a national organisation described how when they came to the Waikato, they were given the opportunity to present to a group of funders all at once which they found beneficial as it saved significant time for them. Another example of an opportunity to 'present' to funders includes, for example, the 'dragon's den' which was a component of the Community Waikato 2015 conference (Rising to the Challenge).

Something that was beneficial for us was that when we came to the Waikato - we were invited by [a local organisation] and at that meeting, there was a guy from [one of the philanthropic trusts] And after the presentation, he come to see me, and he said, "I can help you short circuit the funding process by sending out an email and inviting the funders to a luncheon [we will host that] and you guys do your funding pitch to them all at one time." To have someone make that offer - to do it – the benefits of time saved on our part - to be able to be in front of all the funders at one time – was significant.

3.2.2 FINANCIAL STABILITY

Financial stability was a key theme; that is having some level of 'stable' funding that enabled the group to plan ahead, to be more efficient and/or to provide a level of certainty for any paid staff. For example, one interviewee who has a paid position with a particular group as a project and volunteer co-ordinator, and fundraiser¹⁸, explained the difficulties with planning a project when you only have funding "grant to grant" or "year to year":

Year to year - how do you plan ahead? I'm working now to get [a project planned] – I'm starting to plan that and yet my contract ends at the end of the month so who would make that project happen? If we had three years funding - it allows you to breathe and get on with it and plan ahead.

As the following explains, having some stable funding can also 'take the pressure off' and reduce the amount of resource that has to go into sourcing and reporting on funding.

¹⁸ Note in regards to this 'paid' position: It is not uncommon for a group who has a paid position which involves a number of different roles – for example, the groups might have a paid part time person who does administration, funding applications, project planning and co-ordination, volunteer co-ordination, newsletter, website or blog editing to name a few of the tasks. It is also not uncommon to find that in some groups, people have multiple roles albeit they are volunteers.

There would be so much pressure taken off if they didn't have to put in funding bids all the time. For example one group got funding from a local philanthropist who said 'I'll fund you for 20 years'... then you have funding that doesn't suck up resource to apply and report on it.

Assured long term funding - for 3-5+ years would be of real benefit to us as we spend a lot of time on funding applications and get our fair share of "Dear John" letters. I see real possibilities for a collective approach from groups if they were aware that their application, if approved, would be for a longer period than the usual one year.

Our most recent contract is for ten years and now [after years of shorter term contracts] we can plan for the future and we can help out other areas [wanting to do similar work].

For example we just submitted a grant application to [a philanthropic trust] for next year - signaled to get a multi-year commitment. Three years. If I can reduce the time I spend from raising money then it makes everything a whole lot more efficient.

For those who had some paid staff, on year by year or project by project contracts, the timing of funding grants and/or having to continuously apply can be stressful; having some certainty, stable funding and quick 'turn around' on grants applications can provide more stability and certainty for staff.

The length of time between application and knowing whether you have any money – is too long. The impact on staff is stressful – because there is no certainty and continuity.

Funding is the main issue - to have confirmation of long term funding. We had three year DOC funding which was brilliant because we knew what was coming and we could employ someone with confidence [that we had work for them].

As noted by one interviewee, "working with the community is often about timing" as they cannot afford to 'wait' around for the wheels of the bureaucracy to turn, while they have no money to pay staff or funds to do the work. i.e.:

Working with the community is often about timing. For example with MfE you might put in a proposal, wait six months then put in a business plan and wait another six months ... We need systems that are quicker than that.

Some groups had 'key funders' such as the individual philanthropist mentioned in a previous quote but also from donor organisations (for example, trusts, councils, businesses, government grants). A key funder being defined as a main funder who supported them in an ongoing way, therefore providing some reasonably reliable funding. Having a 'key funder' was viewed as both a positive and a negative. On the positive side, it can assist with stability, but on the negative side it is a risk, because if that funder pulled out then the group could be left either struggling or unable to continue. One organisation provided an example of receiving a significant amount of funding from three key funders on an annual basis, which was working well until one key funder was unable to meet that obligation, one year and reduced their contribution by a third, then by another third the following year, which impacted significantly on the organisation:

... we got to a point where there was a three- way partnership - each partner contributed \$90k per year - then [one partner] said they couldn't afford that so they dropped their contribution to \$60k, then \$30k. It was very demoralising and undermining – when a key partner that can't deliver on their commitment. Even now if they could say "we will commit even \$30k per year, for three years", then we would know where we are.

Most groups sourced funding from a mix of sources and whilst small grants were accessed, the amount of work needed to complete applications, particularly for small grants could be off-putting, as the following quote explains:

The effort that is required to extract \$5K from an organisation is too much. Not many people want to waste that much energy on getting that small amount of funding, especially people with everyday jobs and families to look

after. Is it worth the time, energy etc to access \$5K? Then there would be the reporting that they want for the \$5K... we would spend all the money on paying for the people to do the application and report. Doesn't leave much for the ability to deliver on the project. You may as well apply for \$50K.

Partial funding, where funders 'part' fund a project with the understanding that the group finds the rest of the resource from other sources (i.e. other funders, sponsorship, fundraising, members, in kind), was another key theme that emerged.

Recently, funders have said "I don't want to be the only one", so they only fund parts of projects. ... I can see why they moved to the model – they could go for whole projects. They have gone for 'collaborative' matching funding, co-funding. But it's dissected, not collaborative. Maybe they did it to reduce dependency [i.e. dependency of a group on one funding stream]?

There were a number of points made in regards to 'part funding'. These were:

- Some groups chose to return the money as they could not source the balance.

Trust Waikato is a bit of a problem with their ten percent rule – we couldn't get funding elsewhere so had to send the dollars back.

There's nothing worse than getting some money for a project. We have returned money to funders for that reason.

- If groups do choose to find other sources, this takes 'time' both in people hours (i.e. completing applications) and in 'waiting' time (i.e. for different funding rounds) both of which impact on whether a project can be undertaken.

The funders just have one round per year - so let's say I go to Trust Waikato (for funds) and they say 'yes' – it might take two years to get the rest - and if I'm not around [to source the funding or run the project] for the next two years then what?

Trust Waikato gave us \$2000 for [a project]. We needed \$7000 - so I'm still not sure what to do about that. I appreciate why they do it - but it makes it harder if they are going to limit to ten percent of our project cost - \$7000 was ten percent and we didn't even get that. Applications take a lot of effort - having to do four or five applications [for one project].

- In some cases a project cannot even be started, unless the group can 'divide' it into smaller discrete projects, as most funders will not fund retrospectively so they have to wait until they have the full funds before they can make a start. For example:

The timing of the funding rounds is a constant battle. It does our head in trying to design a project ...

- More funding sources often equates to more reporting tasks, which is compounded by (often) the lack of resource available for 'administration'.

You need a line in your accounts [for each project; part of a project] – it's complicated, and when no one is giving funding to do the accounts. Managing multiple funding streams as a volunteer organisation with minimal support [is challenging].

I don't know why some of the reporting requirements have to be so exacting. Some we get say you agree to an audit, which I accept that, happy to provide that, so why I have to do this other stuff as well, I have no idea? But what [one funder] was asking for was ... for example, we had to give photocopies of every receipt.

In terms of how funders could 'handle' partial funding, some points were mentioned in section 3.2.1 (page 10) such as having easy to complete applications and dividing up funding rounds, which can alleviate some of the issues raised above. As well, interviewees also suggested that funders could be less specific about what

parts of the project they agree to fund, enabling the groups then to set project priorities, and as well, giving groups time to access other funds.

They could be less specific about what they ask for and what they ask for accountability about. If you put up a project plan, for example for \$68K, and they go, 'I'll fund this part, and then I want a report on that.' So you go to the other funders, for the shortfall, and then ... [the same process]. If they could contribute a pool of money, rather than making it specific, then the project could make decisions on the critical aspects, without being specific. ... If they said instead, "Here's the grant for this fund that we can afford to give you, then when you get the rest, then let us know what you would be doing." This would enable better project planning because depending on what we get, and when, then we can decide which parts of a project we keep and which bits we don't, rather than having the funders say which parts they will fund and this not being possible without funding for the other parts so us being in a situation of not being able to do the project properly.

The trick is - each one is only willing to part fund – you have to find the others - no one wants to be the first cab off the rank. What I do like - is that they are giving you time to find the other funders, to go anywhere we can.

3.2.3 MEETING FUNDING CRITERIA

Another theme to emerge was that of the way that work was funded and needing to meet funding criteria in order to get the grants. Interviewees commented that while there are funders and/or grants for ongoing work (for example, see the previous section on relationships and key funders), funders or sponsors often wanted to support 'projects' or set up and capital costs, rather than ongoing work, or wanted 'innovative and new' ideas, or would fund materials but not operations, administration or human resources.

The new buzz words - 'collaborative, innovative and transformational' - DOC said that and then they funded 'business as usual' (for example, pest control). A message back to funders - if you want those type of funding applications then put up million dollar grants. Be realistic about expectations of community groups.

In terms of 'projects', whilst as noted by one interviewee, "we appreciate the funders want projects so when we want money, we put it into a project and apply for that", for many interviewees having to have a new project rather than continuation of the same project was an issue as much of their work was ongoing and by its very nature, long term. For example:

There's no such thing that is easy to get funding for. Funding is always hard to get. It's relatively easy to get funding to establish. But it is harder to get funding to maintain anything; especially maintain them in the longer term. You have to look at decade timeframes for biodiversity and environmental outcomes. ... It's easy to write a bid to say we want to establish a new trapping regime in the catchment. Putting in a bid to say, "we started this five years ago and want to keep it going for the next 20 years" [is not so easy].

The issue more specifically is more about you have an ongoing project, that you need funding for, positioning it as a 'new project' so you can keep doing it. Applications want to see a start and end and a deliverable. How do you ethically position something within a [project]? [They] won't fund a project that is already underway, so you have to fund a discrete thing that meets their funding requirements, because if it has started nobody will fund retrospectively.

Interviewees noted that funding for 'set-up' costs, or even for a project, was often easier to access than funding for on-going work. For example:

Funding - lately we've found it hard to get funding for the phase we are in now – it is monitoring. We don't have to keep killing pests - we've done that, but we need to keep monitoring that so they don't come back. We don't get funding because we are not doing the 'work on the ground'. It's not seen as tangible. When you get rid of the pests then you monitor - that is the action on the ground.

The single thing that keeps me awake - is how we keep this thing going. We can build a building, get volunteers to plan, plant plants etc., but where do we get core funding? You can get funding for capital projects and one-offs, but

where do you get ongoing funding to pay someone. How do we keep it sustainable? Generate our own income - build a building - generate income from rent. If you look at what we want to do - we have to find salary and meet on-going costs....

It's harder to get funding for ongoing funding. [One Funder] has committed money for three years, which is unusual. ... but after that - to run a project like this to be sustainable - would be at least one salary (1 FTE) to keep it going. Where are you going to get that - in perpetuity? No one will give you that. It's a huge problem in the community sector.

When asked to comment on what activities were the most difficult to find funding for the majority of interviewees responded that it was most difficult to get money for 'people' to do the behind the scenes work such as administration, applications, reporting back, someone to co-ordinate and manage the project and/or volunteers or to do the work (for example, pest management contractors). It is 'easier' to get money for materials than to get money for 'people'.

The biggest challenge is funding to support the national overheads. I work probably two thirds of my time 1400 hours per annum on [this project] and getting funding to support that is a challenge.

I really need to appoint three new positions but finding funding is challenging. Operational costs is a battle. ... The back office – GM, Admin, funding positions – it's hard to get funding for that. People like to fund projects – it's tangible. Releasing Kokako or building a depot. But fund the GM ! The board, the trustees, administering those and servicing that - that adds up and that is not appealing for fundraising.

Getting funding to run a project - administer a project. For example, getting money to pay the accountant to pay the bills [is difficult].

Measurable outcomes – are fine – but to set those up, there is the work up front. The reporting, who pays to do that? Nobody.

Its very hard to find funding for staff (for example, my co-ordinator role). But if I'm not around then things just would not happen. It is a good investment (to fund a staff person) – but funders want to see plants. But if you give me money [for wages] then I can get 20 volunteers on the ground to do stuff.

One of my biggest frustrations is being unable to explain to funders or get them to accept the value of a paid Operations Manager who has trapping skills and a knowledge of toxins that are invaluable to us. As a small group, the role he plays in ensuring that all our traps are set to a specified standard each month is crucial yet funders ignore this, but are quite happy to provide funding for traps and toxins. I'm quite sure there are a fair number of traps out in the field or in sheds that remain unset or unchecked, simply because there is no one to ensure they are fully utilized. ... It's easier to get funding for traps, but harder to get funding for wages.

3.2.4 SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability was a key theme. A number of groups had been in operation for many years while others were reasonably new. For example, some of the kiwi groups on the Coromandel Peninsula have been around for at least two decades, Xtreme Zero Waste in Raglan has been operating for a number of years, and the environment centres started in 1997 and 1998, while others were reasonably new groups who have long term inter-generational plans. The ability to be sustainable, to continue to do the work, was ongoing. Some groups (as noted earlier) had a level of financial stability due to having key funders and others had a mix of key funders, government contracts (for example, with local councils), and/or social enterprise (for example, selling services and/or products, rent, training workshops). Also as previously mentioned, groups found getting funding for ongoing work was at times, a challenge.

The extent to which a group could be self-sustaining sometimes depended on the type of work they were doing. For example, some of the waste minimisation groups were able to charge (either consumers or local

government or both) to collect or sort the recyclable waste and then sell the products, but for others, they did not have a service or product to sell. For example, these interviewees from two different organisations which work in the restoration and pest management sectors, notes that they are “not a commercial enterprise” and that “people have no concept of the value of community conservation groups” to the community.

If you're shown you're successful - why would funders assume that if you get funded for two years then you'll be fine? Funding is not just about funding set-up. We are not a commercial enterprise - where do they think the funding is coming from?

I also find it disappointing to be told by funders that we have to endeavour to become financially self sufficient and I quote from an unsuccessful Expression Of Interest-....."it was not progressed to the full application stage as it is not clear..... how the project will be sustainable without future funding support" This to me highlights that some people have no concept of the value of community conservation groups and the fact that the biggest gains are made out on the traplines where the hard yards are being done. They also ignore that in a lot of cases, landowners have already provided their land at no cost to the rest of the country.

In terms of the expected ‘life’ of a conservation intervention the point of view was made by one interviewee working to restore and sustain a natural habitat for local fauna that it is not something that can be done once and then its completed, but that unless New Zealand became ‘predator free’ it is “a lifetime project – we will have to trap forever.”

Other variables that impacted on a group being able to be self sustaining and/or generate income (i.e. via some retail or fundraising) were location and demographic; a large urban centre for example had more of a population base to draw on than a smaller rural community, beach or town. i.e.:

Some places are doing that (generating some income) well. They are in cities. It is an option but not easier, and is easier in a city with a bigger population base. For example, they have retail – we [as a small rural community] would have to go outside our local demographic to make money, or be very targeted – for example, have food, that people would buy over and over...

There was at times some frustration from some groups who had been operating successfully and who were getting results, and having a focus on ‘new’ or ‘innovative’ rather than ‘tried and true’ was a challenge. As one interviewee noted, funders should “back the winners - who has runs on the board.” As well, this quote from another interviewee about backing the work that will have the most gains:

I am not sure how funders set their priorities for the funding of groups but have concerns at times that it doesn't always go where the best conservation gains will be made. I feel it should be based on success but this would penalise newer groups and how would you measure success? However it would focus the funding where the best conservation gains could be made, the downside being that it could create tension between groups who may feel they are not receiving a fair deal.

One of the initiatives that the Waikato River Restoration Forum¹⁹, a “Waikato River catchment leadership group” established to “chart new territory in the way industry, government and iwi organisations can work together for the benefit of the Waikato and Waipa rivers”²⁰, has been engaged with, is development of the Waikato River 5-15 Year Restoration Strategy.

¹⁹ Members of the group include representatives from the Waikato River Authority and the five Waikato River iwi, Department of Conservation, Fonterra, DairyNZ, Mighty River Power, Genesis Energy (also representing various marae organisations around Huntly) and the Waikato Regional Council. www.waikatoriver.org.nz/river-leadership-group-formed-integrate-restoration-work

²⁰ Sources: <http://www.waikatoriver.org.nz/river-leadership-group-formed-integrate-restoration-work/>; interviews.

[The Waikato River Restoration Forum was formed] to better co-ordinate and have a better understanding with what various organisations and priorities were and where money was likely to be focused and where there were opportunities. Out of that came the Waikato River 5-15 Year Restoration Strategy to assure alignment for the vision and strategy. That was the number one objective of the forum – that's been underway for two years and due to be completed on 30th of June. Identifying \$400million dollars of work across the catchment with a 30 year time frame.

The above strategy is a potential source for funders to understand the priorities for work that will benefit Waikato River catchment water quality. The extent to which the strategy will provide guidance for other environmental work (both conservation and prevention) that is not directly related to the river catchment is likely to be out of scope for the document, which suggests that funders may need to have a different approach, including the current research for determining priorities in other parts of the sector.

3.2.5 SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

Related to sustainability is the theme of 'social enterprise'. There were some groups who had some form of 'social enterprise'; that is they had an income stream related in some way to the work they do and that this generated income for the organisation, however they were not all set up the same way.

An organisation may be set up primarily to be a social enterprise, with the environmental work being a secondary outcome. For example, one organisation works in waste management and recycling and is set up as social enterprise. It is primarily set up to provide employment opportunities, and does this via undertaking environmental work from which they can earn money from selling their service and/or products. The environmental work was chosen primarily because it could be profitable. This work tends to be self-sustaining as their main role is to generate income and to 'break even' (i.e. to generate enough income to run the enterprise, pay the overheads and the staff) not to make a profit which can be used for another purpose (i.e. to fund the work of another part of the organisation). As explained by an interviewee:

.. one [purpose of the Trust] is to provide employment. The best way to employ people was to generate the jobs, so they [the Trust] run several social enterprises. ... the social enterprises are run as business units and have to be self-sustaining.

Other organisations may be set up primarily as a social service (for example, to build community capacity, be a community centre, provide training and employment for youth and people on benefits, build iwi capacity) but also have a kaupapa of caring for the environment. The environmental work carried out may be the social enterprise aspect of their work. For example, one iwi organisation²¹ which provides training and employment, community gardening, grows plants, restores gullies, streams and Marae is primarily set up to provide for 'people', and they do this via undertaking environmental work from which they can earn money from selling their service and/or products. In another example an organisation may be set up as an 'environmental' organisation and the work is the type which can 'earn'. For example, a waste management organisation who operate a collection, sorting, recycling enterprise with contracts from Councils and others to undertake the work or an organisation who grows and supplies plants for riparian planting and restoration work.

These examples differ from the organisation in the previous example in that caring for the environment is something that is also an important part of their kaupapa not just because it was the type of work that could be profitable. These organisations may have contracts with Councils, DOC, Health and Education and others

²¹In order to highlight issues that are specific to iwi and to ensure that these do not get lost in the wider discussion within the report, there are times when the terms 'iwi organisations' or 'iwi groups' will be used to identify when the information is from an iwi trust, trust board or other organisation. Also of note is that these blanket terms 'iwi organisations' or 'iwi groups' have been created to protect confidentiality and ensure that the different individuals, trusts, trust boards or iwi and hapū groups that exist in the region and from whom interviewees were sourced, cannot be readily identified in the text. As well, in some cases, some details have been changed in order to protect confidentiality. Approximately 11 interviewees from the research sample were affiliated to an iwi organisation or group.

to undertake riparian planting, to provide plants, collect and sort waste, and/or train and employ people to do the work. However they may also access grants and donations to make up the shortfall, cover administration, developing policies, training, capacity building and other costs that the social enterprise contracts do not. For example:

The large contracts – we provide a product and a service. The funding we seek is to cover the cost of growing p plants (resources) and people (capacity). Community grants for things that aren't covered by the funding of the big projects for example, administration, travel. Trust Waikato for operational costs for example, policies, health and safety. ...

An organisation may be set up primarily to undertake environmental work, with the social enterprise being developed to help fund the primary environmental work which is not in itself 'profit making'. For example, two organisations have a retail outlet, charge an entry fee and provide guided and/or educational tours through their facility with the proceeds of the enterprise going towards funding the environmental work of restoring and protecting natural habitats. Another organisation has a retail outlet and charges for some of their services (for example, rents space, runs workshops) and another sells sustainable products. These are examples of groups whose primary goal is to undertake the environmental work with the social enterprise being developed to provide some of the income to fund it. These groups generally do not generate enough income from the social enterprise to fund all their work and so also rely on other revenue streams such as donations, sponsorship and fundraising activities.

Those that were set up primarily to work on environmental work, with the social enterprise developing as a secondary role, tended to need other funding streams. This is partly because there is a cost to running a social enterprise. For example, guided tours require staffing (for example, administration, trained guides) and resources and advertising in order to run successfully; these are all costs that have to come out of the income from the activity.

A number of organisations did want to expand and grow their social enterprise options to enable them to be less grant-dependent. For example:

Would be great to be able to extend the social enterprise work.

Aspirations? Consolidating our foundation and creating more of a social enterprise. Creating more income streams (avenues within the environment like fencing or pest control etc). Creating more training opportunities

The trouble we faced was that if you raise all your money through grants, you have to restart every year. We are hoping that social enterprise will help alleviate the situation.

The extent to which an organisation can be completely self-sustaining differs across the types of organisations and as well the type of work (i.e. some work has more scope to be 'profitable' than other work). Overall, the findings indicate if the aim is to 'just' provide employment, then the enterprise only has to generate enough to run itself, but if the aim is to make a profit which can be used for other purposes (for example, either environmental outcomes like weed clearing, pest management, sustainability education, fence repairs, bird relocation and/or social outcomes like community development) then the enterprise has to make a greater profit over and above the running costs. As noted by one group which is primarily an environmental enterprise with some current social enterprises and some planned future income streams:

Longer term the trustees may create a business entity, ... Get a commercial board.... and then that business can grow and feed back to the project...but I don't think we'll ever get to where it can be completely self-funding; but hopefully can get to be a sustainable funding model.

And as summed up by another interviewee:

We have to run like a business and fund ourselves but there's nothing to charge for.

3.3 THE HUMAN RESOURCE: PEOPLE

As noted earlier by one interviewee, the second biggest challenge for groups in the sector was 'not burning out' and having 'enough skilled people to share the load' and this was a theme echoed throughout the interviews. The human resource challenges included having enough people, whether they be paid, volunteers or both, and the right mix of skills in order to function effectively, remain solvent and undertake the work. There were issues of availability and skillset, particularly for iwi and in smaller rural communities. These and other themes are presented in the following sections:

3.3.1 VOLUNTEERS

Interviewees working in the sector, were asked to comment about the extent to which their group had paid staff or volunteers. Responses ranged from 'all paid staff' for a small minority to a mix of 'paid staff and volunteers' to 'all volunteers'. There was no 'typical' set up for groups. Most organisations in the sector had some form of 'governance' (i.e. a trust or committee structure) and those in governance roles were usually volunteers, with many also being the 'workers'. Where there were paid staff, this might be a co-ordinator role, responsible for a lot of the planning and running of the group, with 'on the ground' work being carried out by volunteers or by contrast, the paid staff might be the contractors or 'on the ground' staff with specific skills (for example, pest management contractors, education facilitation) and the administrative, operations and/or governance were the unpaid volunteers.

Overall results indicate that the community-based environmental sector is one which primarily relies on a significant number of volunteers to undertake the work. As well some of the work that goes on would not happen without these volunteer groups as the work is beyond the capacity of the government agencies to achieve on their own.

3.3.2 RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF VOLUNTEERS

Recruiting and retaining volunteers were common themes. There were number of challenges related to recruitment and retention such as having a large enough population base to generate enough volunteers, having capacity to manage and co-ordinate, attracting younger volunteers, reducing the potential for burnout and having access to the right skillset for specific tasks. These issues are discussed below.

3.3.2.1 AVAILABILITY

Availability was an issue for some areas, with smaller populations where the groups may have all the able and willing people who live in that area already volunteering, both for their group but also others and as such there may be a limit to their availability. i.e.:

Some of these groups are in the community of a few 100 people and those people are also on the Surf Life Saving Association and the PTA. In rural and semi rural communities [getting enough people] is a significant challenge as well.

A lack of available people was a particular issue for iwi, and more so for those based in rural environments and/or areas where there was a lack of employment opportunities for younger people and families. For example, as this interviewee explained:

Most of our people live outside of our own district. We have less than 100 living in the rohe. A very small pool of expertise, labour, volunteers to draw from. Even maintaining the marae is becoming more difficult due to the low numbers. It is left to our kaumatua who are aging and getting tired.

Being in more than one group was not limited to rural areas but was often a characteristic of the sector. It was not uncommon as part of the research to talk to an interviewee who was a part of more than one group

and/or wore more than one 'hat'. For example, someone might be part of an advisory group for local government, on the trust for an environment group and be involved with a local beachcare group, and as noted by one interviewee, those who are 'active' are usually working in more than one arena:

People in the groups do overlap - active people are overlapping.

Interviewees from iwi groups also reported on the challenges of being stretched 'thinly particularly, but not limited to, consultation and other requirements that were expected and asked of them in their roles as mana whenua and/or kaitiaki for example.

We constantly have people asking to consult with us to tick their box, but we don't have the resource to respond to this and we are not resourced for this.

Groups managed the challenge of getting 'enough' volunteers in different ways with some accessing international volunteers such as WWOOFers (willing workers on organic farms) or partnering with schools or businesses for 'working bees' as two examples. However it was often still a challenge to have 'enough' and at times the work just did not happen. As the following quotes illustrate, a group even those in or close to urban centres as these two are, may have a large number of volunteers on their 'database' but they were not all 'active'.

Our volunteer base. We have 450 volunteers on the register but active ones? About a hundred.

Volunteers? We have a membership of 100, but active, we might have 20.

3.3.2.2 VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

Managing volunteers was another challenge, particularly for larger groups who either have, or need, a large 'casual' volunteer workforce (for example, for working bees or events). Recruiting and then co-ordinating volunteers, keeping them informed and interested, training them, bringing on the new ones are all tasks and as one interviewee noted, finding the time to do these can be a challenge:

We have a capacity issue with finding time to find volunteers and then you have to train them and support them and keep them motivated - struggling with feeding back to them - people can drop away and I don't even know it.

Resourcing groups to co-ordinate and manage volunteers (for example, paid co-ordinator or access to someone with the expertise), and/or providing support (resource for expenses, time) to access training in volunteer management such as that provided by Volunteering Waikato, for example, were some of the possible ways that groups could be supported to address these issues.

3.3.2.3 ATTRACTING YOUNGER VOLUNTEERS

Attracting and retaining younger volunteers was raised by interviewees. Whilst the work of the older volunteers was valued (i.e. "we have dedicated retired men who weed, and are self-supervised and organised"), there was an expressed 'need' for younger volunteers. This was related to (i) needing 'younger' people for some of the physical work and (ii) needing some succession planning in place so wanting to encourage younger people to be involved and ideally 'stay' longer term.

We often rely on retired and semi-retired people, but those with the 'robust' skills needed are often working and don't have time.

The other problem is ageing volunteers. We need to keep recruiting so they can keep tackling the tasks you set them. We are reviewing our volunteer policy because we need to address that - how to provide ongoing challenges and also recruit new ones. And we should be doing more with our education programme to facilitate that - a youth brigade or contingent - get them involved with species and pest control - in the interim - but might give them a taste for it, so maybe longer term -to keep that connection up.

Succession – it’s hard to get new people involved. The age of our committee is pensioner age group - 70 to 75 years. With regards to succession - I have a daughter ... and I have hopes that she’ll pick up the role. We have some young volunteers – it’s hard to get them on a consistent basis because they have to earn a living as well. Hopefully our children will pick it up.

Whilst there are people who are active in more than one group, there was also the theme of the changing ‘nature’ of the volunteer workforce. There was a view that people had less time to put into volunteering due to work and other commitments.

It’s harder to find time to volunteer if you are a working person.

In addition, key informants in the volunteer sector noted that there has been a change in the volunteer workforce. People are wanting to “volunteer for shorter periods of time”. People may volunteer to get ‘work experience’ for example, but would not be looking at it as a long term commitment.

Interviewees from youth focused or youth run organisations were asked about how best to engage and ‘attract’ young people to environmental work. As the following quote explains, ‘it’s about showing them how it affects them’, ‘bringing [the issues] down to a local level’ and using social media and other forums to be more accessible.

People who are older have more time. 25-50 year olds don’t have time. Engaging young people - university/high school - it’s about showing them how it affects them. We have an issue of disengaging with politics because our young people don’t know how it affects them. Rather than listening and understanding about the pertinent issues that people care about. It’s local stuff - whether they can bike safely or whether their local park has bird life - bring it down to a local level. Being more accessible. Start engaging on social media - have a web presence and work together.

An urban-based iwi organisation noted that that they specifically accessed ‘working bee’ volunteers from kura and within their rangatahi to assist with succession planning; that is building skills and values of caring for the environment within the younger community. Working with schools was also something undertaken by a number of other groups (for example, beachcare, harbourcare, stream care groups).

Volunteer base is for community planting days – rangatahi, kura. We include schools as much as possible to help us with succession.

3.3.2.4 FATIGUE AND BURNOUT

Fatigue and burnout can be an issue. Volunteers can get tired, exhausted by the workload, and typically, as the numbers quoted earlier of having 100 on the database but a core group of 20 for example, there is a lot of work done by a core few. Solutions would differ depending on the needs, and may be, for example, to have some paid roles or equally, to have a paid ‘volunteer co-ordinator’ within an organisation who can recruit, train, and sustain a volunteer workforce. i.e.:

We are a bit worried that our planting person will burn out - we think he needs to be paid. Maybe the funders could supply money that would support someone to do that work.

I see volunteer-fatigue in this town – everyone is over committed.

And as noted by one iwi organisation interviewee:

Mobilizing whānau is a need. We will exhaust our resources with volunteer labour. We will require paid people – need an incentive to continue motivating our key support people.

3.3.2.5 VOLUNTEER SKILLBASE

Sometimes volunteers do not have the requisite skills and, as one interviewee noted, with volunteers you have to “work with what they are willing to do”. This is even more of an issue iwi and for smaller and/or rural communities with smaller populations as with larger communities “the more people there are in a community the higher the chance of having the skill set you need.” However, even in larger areas, finding volunteers with the ‘skills’ needed can still be a challenge.

Finding volunteers who are happy to be leaders is a challenge – they are happy to volunteer casually but don’t want to be leaders.

Volunteers want to do the ‘fun stuff’ For example, they don’t want to do the funding applications etc

Another need- it would be good to get more community members involved. Most are very reliable, but numbers fluctuate. With volunteers, it’s hard to get skilled, reliable volunteers. We are always in a bit of a hole - either volunteers are not skilled or that they come and go. Hard with a small organisation like ours.

Whānau need up-skilling so that they can engage and be involved. While the Board can be doing our well, grass roots whānau can still be struggling.

3.3.3 SKILLS

As discussed in the previous section, the skill set of volunteers was often one of the challenges for groups, but this was also relevant for all those involved in the work, both paid and unpaid. As has already been discussed the various groups in the sector operate differently. Oftentimes this was dependent or had developed based on the mix of skills within a group. The extent to which a group was able to successfully undertake their work and/or be sustainable was often related to the skill base they had. One environmental restoration group which is made up entirely of volunteers, for example, noted that they had a very low funding need, primarily due to the make-up of their group i.e. people who were mainly retired and therefore had the time to do the work, and who had a range of skills to undertake the tasks needed. This group also noted that:

Our cost base is very low and productivity is very high. We have never paid for time. Only ever got funding for materials and even a lot of those we scrounge. We got funding for boardwalk materials and built those ourselves. ... We have a range of skill base within the group - have a very low funding requirement Have engineers who make all the bait stations... when you work with volunteers it depends on what your resource is - all ours are retired.

The need for up-skilling and/or access to ‘expertise’ was a key theme that emerged from interviews with iwi groups and organisations. These skills included:

- **Operations** :- For example, project management, setup, policy development.

Project planning is complex and difficult for community groups. Whānau need upskilling so that they can engage and be involved. While the Board can be doing our well, grass roots whānau can still be struggling.

Whānau are keen to support environmental activities but lose heart very quickly with all the hoops to jump through. For example, funding applications, health and safety requirements. There are not enough funds available to mobilize people and get work done.

- **Knowledge or ‘specialist’ skills** across a range of kaupapa. For example, environmental management, tikanga, biodiversity, RMA.

Understanding our environment. How to restore the environment in a way that makes sense – practical – hearts and minds. Our community can get lost in seeing it as too big for them to make an impact, or that it’s too specialized and they don’t have the skill to engage.

Having the right skill sets within our people to achieve desired outcomes. For example, we have to consult on a dolphin project but we have no marine biologist or ecologist. We don't always know what questions to ask.

Access to tikanga experts and local knowledge regarding sustainability and protection.

Locals do not understand why they hold all this land, but do not have control over their lands... there is a lack of understanding in regards to RMA.

Succession planning – recruiting future kaitiaki in the environment spaces. Need putea to support them along the way while they are getting upskilled. ... We are not groomed for environmental roles... For example, [one person] has a former job [in an unrelated field], now manages the environmental arm for an iwi. We learn as we go... what carries us through is our love for our people, and our connection to our whenua, and our atua, and our whakapapa. We need to start grooming the next generation.

To be able to tap into expert advice when we need it across a range of kaupapa.

➤ Professional skills. For example, lawyers, accountants, policy analysts.

Paying legal fees – scratching to pay. We always have to ask – can we afford him? Can we afford to act?

Our level of expertise doesn't stretch to all the areas... we often get a consultant in to help us but this depends on if we have enough funds to pay for them. Otherwise we rely on good faith and volunteers.

Other mainstream community groups also highlighted needing to access to professional help either via funding to “pay the accountant” for example, which they had to do unless they had a “friendly accountant in the project.”

For example, getting money to pay the accountant, to pay the bills. Unless you have a friendly accountant in the project.

Having the skills within the group is the only way some groups are able to meet their needs. For example, one interviewee from a group that is focused on education and conservation work explained how they had a committed group of volunteers in their ‘committee’ who ran their project, however they also had within their group, a range of much needed professional skills. i.e.:

We have such committed group of people - that straddle the disciplines we need - . For example, negotiating with the Ministry - the lawyer [in our group] is doing the work pro bono. We have ... a design person [doing designs for our marketing] pro bono ... have the skillset amongst the group. The work gets shared around. Without that group, it wouldn't happen. Having access to pro bono professional skills is important.

The interviewee above went on to explain how, for example, when the group was required to prepare a legal response to a Ministry that they were working with, the lawyer in their group offered to do the work ‘pro bono’. Without that professional skillset they would have been hard pressed to pay lawyers’ fees²². Other interviewees gave examples of being required to prepare documents or responses and needing to find funds to pay for that, and in one case requesting that the organisation requiring the plan, fund them to produce it.

[The Council] wants a management plan – so we have asked for funding from them for that. If you want that then you pay for it.

If a group does not have the skillset within their own networks and cannot afford to pay for outside expert help, then they may not get the task completed.

²² As was detailed in the funding section of this report there is a MFE Environmental Legal Assistance Fund for NGOs to apply to assist with legal fees, however this has specific criteria that would not necessarily fit for all needs and as well, there are timing issues (applications take time and legal responses often have time limits).

3.3.4 SUCCESSION

Succession planning was a challenge for many groups. For one conservation group, having enough people with a mix of needed skills, who were committed to the project and felt valued, no one 'dominant' person and good communication were reasons why their group was sustainable and likely to continue, post the current members. i.e.:

If I got hit by a bus then our Trust would continue. We have a number of people. The project we do is so important - to be successful it has to have that. We have someone who is brilliant with plants - the longer it's going the wider that is getting. We don't seem to have a dominant person - sometimes you can get a dominant person who can be a pain in the arse. Communication is a key to success - open - everyone feels as though they are involved. ... The fact is that we started with four volunteers and it has just grown organically - we don't want any more at the moment. We have a ring around the night before about the working bee - don't need more. Not one volunteer who has joined the group has left. It is not a problem that we see in the near future because everyone gets on so well together. It's easy.

The above quote illustrates some key factors that are important for sustainability of a group such as valuing the volunteers, good communication, having the 'right mix of skills, no one dominant person and the time to do the work. To some extent this may depend on the makeup of the people who happened to get involved rather than something that was 'planned'. The above interviewee also commented on the make-up of other groups that they knew of in the region who were doing the same kind of conservation work and as they explained "all the groups work differently" and:

When you work with volunteers it depends on what your resource is - all ours are retired. Whereas [for X Group] - they are all working people - so they have employed someone [to do the work]. [Another area] is under control of [their local Council] so they have working bees there. [Another one] is mainly academics - focused on water - that's their interest. [Another one] - is a 'one person' - she does a great job - but if she got hit by a bus it would struggle to survive.

In another example, an interviewee commented on how it was common for a group to be started by someone with a passion for the work who was skilled at 'starting' the project but not necessarily at sustaining it (i.e. 'founder's syndrome'²³):

A lot of the groups are started by people with a passion who have the passion to get it going, but are not good at maintaining. There are people who are masters at keeping things going. The more people you have then you have more spectrum of skills so you can have a sustainable project.

The extent to which projects and organisations were reliant on key people was also raised. In one example a pest control group had lapsed as it was really just 'one person' who had done the work out of personal interest, and when he left, the work was not carried on with. The pests returned and the catching of one, rejuvenated the community, who then re-initiated the project. i.e.:

A number of years ago a retired local man wanted to improve the bird life here and he started putting bait out for rats and possums and he continued for [years]. Then he retired into the nursing home ... and it was handed on to someone else who didn't follow through so for about 3 years, only 2 bait stations were being refilled, then last year someone said 'we had caught a possum' and we thought 'we'd better do something about it'.

The above example illustrates what one interviewee stated, quite succinctly, in regards to a risk for many of the groups:

²³ Founder's syndrome is a popular term for a difficulty faced by organisations in both the profit and not for profit sector, where one or more founders maintain disproportionate power and influence following the effective initial establishment of the project, leading to a wide range of problems for both the organisation and those involved in it. The 'passion' of the founder or founders, which was such an important reason for the successful establishment of the organisation, becomes a limiting and destructive force, rather than the creative and productive one it was in the early stages. http://www.help4nonprofits.com/NP_Bd_FoundersSyndrome_Art.htm

Most projects rely on handful of dedicated people and larger number of 'less involved' and if one or two key core people get hit by a bus then it's a bit stuffed.

One interviewee stated that they would like specific assistance with succession planning. As the quote illustrates some of the challenges such as wanting someone internal to take over the running of the group but those currently involved do not have the inclination for the 'admin' role and/or having some people who could be potential successors only to have them move on.

I'd like to carry on but the time will come when I can't and then what? I have tried to plan for that. I would be interested in help with - the future plan. We rely on volunteers to join our committee - I would expect my successor to come from our committee -not someone from outside. So, you look at people on the committee - who would be likely person to take over? Get that person more involved - have an understudy and become familiar with the systems. But the committee members I have, really like their own area. For example one guy likes the pest control work – he's not interested in the admin or writing strategy. ... I have had some people who would be good but they have left (moved away). We lose people that might grow into the role. There's not a lot you can do about that. Others are telling me 'you have to delegate more' and I am trying to do that.

Providing support for a group like the one in the above example, to put some strategies in place is an area of work that could be provided by an umbrella or support group, and this is discussed in more detail in section 4.3 Capacity Building (page 44).

3.4 SUMMARY: NEEDS OF THE SECTOR

When asked about key needs or challenges for organisations undertaking community-based environmental work, there were two main themes; financial security and human resources.

In regards to financial security, the following were the main points that were identified from the interviews:

- **Relationships with funders and sponsors.** Having local funders who were committed to the region, had staff who understood the sector, and had initiated a range of different options such as, multi-year funding, multi-rounds in a year and easy- to-complete applications were valued. Both Trust Waikato and WRC were highlighted as funders who had these attributes.
- **Financial stability.** Having some level of 'stable' funding enabled groups to plan ahead, to be more efficient and/or to provide a level of certainty for staff. This stability was attained via 'multi-year' funding, donation or sponsorship, having a key funder or sponsor, and/or having efficient, easy to complete processes for contestable funds which enabled groups to access funds quickly, and have time to locate all funds, particularly in a 'part-funding' situation.
- **Meeting funding criteria.** Overall, interviewees reported that 'operations and administration' funding was often more difficult to source than funding for 'projects' and that getting funding for something 'new' was easier than getting funding for ongoing or monitoring work.
- **Sustainability.** Being financially sustainable in order to continue the work was a challenge for many groups. The extent to which a group could be sustainable depended on a number of factors, such as the type of work they were doing, that is for some groups the 'work' could attract contracts, fees for work and/or social enterprise options while for other groups this was less of an option.
- **Social enterprise.** Expanding and developing social enterprise options was of interest to many groups to enable them to be less grant-dependent, however the extent to which an organisation could be achieve this differed across the types of organisations and the type of work. In general, the findings indicated that the groups which were set up primarily to work on environmental work, with the social enterprise developing as a secondary role, tended to need other funding streams as the social enterprise itself has costs and as such had to make a greater profit over and above the running costs to fund the other work.

In regards to 'human resources', the following were the main points that were identified from the interviews:

- **Volunteers.** The sector is reliant on volunteers and for many groups, both iwi and mainstream, there are challenges related to volunteers that are also areas of opportunity for providing support. Key challenges were related to recruiting and retaining volunteers, specifically: availability of volunteers particularly for rural areas; managing volunteers in order to support and retain them; attracting and retaining younger volunteers; preventing fatigue and burnout; and having volunteers with the needed skillsets.
- **Skills.** A number of iwi groups²⁴ identified needing access to up-skilling or expertise in operations activities, specialist skills and professional skills. Mainstream groups also identified access to professional skills as being needed and whilst some had access to these skillsets within their groups, others did not. Overall findings showed that the extent to which a group was able to successfully undertake their work and/or be sustainable was often related to the skill base they had within their group.
- **Succession planning.** Planning for the future was an area of need and a challenge for many groups. There were examples given of 'founder's syndrome', the reliance on one or two key people in a group, and a need for assistance with succession planning.

Overall, in terms of needs of the sector, the following quote sums up the main themes that were identified:

Staying solvent and not burning out. Everything else is secondary to that. If they can have enough funding to keep the wheels turning and enough skilled people to share the load, then they can succeed.

²⁴ In order to highlight issues that are specific to iwi and to ensure that these do not get lost in the wider discussion within the report, there are times when the terms 'iwi organisations' or 'iwi groups' is used to identify when the information is from an iwi trust, trust board or other organisation. The terms were created to protect confidentiality and ensure that the different individuals, trusts, trust boards or iwi and hapū groups that exist in the region and from whom interviewees were sourced, cannot be readily identified in the text. Approximately 11 interviewees from the research sample were affiliated to an iwi organisation or group.

4.0 COLLABORATION AND CO-ORDINATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The research aimed to collate information on “perceptions of environmental community sector groups in the region regarding their needs and opportunities for collaboration, coordination, and capacity.” This section presents the research findings in relation to ‘collaboration and coordination’. Information for this section was sourced from the key informant interviewees and desktop review, from which data was collated and key themes identified. The following sections provide detail on each of the key themes. Quotes from interviews, presented in italics or quote marks, have been used to illustrate key points. A summary of the key findings completes the chapter.

4.2 COLLABORATION, CO-ORDINATION AND NETWORKING

The extent to which groups are collaborating, co-ordinating or networking ranged and there were a range of different ways that these activities occurred. These were divided into the following categories, with the understanding that there is some overlap:

- Regional networking, ‘umbrella’ co-ordination or support organisations - set up to support and assist community groups to co-ordinate and /or network and which may be specifically environment focused or be wider ‘community’ focused (for example, Waikato Biodiversity Forum, Waikato Environment Centre, Community Waikato and Volunteering Waikato);
- Local collaborative groups or organisations- formed by groups within a specific community, to network and work together in a variety of ways as needed, from joint activities and events to sharing resources, putting in joint funding bids, having a website. It may have a physical ‘centre’ (for example, Whaingaroa Environment Centre) or be a network who may meet regularly (for example, T3 Transition Town Thames) or be an entity for groups to apply for funding (for example, Eco Trust 2000) and/or may be a funded co-ordination role to develop and encourage collaboration amongst groups with a similar goal (for example, Kiwis for Kiwi (Coromandel).
- NGO and Government relationships – ways that the government (local, regional and central) works with the community-based environment sector;
- Local level collaborations – typically project-based and formed (both formally and informally) across agencies or organisations and which may include: cross-sector collaboration (for example, Kapai Kai); or professional and not for profit (NFP) (for example, Evolocity); collaboration with iwi (for example, iwi or hapū working together with each other and other groups in a range of ways); and general networking (for example, annual forums, community network meetings).

With all of the above there were examples of relationships and activities that worked well and in some cases there were also some initiatives or activities in which there were areas for improvement or where collaboration did not occur. The following provides more detail on the findings from the interviews and desktop review in regards to the above.

4.2.1 REGIONAL NETWORKING, CO-ORDINATION OR SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS

The region has a number of organisations who have a funded role to support and enable co-ordination and networking across the region. These include the Waikato Biodiversity Forum and the Waikato Environment Centre for whom the ‘environment’ is their main mandate. The different organisations have slightly different foci to each other.

The Waikato Biodiversity Forum is primarily ‘conservation’ focused. Its vision is “Waikato -a place for our living taonga-where the community values and works collaboratively to protect, enhance and restore

indigenous biodiversity”²⁵. The Forum is supported jointly by WRC and DOC and aims to support and enhance networks, facilitate co-operation, and provide advice, referrals and information, and achieves this via regular newsletters, maintaining a database of members, providing training, workshops, annual events and meetings and a website with useful links and information²⁶.

The Waikato Environment Centre has a wider mandate focusing on both ‘conservation’ and ‘prevention’ activities across the region and is funded by a mix of grants (both local, regional and some national) and social enterprise activities. The Waikato Environment Centre:

... provides community education, collaborates with and supports environmental groups and projects, provides inspiration for living lighter, advocates on behalf of the environment, provides a depot for recycling electronic devices, batteries, light bulbs, toner cartridges, and runs Kaivolution Food Rescue²⁷.

For the Waikato Environment Centre, meeting the above involves working on projects, having some funding capacity to liaise, network and support, running some initiatives (such as Kaivolution) and hosting others (for example, Timebank), operating a shop, and is supported by a range of funding, sponsorship and social enterprise activities and a mix of volunteers and paid staff.

Other groups such as Community Waikato and Volunteering Waikato also support environmental community groups although their mandate is not primarily the environment but rather ‘community’ or ‘volunteers’.

In regards to Community Waikato, interview and online desktop review indicates that there is some clarity needed in regards to the role of Community Waikato in relation to their input into the environment sector. Community Waikato’s role is to “build the strength of the community sector in the Waikato by supporting and informing social service organisations” however it is unclear as to whether ‘environmental community groups’ fit under this definition (i.e. as a ‘social service organisation’)²⁸. This was also raised by interviewees, for example:

Community Waikato does some of this work [supporting community groups] but it is more socially oriented. But this area [the environment sector] is not resourced.

Community Waikato does work with some community groups who do environmental work, helping them (on request as they “operate by invitation”) for example with strategic planning and setting up. In addition they provide training which groups can attend, and are Fund Managers for Trusts (Tindall and Len Reynolds) both of which fund environmental sector work.

Volunteering Waikato “has two main objectives - to ensure community groups get the volunteers they need, and to ensure that volunteers get the most out of their decision to give their time, energy and passion.”²⁹ They provide services to link volunteers with organisations and as well provide training workshops, resources and support to help community organisations with volunteer management.

Interviewees from the sector, commented on their engagement with the above organisations and it was clear that those who had been in contact and utilised the various organisations, did so in different ways and were positive about the relationship. Notes that the following are quotes from interviewees of community groups and organisations and not from the umbrella groups themselves or other interviewees such as funders, for example.

²⁵ Source: http://www.waikatobiodiversity.org.nz/about_us/what_is_the_waikato_biodiversity/

²⁶ Sources: http://www.waikatobiodiversity.org.nz/about_us/forum_events/; interviews.

²⁷ Source: <http://www.envirocentre.org.nz/>

²⁸ Sources: <http://www.communitywaikato.org.nz/>; interviews; . Community Waikato specifically does not work with sports groups or arts groups as these are the domain of Sport Waikato and Creative Waikato respectively.

²⁹ Source: <http://www.volunteeringwaikato.org.nz/about>

We've connections with Waikato Environment Centre. We don't do a lot with them on a day to day basis. Have participated in their EnviroExpo. Waikato Environment Centre are also a good networking tool - very valuable - a lot of campaigns and networks, we have got through them.

Waikato Environment Centre . We have a co-existence and knowing that each other exists. ... They let us know about any courses and promote all the things that we are doing. They don't promote the field trips (because that's for the membership). They offered us [some materials] - because they had a contact .. There is a role for the Waikato Environment Centre - to promote, support, put groups in contact with each other - to get all that under one umbrella.

We don't work very closely with any particular conservation group but we know them quite well because we go to Biodiversity Forums and see them there. In the early days we were encouraged to get in touch with other groups who were going to the Forum - that was very useful at the beginning - we could avoid some of the mistakes.

I go to courses at Community Waikato. I like how they exist and they are there and can help you. I've been to the branding one, the budgeting one. It's valuable getting together with other organisations – we are all in the same boat. Can't believe what some people are doing – might be doing sports or working with disadvantaged families – all good work – all out there looking for money to do their work. So many social issues, poverty and housing issues. I like it when there is a push to step up – I think it's important that as a sector that the not for profit sector pushes to smarten up – that is what Community Waikato does. It helps people to get the skills.

As the above quotes indicate one of the roles the umbrella groups is to provide 'networking' opportunities, and this is appreciated by those who have taken up the opportunity, with interviewees viewing this an important role. For example, the Waikato Environment Centre has undertaken to provide some opportunities for groups to 'cross-pollinate', arranging different forums. The Biodiversity Forum holds regular forums and encourages groups to link with each other, and whilst this is primarily 'like' groups (i.e. conservation) they may be working in different areas of conservation. Community Waikato has workshops and conferences which bring together lots of different groups and expertise, and advisors who can and do work directly with groups and at times, help build networks for them with other groups. Volunteering Waikato holds volunteering training and workshops throughout the region which provides opportunities to meet other groups.

As well, as the following quote indicates, 'support' can also go both ways. Essentially a group from outside Hamilton had developed a project-based collaboration with the Waikato Environment Centre related to recycling. This involved the Waikato Environment Centre being a collection point for the group who make regular trips to Hamilton to collect the recyclable goods. This has expanded to the group also collecting and distributing excess food from Kaivolution as available, and where they can fit it in, back to their own area. Without this group providing the transport it is unlikely that the community (outside of Hamilton) would have access to the food.

With the Waikato Environment Centre and [Group A], the relationship is working well. It has extended as well - with Kaivolution - if there is surplus food then [Group A] trucks that through to their area to the needy.

In terms of capacity to meet the needs, interviewees from the various 'umbrella' groups reported that they would often get requests for assistance. For example:

People will come in with ideas and projects and will need supporting in various ways.

However, the extent to which the organisations themselves could support groups was often limited by resourcing. Some had 'advisors' who could travel to visit and work directly with groups, although there was a limit to how much they could take on. Others were limited by whether or not they had specific project

funding to network or liaise with a group or if they did have some 'liaising' funding it was not sufficient to meet the need. For example:

... we have funding for projects but actually a lot of our idea come from interactions. ... For example, [in one community], we had a project there but it lead to other things. We would like to have more capacity to follow up on some of the things. There's no lack of projects – just no time and resources.

Part of [staff A's] role is to do 'capacity' but we also have to have people on the ground here ... so we are torn between being [here] and doing on the ground work [elsewhere]. [Another staff member] has a certain number of hours for projects and it leaves little time to do anything beyond that project. Like doing talks - there's often people asking us to talk at schools and workshops and there isn't any capacity to do that – but those things lead to more relationships and actions.

In some situations interviewees reported that staff might provide support on a voluntary basis to a community group, which was not ideal as this can lead to burnout and fatigue for staff.

One project – someone got funding to do a project but had no experience in that kind of project. So a staff member was helping but it was on a voluntary basis .. there is a need for [the umbrella] organisation to have more capacity to help.

Not having capacity can also at times be detrimental to the organisation itself, as this quote highlights:

When we do help groups and support them, and other groups hear... and then they come in, and there is tension when you cannot help them - "you helped them and not us."

Although some of the organisations mentioned typically had a 'regional' mandate they were located in Hamilton, and did not always have the monetary or human resource to travel across the region, and there was concern that smaller areas missed out.

Lots of stuff that is being organised is being organised in Hamilton but we just don't have the capacity to go out to smaller centres. There are relationships, partnerships that are ready to be built [in other areas] but we need time to go and do it.

In one area, a group there, they are passionate and have lots of skills and are wanting their own environment centre. They want to know how to do it and support in the setting up. [Another group] would like to set up a Kaivololution.

All the groups had websites, and used conduits such as social media, newsletters, blogs, mailing lists and regular radio spots to communicate with their communities. Some also suggested that they could develop educational resources or guides to alleviate some of the pressure, however they would need the resource to develop 'the guides'.

Even if we had the resources to document what we've learnt. Preparing educational resources to follow.

A number of interviewees commented that a facilitator or mentor type role, specifically for environmental initiatives, would be beneficial, to provide networking and other opportunities and to assist groups to realise their goals:

There is a need for a navigator role. They don't want us to do it for them – but need help, to support, to help people to set it up. We need the time and resource to be a reliable contact. To facilitate cross –pollination and being that connector between groups. As individuals it's hard to stay motivated and not get disheartened.

It would be useful to have help from the Waikato Environment Centre to help enable [us to set up an environment centre].

Overall, findings indicate that the various umbrella groups are beneficial and providing for some of the needs of the sector, however there is evidence that there is more that they could do but they are limited by funding structures (for example, project based funding) and capacity (for example, staff numbers and hours) and resources (for example, expenses and operational funding). The extent to which more capacity could be funded is an area for the funders to consider, and it may be most beneficial to focus on enabling support for some 'key' initiatives which are likely to gain traction faster (for example, some that have already been identified) and which may have the potential for a wider impact (for example, to support local initiatives that can impact and enable the wider community and have multiple outcomes).

4.2.2 LOCAL COLLABORATIVE GROUPS

In addition to the organisations mentioned in the previous sections, there are local networks or forums of environmental groups in their local communities. These groups are typically 'alike' in that they have similar or common goals (for example, the environment) rather than for example being cross-sector and they aim to provide a 'network' as opposed to, for example, just being connected by working together on a project. That is not to say they do not work on joint projects, only that their connection or purpose has a wider scope.

These groups include for example, the Whaingaroa Environment Centre, T3 Transition Town Thames, EcoTrust 2000³⁰.

- The Whaingaroa Environment Centre is a Raglan-based environment centre started in 1997, with the vision "that Whaingaroa is a healthy, resilient and environmentally sustainable community" and mission "to be an information, resource and action hub, supporting environmental education and sustainability."³¹ The centre works on projects, has a physical 'centre' in Raglan and is a network hub for a range of groups and initiatives.
- T3 Transition Town Thames is a network of different organisations with common interests in the environment who meet regularly, have a website and host joint activities and events.
- EcoTrust 2000 is a trust set up to enable local community environment groups to have an 'entity' under which to apply for funding.

The difference between these groups and the ones mentioned in the previous section are that they are local not regional and have usually been formed by local groups in response to an identified need in their own community, rather than being funded and/or set up as an 'umbrella' group.

There are also examples of 'funded' collaborative models, one of which is the Kiwis for Kiwi (Coromandel) which was an initiative, based on a successful Northland approach, designed to encourage greater collaboration between kiwi conservation groups on the Coromandel. The aim was to:

... establish a kiwi collective and employ a person to co-ordinate the collective. The aims were to get more collaboration happening and stop them just being little individual groups and get better cross group discussion going and get them interacting better with each other and the agencies.

Assessing the extent to which the groups or networks were effective and/or functioning well was beyond the scope of this research. However there was some evidence to indicate that the 'local' groups have more chance to be successful than for example, an 'imposed' model, primarily because they originated as local responses to local need. A local response is more likely to succeed as it typically has, by definition, more buy-in from the community.

³⁰ This list is not exhaustive. It is just three examples of different types of models.

³¹ Source: <http://whaingaroa.org.nz/about/>

Interviewees were of the view that the Kiwis for Kiwi (Coromandel) project was not able to achieve as much “traction” as had been hoped despite, as one interviewee reported, the coordinator doing “a good job in a challenging environment.” There were a number of reasons suggested for this including, imposing a model from another area, underestimating the differences between the groups and a perception that the co-ordination funding had been ‘taken’ from the local groups. All these factors combined to make the job ‘challenging’ i.e.:

Here they tried to impose the model from Northland but it didn't work. It was assumed that everywhere was much the same and it is not. ... they underestimated the challenge of the Coromandel.

Kiwis for Kiwi coming in and 'imposing' on the groups already there. They resented it, that 'one approach fits all'.

Kiwis for Kiwi applied to the Biodiversity Fund - three applications put in for co-ordination to that fund. And Kiwis for Kiwi were granted theirs and [another group] got some and [one group] got none and that group probably saw it as directly taking funding from them.

Despite the challenges there were some positive outcomes achieved by the Kiwis for Kiwi (Coromandel) project, including more collaboration between the groups, which indicates that the ‘imposed’ model may have ‘sparked’ a more locally-driven (and therefore potentially sustainable approach) to co-operation. For example:

Best outcome? The groups are talking about making collaborative funding bids to DOC and WRC; the four main groups are starting to help the smaller groups putting bids together -- at least in the kiwi project funding world.

4.2.3 NGO AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONSHIPS

4.2.3.2 TYPES OF RELATIONSHIPS

A number of groups had working relationships with their local Councils and/or regional Councils and/or with central government agencies (for example, DOC). The strength and types of relationships ranged from informal arrangements, MOUs, Council providing resources and equipment through to having contracts to provide certain services, working in partnership in an area. For example:

Council fund a lot of the work we do, like maintenance of the lake. We have an MOU with them. Funding is currently supplied by Council. Without that we wouldn't have anything. Council bought shovels and gloves etc. Without it we wouldn't be able to do the work.

As well, an important feature of the environmental sector in the Waikato Region is the Crown-Iwi co-management of the Waikato River catchment. There are a number of facets to this including the Waikato River Authority (WRA), an independent Crown-Iwi organisation charged with administering more than \$250million, over 25 years, to help achieve a healthier Waikato River³². This came out of various settlement negotiations and legislation³³ with Waikato-Tainui and the government of New Zealand between 2008 and 2010 resulting in a new era of Crown-Iwi co-management of the Waikato River catchment³⁴.

32 Source: www.waikatoriver.org.nz.

33 There are three key pieces of legislation relevant to the co-management of the Waikato River Catchment: (i) Waikato-Tainui Raupatu Claims (Waikato River) Settlement Act 2010 which covers Waikato-Tainui and its involvement in co-managing the Waikato River from the Karāpiro Dam to Te Puaha o Waikato (Port Waikato); (ii) Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Raukawa, and Te Arawa River Iwi Waikato River Act 2010, covering Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Raukawa and Te Arawa river iwi (specifically the hapū Ngāti Tahu - Ngāti Whaoa, Ngāti Kearoa - Ngāti Tuarā and Tuhourangi - Ngāti Wahiao), which covers the Waikato River from Te Toka a Tia near Taupō through to Karāpiro; (iii) Ngā Wai o Maniapoto (Waipa River) Act 2012, covering Ngāti Maniapoto and enabling them to enter into co-management arrangements with local government authorities for the Waipa River. Sources: www.waikatoregion.govt.nz; www.waikatoriver.org.nz; www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz; www.waikatotainui.com

34 Sources: www.waikatoregion.govt.nz; www.waikatoriver.org.nz; www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz; www.waikatotainui.com.

Co-management provides iwi with mechanisms to manage the river in partnership with central and local government³⁵. The co-management arrangements include joint management agreements between iwi and the WRC, and iwi and District Councils, about the way they will work together to improve water quality in the catchment. For example, Waikato-Tainui and Waikato District Council signed a JMP in 2010. As well iwi may have Iwi Environmental Management Plans (IEMP). An IEMP is a document developed and approved by iwi to address matters of resource management activity of significance within their respective rohe. There are specific legislative requirements which place a duty on WRC staff to take these plans into account³⁶.

The following sections provide more detail and feedback from interviews, on how collaboration is occurring between the government and 'community' environmental sector. This has been divided into territorial authorities, regional and central government as, whilst there can be overlaps, there are often different issues related to the different 'authorities'.

4.2.3.2 TERRITORIAL AUTHORITIES

In regards to local councils, support and relationships ranged from very supportive to needing some improvement. Some local Councils were less supportive than others and in fact could put barriers in place for groups to undertake the work. For example, one interviewee cited an example of being required to produce a pest management plan in order to be able to carry out work in an area that was Council-owned (for example, a wetland) and for which the Council was responsible but did not themselves undertake significant work in (due to being under resourced for the work). The voluntary groups in this situation noted that they did not have the money or skillbase within their group to complete the plan; the view of the groups was that, to some extent they were doing Council's work for them (i.e. restoring and maintaining a natural heritage area) and that Council could assist by either providing in-kind support (for example, having their staff complete a plan) or funding to have the plan completed.

Pest control is a major - we are rolling that out into a large area and getting community support. We are needing to negotiate with [our local Council] over using bait in public areas. They are very risk averse - they need to come to the table. ... [The Council] wants a management plan, so we have asked for funding from them for that. [Our view is] 'if you want that then you pay for it'. ... The only thing is that we would like is to work a lot more positively [with our local Council]. We don't find them a positive organisation to work with. For example, the bait stations.

One iwi organisation commented on the irony of not having support from the main local Council who had the governance role over their lands, yet were supported by other Councils who had less of the rohe ō Te Iwi within their district areas:

We have no contracts with [our local Council] – they don't acknowledge our heritage sites and do not want to work with our Trust. They are the last Council to come on board with our direction, yet they are the Council that has governance on our lands.

Another organisation from an area that has a 'summer influx' of beachgoers noted that their Council "provides the basic infrastructure but don't manage the impacts" on the environments of the summer influx "that well." There was a view from the community group that their Council should take more responsibility and whilst the Council had a "contestable fund", it was "low" and only for "project funds. They won't fund 'ops'. Won't fund wages or rent."

The above examples are in contrast to other areas where the local Council utilises the human resource in the community to get necessary work completed, by assisting the group with resources and/or in-kind support.

35 Sources: ibid.

36 Sources: ibid.

The Council have identified things that we could support them with – like replanting the banks, repair of the bridge.

The Council mentioned in the above quote, does not have the staff resource to do the work so has provided a local group of willing volunteers help with the planning (as above), plants, money for tools and encouraged them to restore an area in the community that everyone can enjoy and appreciate.

In another example of a working partnership, the following quote is from a group which had been working on a conservation and education project which was initially to be located in one Council district, however they were getting little support from their Council and when a different Council invited them to undertake the work in their area, the group chose to move their project there, as they had more support.

We have a lot of support from [Council A] - they invited us to [have our project here]. They have been fabulous. They put funding into it and support in-kind. We were in the [Council B District]. We were going to build there – but we weren't getting a lot of support there [from Council B] so when [Council A] asked us, we went there. They have more resources and are more engaged in conservation projects, interested in heritage and eco-tourism – that is a drawcard as well [for us]

Those organisations who work across Council areas within the region commented also on the contrasts in levels of support and/or involvement between different local authorities. For example:

For example we take 20 tonne of waste from [Council A area] but not so much from [Council B area]. Some Councils are more proactive and get the waste to us. Others say that we have primary contractors we leave it to them. [Council B] has been very hands off. So Councils do vary.

An issue identified by one of the iwi groups, and which is often a particular issue for iwi, was that their rohe cross Council boundaries and as such they had to work with a number of different Councils (and in some cases, not just local but also regional councils, see maps in Section 1). One particular iwi group had addressed this issue by working to develop 'plans' and Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with the Councils. i.e.

We have a MOU with Council A. Already have it with Council B. Also have a Heritage Plan with Council B. Still working [on a Heritage Plan] for Council A. As we go into different areas we have to keep developing things to meet their needs, especially with Waahi Tapu.

For the above iwi group the MOUs and plans were ways to ensure they were not "ignored" or "left out" and "on the agenda". There was still some frustration at times, however, with unrealistic consultation expectations and timeframes as the following quote indicates:

Consultation – jump on fast or you get left out. If you get left out you get ignored. The MOU with local council is to make sure we don't get left out or ignored. But they are still pulling out consent forms and wanting it returned within a day. So proper consultation is still not occurring. We have made ourselves available to ensure we are not forgotten or ignored. If you don't put yourself in the know then you will get dragged around... Have to make sure you are still in the know and on the agenda.

Although the same group did comment that one of the Councils had established some better processes and more realistic timeframes which was appreciated. i.e.:

Council A is really good. ... They don't rush us, they give us time to do our end of work. We have good relationship with Councils. But we could do more, they are bound by rules, we are bound by tikanga – makes for a slow process. We all hope for the same end result, but it's a long term plan 20-30 years.

As the above quote indicates there was often a slow process to 'consultation' with one group being bound by law and the other by tikanga or as another interviewee from a different iwi group put it "finding the balance with law and lore".

Not all collaboration was positive, for iwi however, and one iwi group summed it up in the following quote in regards to the relationship with their local Council which “goes well as long as it goes their way and ticks their boxes” but often “they don’t understand us”.

Collaboration goes well as long as it goes their way and ticks their boxes. If we disagree or don’t give them the answer they want to hear then it doesn’t go very well. They don’t understand us either. For example, mauri, kaitiakitanga. They don’t get it so they seem a little confused or unsure of our meaning, or intent. Lack of knowledge.

The above interviewee continued on, to state:

We are happy to meet and talk things through but we want to be heard.

Overall for both mainstream and iwi organisations, having a working relationship and support from local government was viewed as important and beneficial. As noted by an interviewee for example:

The most difficult issue with funding is that if you don’t have local Council support for your projects it can be really difficult to get funding from anywhere.

4.2.3.3 REGIONAL GOVERNMENT

The links between the regional council and the community environmental sector varied. For example, the WRC provides support and advice (for example, advisors, co-ordination for beach and harbourcare groups), avenues for consultation (for example, ACRE), regional co-ordination or oversight (for example, waste minimization, Enviroschools), funding (for example, NHF, EIF) for both landowners and community organisations, is part of the river co-management structure and as well has a regulatory and legislative role and responsibility for the environment.

Interviewees from organisations ranged in the amount of contact they had with WRC and iwi often had a greater level of contact with WRC than some of the other groups. This was to some extent, to be expected because, as was noted earlier, there are links with co-management of the Waikato river, IEMPs and/or JMPs and as well links in relation to resource consents, consultation, cultural heritage and waahi tapu at both a ‘trust board’ level and a iwi or hapū level. Given this, the views and needs of iwi organisations in relation to WRC have been analysed separately and are discussed first, followed by mainstream organisations.

IWI RELATIONSHIPS WITH WRC

There was a range of views from iwi organisations³⁷ in regards to the relationship with WRC. There were some who noted that they had experienced frustration with WRC and that they were often “battling council” in regards to resource consents and resourcing, dealing with “internal politics”, and that Council was not responsive to local needs, and did not consider the IEMPs in their work:

Resource consent issues, [we are] battling with Council. [We are] under resourced [for that work].

There is some frustration with agencies (including Regional Council) who have their own internal politics. We are very much the poor cousins. It is difficult to get buy in and get told what they can’t do for us... yet they have other funds available for other needs that they have identified. A lot of time wasted on inflexibility of larger agencies to meet local needs.

Regional Council have been abysmal to support with capacity and resources. ... Our Iwi Environmental Plan is published and relevant to Iwi aspirations, DOC, Ministry. This plan hasn’t been picked up Regional Council.

³⁷ Note that in order to protect confidentiality and ensure that different trusts, trust boards or iwi cannot be easily identified they terms ‘iwi organisations’ or ‘iwi groups’ has been used. As well, in some cases, some details have been changed in order to protect confidentiality.

There was also a concern expressed by some in regards to the ‘focus’ of WRC being on the Waikato River and less so on other areas (water and/or land) important to iwi and/or less focus on the needs of iwi who had less connection to the Waikato River catchment. Whilst this was understood by some, as it was ‘the only settlement so far’ it was frustrating.

The focus is definitely on the Waikato River – which makes sense as it’s the only settlement so far. But we do feel that we are often disregarded or left off the agenda.

Regional Council as an organisation (interfacing with Māori) at both governance, professional and staffing level. It’s about a mindset – no consultation with our Iwi in regards to the Waikato River Plan. Very strong predominance focusing on the river. ‘Top of their mind’ awareness about our rohe is limited within Regional Council. There is a predominance of Waikato River Iwi and Treaty arrangements. This leads to all sort of things that are not done. Our rohe is much broader as a geographic area, not just a river.

As well concern was expressed that for iwi who were getting close to settlements (for example, for land and/or water) as to what support they might receive, from WRC, particularly for areas where DOC was not intending to be involved.

... establishing boards to manage and preserve this returning land. We will have kaitiaki responsibilities (for example, pest control , but the government (DOC) don’t want to be involved in [Area A], but they will stay involved [in Area B].

Other iwi groups considered that they had a ‘good working relationship’ with WRC (even if, as the following example shows, this had not always been the case) either as a whole organisation, or as the second quote indicates, with certain staff or sections of the Council. The role of Māori councilors was also highlighted as being an important support for iwi groups:

Waikato Regional Council have really upped their game. We have a good working relationship now. Historically consultation hasn’t been so great. There was a consent issue years ago and it’s been rolling over for years. ... They were about to roll it over again but ... we questioned the consent. They were not keeping up with the terms of the consent (land use issue). ... After this [was resolved] Regional Council has upped their game and we were able to come to an agreement. They are now working with us with Regional Council to get the right consent. We are grateful to the Māori Councilors for backing us and bridging the gap with the Council.

Waikato Regional Council Technical Staff Support – patches of this that are good like scientists and report dissemination from scientists, and provision of information.

Overall, as noted by the following interviewees, it was important for iwi to develop and work on having a good working relationships with their regional council, because:

If we don’t attempt to have input or have our say then they cannot hear us, and then we end up with policies and plans that do not realise our aspiration. Council – keep working on them, keep building relationships – we can’t give up.

If we are not sitting at the table when it comes to environmental issues, the psyche from the people who have the money will prevail. It will always be economic gain before environmental sustainability. We are there to change this and be the reminder that puts the environmental impact on the table. It can be quite a negative or harsh experience – we know what we have is not an endless resource, but this isn’t a common viewpoint. What do we leave for the next generation? Do we leave them a struggle or do we leave them ways to interact with our environment? Making sure there is a tomorrow, and a tomorrow that we are happy with and that our tupuna would be proud of, is our focus.

Another issue that was raised by iwi organisations was in relation to consultation and consent work. This was not limited to the WRC as some also provide consultation to other organisations and central government

agencies such as the New Zealand Transport Agency and power companies, as two examples. However, it has been included in this section as a lot of the work is in relation to WRC consents and requirements. The main issues are lack of resourcing to undertake the work (both in time and for practical costs such as worksafe clothing, for example), lack of capacity both in numbers of people to do the work (being spread thinly) and at times a lack of skills or expertise, particularly in specialty areas.

Various groups require our 'tick in the box' for permits for environmental activities. We have to go through their documentation and then respond to it. This takes a lot of time and across a vast array of topics for example, river cleaning, waahi tapu, mining. They often pay for lunch or petrol but not for our time to undertake the work or visit sites. They all have paid employees to come and 'consult' with us, yet we are voluntary. Consultation tick box. This costs us in our time and administration.

Applications for subdivisions. For example, one of the areas is waahi tapu (urupa). Cultural impact assessment – comes at our cost, they don't pay for our time or our expertise and we often have to find money to pay for the expertise ourselves. ... Work gear to visit sites – for example, workboots, hi-vis gear, rain gear (practical level support).

Together these organisations [who are consulting us] have thousands of employees – versus one to two reps from each Iwi who have to put all expertise into those reps across a diverse range of projects. The risk of this is the tunnel vision that they have the privilege of having because they are only employed to achieve one project. For us it's the same people sitting at every table and spreading our time thinly across multiple projects. Mana Whenua are often sitting at ten different tables for different kaupapa, with people who only have to focus on one kaupapa (with expertise, consultants, resourcing and the rest of their large organisations). Ninety nine percent of the time the people we are engaging with – it's just a job, and then they leave. We don't leave our job – this is our home.

As one interviewee summed up:

We are not resourced to respond to statutory requirements. Māori are unable to participate at the levels at which they would like to.

There were examples of some resourcing for consultation, although not necessarily in the Waikato region. One interviewee commented on the difference between engagement and consultation with Tamaki Makaurau (Auckland) Council and WRC, whereby Auckland resourced Mana Whenua to enable them to be consulted with. i.e.:

In Tamaki - when we engage different departments of the Council (like stormwater, parks, infrastructure etc..) they have established a budget for each iwi for meeting fees. This results in greater efforts being made in the Tamaki region when it involves Council and less work or effort in the Waikato area.

Resourcing and engagement is well resourced by Tamaki Council in comparison to Waikato. As a collective, particular rūpu are not resourced in Waikato. They ask us to sit at their tables and give Mana Whenua professional whakaaro/ korero, but they aren't forthcoming with resourcing our time. In Tamaki – the population is larger but they engage properly and resource Mana Whenua.

In relation to the above, there was feedback from other iwi organisations and sources that some principal iwi were resourced to provide at least some consultation, whereas local hapū, iwi or mana whenua were not. For example:

[Principal iwi] is a well-resourced Iwi who are able to sit at the table for high-level consultation. It can be difficult to see the trickle down impact on marae, hapū, whānau level.

MAINSTREAM GROUPS RELATIONSHIPS WITH WRC

In terms of mainstream groups, in regards to the work of WRC in providing advice and support, there was positive feedback from many interviewees, about the approach of 'on the ground staff' and the way they

were looking at funding options. Some groups did note, however that they might have a good relationship with some staff but less so with other parts of the organisation. For example:

[On the ground WRC staff] are making the right noises and are approachable. It's the people higher up that we have issues with.

Regional Council in the last year have morphed their ability to work with these groups. They have always been quite good at working locally to achieve aims, but they now understand far better - new people understand what these groups are trying to achieve. Regional Council have become probably the primary funder of biodiversity [in this area], ahead of DOC. That is why they and DOC have been comparing notes. For example, how do they interface without doubling up or leaving gaps? At a local level they talk to each other.

WRC also has a role in providing co-ordination and education for the enviroschools³⁸ in the region. A detailed exploration of this initiative was beyond the scope of this research, however there were some examples of groups working together with schools on environmental activities. However, there is significant potential for longer term outcomes (i.e. future generations to take over from the ageing volunteers, more sustainable living practices to reduce the negative impacts) by building environmental education and values and influencing behavior change in future generations via Enviroschools, and as one interviewee noted:

Enviroschools is an opportunity that is missed. We barely have a relationship with Enviroschools.

4.2.3.4 CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

The various groups interviewed had a range of relationships with different central government agencies, at both a national and local level, depending to some extent on the type of work they do. Agencies that were mentioned included for example, DOC, Health, Education (MOE), MBIE, MfE, MPI, Social Development (MSD) and EECA. There were examples of 'good' relationships and partnerships as well as examples of frustrations and challenges.

Relationships at a local level were often more likely to be positive. For example, in relation to working with DOC, a number of groups had relationships with DOC. These might be 'contractual' relationships (i.e. where DOC funds a group to carry out work) and/or different partnership arrangements (i.e. where DOC supports a group undertaking work on conservation land). For example:

DOC has some land within the [area we work on] so we have a little bit of support but they have a lot of resource constraints.

The [Project], a pest control one, is a partnership with DOC, and another group, and iwi.

Interviewees had some positive experiences in working with DOC, particularly where it was a 'roundtable' rather than a 'prescriptive' arrangement, and included positive input and problem solving. For example:

The partnership with DOC is very good - finding personnel and equipment and coming up with different funding. DOC's new model - it's a round table - before they would 'prescribe' but now we get round the table about how we want to run and they make suggestions. For example, we needed to put in a bait station grid and were paying a contractor to do it. But when they went in to check it out, they identified that there were access roads that needed upgrading so DOC funded half the work to upgrade the road in. We also identified that we like to use small utility vehicles - we needed three or four people trained for this, DOC said we needed to have them licensed - so DOC paid to get four people licensed.

³⁸ Number of schools on the website is 177, although not all will be active. <https://waikatoenviroschools.com/>

An iwi organisation noted that for them the relationship with DOC worked well at a local level and less well at a Policy or Treaty of Waitangi level:

DOC at various levels, work well. At a policy or Treaty of Waitangi level DOC are not so good. They don't want to give up their management of the land. On the ground level they are good to work with. There are examples of good collaboration, logs for carving, pest control, harvesting - the current arrangement with DOC works well

Some of the challenges for community groups who worked with central government agencies were noted such as three year political cycles and restructuring and staff turnover in government agencies requiring work to rebuild and develop new relationships and promoting the programmes.

We struggle with three year political cycles. Our programmes are inter-generational. We also struggle with Central Government – we used to go and lobby MfE, DOC, MSD, MBIE ... every 12 to 18 months in between elections – new ministers, new senior staff, very frustrating.

[There has been] restructuring in DOC and loss of relationships there with DOC – it is time consuming to develop new relationships - when staff turnover.

Other challenges were related to negotiating with different government agencies. For example negotiating with Education in regards to environmental activities in schools grounds (despite the fact that for example, environmental education is within the New Zealand Curriculum) and having to prepare legal responses with limited resource to do so.

We are trying to put a plan together for the next two to five years and negotiating with the Ministry of Education for a legal agreement around the use of the land.

The settlement process was raised by some interviewees, both mainstream and iwi. Some groups who were working on DOC lands in areas where settlement processes were still in progress were interested in what the settlement process would mean for the long term sustainability of their project. For example as the following quote illustrates, this group worked across private land much of which had QEII covenants which provided protection from development, and some DOC land. Whilst they have a close relationship with mana whenua they were aware that there was a settlement process and were unsure what change that would bring.

There are a few landowners. A bush block is in a QEII covenant, another with 90ha of reserve status, 4 QEII covenants The DOC estate – I would like to think that would be protected – I'm not sure about the iwi settlement. We have a close relationship with mana whenua – they are supportive of what we are doing.

There are examples in the region of post-settlement structures (e.g. MOUs) between local hapū and organisations as well as examples of current (pre-settlement) working partnerships between community groups and local iwi and hapū and they may be examples to look at for ideas and/or 'best practice'.

Given that there is a significant amount of conservation work being done in some of the DOC areas (often by voluntary groups in partnership or collaboration and/or with oversight from DOC and/or WRC) managing the transitions post-settlements, of which there are some which will come into effect in the near future, is an area of need.

4.2.4 LOCAL LEVEL COLLABORATIONS

There were a number of examples of collaborations and co-operation, formal and informal, that occurred across the sector that were at a local or 'community' level, which were typically project-based and formed across agencies or organisations and which may include:

- *Cross-sector collaborations* - different sectors working together, professional, NGO and others;

- *Collaboration with iwi* - iwi or hapū working together with each other and other groups in a range of ways.
- *Networking* – formal (for example, community network meetings, forums) and informal (for example, ‘who you know’).

4.2.4.1 CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATIONS

In regards to cross-sector collaborations, there were examples at a community level of different collaborations between NGOs, government agencies, iwi, and community organisations from different sectors, working together on work that had environmental outcomes. Kapai Kai was one such initiative, being a locally-led and developed partnership between iwi social services, Health, Enviroschools, businesses Waikato Environment Centre, alternative education, and local food rescue to name a few. This initiative aims to provide healthy food options for school children in a low socio economic community is engaging across the community and sectors in a ‘whole community’ approach to achieve this, in a sustainable way.

There were also examples of professional associations working with NGOs. For example ‘farmer’s’ associations working with groups interested in food crops, trees or organic activities. Or in another engineering professional associations and universities wanting to encourage engineering, support a group who encourage youth to design electric vehicles.

The programme is about getting youth interested in engineering at the same time showing them that there are things they can do to make a difference in sustainability.

4.2.4.2 COLLABORATION WITH IWI

In terms of iwi collaborations, as has already been discussed in other sections iwi are engaged in the environmental sector in the region at a number of governance levels, with local authorities and central government. At the community level, there were also examples of locally based groups who worked with iwi and mana whenua in different ways. A number of interviewees gave examples of ways that their groups worked with local iwi including such as having support and/or representation on their committee, partnership relationships and various levels of commitment from principal iwi:

We have real engagement with mana whenua which is great and have had interest from the principal iwi now, which is great.

We have a close relationship with mana whenua – they are supportive of what we are doing.

The pest control project is a partnership with DOC and [another] group and iwi from the area.

Two or three of our biggest projects are outside the park . For example, the wetlands was on DOC land and now has included Māori land as well. We have MOU with three hapū and the project is moving from there.

There were also examples of iwi or kaupapa Māori organisations or those primarily work with and for Māori (for example, iwi-based trusts, mare groups, marae initiatives, kaupapa Māori) who received varying levels and types of support from their own iwi or other iwi. For example, in-kind, funding, resource from iwi trusts. Although this support was often forthcoming one in interviewee noted that “iwi authorities are the most difficult to work with.” This point is interesting and may be related to capacity. For example, one interviewee from an iwi organisation stated that there is a difference between the capacity of pre and post settlement iwi. i.e.:

Post Settlement groups have more money and therefore capacity is increased. Pre-settlement means less money and less capacity.

In terms of collaboration, as noted by one iwi group who work for and with other iwi “everything we do requires collaboration”:

We collaborate to the extent required to get the job done. Everything we do requires collaboration – internally with the iwi and externally. It’s impossible for us to do the work without the help of others. We do the critical thinking and then we look for help

Need to be watchful that we don’t step on each other toes (between Iwi Trust and our trust) – politics can get in the way a bit – we are all whānau, just a few little things to iron out.

There were a number of other themes that emerged in relation to the work of iwi groups in the region and these are as follows:

- **Having a long term vision.** As was noted in earlier sections, environmental work is ‘long term’ as one iwi organisation interviewee noted in regards to the environment, iwi commitment is long term (“we are in for the long haul”)and that if you want to make a long term difference “you need to work with long-term inhabitants” such as iwi. For example:

Our commitment to the rohe will span generations – we need to find the opportunities to restore our mana whenua and keep whānau connected. We are in for the long haul. Entities/ Government agencies are there for an election cycle and their priorities change. Our priorities do not change. If you want to make a long-term difference in the area then you need to work with long-term inhabitants – mana whenua and farmers.

Making sure there is a tomorrow, and a tomorrow that we are happy with and that our tupuna would be proud of, is our focus.

Ninety nine percent of the time the people we are engaging with – it’s just a job, and then they leave. We don’t leave our job – this is our home

- **Kaitiakitanga.** Many iwi groups and/or trusts had kaitiaki roles and responsibilities for the tribal area, the tribe and the future. These may be ‘mandated’ (for example, post-settlement) or a part of the kaupapa of the group. For example:

The Trust is a settlement based trust – mandated to do resource consents. They have kaitiaki role for the whole rohe and are there in a governance capacity for the beneficiaries of the tribe. They have designated kaitiaki based on each marae that oversee marae based development and representation.

- **Having a wider vision.** It was common amongst iwi groups and organisations, interviewed for this research, even those who were engaged in environmental work, per se, that there was a ‘wider vision beyond just ‘environmental’ outcomes. For example, being able to provide employment was important for one iwi group, in relation to succession planning as they were working towards creating positive change, building up skills and values within their community and iwi, for the future:

Employing staff is really important. This helps us with succession and creating positive change within own community. Building succession for our rangatahi, we need to strengthen ourselves and include rangatahi. It’s important for rangatahi to see the link between training and employment, and social good. Training needs to be on the job. We don’t want them to just be the labourers, we want environmental planners, DOC workers, environmental scientists. Creates hope within the rangatahi.

- **Cultural heritage priorities.** Interviewees from iwi organisations noted that ‘cultural heritage’ like pa sites and waahi tapu were important aspects of their engagement with the environment. At times these sites were or are on ‘private’ land and iwi groups often have to engage and work with landowners around the ways that sites were treated. For example:

Lakes – farmers are happy to do their bit in looking after the place, but they will still farm the boggy areas, which impact on the lakes. Negotiating limits between parties can be difficult. They respect the moana and the land, but when they want to use it for their own benefit they will do what they want. ... Waahi tapu – Māori tupapaku have emerged from the lakes, yet the farmers treat it like their own personal oasis. They will look at tikanga Māori and take it into consideration, but they will not address their own beliefs and behaviours on our traditional lands

- **Different pressures.** For some groups, particularly those who worked for other social changes in areas of deprivation, there were other ‘pressures’ and challenges. For example, being committed to up skilling tribal members, but having to address “massive social issues” such as addiction and benefit dependence:

But we have massive social issues – alcohol and drugs are a key issue. Long-term unemployment. They want jobs, but we cannot hire them if they have drugs in their system. If they actually get employed, they have to resist what is happening at home. We spend a lot of money on employment and recruitment. High turn-over due to social issues

- **Different way of working.** Some iwi groups highlighted that they had a ‘point of difference’, that whilst they might do the same kind of work as a mainstream group they brought a culturally responsive and mātauranga Māori approach to what they do. For example:

We bring mātauranga Māori to our work. This is our point of difference to [other similar organisations]. We provide quality; quality service, social good, and we are culturally responsive.

4.2.4.3 NETWORKING

Networking, both formal and informal was a characteristic of the sector.

Some areas have community network meetings and whilst some interviewees did attend many did not because the groups were not ‘environment’ focused (but more community or social services oriented for example) and/or they did not have time and were not resourced (i.e. travel expenses or time) to ‘network’. Some interviewees recognized the benefits of networking across sectors. For example:

Networking opportunities would be helpful with people who have influence. Lots out there but tend to be between organisations with similar objectives - and out of that you can get opportunities for networking. But last year – [Funder] organised a meeting and we went and spoke to a group – Waikato Environment Centre was there, a number of Councilors, business mover and shakers - that is always a good opportunity to 'mine the prospects'.

There were examples of informal networking amongst different groups. People may be on different groups – wearing different hats so networking occurs that way. As well, some groups provided advice to other groups, particularly those starting up:

We now field calls from people wanting advice for starting up - it is time consuming but did answer the questions, because we've had the benefit [of help from others when we were starting up].

Some groups try to combine with similar groups for specific training (for example, trapping, skills, health and safety), with varying levels of success (see section 4.2.5 below), running workshops, putting in joint funding submissions. For example:

We are working with Waikato Environment Centre- got a small grant. We did a joint submission with Waikato Environment Centre and as a result of that we are doing three educational workshops at Waikato Environment Centre.

4.2.5 REASONS FOR NON-COLLABORATION

The previous sections have discussed collaborative arrangements and formal and informal networking arrangements and to some extent the varying levels of success. This sections covers 'gaps'; areas where collaboration does not occur and reasons why connections may not occur.

Interview findings provided examples where collaboration and/or co-operation did *not* occur amongst environmental groups even though on the surface it would appear that these groups should or could work more together. For example, groups doing similar work like restoring gullies or managing pests and working in the same area or district. Interviewees provided some explanations for why these groups might not work closely together:

- Different mandates. They did not necessarily have the same reasons or mandate for what they were doing. i.e. some may work with more than one species or be wanting to create sustainable employment or encourage iwi development, over and above the environmental outcomes. For example:

The majority of the groups have larger mandates that just kiwis. Kiwis need large scale predator control, then you do it and protect more than just the kiwis. Some groups have wider mandates - for example, local sustainable employment might be part of their trust deed.

They have kaitiaki role for whole rohe and are there in a governance capacity for the beneficiaries of [iwi].

- Different approaches. They have different approaches which may be incompatible (i.e. use of poisons or not) but which could also be a strength (i.e. learning from each other). For example:

They are fiercely independent because they've been working a long time and have different ways of doing things. ... For example, one group doesn't handle the kiwi because they want it to be natural, they target the predators and let the kiwi do their thing, and others run Operation Nest Egg. Some use 1080 and have dog control policies - highly unpopular with the pig hunters but very successful. Others are opposed to 1080.

- Different structures and needs. They have different structures and needs and different foci which whilst not necessarily incompatible, might not overlap. For example:

Other gully groups? In our gully there are neighbours who work on the gully - we work with them and supply plants when we have them. As far as other groups go - not to a great extent. There's [three other groups] in our area. We sort of have brief encounters with them but do not work in closely.

- Not resourced to collaborate. They were not resourced to 'collaborate' and/or used the resource and time that they had to work directly on their specific project. For example:

Most groups are supportive of each other; but if you were looking for working together, because groups have volunteers committed to that site - that's enough - don't have time to do other things.

- Competitive funding environment. They may be either currently or historically in a competitive funding environment which sets them up in opposition. For example:

With regards to a collective approach –we had a spanner because one funder had been telling us to put in collective application in and they couldn't support us in isolation, then earlier this year they gave money [to one of the other groups] and that created (some issues). We voiced concern about it because they were pushing for co-operation then did the opposite.

We need to collaborate more and fund the smaller groups who are working in a collaborative way as opposed to the big groups who can do it on their own. The way the funding is set up is you end up competing with another local group for the same pool of money. This doesn't create a collaborative relationship or community.

That is not to say that the various groups did not ‘get along’ but that unless there were tangible, direct benefits to them of being more closely connected, they might not work together. For example:

If we could work together and bulk purchase – that would be some advantage.

Some interviewees did talk about possible benefits that there could be, for groups such as ‘bulk buying’ of products (for example, plants, traps), sharing staff (for example, contractor, co-ordinator), joint training, joint funding applications to reduce the administration and reporting tasks. Some had already tried some different ways of working together with varying levels of success. For example:

Collective working together - looking at the groups that I mentioned, Group A is bound with us, Group B we don't link with them but could link with the [toxins]. The idea of working in with them. When funders were pushing the collective – we approached them with getting some funding for [a contractor] and all three groups could have done that and then if we didn't get the full amount then we could do the work on a percentage basis. One group thought it was too complicated, so we didn't put in to get funding application because the funders wanted all three.

With regards to a collective funding approach, this does have merit and as far as I'm concerned it is a work in progress we should be able to put a relatively simple collective application together [with a group that works next to us]. Not so positive about linking in with the other groups as they are further away but we should all be able to put our actual costs in to the funders so they are at least aware of the funding needed [in this area].

[Group A] is a similar group although on a far larger scale. They were also wanting [the same species] so we were trying to work with them in training volunteers. With the training for [bird relocation] - thought that would be a good idea to combine training [with another group] but DOC needed small groups so we did do different days.

In terms of whether ‘like’ groups should collaborate there are benefits to ‘cross-group’ networking and/or collaborations which may be of more practical benefit. For example, the link between Kaivolution (a food rescue service) and a waste recycling service (who combine transporting food back to their community with their waste collection runs) that was described in an earlier section is an example of two groups who don't have the same mandate but whose connection has expanded both the reach of Kaivolution and the ability of the other group to benefit their own community.

The above is an example of two ‘environmental’ groups connecting, however there are examples of collaborations, like Kapa Kai or NGOs and professional associations which connect across different sectors and have different ‘primary’ services (for example, business or health or education for example) rather than ‘environment’. There would also be benefits to other types of cross-sector collaboration. For example, linking groups who have human or other resources (for example, schools, Rotary, Girls and Boys Brigades, Duke of Edinburgh, businesses, corporate sponsors), together with the groups who need volunteers or resourcing.

As noted in sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2, some of the umbrella groups such as the Waikato Environment Centre and Community Waikato can and do provide opportunities for ‘cross pollination’ and networking both cross-sector and within the sector, and these were valued by the interviewees who made use of them. The extent to which the ‘umbrella’ organisations have the capacity to provide these opportunities, is limited by their resources. As well, there is the need to resource organisations to be able to access the opportunities provided. One interviewee from a community organisation stated that the ‘umbrella’ groups should be supported to widen their scope i.e.:

Waikato Environment Centre, groups like that who are already linking groups together - should be funding those organisations to widen their scope to do enabling or facilitation type stuff.

The extent to which groups recognise the benefits of these opportunities differs with some being able to see the ‘bigger picture’ and others less so. As well, for some groups, they may see the value but they do not as

was mentioned earlier, have the resources (i.e. either for time and/or expenses) and in some cases the skillset to put to those tasks. For example, in relation to networking with funders:

If your staff is busy – they don't have time to build the relationships with the funders –don't have the time to do that, not paid to do that. It falls back on the committee – if you have committee members who have time, or are savvy on the funding game then they can do that. ... I'd like to see resources on both sides for relationship building on both sides. It's hard to find committee members who have time to dedicate to this.

The example, described in the previous section, of one group being asked to speak at a network meeting which included “business movers and shakers” and “people of influence” is an example of how connections might occur and in that case the group could understand the value of being a guest speaker and also had paid staff to do those tasks.

4.4 SUMMARY: COLLABORATION AND CO-ORDINATION

The research identified the following ways that collaborating, coordinating and networking occurs within the region: regional networking, ‘umbrella’ co-ordination or support organisations; local collaborative groups or organisations; NGO and government relationships; and local level collaborations and networks including cross-sector, working with iwi and general networking.

In relation to the various collaborative and co-ordination models, the following were key findings:

- **Regional ‘umbrella’ organisations** were considered to be beneficial, were valued by interviewees, were providing for the sector but were limited by funding structures (i.e. project-based funding), current capacity and resources.
- **Local collaborative groups** were valued and beneficial, provided support for local needs, and were more likely to succeed if they originated from within the community as a local response to a local need as they typically have, by definition, more buy-in from the community.
- **NGO and Local Council** relationships ranged from ‘very supportive’ to ‘needing some improvement’, and overall for both mainstream and iwi organisations, having a working relationship and support from local government was viewed as important and beneficial.
- **Iwi organisations and WRC** relationships varied, with interviewees reporting experiences ranging from frustration with WRC in regards to resource consents, resourcing, and “internal politics”, concerns that WRC was not being responsive to local needs, not considering IEMPs and was ‘focused’ on the Waikato River and less so on other areas (water and/or land) through to having a ‘good working relationship’ with WRC and support from staff and Māori councillors.
- **Mainstream groups and WRC** relationships were positive in relation to the approach of WRC ‘on the ground’ staff and funding options, and were less positive in regards to other parts of the organisation.
- **NGO and Central Government** relationships ranged from national to local level, and across a range of different agencies and there were examples of ‘good’ relationships and partnerships as well as examples of frustrations and challenges, with relationships at a local level more likely to be positive. Some of the challenges for community groups who worked with central government agencies were: three year political cycles; restructuring and staff turnover in government agencies; negotiating with different government agencies and having to prepare legal responses with limited resource to do so; and concerns about post-land claim settlements, structures and support in relation to project sustainability.
- **Cross-sector collaborations** occurred in different ways including collaborations between NGOs, government agencies, iwi, and community organisations from different sectors working together, and there were a number of examples of positive and mutually beneficial partnerships.
- **Working with iwi** occurred at a number different levels including: at governance levels, with local authorities and central government; at ‘community’ levels with locally-based groups as supporters, committee members and partners; and at ‘iwi’ levels with varying levels and types of support, such in-

kind, funding and/or resource from iwi trusts. Interviewees identified that iwi groups may have a focus that can be different to and/or can impact on relationships with other groups or organisations, such as: having a long term vision or commitment to the area; a wider vision beyond just 'environmental' outcomes; cultural heritage priorities as part of the environmental focus; different pressures, such as managing 'social issues'; a mātauranga Māori approach; and a kaupapa of kaitiakitanga and/or kaitiaki roles and responsibilities.

- **Networking**, both formal and informal was valued, although at times interviewees reported that they struggled to find the time and resource to 'network'. Types of networking included: community network meetings; informal networking amongst different groups; providing advice to other groups, particularly those starting up; and combining with similar groups for specific training.

The research identified examples of where collaboration and/or co-operation did *not* occur amongst environmental groups even though on the surface it would appear that these groups could work more together. For example, groups doing similar work and/or working in the same area or district. Interviewees provided the following explanations for why these groups might not work closely together:

- **Different mandates.** They did not necessarily have the same reasons for what they were doing.
- **Different approaches.** They have different approaches which may be incompatible.
- **Different structures and needs.** They have different structures and needs and different foci which whilst not necessarily incompatible, might not overlap.
- **Not resourced to collaborate.** They were not resourced to 'collaborate' and/or used the resource and time that they had to work directly on their specific project.
- **Competitive funding environment.** They may be either currently or historically in a competitive funding environment which sets them up in opposition.

That is not to say that the various groups did not 'get along' but that unless there were tangible, direct benefits to them of being more closely connected, they might not work together. As well, the findings reported that in terms of whether 'like' groups should collaborate there are benefits to 'cross-group' networking and/or collaborations and benefits to other types of cross-sector collaboration. For example, linking groups who have human or other resources together with the groups who need volunteers or resourcing.

5.0 CAPACITY BUILDING

The research aimed to collate information on “perceptions of environmental community sector groups in the region regarding their needs and opportunities for collaboration, coordination, and capacity.” The previous sections have highlighted some areas of need that community groups experience such as funding, human resource, succession planning, and highlighted networking, collaboration and co-ordination opportunities. This section draws the findings from the interviews and analysis together in regards to capacity building needs and opportunities for the Waikato region community-based environmental sector. The sections have been divided in to ‘general’ and ‘iwi’ capacity building needs. Quotes from interviews, presented in italics or quote marks, have been used to illustrate key points. A summary of the key findings completes the chapter.

5.1 GENERAL CAPACITY BUILDING NEEDS

The research identified the following capacity building needs for groups and organisations in the regions community based environmental sector.

- Access to support and/or mentoring :- for setting up projects, operations and project management tasks, business mentoring as needed. For example:

It would be useful to have help from Waikato Environment Centre to help enable setting up an [environment centre].

Some of the big funders across all sectors have in-house expertise in doing this sort of thing. Some of the groups through the Tindall Foundation, got mentoring from senior people in the Warehouse.

Environment sector – data collection – making sure you have easy systems to enter data and collect. Each project is unique so how to set it up depends on the project. If funders could provide more support for that, then that would be good. Someone that went round and sat with managers and said ‘Would you like us to do a review of how you collect data and show me what works and what doesn’t?’

- Access to professional expertise :- such as lawyers, accountants, directors, governance and others dependent on need. For example:

Maybe the philanthropic organisations - maybe they know professional directors and can link those people doing some pro-bono work with some of these groups?

- Support with sourcing, recruiting and retaining human resources:- including volunteers, paid staff and trustees with the skills needed.

Easy to get ‘doers’ but not as easy to get planners and thinkers. Doers don’t value the planners and thinkers. One thing that is healthy is a strong appreciation of the skillsets to run the projects. We have one person [in our group] who is an amazing organiser - really great at that. But she doesn’t get the planning stuff.

- Support with governance and planning:- strategic planning, succession planning, restructuring. For example:

Strategic planning is one that is really important - ideally all groups should do strategic planning from day one, but don’t do it ‘til they get to the point where they run out of deck space. Then they figure out where they are going. A lot of the funding organisations (like Councils) have people in them who are good at doing that – it’s part of what they are good at. [One group] got help from management planners at DOC and WRC.

The other thing that is important – strategic planning – so you know who you are and what you do and why you do it because if you don’t have that then might do lots of things that are nice but not really what you should be doing.

Some people have amazing visionary strategic thinking boards and managers. In the environment sector it can be hard because it is so broad and it is not valued, what they do.

Governance and management structures are a challenge. Three of the largest groups have outgrown their governance structures at least once or twice and have to put different models in each time.

- Access to a range of training and information:- as needed. For example:

Biodiversity Forum - I really like what they do at the moment - they do field days or forum days which have been really good, advertise workshops and training days – and are generally free which is great. Also other groups like WRC offer training as well - for example, health and safety

I have done funding application days, looking after volunteers, sustainable funding streams, health and safety, pest control ones and got funding for outdoor first aid training and that was really good. If they offered that it would be really popular - we got funded for 20 people - \$3k - but it was so good.

The new OHS legislation - one group got me to ask Worksafe what the obligations are. A lot of groups - haven't come to terms with that yet. Being linked with a specialist in that could be valuable.

- Increased networking and collaboration opportunities : - supporting key 'umbrella' organisations to further develop networking and collaboration opportunities, including cross-sector opportunities. For example:

For example Waikato Environment Centre - groups like that who are already linking groups together - funding those organisations to widen their scope to do enabling or facilitation type stuff.

5.2 IWI- SPECIFIC NEEDS

Iwi organisations were asked to identify capacity building needs for their organisation and/or iwi in relation to community-based environmental work. Many of the needs identified were similar to those discussed above and in previous sections, while others were specific to iwi. They have been included here, separately to ensure that they do not get diluted in the larger report.

- Up skilling and/or support in operations and project management :- in for example, project planning, 'jumping through the hoops'.

Project planning (is complex and difficult for community groups). Whānau need up skilling so that they can engage and be involved. While the Board can be doing our well, grass roots whānau can still be struggling. It is hard to focus on aspirations if you are still wondering where your next meal is coming from.

Whānau are keen to support environmental activities but lose heart very quickly with all the hoops to jump through – for example, funding applications, health and safety requirements. Not enough funds available to mobilize people and get work done.

We need professional people that can respond to requests, identify needs and co-ordinate community projects. We rely on community people and good will for help.

- Opportunities to increase knowledge in specialist areas :- in for example, understanding of environmental management, tikanga , RMA .

Understanding our environment. How to restore the environment in a way that makes sense – practical – hearts and minds. Our community can get lost in seeing it as too big for them to make an impact, or that it's too specialized and they don't have the skill to engage.

Mix of needing both people on the ground (employed and paid) – kaitiaki work. And the ability to train these people in kaitiakitanga.

Study assistance would be useful.

Having the right skill sets within our people to achieve desired outcomes. For example, we have to consult on a dolphin project but we have no marine biologist or ecologist. We don't always know what questions to ask.

Consultants, expertise – but only from our own people. Access to tikanga experts and local knowledge regarding sustainability and protection.

Locals do not understand why they hold all this land, but do not have control over their lands... there is a lack of understanding in regards to RMA.

Needing more people on the ground, that know how to interpret RMA issues and articulate issues to interact with local government. Be the liaison between government and Māori community.

Succession planning – recruiting future kaitiaki in the environment spaces. Need putea to support them along the way while they are getting upskilled. ... We are not groomed for environmental roles...

Having the knowledge to be in a position to challenge decisions and plans moving forward. Where we can be comfortable that we have put our view across in a way that is understood. At the end of the day, the people we sit at the table with, it is about an economic decision or gain. This isn't what we bring to the table and this is where the negotiating and engagement has a different value base. Nine out of ten times it's the cultural component that has to compromise for economic gain.

➤ Access to expertise :- as needed.

To be able to tap into expert advice when we need it across a range of kaupapa

Our level of expertise doesn't stretch to all the areas... we often get a consultant in to help us but this depends on if we have enough funds to pay for them. Otherwise we rely on good faith and volunteers.

Paying legal fees – scratching to pay. Always have to ask – can we afford him? Can we afford to act?

For example, developing register and database – it's difficult to get a volunteer to do this kind of work. Really time consuming. Internal surveys would be nice to fund also... knowing our community capacity.

Policy Analyst to support with Crown engagements. Completion of Environmental plan - specialist advice and expertise.

We are struggling to put our environmental plan together. Capacity means it's been done in house as we don't have the budget to get an expert in to give it a final polish.

➤ Support for iwi to become engaged in the mahi:- to provide a 'hand up':

Iwi could benefit from a hand up (as opposed to hand down)... this is not a handout... it's about evening the scales and creating a level playing field.

Reduce the transaction costs of working with external agencies and to some degree, our own people – normal start-up stuff.

➤ Support and resourcing for consultation activities.

We constantly have people asking to consult with us to tick their box, but we don't have the resource to respond to this and we are not resourced for this.

➤ Support to ensure the 'human resource' has the incentive to engage:- for example, funding wages, employment creation:

Mobilising whānau – we will exhaust our resources with volunteer labour. We will require paid people – need an incentive to continue motivating our key support people.

Because it's unfunded it's difficult to get people involved in the area. Unless they are driven by the kaupapa but we can't rely on this anymore. There is no promotion of the sector to attract a workforce... no scholarships/ grants, no pathways.

It would be great to have more kaumatua involved and paid for their expertise and time. Need to build positive and innovative projects to help the community move with you. Need innovative approaches to inspire people to make a change.

➤ Support with local needs and aspirations.

It would be a perfect world if we could put our own strategies, priorities and projects forward for funders to come to us and then engage with where they can help and support us

There are not enough people on the ground to tackle greater aspirations.

We want a vibrant community, Health in all directions – harbour, land, sea, people. Mental, physical, spiritual. Business opportunities –there is potential in our people but we are lacking in skill and finance to get things off the ground.

Funding would be useful for more research into our other issues and the resources we need to realise our aspirations and support other projects/ community activities – for example, signage, education regarding cultural protocols, school programmes. Something available to the general community.

There are a number of ways that the various needs described above can be met, such as resourcing of the groups themselves and resourcing, strengthening and widening the scope of existing umbrella organisations.

5.3 SUMMARY: CAPACITY BUILDING

The research identified the following overall capacity building needs for groups and organisations in the region's community based environmental sector:

- Access to support and/or mentoring;
- Access to professional expertise;
- Support with sourcing, recruiting and retaining human resources;
- Support with governance and planning;
- Increased networking and collaboration opportunities.

Iwi organisations were asked to identify capacity building needs for their organisation and/or iwi in relation to community-based environmental work. These were:

- Up skilling and/or support in operations and project management;
- Opportunities to increase knowledge in specialist areas;
- Access to professional expertise;
- Support for iwi to become engaged in the mahi;
- Support and resourcing for consultation activities;
- Support to ensure the 'human resource' has the incentive to engage; and
- Support with local needs and aspirations.

Meeting the above needs could include both resourcing of the groups themselves and resourcing, strengthening and widening the scope of existing umbrella organisations to provide support and access to expertise.

6.0 CONCLUDING COMMENTS

This research has provided an overview of the perceptions of the community-based environmental sector in the Waikato Region, and the challenges and opportunities they face.

The overall conclusions that can be drawn are that there is a significant amount of environmental activity occurring in the community sector across the region with a number of valued co-ordinating groups and networks operating at regional and local levels, a variety of funding sources and structures, and a lot of active community groups, numerous iwi, hapū and marae, and local and national government agencies who partner and work with groups in various ways.

The research identified a range of funding sources for community based environmental work in the region. These ranged from central and local government funds and grants through to national and international and local trusts and funds and including corporate sponsorship and in-kind support from a range of different sources. Of the 65 organisations within the research sample, most typically operated with a mix of different funding sources from grants and donations through to social enterprises and commercial arms, fees for work and in-kind support. The extent to which an organisation used all or some of these funding options, depended on the work and the organisation. In addition most organisations relied on some, if not all, volunteer labour to undertake a lot of the work. There was also a range across the organisations as to how 'financially solvent' they were and there was no 'typical' way that a group was set up or organised.

There were a range of needs and challenges for the sector that were identified by the research including issues around funding and accessing funding, recruiting and retaining both paid and unpaid human resources, and ensuring that people do not 'burnout'. There were also a range of different ways that groups collaborated, co-ordinated and worked together and some gaps and areas for development to strengthen and maximize potential were identified, including cross-sector collaborations and cross-agency partnerships for mutual benefit, upskilling, training and support.

Iwi groups and organisations often had a wider vision than 'just environment, related to iwi development, succession and kaitiakitanga and as well many faced significant and specific challenges, such as being under-resourced for kaitiaki and consent tasks, requiring support to access 'expertise' across a range of kaupapa and to create pathways and opportunities to enhance skills to mobilise and sustain the workforce. There are also settlement agreements in the region which will be finalized in the near future and, there will be post-settlement impacts for iwi in regards to the ongoing management, future plans and opportunities for working together with groups already in place.

Overall, the research identified that there are untapped opportunities (for example, projects, groups and ideas) that could be realised with some targeted support. There are some established umbrella groups and networks, which are valued and accessed by interviewees, and which could be strengthened and resourced to increase their capacity to support and access the sector. In addition there are areas that funders and government agencies could consider streamlining (for example, funding processes, resource consents) or providing (for example, in-kind support, such as advice) which would further support the sector.