

SUMMARY



Draft Issues and Options for Bay of Plenty Regional Natural Resources Plan Integrated Management chapter

Integrated management is about ensuring activities are not thought of in isolation. For example, an integrated management approach to earthworks would involve ensuring runoff from high up in the catchment does not cause problems downstream in, say, a wetland or estuary. This means thinking beyond effects of the use and development of land on a whole-of-catchment basis, to those in freshwater or even the coastal or receiving environment. This integrated or joined up approach is also known as ki uta ki tai, mountains to sea or catchment to sea approach.

The current Regional Natural Resources Plan has a chapter about Integrated Management of Land and Water. In 2017 Regional Council decided to bring all the Regional Plans (except the Coastal Plan) into the one Regional Natural Resources Plan. The RNRP 2024 changes can have an Integrated Management chapter, with objectives and policies. It will need to be broader than the current chapter - overarching all regional plan content, so not only land and freshwater (and their receiving environment such as harbour or estuary) but also air, geothermal and natural hazards.

Feedback suggests that to be more effective than the operative IM chapter of the RNRP, IM objectives and policies need to be directive and clear about how they should be applied in relation to activities managed in other chapters.

What might it contain?

Provisions in the IM chapters will apply to and direct activities managed in multiple domain, topic and area specific chapters of the plan. At this stage we suggest they will include direction that:

- Overarching/ he korowai objectives and policies which bind the strands or chapters and sections of the regional plan together.
- Recognise the interconnectedness of te taiao – the whole environment - air, geothermal, coastal, land and freshwater
- Recognise interactions between freshwater, land, water bodies, ecosystem, and receiving environment
- For freshwater, adopting a ki uta ki tai or integrated approach - from the mountains to the sea.
- Set out a policy framework showing how Te Mana o te Wai will be applied in our region.
- Relate to matters of national importance (section 6 of the RMA) and Part 2 objectives and policies in the NPSFM.

The IM chapters could also include high level objectives and policies as follows:

- Directing a precautionary approach if things are uncertain.
- Indigenous biodiversity – Similar to the health and wellbeing of water, seeking maintenance, enhancement, restoration and protection of indigenous biodiversity are considered appropriate to sit in the Integrated Management chapters where they will guide all activities and have policies that cascade to the relevant chapters of the plan.

- Beneficial use /recognising good practice and early adopters
- Bundling of activities – We are also considering including policy directing applicants to apply for all regional plan consents for a proposal together to assist integrated decision making.
- Some tangata whenua provisions (currently in the Kaitiakitanga chapter of the operative Regional Natural Resources Plan) may carry into the IM chapter, and others in to the Tangata Whenua chapter (such as KT O6 and KT P4).

At this stage we think climate change policy might be better in the specific chapters where they can be tailored to meet the known and potential impacts of climate change associated with that resource/activity (i.e. they can provide specific guidance on the relevant considerations).

These draft options are subject to more development and consideration, before recommendations are made to Council for decision.

Under the NPSFM 2020 Council must actively involve tangata whenua in the freshwater planning process to the extent they wish to be involved, enable the application of Mātauranga Māori to freshwater management, identify Māori freshwater values, and provide for mahinga kai values. Council has made efforts, and continues these efforts, to engage with tangata whenua to deliver on these NPSFM requirements. Notwithstanding this, the scope and quantity of work to implement the NPSFM within the statutory deadline of December 2024 is very large, and issues and options papers on all topics have had to progress while tangata whenua engagement is being sought or progressing. Existing information about tangata whenua values has been relied on. Policy options and assessments will be amended as appropriate in response to engagement in the next year leading up to decision making.