**INFORMATION SHARING SESSIONS**

The Bay of Plenty Regional Council (BOPRC) held community information sharing sessions to discuss the Action for Healthy Waterways discussion document, proposed NES for fresh water, draft NPSFM and draft s.360 regulations relating to stock exclusion. The sessions were held at:

**ROTORUA - 30 September 2019**

**AWAKERI - 1 October 2019**

**TE PUKE - 2 October 2019**

The following notes summarise the key matters raised at the sessions.

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| **Elevation of Māori values** | |
| **ROTORUA** | Every farm environmental plan should have a cultural implication section. |
|  | Integrate iwi/hapū management plans and frameworks (eg Te Tuapapa). |
|  | Wetlands and birdlife need to be considered/protected. |
|  | Culturally, can a water pipe go under a wastewater pipe? No! |
|  | Māori values protect resources for everyone. |
|  | Water – charged with mana and power. |
|  | Water is the most important of all the elements to sustain life on earth. |
|  | Major hydro schemes – consult with hapū and iwi. |
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| **AWAKERI** | How can we do this work together, fairly, reasonably and with focus on the three tenets in the hierarchy? |
|  | Will government and local government enable multiple iwi/hapū/Māori on rivers and in catchments to collaborate on water management and how will it do that? |
|  | Māori Land Trusts – are they iwi? Who is the Māori that is consulted with? |
|  | What role for iwi, hapū and whānau on rivers and waterways is envisaged and who pays? |
|  | Collaboration with local iwi and hapū for monitoring. Who’s going to be doing the monitoring? Iwi? Hapū? Māori? Western science joined with matauranga Māori. |
|  | What can iwi/hapū do in terms of its own farms and activities? |
|  | Mahinga kai as a compulsory Māori value: - in waterways where kai is protected or – in all waterways because they have the potential to be places to gather kai? |
|  | How does Te Ao Pākehā science equal Te Ao Māori matauranga? |
|  | What is MfE looking at? Species e.g. torrent fish (high oxygen requirement), eel (turbid water), freshwater kutai? |
|  | Healthy awa; plentiful kai; ka ora te tangata |
|  | Walk the talk. What are we leaving for our moko? |
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| **TE PUKE** | Kaitiakitanga – understanding what this is – from tangata whenua. |
|  | Hierarchy of obligations – RMA – s6(e), 7(a), 8. What effect does s6(e) have? |
|  | Difficult to interpret Te Mana o Te Wai for every iwi, hapū and trust. There are different interpretations of values/whakapapa. |
|  | Capacity and capability for iwi/hapū – they need support to undertake these processes. |
|  | Regional council enable and support iwi. |
|  | Tikanga principles included – not current RMA definitions. |
|  | Poor direction in terms of implementation – where are the tools/resources? Timeframes are difficult to respond to. Will the government help with funding? So many changes become difficult to manage. |
|  | High costs to appeal on a point of law. |
|  | Policy direction – impacts on current processes eg PC9 over-allocation issues for example – implications for reprioritising timeframes if existing plan changes are in process? |
| **Raising the bar on ecosystem health** | |
| **ROTORUA** | Incentives are needed for planting riparian areas, not just fencing off. Fenced-only riparian areas could have increased biosecurity issues with invading noxious weeds. |
|  | Who pays? Who benefits? Landowners are paying, but what are the downstream benefits? INCENTIVES are needed. |
|  | Indicators of ecosystem health should have a science and a te ao Māori perspective. |
|  | OVERSEER is inadequate for its purpose. |
|  | Ensure compliance for wetland restoration/enhancement is affordable. |
|  | Fertiliser/agrichemicals go into the soil and through to the water. |
|  | Partnerships with industry groups and NGOs could be encouraged. |
|  | Clean, green 100% pure branding is important for the tourism and agricultural industries. |
|  | What overshoot must be added to target standards to actually achieve the standard? Industry must meet discharge standards so why shouldn’t profit-driven farms do likewise? |
|  | Planting natives would greatly improve the ecosystems. The billion tree programme is not delivering on natives. |
|  | As a broad concept, all anthropogenic/nitrogen activity should operate in an envelope and what leaves is as good as what enters. |
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| **AWAKERI** | How will streams’ ecological health be monitored taking into account seasonal differences? |
|  | How do you measure each individual farmer’s environmental performance? |
|  | Incentivise farm improvements. |
|  | Sediment is killing the ecosystem. Manage sediment caused by forestry. Forestry must be included. |
|  | Landowners need support to manage pest animals and plants. |
|  | Pumice soil means nutrients aren’t captured in the soil. |
|  | Treat urban areas in the same way as rural areas. |
|  | Two wetlands have been created where the water is sourced from Tarawera. |
|  | Councils need to prioritise sewerage management. |
|  | The shortened timeframe proposed in the package would be a shame given the good experience of the Rangitāiki discussions. |
|  | OVERSEER issues are acknowledged. |
|  | Are nitrogen and phosphorous monitoring the best measures for maintaining the health of the waterways? |
|  | More clarity is needed about river classifications – which rivers are monitored and where are they measured? |
|  | Good science is the desired basis for decision making. |
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| **TE PUKE** | Sustainability of planting setbacks; pests (animals, weeds), - funding is needed to support it. |
|  | Holistic measurements for ecosystem? |
|  | Long-term sustainability of unmanaged riparian areas? |
|  | Expertise is needed…. Where will it come from? |
|  | Complement requirements with support: - TDRs, - Rates, - Tax incentives, etc |
|  | When will improvements be required on existing culverts for fish passage? |
|  | Improve public access to improve awareness leading to local community support. Involve community groups. |
|  | What about the iwi environmental view, ie scientific bottom lines versus holistic health? |
| **Improving farm practices** | |
| **ROTORUA** | Farm plans: monitoring? Timeframe for updating existing plans? Maintaining farm plans every two years could be too frequent for ‘good’ farms. What risks should be included? Auditing/frequency period should match the level of compliance/progress achieved. |
|  | How do we apply/interpret “exception” (NPSFM – s.323)? |
|  | How will responsibility be allocated to farmers along a stream – if most are doing the right thing? |
|  | When stream bank erosion reduces setback width, who will pay for bank protection? |
|  | How will we manage sediment on erosion prone banks? |
|  | Greater clarity is needed about intensification – what changes are required for viticulture? |
|  | Does OVERSEER need to be improved/updated? |
|  | Will farmers already doing the right thing have to do more? Consideration of cost implications. |
|  | Lack of resources/capability and capacity for farm plan certifiers and auditors. |
|  | Why is in grade of swimmable giardia not mentioned? Is it that e-coli is easier to measure? |
|  | Often the quality issue is public toilet wastewater and freedom camping run off issues. |
| **Dairy** | How much will this all cost? |
|  | Has the government done an economic analysis? |
|  | Farmers need to know there is an economically viable future. |
|  | Potential for intensification by retiring stream margins. There should be follow up on stocking units. |
|  | Confusion about the definition of stream, waterway, ephemeral flow path particularly in relation to fencing. |
|  | Council will need to manage water quality in drainage schemes. Also fish passage. |
|  | Change needs to be at a pace that landowners can sustain. |
|  | OVERSEER should reflect downstream impacts – not just losses at the root zone. It should give credit for good management practices. Is OVERSEER the only avenue to get credit for on-farm work such as shelter belts and riparian retirement? |
|  | How is “intensification” going to be measured? Confusion about what the intensification rule will look like. |
|  | Irrigation consents – can you get a new consent to irrigate when the current consent runs out? |
|  | What is the threshold for requiring a farm plan eg >40ha? |
|  | Will historical consents be reviewed? |
|  | What is it going to cost in rates to implement these requirements? |
|  | Why are we worrying about water quality when climate change is a more important issue? |
|  | Will we be charged for water usage once meters are installed? |
|  | Why isn’t Council auditing farm plans or should this be industry led? |
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| **AWAKERI** | Farm plans: who owns the information? Who will make/create the plans? Who will pay? Can we build on our existing plans? Who will bear the auditing costs? |
|  | Increasing riparian width alongside drains will significantly reduce the effective dairy platform. |
|  | How are decisions about these proposed changes going to be made when there is a lack of science data? Is the science balanced? There is a lack of current data available on smaller waterways. |
|  | What is the cost of implementation and has this been considered? |
|  | More farmers will need wintering pads – which is expensive and could mean more intensification. |
|  | Humans pollute waterways too (freedom campers, swimmers). |
|  | How do we know all the nitrogen and phosphorus comes from ‘our’ farms? |
|  | Will drains and natural waterways be treated the same? |
|  | How will the cost and maintenance of large riparian areas be funded? |
|  | The NPS doesn’t talk to other policies well. |
|  | Changing a farm plan from being a farmer’s document to enforcement raises concerns. |
|  | Is the DIN level achievable? Is there science available to support it? |
|  | Fit for purpose – are the proposals relevant to all regions/should there be ability to localise? |
|  | Need the buy-in of farmers to achieve the goals. Best practice, regenerative, organic farming – blanket rules regardless of individual farms/practices. |
|  | Economic analysis needs to be undertaken – how will it affect New Zealand? |
|  | Needs to be catchment based. |
|  | Health and well-being of farmers and communities needs to be considered. |
|  | Changes could accidentally result in more intensification with less land for farmers to earn a living from. |
|  | This will impact on everyone in New Zealand. It needs to be fair and equitable, transparent and done with respect. |
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| **TE PUKE** | Supportive but how will it work? |
| **Horticulture** | Supportive of current schemes. |
|  | Account for that (programmes, systems, schemes) already being undertaken. |
|  | Need flexibility for localised measures. |
|  | Capacity to deliver in the short timeframe. Timeframe: tight versus delivery. |
|  | Not supportive of blanket NZ-wide nitrogen and phosphorous standards. |
|  | Should be linked to existing industry schemes. |
|  | Doesn’t want regional council to lose current role of working together and co-funding environmental projects and move into ‘enforcer’ mode. |
|  | Prefer holistic approach to whole property. |
|  | Recognise “offsets” eg riparian/bushy gulley areas. |
|  | Access to expertise and independent/practicality of advice. |
|  | Need some flexibility for the audit period, which should be adjusted to reflect the result of the audit. Prefer risk-based audit return period. |
|  | Fence: in from stream versus true effect of riparian planting at less than 5m. |
| **Sheep and beef** | Blanket policies may result in costs in areas with lower issues – should focus on relevant local issues. |
|  | Should the farm plans reflect catchment issues, not nation-wide ones? |
|  | Do farm plans need to be audited every two years if you have an action plan? |
|  | First, spend the dollars where the problems are. |
|  | Farm planning: - who? – cost? – auditing? Consider staggering the auditing process. Could farm plans be phased over time? When will existing plans need to be updated? Farms plans should be regionally flexible, relating to local context and issues. |
|  | Could incentivise better outcomes – no rates on % of farm not being used/farmed? |
|  | What is the point if legislation is more expensive (ie preparing farm plans, etc) than spending the money on fixing the problem? |
|  | Should lifestyle blocks be considered? |
| **Dairy** | Focus – agreed but central government missing that we are doing all that we can, BUT at a cost to us as farmers. |
|  | Where is the government putting their money so we can input to social/economic well-being also. Needs more assessment of the real implications. |
|  | The lack of detail across the package is stressful. How do we manage that? Need knowledgeable people. Why not just modify the existing farm plans, which would be a fair transition. Existing farm plans are our own and are meeting current requirements. |
|  | Stocking two cows/ha or five cows/ha (doesn’t include sheep). Clarification is needed around what slope and which steeper land (14su/ha or 18su/ha)? |
|  | Flexibility of land use needs to be maintained especially with climate change pressures and vulnerability of economic markets. |
|  | Look at affordability/economic impact in terms of accumulative impacts, eg drinking water, agricultural emissions. |
|  | Impractical measures need practical solutions that can be applied. There is also a lack of clarity for Council. |
|  | The EFW package regulations require telemetry water take measurements. |
|  | Drains – clarity needed. |
|  | Farm plans need to address: – wastewater consents – standardising regulations, - compliance, - a timeframe, - localised conditions, the cost of putting in place, more implementation details. |
|  | Social/environmental cost analysis needs to be undertaken. |
|  | Stock exclusion – has a huge impact. |
|  | Central government has shut key stakeholders out. Short consulting timeframe puts huge pressure on us. |
|  | Can one side of the drain only be fenced so it can be maintained from the other side? Stock exclusion it is assumed doesn’t include drains. |
|  | Focus appears to exclude stock. What is urban development doing to achieve discharge quality restriction and tighter risk management? |
|  | Bottom of lake sediment etc – what will happen if they stir up, will send down Kaituna? Needs to set limit on real issues in our region. |
|  | Reporting farm plans – OVERSEER – not a good tool if biologically farming – in fact it has a negative impact. OVERSEER not required if not in nitrogen impacted catchment or not part of the Council plan. Central government are funding improvement. Use farm plans to integrate the data, otherwise costs should be subsidised. |
|  | Other support needed, funding for transition. |
|  | Why 1mg? Toxicity protection level will be a policy choice. |
|  | Emissions over the next five years need to be factored into the economic impact analysis. |
| **3 waters (storm, waste and drinking water)** | |
| **ROTORUA** | Four well-beings are essential. |
|  | Submission timeframe is much too short considering the importance of this kaupapa. Need more detail. It’s hard to make a submission without specifics. |
|  | Māori cultural and spiritual values must be considered in 3 waters framework. |
|  | Monitor, enforce – must have follow through. |
|  | Encouragement should be given to help individual dwellings to develop community schemes with funding. |
|  | Compliance costs, council versus council, are not working. |
|  | What are the cultural implications of the pNES wastewater proposals? |
|  | How do these proposals for wastewater/stormwater impact on current non-reticulated areas and BOPRC OSET policies? |
|  | Important to have central government and regional councils help fund improved wastewater treatment – unaffordable for smaller communities. |
|  | Marae costs – stormwater and sewerage costs must be considered? |
|  | Clarification needed on end of pipe standards and the impact on the receiving environment. |
|  | Measure of how many are supplied by water schemes should be defined in terms of HUE, not the number of people. |
|  | As with wastewater, drinking water schemes should be at least part funded by central government. |
|  | Need encouragement to help communities with singular use bores (>25 people). |
|  | Marae costs in terms of compliance and support for OSET, stormwater and water and this should be taken into consideration. |
|  | Kaituna River – consultation please. Local iwi and hapū need to develop future housing. Native fish species are affected by water levels, weeds, etc. Commercial rafting impact needs consideration. |
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| **AWAKERI** | Consistency and alignment of councils and industry required. |
|  | Capacity and capability for ensuring/delivering timely compliance? |
|  | Ageing pipe infrastructure – how is it going to be addressed? |
|  | Acknowledgement of the investment already made. Farmers are also paying 3 waters rates. |
|  | Respect oceans. The sea should not be an effluent outfall. Aquifers are sources from many sources and migration paths to point of use. Some are impossible to trace. Nutrients need to be recycled to land rather than waterways – change the stigma re effluent to land. |
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| **TE PUKE** | Liked the direction. Liked the national reporting standards. |
|  | Needs more detail, particularly on risk management and council requirements. |
|  | Affordability and transitioning implications. |
|  | Outlying settlement costs of wastewater plant and running it. |
|  | TLA’s operational costs of running the plant implications. |
|  | Nationally-consistent reporting measures are a good thing. |
|  | Stormwater needs to be national-requirements led. |
|  | Affordability for ratepayers’ issues. |
|  | Economic impact of pNES on smaller councils and communities drinking water. Needs detail. |
|  | Wastewater and stormwater requirements need more detail. |
| **Clarifying policy direction** | |
| **TE PUKE** | How will this action for healthy waterways affect over-allocated catchments? |
|  | Impact of the new NPS on current plan making processes, eg plan change 9 is already well advanced – plan making consistency and allow longer timeframes. |
|  | How can there be exemptions for major hydro schemes if a policy principle is to protect Te Mana o Te Wai? |
|  | It would be easier to strive for policy if achievement could be shown graphically, eg map of NZ swimmable water bodies before and after implementation. |
|  | Love the hierarchy but – realistically implementing water hierarchy with water at the top given the economic constraints? |
|  | Funding issues. Does policy account for regional budgets? Will central government help to fund policies in the NPS? |
| **General comments** | |
| **AWAKERI** | Water bottling rules- this is a matter of high interest. |
|  | Will these changes impact on Reginal Council’s capacity to manage waterways? |
|  | Time is needed for each area to determine is own attributes/approach. |
|  | Everyone (landowners, stakeholders, farmers, Council, industry)will have capacity, cost and capability issues. |
|  | What are the timelines for transitioning to the new regimes and could they be extended? |
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| **TE PUKE** | How much extra resourcing will Council need? What roles are required – science, consents, compliance? |
|  | Further clarity on what qualifies as land use change? |
|  | 1mg/ltr – how will Councils monitor/audit/police? |