

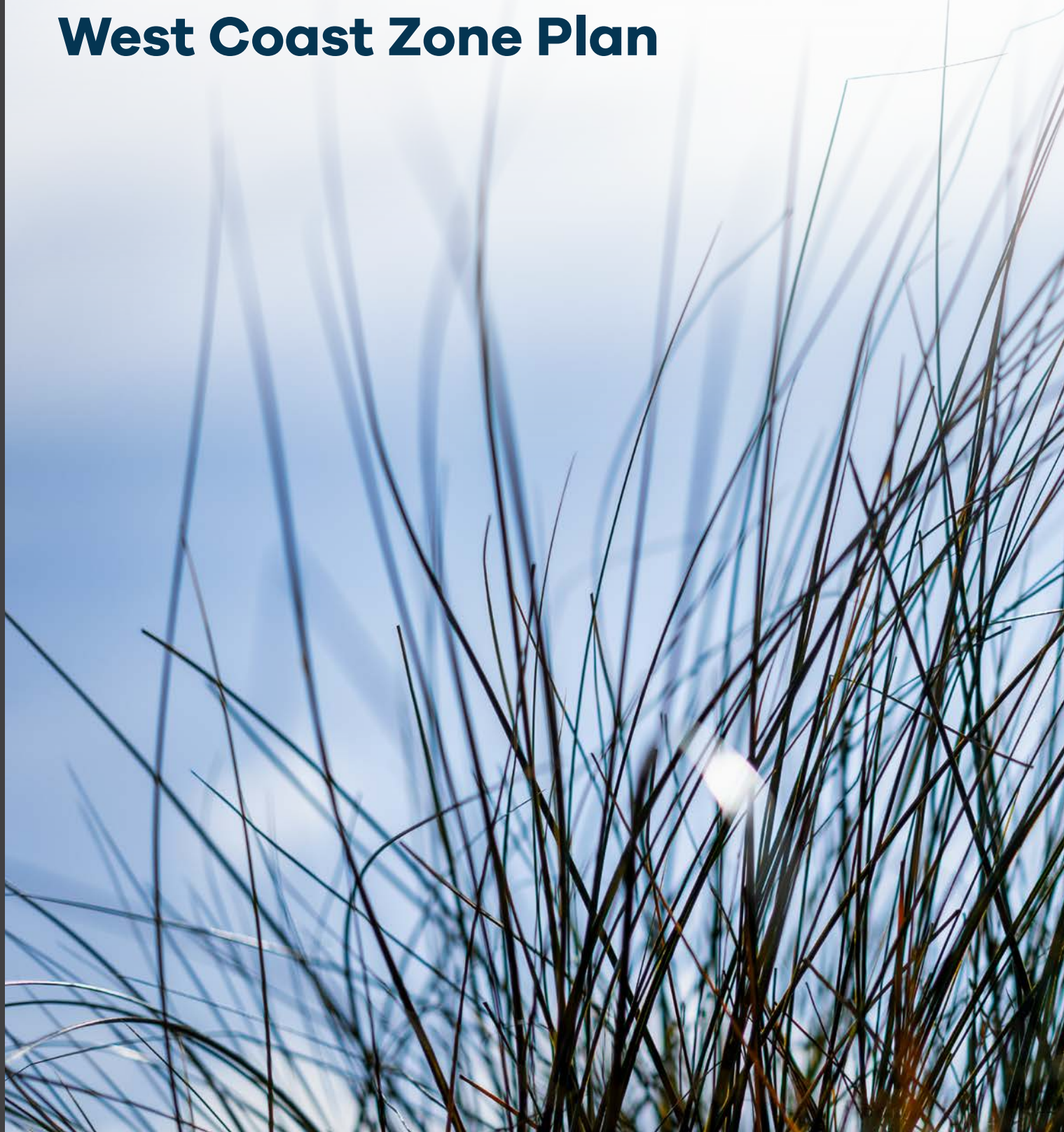
Waikato



REGIONAL COUNCIL  
Te Kaunihera ā Rohe o Waikato

# Te Mahere o te Rohe Taihauāuru

## **West Coast Zone Plan**



Peer reviewed by Paul Smith on 1 May 2024.

Approved for release by Grant Blackie on 20 May 2024.

## Disclaimer

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## Acknowledgments

Members of the former West Coast Catchment Committee (councillors, community and iwi members) developed the vision and catchment goals and endorsed the original version of this plan.

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# Executive summary

The purpose of this zone plan version is a “limited (lite) review” of the 2016 zone plan. As such, the original zone vision and goals (previously referred to as objectives) remain.

The zone plan sets out the strategic direction for the council’s integrated catchment management activities within the West Coast Zone for the next 10 years with a vision of:

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## Healthy West Coast Zone catchments for community and environmental wellbeing.

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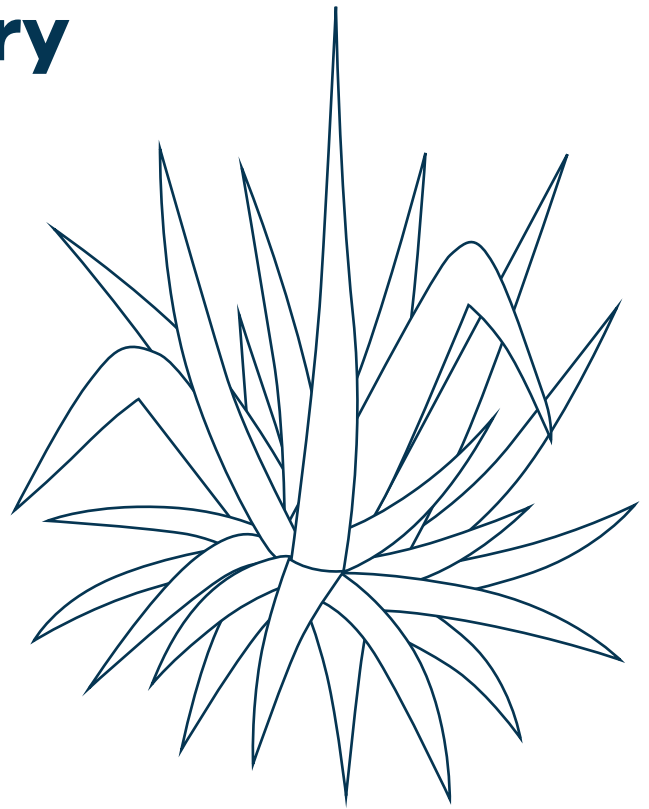
The goals developed to support the realisation of the West Coast Zone vision are:

- 1** Protect and enhance the productive soil capacity, fresh and marine water quality and biodiversity.
- 2** Direct resources to activities and areas of greatest environmental benefit.
- 3** Support mana whenua and strengthen community partnerships.
- 4** Enhance outcomes for the West Coast through strengthened leadership and visibility.

Since the development of the zone plan in 2016, the council has increased its West Coast Zone work programme and has supported the delivery of the following.

<b>2622</b>	<b>708,582</b>	<b>443</b>
hectares of land retired	plants planted, including native, afforestation and willow/poplar poles	kilometres of fencing

The revised zone plan is formulated to build on these past achievements and to continue to help address issues identified within the West Coast Zone. It provides a framework to guide future work programmes of all those involved with the zone’s management and development.



The implementation plan includes specific and tangible actions, the relevant priority catchment(s) of focus for those actions, and the measures for success.

Monitoring of the zone plan goals will be ongoing and will focus on the following key aspects:

- environmental outcomes demonstrating the effectiveness (or otherwise) of this zone plan
- completion of actions to measure the progress in implementation of this zone plan
- the outcomes of the information gathered to measure the success of each goal.

The results of monitoring will be reported annually to the Integrated Catchment Management Committee. This zone plan will be subject to a full review every six years and a limited review three years after each full review.



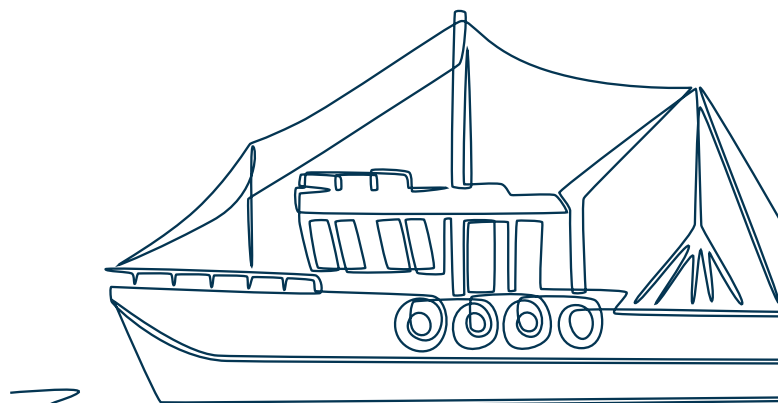
# 1 Introduction

The *West Coast Zone Plan* is an important strategic document for Waikato Regional Council that will guide the implementation of integrated catchment management activities within the zone over the next 10 years.

The council is seeking to build on past achievements within the zone in relation to soil conservation, river management, water quality, indigenous biodiversity and industry engagement. The zone plan promotes a comprehensive and integrated approach to the delivery of council services in these key areas.

The zone plan cannot be delivered by the council alone and will rely on successful engagement and collaboration with stakeholders to achieve its vision and goals. Stakeholders can therefore expect engagement and collaboration on the programmes that the council undertakes within the zone.

The West Coast Zone contains a range of unique environments with significant natural, economic, social and cultural value. An ongoing challenge for the council over the life of the plan will be to prioritise and target limited resources into areas of greatest need for enhanced outcomes. Greater integration with, and effective advocacy across council business, will be important to tackling this challenge and this is a key focus area for the zone plan.



## 1.1 Purpose

The zone plan sets out the strategic direction (vision, goals and actions) for the council's integrated catchment management activities within the West Coast Zone for the next 10 years.

The first *West Coast Zone Plan* was prepared in 2016, and the current version has resulted from a "limited (lite) review" of the original. As such, the original zone vision and goals (previously referred to as objectives) that were developed in collaboration with the (now disbanded) West Coast Catchments Committee remain. The next zone plan review in 2026 will involve a full review of the plan with wider consultation.

This zone plan seeks to:

provide an overview of the zone with a specific focus on the values, challenges, opportunities, work programmes and other activities within the zone

outline the vision and goals for the zone

detail implementation actions for the next 10-year period to meet the goals identified

explain West Coast funding policies and priorities

provide a management tool that is live and adaptable with regard to the changing needs of river and catchment management assets.

As well as influencing the work the Integrated Catchment Management (ICM) Directorate will do within the West Coast Zone, this zone plan identifies how our council can work with others to help achieve the identified vision, goals and actions.

The implementation of the zone plan actions will also give effect to key aspects of Waikato Regional Council's *Regional Policy Statement* and *Strategic Direction 2023-2025* and will guide the implementation of a number of the council's non-regulatory responsibilities under a variety of statutes.



## 1.2 Scope

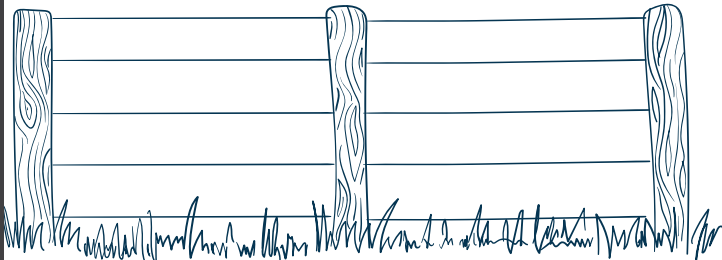
The *West Coast Zone Plan* is one of eight zone plans that provides a strategic framework for delivery by the council's ICM directorate. The zone plan has a focus on catchment and river management activities, and the supporting activities of animal and plant pest management and natural heritage.

The zone plan is a non-statutory plan and includes voluntary actions not required by regulation. The zone plan will identify agreed levels of service and potential funding sources for the implementation of actions.

Actions at a zone scale relating to water quality, land management in rural areas, protection of cultural values, biodiversity, terrestrial and freshwater environments and collaboration in the implementation of environmental and cultural restoration projects are all considered within scope.

The following activities or actions are out of scope for the zone plan.

- a. Plan Change or Treaty settlement processes.
- b. Actions within the open water areas of the harbours and coast.
- c. Water or community infrastructure.
- d. Water allocation.
- e. Land use controls.
- f. Wastewater treatment.
- g. Monitoring the council's rules under the current Waikato Regional Plan (except where specific resource consent conditions apply)
- h. Monitoring the general state of the environment.



## 1.3 Plan structure

This zone plan is structured as follows.

<b>Section 2</b>	Sets out the legislative and policy context for the plan.
<b>Sections 3 and 4</b>	Describe the unique features of the West Coast Zone and the key opportunities and challenges for integrated catchment management within the zone.
<b>Section 5</b>	Summarises the progress within the zone since the 2016 zone plan.
<b>Section 6</b>	Outlines the funding opportunities for the zone.
<b>Section 7</b>	Contains the vision and goals for the zone.
<b>Section 8</b>	Implementation, monitoring and review.
<b>Section 9</b>	Appendices, including the implementation plan.

# 2 Legislative and policy framework

## 2.1 Statutory context

The zone plan implements numerous non-regulatory responsibilities under a variety of statutes, policies and plans, including:

- Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA)
- Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941
- Local Government Act 2002
- Waikato Regional Policy Statement (WRPS)
- Waikato Regional Plan (WRP)
- Proposed Waikato Regional Coastal Plan (PWRCP)
- Regional Pest Management Plan (RPMP)
- National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPSFM).

## 2.2 Waikato Regional Council plans and strategic direction

The WRPS has a number of objectives and policies which are relevant to river and catchment management issues within the zone, including the management of fresh water, indigenous biodiversity, natural hazards, the coastal marine area and soil conservation.

The WRPS has several provisions relating to integrated management (see Objective IM-O1 and Policies IM-P1), in particular Policy IM-P1(2) states:

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**An integrated approach to resource management will be adopted that maximises the benefits and efficiencies of working together.**

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The WRP is an operative regional plan and contains objectives, policies, methods and rules that apply to the entire Waikato Region (with the exception of Chapter 3.10 which applies only to the Lake Taupō catchment). The WRP contains provisions that assist the council in carrying out its functions, in order to achieve the sustainable management of the land and water resources of the Region. This includes provisions that manage: the use of land; the discharge of water and contaminants to water and land; the taking, use, damming and diversion of water; and air. The WRP became operative in September 2007.

Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora: Proposed Waikato Regional Council Change 1 (PC1) is a new Chapter 3.11 of the WRP. The development of both PC1 and the PWRCP started in late 2015. PC1 was prepared to give effect to higher order planning instruments including Te Ture Whaimana o te Awa o Waikato, the NPSFM 2014 and the WRPS (which became operative on 20 May 2016), within the Waikato and Waipā River catchments.

PC1 seeks to reduce the amount of contaminants entering into the Waikato and Waipā river catchments, and while this is not applicable to the West Coast Zone (being outside of these catchments), it could inform how council will implement other initiatives to improve water quality in the region.

Water quality plan changes for the West Coast catchments will be undertaken concurrently with the full review of all other water aspects of the WRP and while reviewing the PWRCP.



# The Strategic Direction for the Waikato Regional Council 2023-2025 sets out the strategic focus and priorities for the council.

The strategic direction includes the council's vision, purpose, values, strategic priorities and goals for success.



[strategicdirection.waikatoregion.govt.nz](https://strategicdirection.waikatoregion.govt.nz)

The strategic priorities and associated goals for success that are directly relevant to the *West Coast Zone Plan* are as follows.



## Wai Water

### Associated goal:

Put the health of our region's waterbodies and freshwater ecosystems first when making decisions, giving effect to Te Mana o Te Wai, Te Mana o te Awa.

Leverage our investment in catchment and river restoration work through funding partnerships and community actions, contributing to water quality improvements that are demonstrable in the long term.



## Rerenga rauropi, tiakitanga taiao Biodiversity and biosecurity

### Associated goal:

Support and empower people to protect and restore the natural environment and taonga species by integrating their efforts with councils and other agencies.

Work with others to protect ecosystems, human health and economic activities through effective pest management.



## Takutai moana Coastal and marine

### Associated goal:

Adopt a ki uta ki tai – mountains to sea – approach to consider coastal ecosystems as sensitive receiving environments.

Support and empower people to reduce harmful impacts of land-based activities on coastal environments.

Work with communities, and iwi and hapū to carry out integrated coastal and catchment planning and restoration activities to protect and enhance coastal marine ecosystems.



## Hanganga tauwhiro Sustainable development and infrastructure

### Associated goal:

Involve communities, and iwi and hapū in understanding risks and developing short and long term management strategies that are holistic, sustainable and adaptive.



## Hononga hapori Community connections

### Associated goal:

Strengthen our role as a trusted source of timely, relevant, and high quality information, and make it easy for people to access environmental, economic and social information.



## Whakaheke tukunga Transition to a low emissions economy

### Associated goal:

Enable Waikato farmers to be national leaders in the adoption of climate smart practices and technologies by aligning our farmer education and support services with those of industry bodies and central government.



**Implementation of this zone plan will assist the council with delivering its strategic direction.**

The key connections from the zone plan goals to the strategic direction are summarised below in Table 1.

		Council strategic priorities					
		Water	Biodiversity and biosecurity	Coastal and marine	Sustainable development and infrastructure	Community connections	Transition to a low emissions economy
Zone goals	Protect and enhance the productive soil capacity, fresh and marine water quality and biodiversity.						
	Direct resources to activities and areas of greatest environmental benefit.						
	Support mana whenua and strengthen community partnerships.						
	Enhance outcomes for the West Coast through strengthened leadership and visibility.						

Table 1: Connections between *West Coast Zone Plan* and Waikato Regional Council’s Strategic Direction 2023-2025

## 2.3 Essential Freshwater policies and regulations

On 3 August 2020 the Government released the ‘Essential Freshwater’ package (previously known as the ‘Action for Healthy Waterways’ package). This had implications for the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPSFM) and National Environmental Standard for Freshwater (NESF) and other Regulations.

The ‘Essential Freshwater’ package introduced new rules and regulations which were designed to:

- stop further degradation of New Zealand’s freshwater resources and improve water quality within five years; and
- reverse past damage and bring New Zealand’s freshwater resources, waterways and ecosystems to a healthy state within a generation.

A new streamlined freshwater planning process was also introduced in 2020 as part of RMA amendments that came into force on 1 July 2020<sup>1</sup>. The amendments introduced a new planning process for regional councils when preparing, changing, or varying regional policy statements and regional plans (freshwater planning instruments) that give effect to any national policy statement for freshwater management, or otherwise relate to freshwater. The RMA requires public notification of all freshwater planning instruments by 31 December 2027<sup>2</sup>, with decisions on these plans required within two years of notification.

The council is therefore required to publicly notify water quality plan changes for the West Coast and other catchments, and undertake a full review of all other water related aspects of the WRP. It has initiated a Freshwater Policy Review process to meet these obligations under the NPSFM 2020.

Freshwater farms plans are a regulated farm planning process for farmers and growers. They provide a practical way to identify, manage and reduce the impact of farming on the freshwater environment. Freshwater farm plans have been legislated under Part 9A of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) and the Resource Management (Freshwater Farm Plans) Regulations 2023.

Freshwater farm plans are part of the Essential Freshwater package. All those with:

- 20 hectares or more in arable or pastoral use; or
- 5 hectares or more in horticultural use; or
- 20 hectares or more of combined use

need to have a freshwater farm plan.

Freshwater farm plans will need to be developed, considering Catchment Challenges, Context and Values (CCCV), and identifying and assessing risks to freshwater. The five-year plan will need to be certified and audited.



<sup>1</sup> s80A freshwater planning process of the Resource Management Act 1991.

<sup>2</sup> s80A, 4b freshwater planning process of the Resource Management Act 1991.

## 2.4 Iwi management plans

### 2.4.1 Ko Tā Maniapoto Mahere Taiao – Maniapoto Environmental Management Plan (2016)

Ko Tā Maniapoto Mahere Taiao - Maniapoto Environmental Management Plan (EMP) is a comprehensive management plan that was prepared by the Maniapoto Māori Trust Board on behalf of the people of Maniapoto and was published in 2016.

The plan is a high-level direction setting document that describes the issues, objectives, policies and actions to protect, restore and enhance the relationship of Maniapoto with the environment including their economic, social, cultural, and spiritual relationships (Maniapoto Māori Trust Board, 2018).

This zone plan is well aligned with Section D – Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment - of the Maniapoto EMP, and in particular helps to deliver on the objectives for freshwater (Part 14), wetlands (Part 15), coastal and marine environment (Part 17), land (Part 18) and natural heritage and biodiversity (Part 19).

### 2.4.2 Tai Tumu Tai Pari Tai Ao – Waikato-Tainui Environmental Management Plan (2013)

Tai Tumu Tai Pari Tai Ao – Waikato Tainui Environmental Management Plan provides clear high-level guidance on Waikato-Tainui objectives and policies with respect to the environment. The overarching purpose of the Plan is to provide a map or pathway that will return the Waikato-Tainui rohe to the modern-day equivalent of the environmental state that it was in when Kiingi Taawhiao composed his maimai aroha (Waikato-Tainui, 2013).

This zone plan is aligned to Section C – General Waikato-Tainui Environmental Matters and Section D – Specific Environmental Areas. In particular, it helps to deliver on the objectives and methods for natural heritage and biosecurity (Part 15), freshwater (Part 19), wetlands (Part 20), land (Part 21), and coastal environment (Part 24).



# 3 West Coast Zone context

This section provides a summary of the key environmental features of the west coast zone. Further detail on the environment and geography of the zone is contained within the document, *West Coast Zone Plan Supporting Information* (Waikato Regional Council, 2016).

## 3.1 Overview

The West Coast Zone covers a large geographic area of 425,835 hectares, or approximately 17 percent of the Waikato Region, stretching from Port Waikato in the north, to Mokau River in the south, and as far inland as Benneydale. Its rivers and streams drain a large number of catchments to the Tasman Sea.

The zone encompasses three district councils, Waitomo, Ōtorohanga and Waikato, and overall has a low population base of less than 3 per cent of the region’s population (Statistics New Zealand, 2018).

Key settlements include Aotea, Aria, Awakino, Benneydale, Kawhia, Marokopa, Mokau, Piopio, and Raglan (see figure 2).

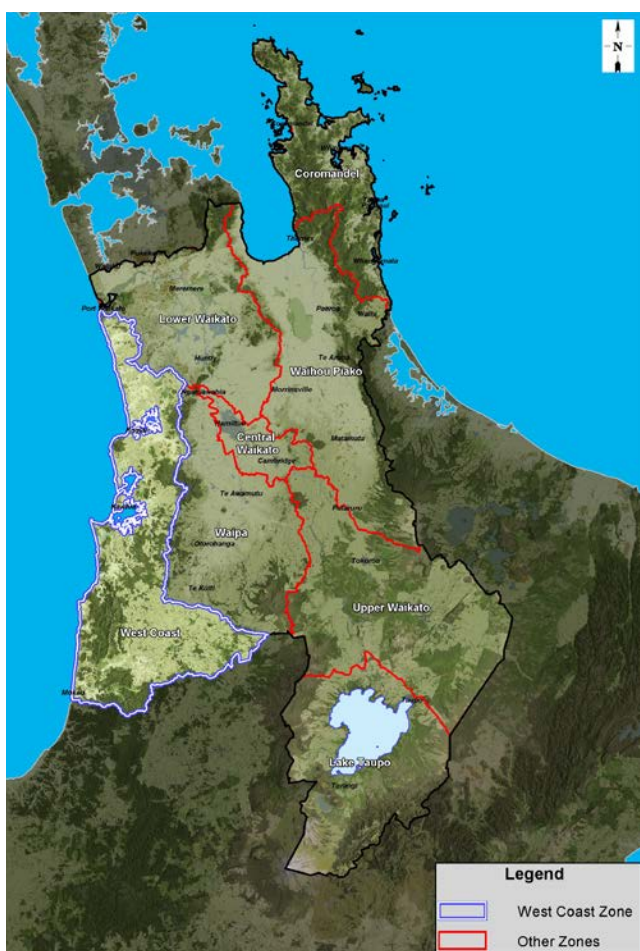


Figure 1: West Coast Zone relative to the Waikato region.



Figure 2: West Coast Zone.

## 3.2 People and communities

The West Coast Zone comprises a large geographic area with a relatively small rating base of approximately 8,555 properties.

Raglan in the Whaingaroa Harbour is the largest settlement in the West Coast Zone with approximately 3,280 permanent residents. Kawhia village is another coastal settlement with a permanent population of 400. The populations of Raglan and Kawhia increase by 300-400 per cent with the influx of summer visitors (Waikato District Council, 2024) (Otorohanga District Council, 2024).

Other settlements and their populations in the West Coast Zone include:

<b>528</b>	Port Waikato
<b>462</b>	Pio Pio
<b>315</b>	Glen Afton & Pukemiro
<b>189</b>	Benneydale
<b>120</b>	Mokau
<b>42</b>	Aotea village (Stats NZ, 2024)

Of the 8,555 properties, there are 1,673 that are over 20 hectares. The following land uses for these properties are summarised below in Table 2, with mixed sheep and beef as the largest agricultural land use in the West Coast Zone.

Land use type	Number of properties >20 ha
Lifestyle	<b>551</b>
Mixed sheep and beef	<b>498</b>
Beef	<b>235</b>
Forestry	<b>71</b>
Native bush	<b>68</b>
Dairy	<b>62</b>
Grazing others' stock	<b>48</b>
Sheep	<b>41</b>
Drystock	<b>32</b>
"Other" land uses	<b>42</b>
Unspecified	<b>25</b>
<b>Total properties</b>	<b>1,673</b>

Table 2: Land uses in West Coast Zone properties greater than 20 hectares

West Coast Zone land ownership for these properties is dominated by private landownership with 1,257, followed by Māori owned land with 314 properties, Public Conservation Land with 88 properties, Territorial Local Authorities with 8 and Government owned with 6 properties.

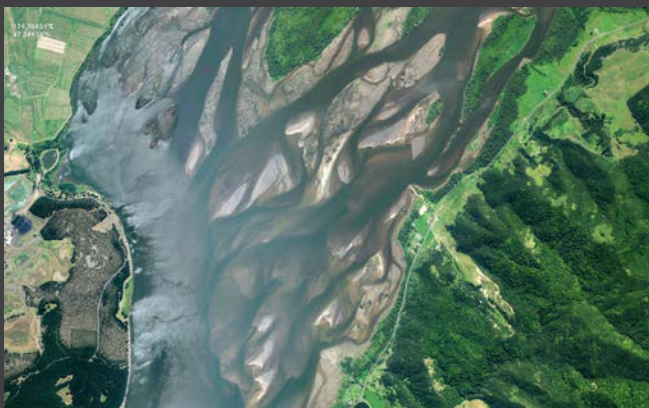
The West Coast has a rich cultural heritage and has been a stronghold for Māori for many generations. Key iwi within the West Coast Zone includes Waikato-Tainui, Maniapoto and Ngāti Tama in the south. Each has rohe within the zone and significant ongoing interests in maintaining and restoring the health of the West Coast.



### 3.3 High value features

The zone contains a range of high value natural habitats, landscapes and ecosystems that make the West Coast unique, and highlight the importance of on-going initiatives to maintain and enhance the environment.

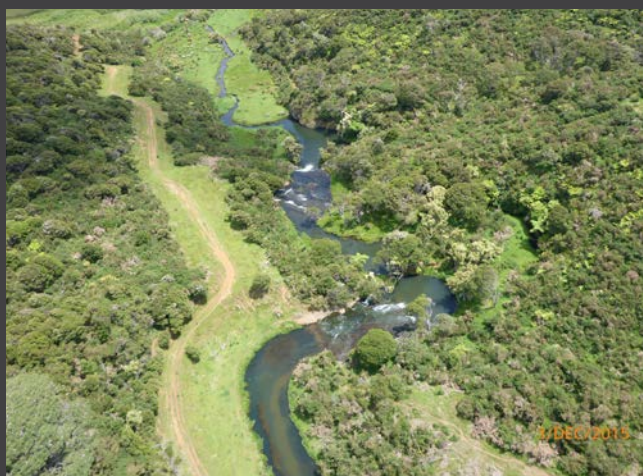
Coastal landforms along the West Coast are diverse and include sand and boulder beaches and wave-cut platforms backed by dunes, dune lakes or coastal pastures in some areas; and by rocky headlands and the seaward faces of steep coastal hills in others. The mouths of streams, rivers and harbours cut through dunes and escarpments and discharge into the sea. In parts of the zone, there are small islands and coastal rock stacks out to sea. The vegetation growing in this landscape is correspondingly diverse, reflecting not only the variety of landforms, but also the degree of exposure to salt and wind from the sea. Vegetation ranges from dune tussock grassland, cliff herb and shrub communities, to flaxlands, pohutukawa or kohekohe treelands and forests.



The harbours and major river mouths of the West Coast are of particular importance. Whaingaroa (Raglan), Aotea and Kawhia harbours, and the mouths of rivers such as Mokau and Marokopa, all provide important habitats for shorebirds and shellfish, and nurseries for a range of species of fish. Gannet Island, which is nine nautical miles west of Aotea Harbour, and Albatross Point south of Kawhia Harbour, provide breeding sites for the New Zealand fur seal. Inanga, the most abundant of the 'whitebait' species on the West Coast, breed only in places where spring high tides inundate streams and river banks. Shorebirds that seasonally migrate through New Zealand mostly follow routes that run north and south along the West Coast and utilise the shelter and food resources provided by these harbours and river mouths.



Dune lakes have formed along the West Coast where sand dunes have blocked catchment outlets over time and the water draining from each catchment has been impounded. Several of the dune lakes of the West Coast Zone are considered to be particularly good examples of natural coastal dune lakes within the national context. The Taharoa Lakes Complex (Lakes Taharoa, Numiti, Rotoroa, Piopio and Rototapu) and Lake Harihari rank highly in terms of their ecological, recreational and cultural values. They retain comparatively high water quality, in comparison to many other lakes in the region. The lakes and their adjoining wetland areas also support significant biodiversity values, including diverse birds (including waterfowl, bittern, dabchick, and spotless crane) and fish communities. The relatively short, steep and forested streams of many parts of the West Coast are likely to support a wider diversity of native fish species than streams found further inland in the region.



Karst landscapes are widespread throughout the West Coast with features scattered from Port Waikato to Mokau. These landscapes are varied and include features such as pools, caves, arches, disappearing streams and unique rock formations. These landscapes are home to plants which favour limestone conditions and cave dwelling animals.

A range of threatened plants and animals rely upon the special environmental conditions found in the natural areas of the West Coast. While some threatened species are found in lowland and submontane bush, a considerable number are confined to coastal habitats, including populations of the New Zealand fur seal at Gannet Island, Albatross Point and Tirua Point.



These valued West Coast features have been a key consideration when exploring the opportunities and challenges for the West Coast Zone and have informed the subsequent development of the vision, objectives and implementation actions proposed within this plan. Potential for enhancement of the above features has informed the development of implementation actions across all four objectives.

# 4 Opportunities and challenges

Council staff and stakeholders identified a range of opportunities and challenges to improving the effectiveness of integrated catchment management in the West Coast Zone.

The zone plan vision and objectives have developed in response to these and set out the focus for council's operational activities within the zone. The opportunities and challenges identified are interrelated and for the purpose of this document are grouped as follows:

- community partnerships and co-management,
- soil conservation,
- water quality,
- indigenous biodiversity,
- natural hazards.

These groupings are well aligned with the key priority areas set out in the council's strategic direction: (refer Table 1, Section 2)

- Water,
- Biodiversity and biosecurity,
- Coastal and marine,
- Sustainable development and infrastructure,
- Community connections,
- Transition to a low emissions economy.

## 4.1 Community partnerships and co-management

### Summary

### Challenges

The West Coast Zone is a large geographic area with a sparse population and limited rating base and therefore faces challenges in funding effective catchment and river management works across the zone.

### Opportunities

Strengthening community/stakeholder partnerships and iwi co-management practices are key opportunities to deliver more effective catchment management outcomes for the zone.

The relatively small rating base compared to geographic area in the zone means that funding availability does not always match desired community outcomes for catchment and river work.

Community groups, landowners, iwi, hapū and a range of other organisations and groups are reliant on the healthy functioning of the natural and physical resources of the West Coast Zone for their social, economic, cultural and environmental well-being. Many of these groups already undertake a range of initiatives that contribute positively to the vision and goals of this zone plan. It is important that Waikato Regional Council continues to engage and partner with community sectors to

identify opportunities to work collaboratively together, avoid duplication of effort and add significant value where priorities are aligned. This collaborative approach is a challenge, but will assist in focusing resources into priority areas, where the biggest gains can be achieved.

A significant component of enhancing community partnerships is embracing and supporting the co-management resources with iwi and hapū. The West Coast is home to various iwi, hapū, and marae based tangata whenua groups. Engaging with them effectively is crucial for our council, especially considering their overlapping interests in local, sub catchment, catchment, and zone matters. Building good relationships is key to making decisions that benefit the region's health and wellbeing.

Our council prioritises working with iwi through Treaty settlements, co-governance, and co-management agreements. Several settlements that intersect with the West Coast Zone have been passed with more in progress.

In addition, iwi including Waikato-Tainui, Maniapoto, Hikairo, and Tamainupō have developed iwi and hapū planning documents outlining goals for enhancing environmental, economic, social, and cultural wellbeing, identifying what is important to them, and outlining how they wish to be engaged with. Understanding these documents is an important step in forging effective relationships with these groups.

Continuing proactive iwi, hapū and marae engagement, both within formal agreements and more informally, will be important to building enduring partnerships and ensuring the objectives of this zone plan are met.



## 4.2 Soil conservation

### Summary

### Challenges

Large areas of the West Coast have high erosion risk and sediment yield and effective soil conservation is critical for maintaining the health of the West Coast catchments. Soil conservation often requires upfront investment and long term maintenance to realise environmental and production benefits. The challenge is to assist landowners in implementing long term strategies for soil conservation.

### Opportunities

Funding is available to landowners to assist upfront investment and there is an opportunity to take advantage of external funding to increase support to landowners. Freshwater Farm Plans will assist landowners to identify the highest areas of risk on farm and to identify priority mitigations.

Over 50 per cent of the land subject to the highest erosion and sediment yielding in the Waikato Region is situated within the hill country extending along the West Coast. The annual loss of sediment is estimated at approximately 1,000,000 tonnes or 245 t/km<sup>2</sup> (Palmer et. al., 2015). The hill country is prone to shallow slip and sheet erosion, particularly where heavy livestock are grazed on steep land, and to slumping, earthflow and gully erosion. The zone's harbours, estuaries, karst and cave systems are particularly vulnerable to high sediment input.

The West Coast Zone contains extensive areas of erosion prone (Class VI and VII) hill country and the West Coast Zone has the highest proportion of highly erosion-prone farmland in the region. Erosion affects farm production and sends sediment into waterways where it damages water quality and aquatic life and is a significant issue for the zone.

Land use change and agricultural intensification in areas where there is limited land use capability can contribute to erosion and sedimentation issues. Some land use practices also adversely affect soil health, versatility and productivity by compaction and reducing fertility (Waikato Regional Council, 2012).

Stream bank erosion is another source of sediment within waterways across the zone, with many watercourses within the zone having little or no erosion protection in place. Results from the 2017 Riparian Survey showed that at that time 28% of riparian bank length within the West Coast Zone was effectively fenced. This was an increase from the average of 7% in the 2002 survey (Norris, et al., 2020). Repeat surveys were undertaken in 2023, however the full results and report is not yet available. These results will provide an indication of the work of the council and others over the past five years in promoting waterway fencing in the zone.

Climate change is expected to result in more frequent extreme rainfall events in the future, further exacerbating erosion and sedimentation problems.

Key management issues for the zone with respect to soil conservation and sustainable land management practices include:

- stock access to waterways,
- hill country management,
- nutrient management,
- increased stocking rates versus the capability of the land and soil,
- loss of seeps and wet areas adjacent to streams,
- riparian management,
- impacts of contaminants on water quality and the habitats of taonga species,
- increased risk of flooding
- negative effects on indigenous biodiversity, aquatic recreation as well as future pastoral productivity and community prosperity.



## 4.3 Water quality

### Summary

### Challenges

Intensified land use, and increased demand for water in catchments are adversely impacting on water resources in the West Coast Zone and in general water quality is declining. The challenge is to protect and enhance water quality within the zone

### Opportunities

A strong window of opportunity to address water quality decline exists now as many catchments are healthy and intensive land use change has not been undertaken to a large extent.

The total length (6,287km) of rivers and streams in the West Coast Zone accounts for 14.2 per cent of the total length of stream and river network in the Waikato region. Streams on the West Coast are generally short and steep with high connectivity to the sea for migrating fish.

In general, water quality in West Coast rivers and shallow lakes is in decline, often in the form of a gradual change that is not obvious from year to year. There is an opportunity to intervene to protect and enhance water quality in the zone before these issues become more difficult to deal with.

Key risks and issues in relation to water quality, use and access are:

- loss of sensitive and rare fish species which live in cool, forested, headwater habitats,
- proliferation of stream weeds and algae in open, low gradient channels,
- loss of ecologically significant springs and seepages,
- decrease and loss of submerged plant communities which help maintain clear water in lakes,
- increased prevalence of algal blooms in lakes (this can happen very rapidly, and is difficult to reverse),
- reduced recreational enjoyment and eco-tourism opportunities around freshwater fishing, swimming, and boating activities,
- reduced opportunities for river and lake iwi to enjoy customary and traditional relationships with the water of the catchment.



Waikato Regional Council regularly monitors and reports on the quality of our region's river and stream resources.

Table 3 summarises the water quality indicators that have been monitored between 2015-2019 in various rivers and streams in the West Coast Zone.

Note that the results are presented as percentage of samples meeting council's guidelines for 'excellent', 'satisfactory', 'unsatisfactory' for water quality (Waikato Regional Council, 2024).

	Ecological health	Swimming quality
<b>Excellent (%)</b>	<b>48.6</b>	<b>0.4</b>
<b>Satisfactory (%)</b>	<b>29.4</b>	<b>12.4</b>
<b>Unsatisfactory (%)</b>	<b>21.9</b>	<b>87.3</b>

**Table 3: Summary of West Coast Zone water quality results**

The Essential Freshwater package includes the requirements for resource users as well as direction for councils to engage with communities and iwi to give effect to Te Mana o te Wai in regional policies and plans (Ministry for the Environment, 2020). The actions set out in this zone plan associated with developing and implementing harbour catchment management plans; incentivising the management of erosion prone land and rivers, project wetlands and harbour margins; and supporting appropriate sustainable land management practices will assist with meeting the objectives of the zone plan and relevant Essential Freshwater statutory requirements.

## 4.4 Indigenous biodiversity

### Summary

### Challenges

Twenty percent of the Waikato Region's high priority indigenous biodiversity is found on the West Coast Zone. These natural areas need active management to stop them shrinking and declining in quality.

### Opportunities

The co-ordination of efforts and expenditure will help ensure the best possible outcomes are achieved for natural habitats and the native species they support.

West Coast catchments contain a mosaic of modified areas and highly significant indigenous ecosystems. These include lake, wetland, freshwater stream, karst (limestone), forest, coastal, dune and estuarine ecosystems. These ecosystems support a wide range of species, some of them at risk of extinction. While some threatened species are found in lowland and submontane bush (e.g. Archey's frog), a considerable number are confined to coastal habitats, including populations of the New Zealand fur seal at Gannet Island, Albatross Point and Tirua Point

Like the rest of the country, indigenous forests of the West Coast have been reduced to about one third of their original extent, with much greater losses happening in coastal and lowland areas than in steeper hills and sub-montane areas. Wetland and dune areas have been even more heavily reduced than forests. The remaining indigenous ecosystems of the West Coast needs to be protected from further reduction in extent and quality.

Throughout the zone there are a range of animal and plant pests which threaten indigenous species and habitats. The effects and severity of impact of each of these pests vary throughout the zone depending on the location of the site and the values that require protection.

Key biosecurity and biodiversity issues on the West Coast include:

- reduction, fragmentation and isolation of indigenous ecosystems and habitats,
- loss of corridors or connections linking indigenous ecosystems and habitats,
- loss or disruption to migratory pathways in water, land or air,
- the difficulty of restoring indigenous forest and other ecosystems once they have been lost,
- effects of changes to water flows, levels and quality on ecosystems,
- an increased threat from animal and plant pests,
- loss of cultural values, amenity values and recreational opportunities.



## 4.5 Natural hazards

### Summary

### Challenges

There is limited detailed knowledge of the natural hazards that may impact the West Coast Zone

### Opportunities

There is an opportunity to improve risk management through increasing the knowledge of hazards. Upcoming data reviews and the acquisition of 2021 LiDAR data will assist with this.

The West Coast is considered a high energy coastline and, as such, there are a number of coastal hazards associated with it. These include cliff erosion and instability, coastal inundation, tsunamis, storm surges and oil spills. At present there is limited knowledge of the coastal processes and associated risks within the zone. The [Waikato Regional Hazards Portal](#) contains relevant information and links.

In 2009 Waikato Regional Council and Ōtorohanga District Council prepared a natural hazard risk assessment report which identified that river flooding hazards pose the greatest risk in terms of potential loss of human life, social disruption, economic cost and infrastructure damage. Coastal flooding has the second highest risk, and land instability has the third highest risk. The report can be downloaded on the Waikato Regional Council website.

In 2015, a tsunami study found that Port Waikato, Raglan Harbour and Aotea Harbour are at a low risk of inundation from a tsunami. However, waves could cause strong surges and currents and inundation could affect low-lying areas (Borrero & O'Neill, 2016).

The council has recently obtained LiDAR data (light and radar surveying technology to measure distance) from 2021 which will enable better assessment of shore dynamics, coastal inundation and cliff instability. A tidal gauge has been installed at Kawhia since 2008 and an analysis of data from 2008-2014 was published in 2015 (National Institute of Water & Atmospheric Research Ltd, 2015). At that stage the record was too short for trend analysis, however an updated report is currently being prepared to include data collected between 2014 to present.

The zone is subject to high intensity rainfall that can fall over a localised area causing flash flooding, land instability, stream bank/gully/slope erosion and debris flows. While Waikato Regional Council operates a flood warning network in the zone (namely river level and rainfall sites), coverage is limited due to the sparse population, isolated and remote catchments and generally low urban flood risk across the zone. Data from these sites can be accessed 24/7 from Waikato Regional Council's website.

The seismic/earthquake hazard threat to the zone is relatively unknown. GNS conducted a broad assessment in the late 1990s of the regional earthquake hazard risk and that report did not indicate that any extensive active fault networks existed in the zone. Since that time no further fault lines have been identified and further work would be required to ascertain the risk in more detail.



# 5 Progress

## 5.1 Waikato Regional Prioritisation Project

In 2013 the council's Land and Water Forum identified a need to better prioritise incentivised catchment management works regionally and within zones. As a result, a prioritisation framework was developed internally and used to support the preparation of the Waipā Catchment Plan (Waikato Regional Council, 2014). Following this the Waikato Prioritisation Framework (WPF) was developed for the whole of region in 2015. A 2018 revision supported the identification of priority locations and mitigations for the Waikato and Waipā River Restoration Strategy (Neilson, et al., 2018). Further revisions and updates have been completed periodically, with the most recent revision undertaken in 2021 (Norris, et al., 2021).

The WPF is a spatial framework that utilises spatial model data from multiple sources and applies geospatial techniques for determining priorities based on risk. It provides a decision support tool for prioritisation across catchments, identifying locations with the greatest potential for water quality improvement, and with the likely greatest cost benefit in implementing soil conservation mitigations (Norris, et al., 2021).

As part of the 2021 revision of the WPF, a detailed assessment of risks, mitigations, costs and potential outcomes was undertaken for the West Coast Zone. This had been identified as a priority action in the 2016 *West Coast Zone Plan*. The outcomes of this assessment have been used to refine priority catchments and targets in this revised Zone Plan and are reflected in the Action Plan. See Appendix 3 for ranked soil conservation scores by sub-catchment for the West Coast Zone.

## 5.2 Zone achievements

Since the development of the zone plan in 2016, the council has increased its West Coast Zone work programme. Since this time the West Coast Catchment Committee has been disbanded, however the zone vision and goals derived during the initial committee engagement and workshops to draft the 2016 zone plan have continued to be a focus for the work led and delivered by the council.

Since 2016, the council has supported delivery of the following across the zone:

<b>2622</b>	<b>708,582</b>	<b>443</b>
hectares of land retired	plants planted, including native, afforestation and willow/poplar poles	kilometres of fencing



Progress against the 2016 zone plan measures is summarised below in Table 4.

Goals	Measures	Progress
Protect and enhance the productive soil capacity, fresh and marine water quality and biodiversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agreed new catchment and river management works meet annual fund allocations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieved</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>60 per cent of zone funding spent in priority areas by July 2019.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieved</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>80 per cent of zone funding is spent in priority areas by July 2021.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieved</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hill country erosion programme fully implemented by 30 June 2019.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieved. A further 4-year programme has also recently been completed and new funding for 2024-2027 secured.</li> </ul>
Direct resources to activities and areas of greatest environmental benefit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identification of priority catchments and sub-catchments by July 2017.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed in 2021.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One integrated catchment/harbour management plan complete by July 2018.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not achieved. A decision was made to prepare plans for all three harbours concurrently. These are due for completion by June 2024.</li> </ul>
Support mana whenua and strengthen community partnerships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two formal community partnerships have been developed and terms agreed by July 2018.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least 3 partnership projects with Ngā Whenua Rāhui and Māori Trust farms have been completed (one in each harbour catchment)</li> </ul>
Enhance outcomes for the West Coast through strengthened leadership and visibility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Three to four Integrated Catchment Management Committee meetings held per annum.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The West Coast Zone programme update is provided to every meeting of the Integrated Catchment Management Committee.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A minimum of three council-wide meetings on West Coast Zone activities per annum.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not achieved. Council communications are undertaken via the relevant council committees.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete and implement stakeholder engagement plan by July 2017.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieved. The engagement plan will be refreshed following this updated Zone Plan.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete and implement communications plan by July 2017.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieved. The communications plan will be refreshed following this updated Zone Plan.</li> </ul>

Table 4: Progress against the 2016 *West Coast Zone Plan* measures

# 6. Zone funding

The council collects rates (general and targeted) for flood protection, river management, soil conservation works, catchment management and new works, based on areas of benefit and activities that contribute to the programmes being managed. This is outlined in the West Coast Zone - Funding Policy Statement (Waikato Regional Council, 2010).

The actions identified in this zone plan and funded by council will be implemented under the current levels of service agreed with the community. Work programmes and funding levels will be subject to review throughout the life of the plan.

## 6.1 Catchment new works and maintenance

For catchment new works (CNW), the council will continue to incentivise landowners to invest in catchment management activities that provide protection beyond statutory or minimum requirements and enhance the special values that characterise the West Coast such as wetlands, rivers, coastal and estuarine ecosystems.

The following funding framework will be applied:

- The costs of implementing identified actions in priority locations will be funded by council up to 35 per cent, with the remainder being met by other funding partners and landowners, subject to availability of funding. Landowner share may include in-kind contributions such as assisting with fencing, planting and plant maintenance.
- Throughout the remainder of the West Coast Zone landowners may be eligible for up to a 35 per cent funding contribution for restoration works if the project meets one or more of the following criteria:
  - Site containing isolated and severe erosion.
  - High existing biodiversity value, e.g. presence of threatened species, underrepresented ecosystem.
  - High potential for a flagship site for advocacy and education purposes.
  - Part of an iwi or community partnership project.
- Owners of properties containing previous works part-funded by council, may be eligible for up to 35% of the costs of maintaining those works, subject to funding availability. Maintenance may include activities such as fence repair, native plant releasing, in-fill native planting and weed control.
- Throughout the West Coast Zone, landowners and community groups will be able to receive information and advice on preventing and remediating erosion, maintaining and improving water quality, protecting and enhancing biodiversity and applying for restoration funding.

## 6.2 River management

For the river management programme, council works with landowners to achieve stable and healthy rivers, management of flood waters and enhancement of environmental values of river systems. Typical works include:

- Removing or relocating obstructions
- Vegetation management to improve channel conveyance, capacity and stability
- Mitigating bank erosion through construction of hard or soft engineering works and fencing and planting of river banks.

The following funding framework will be applied:

- The costs of implementing identified river maintenance actions in priority locations may be funded up to 100%. This includes actions such as obstruction removals and maintenance spraying of pest plants.
- Where a local benefactor (landowner) is identified actions will be funded by council up to 50 per cent, with the remainder being met by other funding partners and landowners, subject to availability of funding. Landowner share may include in-kind contributions such as assisting with fencing, planting and plant maintenance.
- Throughout the West Coast Zone, landowners and community groups will be able to receive information and advice on preventing and remediating erosion, maintaining and improving water quality, protecting and enhancing biodiversity and applying for restoration funding.



## 6.3 Hill Country Erosion Fund

Council has been successful in obtaining funding from the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) in obtaining funding to support landowners undertaking hill country erosion mitigations in priority catchments. Eligible actions include fencing and retiring LUC 6, 7 and 8 pasture, planting retired LUC 6e and 7 land with native afforestation species, retirement fencing of indigenous bush on LUC 6e, 7 and 8 land, and pole planting on erosion prone LUC 6e and 7 land. The following framework will be applied over this period:

- The costs of implementing identified actions in priority catchments will be funded by council and its funding partners up to 70 per cent, with the remainder being met by other funding partners and landowners, subject to availability of funding. Landowner share may include in-kind contributions such as assisting with fencing, planting and plant maintenance.
- River management works are out of scope for this funding.

## 6.4 Coastal Enhancement Fund

This funding was established in 2018 and is intended to support projects that don't meet our standard criteria for CNW funding. The fund is intended for projects that are either:

- on public land or land for which there is no clear owner (e.g. LINZ who don't have any capacity or desire to be involved) and are a high priority for protection
- community, DOC, TLA or iwi partnerships where there isn't eligibility for CNW (for example plant pest control, mangrove removal, animal pest trapping lines etc)
- high value sites on Multiple Māori owned land where there isn't a clear source of co-funding

Works can be funded at up to 100% of project costs, however for partnership projects we seek financial and/or in-kind contributions from partners.

## 6.5 Other funding sources

The council also actively explores opportunities for co-funding of projects with other agencies. The zone has been successful in several funding applications, and opportunities for further funding will be explored and actioned as appropriate.

Some funding sources are included in Appendix 4.





# 7 West Coast Zone vision and goals

The original zone plan vision and goals (previously referred to as objectives) were developed with the (now disbanded) West Coast Catchment Committee at the time of the first zone plan development. These goals remain aligned to the Waikato Regional Council Strategic Direction 2023-2025.

The vision for the West Coast Zone is:

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**Healthy West Coast Zone catchments for community and environmental wellbeing.**

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## 7.1 Zone goals

The goals developed to support the realisation of the West Coast Zone vision are:

- 1** Protect and enhance the productive soil capacity, fresh and marine water quality and biodiversity.

Water quality, soil capacity and areas of valued biodiversity are all under pressure within the West Coast Zone. There is significant opportunity to intervene to protect and enhance soil capacity, water quality and native biodiversity before emerging challenges become more difficult and complex to address. Frequently, the intervention opportunities span across all these areas as they are interconnected.

- 2** Direct resources to activities and areas of greatest environmental benefit.

Analysis of West Coast Zone environmental and catchment values will be critical to ensuring that our limited resources are prioritised and focused on areas under the greatest pressure, and where the greatest benefits can be achieved. The priorities determined will provide a basis for guiding discussions with key stakeholders and community groups on opportunities for working together in specific sub-catchments.

- 3** Support mana whenua and strengthen community partnerships.

There is an ongoing need to build enduring relationships with mana whenua and to leverage and strengthen community partnerships for the long-term protection and enhancement of the West Coast environment. This partnership approach will be critical to successful delivery of a range of zone plan outcomes.

- 4** Enhance outcomes for the West Coast through strengthened leadership and visibility.

The unique environmental, social and cultural values of the West Coast Zone need to be championed across the council and within the wider community to raise the profile of the zone. Effective leadership at committee level and within the community will play a key role in promoting the enhancement of West Coast Zone values and will also assist in ensuring that programme activities are integrated across council and are focused on areas of greatest benefit.



# 8 Implementation, monitoring and review

An implementation plan has been developed with specific and tangible actions to help achieve the zone vision and goals. The implementation plan, which can be viewed in the appendices on pages 27-38, sets out a description of each action, the relevant priority catchment(s) where the action will be undertaken, and the measures for success.

Monitoring of the zone plan goals will be ongoing and will focus on the following key aspects:

- environmental outcomes demonstrating the effectiveness (or otherwise) of this zone plan
- completion of actions to measure the degree of implementation of this zone plan
- the outcomes of the information gathered in respect of Table 4 below.

The results of monitoring will be reported annually to the Integrated Catchment Management Committee.

The zone plan will be subject to a full review every six years and a limited review three years after each full review.

A three-yearly summary report will be published prior to each review of the zone plan. The annual reports and three-yearly summary will be used to inform the reviews of this zone plan.

Goals	Measures
Protect and enhance the productive soil capacity, fresh and marine water quality and biodiversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreed new catchment and river management works meet annual fund allocations.</li> <li>• 80 per cent of zone funding is spent in identified priority areas.</li> <li>• Hill country erosion programme fully implemented by 30 June 2027.</li> </ul>
Direct resources to activities and areas of greatest environmental benefit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrated catchment management plans complete for each harbour catchment by August 2024.</li> </ul>
Support mana whenua and strengthen community partnerships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two iwi partnership projects have been developed and implementation commenced by July 2026.</li> </ul>
Enhance outcomes for the West Coast through strengthened leadership and visibility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• West Coast Zone programme update provided to all Integrated Catchment Management Committee meetings.</li> <li>• Revise and implement the West Coast communications plan by July 2025.</li> </ul>

Table 5: West Coast Zone plan measures of success



# 9 Appendices

## Appendix 1 - Implementation plan

Goal 1: Protect and enhance the productive soil capacity, fresh and marine water quality and biodiversity

*Explanation: Water quality soil capacity and areas of valued biodiversity are all under pressure within the West Coast Zone. There is significant opportunity to intervene to protect and enhance soil capacity, water quality and native biodiversity before emerging challenges become more difficult and complex to address. Frequently, the intervention opportunities span across all these areas as they are interconnected.*

Action area	Implementation actions	Priority catchment(s)/site(s)	Measure	Date	Programme
1.1: New catchment management works (including the Hill Country Erosion Fund project) to enhance soil conservation, water quality and biodiversity values	<p>1.1.1 Fund new works (Funding Policy Section 6) that incentivise landowners to invest in activities that provide protection beyond statutory or minimum requirements to support soil conservation, water quality and biodiversity, and enhance the special values that characterise the West Coast such as wetlands, shallow lakes, karst and coastal features. This will be undertaken by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ engagement with landowners, and informing them of the assistance available for new works;</li> <li>○ providing advice on the funding process and ongoing landowner responsibilities;</li> <li>○ preparation of Environmental Programme Agreements (EPAs);</li> <li>○ providing advice and where possible, providing support for the preparation of funding applications from other sources to complement new works projects.</li> </ul> <p>Target 80 per cent of catchment new works funding into priority areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mokau</li> <li>• Awakino</li> <li>• Marokopa</li> <li>• Kāwhia*</li> <li>• Aotea*</li> <li>• Whāingaroa*</li> </ul> <p><i>*Refer to the Harbour Catchment Plans for priority sub-catchments</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waimai-Mangati</li> <li>• Shallow lakes</li> </ul>	80 per cent of catchment new works funding is spent in priority areas.	Ongoing	West Coast Zone Manager
	<p>1.1.2 Outside of priority areas, focus on sites in partnership with iwi, other agencies and/or funding providers that are of high biodiversity value, SNAs and/or flagship sites. In addition, respond to landowner requests for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ information and, if appropriate, funding for new works;</li> </ul>		At least two iwi partnership projects commenced.	July 2025	West Coast Zone Manager

Action area	Implementation actions	Priority catchment(s)/site(s)	Measure	Date	Programme
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ assistance with preparing funding applications to complement new works projects.</li> </ul>				
	1.1.3 Enhancement of coastal areas within priority harbour areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kāwhia*</li> <li>• Aotea*</li> <li>• Whāingaroa*</li> </ul> <i>*Refer to the Harbour Catchment Plans for priority sub-catchments</i>	Up to \$50,000 Coastal Enhancement Funding spent in priority harbour areas.	Ongoing	West Coast Zone Manager
	1.1.4 Implement projects under the Hill Country Erosion Fund (HCEF) project – with 40% of the West Coast HCEF allocated to the southern West Coast Zone.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mokau</li> <li>• Awakino</li> <li>• Marokopa</li> </ul>	40% of the West Coast HCEF allocated to the southern West Coast Zone.	30 June 2027	West Coast Zone Manager
	1.1.5 Implement projects under the Hill Country Erosion Fund (HCEF) project – with 60% of the West Coast HCEF allocated to the northern West Coast Zone.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waimai &amp; Mangati</li> <li>• Whāingaroa Harbour catchment</li> <li>• Aotea Harbour catchment</li> <li>• Kāwhia Harbour catchment</li> </ul>	60% of the West Coast HCEF allocated to the northern West Coast Zone.	30 June 2027	West Coast Zone Manager
	1.1.6 In priority harbour sub catchments, provide incentives for eligible, non-regulatory hill country erosion control mitigations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kāwhia (Te Kauri, Awaroa and Oparau)</li> <li>• Aotea (Te Maari, Taparamapua)</li> <li>• Whāingaroa (Waingaro and Waitetuna)</li> </ul>	At least 40 ha per year of treatment of hill country erosion across priority harbour sub-catchments, through pole planting, retirement fencing and revegetation.	30 June 2034	West Coast Zone Manager

Action area	Implementation actions	Priority catchment(s)/site(s)	Measure	Date	Programme
	<p>1.1.7 Where extension opportunities are available, provide support to landowners to bring people together (e.g. through farm field days) to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Build knowledge and capability;</li> <li>○ Co-ordinate discussion groups on enhancing catchment health;</li> <li>○ Encourage holistic catchment management and thinking beyond property boundaries.</li> </ul>	Whole of zone	Support at least one community workshop or event per year.	Ongoing	West Coast Zone Manager  Catchment and River Management Teams
1.2: River management works	1.2.1 Undertake, in partnership with landowners, river channel erosion control works along priority rivers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marokopa</li> <li>• Waikawau</li> <li>• Mokau (including Mapiu, Mapara, Mangapehi, Mangaotaki and Mokauiti)</li> <li>• Awakino (including Manganui)</li> <li>• Priority rivers within Harbour Catchments</li> </ul>	80 per cent funding is spent in priority rivers.	Ongoing	West Coast Zone Manager  River Management Team
	1.2.2 Respond to reports of flood damage and undertake inspections where required.	Whole of zone	<p>&lt;5 reported incidences per year where it takes more than 3 days to remove surface water after events with up to 10% annual exceedance probability.</p> <p>Enquiries following significant weather events are prioritised and responded to, with inspections undertaken as required, when and where practical to do so.</p>	Ongoing	West Coast Zone Manager  River Management Team

Action area	Implementation actions	Priority catchment(s)/site(s)	Measure	Date	Programme
	1.2.3 Inspection of priority rivers and river control works following flood events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waitetuna</li> <li>• Marokopa</li> <li>• Waikawau</li> <li>• Mokau (including Mapiu, Mapara, Mangapehi, Mangaotaki and Mokauiti)</li> <li>• Awakino (including Manganui)</li> </ul>	Inspections of priority rivers completed as required following significant weather events.	Ongoing	West Coast Zone Manager  River Management Team
	1.2.4 Identify areas for proactive river management within the priority harbour sub catchment(s) by July 2024. Use local knowledge and further survey of stream bank erosion. Complete a proposed works plan by July 2025 and review the sub catchment(s) within five years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kāwhia (including Te Kauri, Awaroa and Oparau)</li> <li>• Aotea (including Te Maari, Taparamapua)</li> <li>• Whāingaroa (including Waingaro and Waitetuna)</li> </ul>	Areas for proactive river management in priority sub catchment(s) identified.	July 2024	West Coast Zone Manager
	1.2.5. Provide incentives for remediation and prevention of stream bank erosion in priority harbour sub catchment(s). Work in partnership with landowners in the priority sub catchment(s).		Proposed works plan completed.	July 2025	River Management Team
1.3: Maintenance of existing catchment and river management works	1.3.1 Maintain accurate, up-to-date property files and asset records.	Whole of zone	Review proposed works plan every 5 years	Review 2030 (5 yearly)	River Management Team
	1.3.2 Implement the agreed inspection programme of assets and follow up any maintenance that landowners are required to carry out. Ensure landowners are aware of and meet their responsibilities under existing agreements.		Provide information and advice to landowners.	Ongoing	West Coast Zone Manager
			Provide a level of funding as per funding framework to landowners for reactive and proactive river/stream erosion control.		River Management Team
			A sample of at least 10 per cent of all catchment scheme and non-scheme works (individual work agreements)	Ongoing	West Coast Zone Manager

Action area	Implementation actions	Priority catchment(s)/site(s)	Measure	Date	Programme
	1.3.3 Special project - A minimum of 15 maintenance inspections to be undertaken on existing catchment management projects, and 11 maintenance inspections to be undertaken on existing river management projects. These inspections will be as part of a dedicated maintenance inspection programme to understand the current condition of works through various funding models, and to develop options for a short- and long-term maintenance programme.		legally protected on property titles outside schemes) are inspected to assess their condition every year. Works include fencing, planting and erosion control structures. 15 maintenance inspections undertaken on existing catchment management projects. 11 maintenance inspections undertaken on existing river management projects.	July 2025	West Coast Zone Manager
1.4: Priority biodiversity funding and natural heritage partnership programme	1.4.1 For protection of areas of high biodiversity value, contribute funding to works (or top up to a higher level of funding) that incentivise landowners to invest in activities that provide protection beyond statutory or minimum requirements. 1.4.2 Increase focus on funding protection of coastal cliffs and karst features. 1.4.3 Develop a decision making framework to assist with allocation of biodiversity funding. 1.4.4 Seek opportunities for joint funding of projects that have co-benefits for catchment management and biodiversity protection and enhancement through collaborations between the West Coast catchment management team and ICM biodiversity team.	Whole of zone	Decision making framework developed to assist with funding allocation.	June 2027	Biodiversity Team Leader
	1.4.5 On request or as part of a focus on priority biodiversity areas, provide advice, engage and inform landowners of the assistance available through council's contestable funds, and advise on the funding process and ongoing landowner responsibilities.	Whole of zone		Ongoing	

Action area	Implementation actions	Priority catchment(s)/site(s)	Measure	Date	Programme
	<p>1.4.6 The council will fund eligible projects via its Natural Heritage Partnership Programme (regional programme). This comprises council's three funding streams that support the community undertaking environmental enhancement. These funds are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Natural Heritage Fund (NHF).</li> <li>○ The Environment Initiatives Fund (EIF).</li> <li>○ The Small Scale Community Initiatives Fund (SSCIF).</li> </ul>	Whole of zone	The Natural Heritage Partnership Programme funds are evenly distributed across the region.	Ongoing	
1.5: Sustainable land management	<p>1.5.1 The Primary Industry Engagement (PIE) section aims to support the rural sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to meet its regulatory obligations</li> <li>• to continuously improve their environmental footprint at both farm and catchment scale</li> </ul> <p>The scope of work includes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting capacity building within the agriculture industry to support farmers in adapting to freshwater farm plan regulations and future changes to Waikato Regional Plan.</li> <li>• Partnering with the agriculture industry, regional sector and rural communities to facilitate increased awareness and implementation of freshwater farm plans.</li> <li>• Waikato Regional Council, agricultural industry, regional sector and rural communities support initiatives to deliver sustainable agriculture practices are aligned, consistent and effective in bringing about on-farm change.</li> </ul> <p>1.5.2 ICM will work with PIE to support the roll out of Freshwater Farm Plans across the West Coast Zone with a particular focus on ensuring alignment of FFPs with incentivised programmes.</p>		<p>At least two freshwater farm plan workshops to be held in the zone before December 2024.</p> <p>Workshop for farms in hill country erosion priority catchments to be held by June 2025.</p>	<p>December 2024</p> <p>June 2025</p>	PIE and Hill Country Erosion Fund project manager
1.6: Coastal	1.6.1 On request or as part of a focus on priority biodiversity areas, engage and inform landowners of the assistance available through council's Coastcare Programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kāwhia</li> <li>• Aotea</li> <li>• Whāingaroa</li> </ul>	At least three promotional activities annually	Ongoing	Biodiversity Team Leader



Action area	Implementation actions	Priority catchment(s)/site(s)	Measure	Date	Programme
	1.6.2 Provide plants, materials, weed control and guidance to eligible groups that aim to restore a local coastal habitat, such as foedune, reardune or coastal forests via the Coastcare Programme.		At least three promotional activities annually	Ongoing	
	1.6.3 Encourage native planting for dune restoration and provide information on risks of planting exotic species.			Ongoing	
1.7: Pest management to manage plant and animal pests that are a threat to indigenous species, habitats and economic productivity	1.7.1 Collaborate with the Department of Conservation and iwi to control goats in high value biodiversity areas on the West Coast.	Whole of zone	Reporting via the RPMP Operational Plan Annual Report	Ongoing	Biosecurity Team Leader
	1.7.2 Continue to manage possums in priority possum control areas (PPCAs) where control is needed to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>protect and enhance biodiversity (including improving the stability of the catchments);</li> <li>enhance farm production;</li> <li>maintain the gains of previous or existing possum control.</li> </ul>	Whole of zone	Reporting via the RPMP Operational Plan Annual Report (to a 5 per cent residual trap catch)	Ongoing	Biosecurity Team Leader
	1.7.3 Key plant pest control actions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake direct control projects for high threat plant pest species that are set out in the Regional Pest Management Plan (RPMP).</li> <li>Surveillance of RPMP and national interest pest plants.</li> <li>Ensure landowners (including TLAs and Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency) comply with the RPMP rules around pest plants.</li> <li>Provide technical support (advice and education) for community groups.</li> <li>Support DOC to manage pest plants within the three West Coast harbours and elsewhere on DOC managed land.</li> </ul>	Whole of zone	Reporting via the RPMP Operational Plan Annual Report	Ongoing and reactive	Biosecurity – Pest Plants Team Leader
	1.7.4 Support Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) to manage national priorities.	Whole of zone	Reporting via the RPMP Operational Plan Annual Report	Ongoing	Biosecurity – Pest Plants Team Leader,

Action area	Implementation actions	Priority catchment(s)/site(s)	Measure	Date	Programme
					Biosecurity Team Leader
1.8: Community resilience to hazards	1.8.1 Develop a zone wide Natural Hazard Risk Management Plan (based on the current series with TAs) which details all the hazards for the zone, their ranking, and outlines responsibilities for their management.	Whole of zone			
	1.8.2 Input into the Waikato Regional Council internal Hydrology Review, including reviewing the need for additional flood warning sites following the North Island rain events of 2023.	Whole of zone		Beginning June 2024	Regional Hazards Team

## Goal 2: Direct resources to activities and areas of greatest environmental benefit

*Explanation: Analysis of West Coast Zone environmental and catchment values will be critical to ensuring that our limited resources are prioritised and focused on areas under the greatest pressure, and where the greatest benefits can be achieved. The priorities determined will provide a basis for guiding discussions with key stakeholders and community groups on opportunities for working together in specific sub-catchments.*

Action area	Implementation actions	Priority catchment(s)	Measure	Date	Programme
2.1 Prioritisation of catchments for soil conservation, water quality and biodiversity values	2.1.1 In the short term (1 to 2 years), continue to focus on existing priorities established through the 2021 Regional Prioritisation Project detailed West Coast assessment and previous Zone plan.			30 June 2026	West Coast Zone Manager
	2.1.2 SedNetNZ update and utilisation: A full region-wide update of SedNetNZ model will be completed in March 2024. This model predicts mean suspended sediment loads from hillslope (i.e. shallow landslide, earthflow, gully, and surficial erosion) and riverbank erosion processes. Baseline sediment loads are modelled at the REC2 stream segment level and provide a detailed spatial dataset to identify high erosion risk areas. Using SedNetNZ, modelling of selected mitigation scenarios (e.g., space planting and exclusion of stock from waterways) will be undertaken to assess sediment load reductions relative to the current baseline. This will help identify areas where greatest gains can be made to achieve zone objectives, meet NPS-FM attribute bands and national bottom lines (NBL) for suspended sediment, and improve water quality.	Whole of zone	Technical report published	30 June 2024	Soil and Land (SPI)
	2.1.3 Model region-wide suspended sediment loads under future climate change: The impact of future climate change on erosion and suspended sediment loads across the region will be assessed. This assessment will support further prioritisation of catchments where climate change is likely to have the greatest impact on erosion and suspended sediment loads in waterways.	Whole of zone	Technical report published	30 June 2024	Soil and Land (SPI)

	2.1.4 Regional Prioritisation Project refinement and utilization: Update the Regional Prioritisation project framework to include updates of the underlying models.	Whole of zone	Technical report published	30 December 2026	Soil and Land (SPI)
2.2 Implementation of catchment and harbour management plans	2.2.1 Complete the harbour catchment management plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kāwhia</li> <li>• Aotea</li> <li>• Whāingaroa</li> </ul>	Harbour catchment management plans completed within required timeframes.	30 June 2024	West Coast Zone Manager
	2.2.2 Implement the actions as specified in the approved harbour catchment management plans.		Harbour catchment management actions completed within required timeframes.	Ongoing	

### Goal 3: Support mana whenua and strengthen community partnerships

*Explanation: There is an ongoing need to build enduring relationships with mana whenua and to leverage and strengthen community partnerships for the long term protection and enhancement of the West Coast environment. This partnership approach will be critical to successful delivery of a range of zone plan outcomes.*

Action area	Implementation action	Priority catchment(s)	Measure	Date	Programme
3.1 Support of mana whenua initiatives	3.1.1 Build relationships with iwi, hapū and marae to develop trust and credibility.	Whole of zone	Engagement with iwi authorities utilising co-management operational forums with West Coast iwi, and Taiao Forums where in place.	Ongoing	West Coast Zone Manager
	3.1.2 Understand mana whenua objectives and priorities.				
	3.1.3 Identify areas of common objectives and supporting associated initiatives.				
	3.1.4 Be responsive and adaptable to Treaty settlement outcomes on the West Coast.				
3.2 Increased effectiveness through partnerships	3.2.1 Regularly liaising with agencies that fund activities that complement zone new works to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ share information and alert one another to changes in funding priorities, criteria or process.</li> <li>○ encourage strategic funding of projects to make the best use of limited resources.</li> <li>○ facilitate project management for reporting, accountability, confidence.</li> <li>○ promote programmes for future action.</li> </ul>	Whole of zone		Ongoing	West Coast Zone Manager
	3.2.2 Develop relationships and undertake joint projects where beneficial with the Department of Conservation, given that they are a major land steward within the West Coast Zone.			Ongoing	

## Goal 4: Enhance outcomes for the West Coast through strengthened leadership and visibility

*Explanation: The unique environmental, social and cultural values of the West Coast Zone need to be championed across the council and within the wider community to raise the profile of the zone. Effective leadership at committee level and within the community will play a key role in promoting the enhancement of West Coast Zone values and will also assist in ensuring that programme activities are integrated across council and are focused on areas of greatest benefit.*

Action area	Implementation action	Priority catchment(s)	Measure	Date	Program
<b>4.1 Leadership - Provide overall management, oversight and direction to the zone programmes, including zone planning, management of zone staff, financial management, and stakeholder and political liaison</b>	4.1.1 Develop annual work programmes for river and catchment works within the zone.	Whole of zone	Annual works programme developed within required timeframes.	Ongoing	West Coast Zone Manager
	4.1.2 Manage all zone-based activities, resources, assets and finances and provide timely and accurate status and financial reports, and co-ordinate the reporting of integrated catchment activities within the zone.		Status and financial reporting done within required timeframes	Ongoing	
	4.1.3 Service the relevant Council Committee(s) through regular liaison and reporting and support the Council in its role of strategic governance for the West Coast Zone programmes.		Council Committee reporting undertaken as per meeting schedules.	Ongoing	
	4.1.4 Review the West Coast Zone Plan, with a full review every six years and a limited review three years after each full review.		Zone plan reviewed as per the review cycle.	Full review 2026 Limited review 2029	
<b>4.2 Build awareness of West Coast features and zone plan objectives within the council and influence council programmes</b>	4.2.1 Scope opportunities to profile the West Coast Zone Plan objectives across council.	Whole of zone		Ongoing	West Coast Zone Manager
	4.2.2 Initiate and coordinate quarterly West Coast Zone meetings for staff council-wide to promote internal knowledge of activities within the West Coast and synergies of activity.		Quarterly meetings undertaken as required.		
	4.2.3 Revise and implement the West Coast communications plan by July 2025.		Plan revision complete		

## Appendix 2 – Plans and policies

The following strategies, plans and initiatives are relevant to Waikato Regional Council's work in the West Coast Zone (please note that this may not be an exhaustive list).

### Resource Management Act 1991

Section 15 states that no person may discharge any contaminant into water unless the discharge is specifically allowed for in a national environmental standard, a rule in a relevant regional plan or a resource consent. Section 30(1)(c)(iia) sets out the function of regional councils in maintaining and enhancing ecosystems in water bodies and coastal waters.

Section 69, sets out rules relating to water quality and provides that, subject to the reasonable mixing of a discharged contaminant, a regional council should not set water quality standards in a regional plan that result or may result in a reduction in water quality unless it is consistent with the purpose of the RMA to do so.

Section 70, which sets out that before a regional council includes a rule providing for a discharge as a permitted activity, it must be satisfied that the discharge by itself or in combination with other discharges will not, after reasonable mixing, result in specified effects on the receiving waters.

### Waikato Regional Policy Statement

Provides an overview of resource management issues facing the region and outlines objectives, policies and methods to achieve integrated management of the natural and physical resources of the Waikato Region.

The Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) requires every region to prepare a regional policy statement – in order to achieve the purpose of the RMA by providing an overview of the resource management issues of the region, and policies and methods to achieve integrated management of the natural and physical resources.

### Waikato Regional Plan

The Waikato Regional Plan (WRP) outlines how the Waikato Regional Council will undertake its resource management responsibilities in relation to water, river and lake beds, land and soil, air and geothermal resources.

The Waikato Regional Plan contains a number of generic policies, rules and methods that are relevant for the management of water quality and quantity, indigenous biodiversity and social and cultural values.

The WRP includes a mixture of regulatory and non-regulatory methods and rules with effects-based performance standards.

The Waikato Regional Council commenced the review of the WRP in late 2015 for the Waikato and Waipa Rivers and their catchments (Plan Change 1 – Healthy River wai ora (PC1)) and while not specifically relevant for the West Coast Zone, the outcome of PC1 will likely influence how the remaining WRP is reviewed.

### Waikato Regional Coastal Plan

The Waikato Regional Coastal Plan (Coastal Plan) sets out how Waikato Regional Council will fulfil its resource management responsibilities in the Coastal Marine Area (CMA), and the regulations that apply within it.

Waikato Regional Council is currently undertaking a review of the Coastal Plan.

### Regional Pest Management Plan (RPMP)

The Biosecurity Act 1993 guides pest management in New Zealand, with a focus on preventing new pests from entering the country (through border control surveillance) and management of pests that are already established here. The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) is the lead agency for biosecurity in New Zealand.

Under the Biosecurity Act 1993, regional councils can develop Regional Pest Management Plans (RPMP) and Regional Pathway Management Plans to develop a pest management approach that is specific to the needs and expectation of the region and its community. Other groups and agencies can also play a key role when a pest or disease affects their interests.

Waikato Regional Council's RPMP was approved in 2022. It establishes the strategic and statutory framework for the management of pests within the region, to:

- minimise the actual or potential adverse environmental effects of pest plants and animals; and
- maximise the effectiveness of pest management programmes via a regionally coordinated approach.

### Waikato Region Shallow Lakes Management Plan (2014)

The Waikato Regional Shallow Lakes Management Plan was developed in 2014 and draws together information about the 71 shallow lakes of the Waikato region, and the policy and legal framework for their management.

The management plan is divided into two volumes; volume 1 identifies the key management issues for shallow lakes, with a specific focus on matters that the Waikato Regional Council has responsibility for (i.e. water quality, lake water levels and biodiversity values). Objectives have been identified for implementation within the Waikato Regional Council's shallow lake management programme over 10- years.

Volume 2 is a complementary resource statement that summarises available information and knowledge for shallow lakes in the Waikato region and identifies specific key management actions for individual lakes at a greater level of detail. It is intended that this volume will be relevant and useful to a wide range of stakeholders and individuals.

### Local Government Act 2002 (LGA)

The Local Government Act 2002 (LGA) sets out the statutory purpose of district and regional councils and the long term plan (LTP) process provides a framework for the direction and priorities of each local authority.

## Long Term Plan

Through Long Term Plans (LTPs), councils secure funding for their activities in consultation with their communities. This includes funding for biosecurity activities. Regional councils also have responsibilities under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) for natural and physical resources. Adverse effects are managed through regional policy statements, regional and district plans, and resource consents. Regional policies and plans can manage activities so that they do not create or exacerbate biosecurity risks. The council's regional policy statement and regional plan contains policies and methods to manage biosecurity effects.

## New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement (NZCPS)

Objective 1 specifically refers to the maintenance or enhancement of coastal water quality as a means of safeguarding the integrity, form, functioning and resilience of the coastal environment and sustaining its ecosystems.

## National Policy Statement – Freshwater Management (NPS-FM 2020)

The Essential Freshwater package introduced rules and regulations to stop further degradation and bring New Zealand's freshwater resources, waterways and ecosystems to a healthy state within a generation. National Environmental Standards for Freshwater and a National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPSFM) will prevent further loss and degradation of freshwater habitats and introduced controls on some high-risk activities. These came into force on 3 September 2020.

The core decision-making concept Te Mana o te Wai in the NPSFM recognises that the health of the environment is integral to our wellbeing. Te Mana o te Wai recognises the vital importance of water. It expresses the special connection that New Zealanders have with freshwater. By protecting the health of freshwater, we protect the health and well-being of people and our ecosystems. To give effect to Te Mana o te Wai regional councils must develop a long-term vision through discussion with communities and tangata whenua.

Establishing a long-term vision for a waterbody means capturing the needs and aspirations of the community and tangata whenua in each region. Long-term visions identify a time frame that is both ambitious and reasonable (for example 30 years). The long-term vision needs to be based on the history of, and current pressures, on local waterbodies and catchments. Regional councils also need to regularly report on their progress against the long-term vision.

The NPSFM also contains policies for maintaining or improving ecosystem health, which include protection of habitat and aquatic species.

## National Environmental Standards for Freshwater (NES-F 2020)

Some of the rules to be applied in order to meet the NPSFM 2020's objectives and policies and those set in regional plans through the National Objectives Framework process and under parts of the NPSFM 2020, are set out in the National Environmental Standards for Freshwater (NESF).

According to the Ministry for the Environment, the NESF is designed to:

- protect natural inland wetlands,
- protect urban and rural streams from in-filling,
- ensure connectivity of fish habitat (fish passage),
- set minimum requirements for feedlots and other stockholding areas,
- improve poor practice intensive winter grazing of forage crops,
- restrict further agricultural intensification until the end of 2024,
- limit the discharge of synthetic nitrogen fertiliser to land and require reporting of fertiliser use.

Controls relating to Natural wetlands - the overarching activities controlled by the NESF in relation to natural wetlands are vegetation clearance, earthworks, and wetland drainage or the taking, using, damming, diversion or discharge of water. Importantly, none of the controls relating to natural wetlands apply to customary harvest of food or resources undertaken in accordance with tikanga Māori.

Each of New Zealand's regional councils are responsible for the consenting and consent monitoring associated with these regulations.

## National Environmental Standards for Plantation Forestry (NES-PF)

The NES-PF are regulations under the RMA which aim to maintain or improve the environmental outcomes associated with plantation forestry and to increase the efficiency and certainty of managing plantation forestry activities. This is achieved through a single set of regulations under the RMA that apply to foresters throughout New Zealand. The NES-PF applies to any forest of at least 1 hectare that has been planted specifically for commercial purposes and will be harvested.

The NES-PF regulations cover eight core plantation forestry activities that have potential environmental effects. Two relate to indigenous biodiversity: indigenous bird nesting for specific species and clearance of indigenous vegetation. The NPSIB provisions manage indigenous biodiversity in SNAs located in plantation forests. The NPSIB provisions prevail because the NES-PF allows councils to be more stringent than the NES-PF in their plans to protect SNAs.



### **National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land (NPS-HPL)**

The NPS-HPL requires the identification and management of land for primary production. It does not intend for the absolute protection of highly productive land or that there should be no net loss of such land. Rather, the aim is to require local authorities to consider the value of this resource in their region/district, both now and in the future.

### **Proposed National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity**

The Government is proposing a National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity. This builds on a draft created by the Biodiversity Collaborative Group. It has been developed by the Ministry for the Environment and the Department of Conservation. The proposed NPSIB would focus on maintaining and improving terrestrial indigenous biodiversity.

Submission closed in July 2022 and the document is under review.

### **The Biosecurity Act 1993**

The Biosecurity Act is the key legislation for managing marine pests in New Zealand. Key provisions and regulatory mechanisms available under the Biosecurity Act to manage marine pests include:

- national policy direction,
- national and regional pest management plans,
- national and regional pathway management plans,
- government–industry agreements,
- craft risk management standards,
- controlled area restrictions,
- small scale management programmes,
- unwanted organism declarations.

The statutory provisions enabling pathway management plans and government industry agreements were added by amendments to the Act in late 2012.

## **11.1.1 Ngāti Hikairo Iwi Freshwater Management Plan 2005-2015**

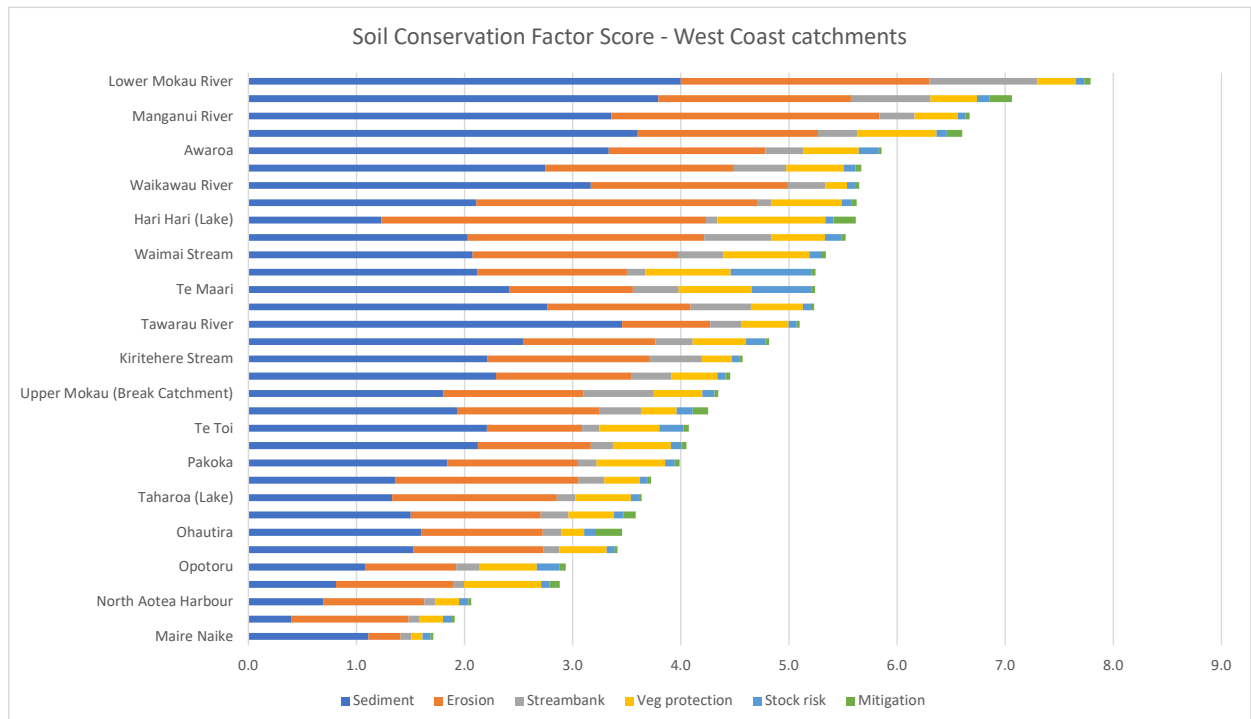
Ngāti Hikairo Freshwater Management Plan<sup>3</sup> outlines objectives and goals for their rohe. Some of the main goals are given below.

- To gradually improve the availability of suitable spawning habitat for indigenous fish species especially Koura, Inanga and Tuna.
- Increase the population of aquatic species.
- The promotion of effective management of the river, stream and lake banks to protect riparian habitat.
- A reduction in sediment inflows, enabling the river and streams to return to their natural character.
- A reduction in effluent discharges to all rivers, streams and lakes.
- A reduction in nutrient loading to all rivers, streams and lakes.

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3 Ngāti Hikairo Freshwater Management Plan. August 2005

# Appendix 3 – West Coast Zone sub-catchment soil conservation score



For the soil conservation key issue, the WRC ICM goals place a high importance on sediment and erosion (80% of the score combined). Land use pressures, represented by vegetation protection and stock pressure are weighted next highest (17.5% of the score), and WRC works are weighted the lowest to have the least influence on the score (2.5% of the score).

	Sediment	Erosion	Streambank	Veg protection	Stock risk	Mitigation	Overall score
Lower Mokau River	4	2.3	1	0.4	0.1	0.1	7.8
Awakino River	3.8	1.8	0.7	0.4	0.1	0.2	7.1
Manganui River	3.4	2.5	0.3	0.4	0.1	0	6.7
Mangaotaki River	3.6	1.7	0.4	0.7	0.1	0.1	6.6
Awaroa	3.3	1.4	0.4	0.5	0.2	0	5.9
Te Kauri	2.7	1.7	0.5	0.5	0.1	0.1	5.7
Hari Hari (Lake)	1.2	3	0.1	1	0.1	0.2	5.6
Kerikeri	2.1	2.6	0.1	0.7	0.1	0.1	5.6
Waikawau River	3.2	1.8	0.3	0.2	0.1	0	5.6
Mokauiti Stream	2	2.2	0.6	0.5	0.2	0	5.5
Waimai Stream	2.1	1.9	0.4	0.8	0.1	0	5.3
Marokopa River	2.8	1.3	0.6	0.5	0.1	0	5.2
Te Maari	2.4	1.1	0.4	0.7	0.5	0	5.2
Kaawa Stream	2.1	1.4	0.2	0.8	0.8	0	5.2
Tawarau River	3.5	0.8	0.3	0.4	0.1	0	5.1
Oparau	2.5	1.2	0.3	0.5	0.2	0	4.8
Kiritehere Stream	2.2	1.5	0.5	0.3	0.1	0	4.6
Taparamapua	2.3	1.2	0.4	0.4	0.1	0	4.5
Waitetuna	1.9	1.3	0.4	0.3	0.1	0.1	4.3
Upper Mokau	1.8	1.3	0.6	0.4	0.1	0	4.3
Waiharakeke	2.1	1	0.2	0.5	0.1	0	4.1
Te Toi	2.2	0.9	0.2	0.6	0.2	0.1	4.1
Pakoka	1.8	1.2	0.2	0.6	0.1	0	4
Mangaroa	1.4	1.7	0.2	0.3	0.1	0	3.7
Waingaro	1.5	1.2	0.3	0.4	0.1	0.1	3.6
Taharoa (Lake)	1.3	1.5	0.2	0.5	0.1	0	3.6
Ohautira	1.6	1.1	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.3	3.5
Okapu	1.5	1.2	0.1	0.4	0.1	0	3.4
South Aotea Harbour	0.8	1.1	0.1	0.7	0.1	0.1	2.9
Oporoturu	1.1	0.8	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.1	2.9
North Aotea Harbour	0.7	0.9	0.1	0.2	0.1	0	2.1
Kawhia	0.4	1.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0	1.9
Maire Naike	1.1	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.1	0	1.7

# Appendix 4 – Potential funding sources

Below is a list of potential funding sources for the implementation of the actions identified in this zone plan. These sources are listed in no particular order.

## **Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) – Hill Country Erosion Programme (HCE)**

The HCE Programme is a partnership between MPI, regional councils and landowners that aims to plan for and treat erosion-prone land and put sustainable management practices in place. The HCE programme is open to all regional councils and unitary authorities.

In 2023, council was awarded \$2.86M funding from MPI over four years (until 30 June 2027). The funding is designed to undertake a targeted approach that identifies and works with landowners in catchments with the greatest soil conservation risk. It aims to support sustainable land use change and protect erosion prone land using a suite of mitigations including space planting, afforestation, land retirement/reversion and erosion control structures.

Landowners are advised to make contact with the council's local catchment management officer to work directly with them.

## **Waikato Regional Council – Small Scale Community Initiatives Fund (SSCIF)**

The Small Scale Community Initiatives Fund supports volunteer community groups and individual landowners undertaking ecological restoration through animal and plant pest control. The amount of funding available annually is \$150,000, with individual projects eligible for up to \$5,000.

## **Waikato Regional Council – Enviroschools Fund**

The fund provides one-off grants up to \$5,000 per year for projects that directly enhance and/or benefit the environment or provide environmental education.

## **Trust Waikato**

Trust Waikato provides donations to not-for-profit community groups and projects that improve the wellbeing of Waikato communities. The types of groups and projects supported is broad, including social services, education, sport, recreation, youth, art, culture, history and the environment. Trust Waikato is particularly interested in projects that target communities with the highest need. The trust awards around \$10 million per annum.

## **Waikato Regional Council – Environmental Initiatives Fund (EIF)**

The Environmental Initiatives Fund provides one-off grants up to \$40,000 for up to three years, to projects which directly enhance and/or benefit the environment or provide environmental education.

## **Waikato Regional Council – Natural Heritage Fund**

This regional fund contributes to ecosystem restoration projects that aim to achieve “landscape scale” outcomes. The fund aims to protect and manage, in perpetuity, special places of ecological significance. The amount of funding available annually is expected to be in the range of \$40,000 to \$300,000.

## **Ngā Whenua Rāhui**

This national fund supports the protection of indigenous ecosystems on Māori-owned land while honouring the rights guaranteed to landowners under Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

It provides protection for Māori landowners through the use of 25-year renewable kawenata (covenants). It also provides significant support for the landowners, including pest control programmes, monitoring and consequent operational support. Māori land authorities such as trusts and incorporations, organisations representative of whānau, hapū or iwi, and Māori owners of general land can apply.

## **Queen Elizabeth II National Trust**

Queen Elizabeth II National Trust (QEII Trust) was set up in 1977 to “encourage and promote the provision, protection, preservation and enhancement of open space”. QEII Trust helps private landowners in New Zealand permanently protect special natural and cultural features on their land with open space covenants. The trust can contribute to fencing costs and covers the cost associated with covenanting a site (e.g. surveying and legal fees).

## Appendix 5 - Glossary

AP	Annual Plan
DOC	Department of Conservation
ICM	Integrated Catchment Management
LIA	Land Improvement Agreement
LTP	Long Term Plan
PPCAs	Priority Possum Control Areas
RMA	Resource Management Act
RPS	Regional Policy Statement
TA	Territorial Authority
TLA	Territorial Local Authority
WCZ	West Coast Zone
WRCP	Waikato Regional Coastal Plan
WRP	Waikato Regional Plan
SNAs	Significant Natural Areas

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