

Whakatupu ngātahi Growing together

Waikato Regional Aquaculture Strategy
March 2024

Te whakatinanatanga Implementation Plan

Ngā whakaarotau Our priorities

Sustainable

A primary industry leading in environmentally sustainable practices across the value chain.

Resilient

Aquaculture is protected from biological harm and supported in adapting to climate change.

Prosperous

Aquaculture growth supports regional prosperity.

Ngā putanga Actions

Outcome 1: Leadership with industry, iwi and our communities

1. Develop a roadmap for how a doubling of the export value from aquaculture in the region will be achieved in a sustainable manner, including identifying the investment gap.
2. Communicate the roadmap to the wider community through easily accessible information and resources.
3. Better understand and assist iwi and other stakeholders to develop opportunities in aquaculture.

What does success look like?

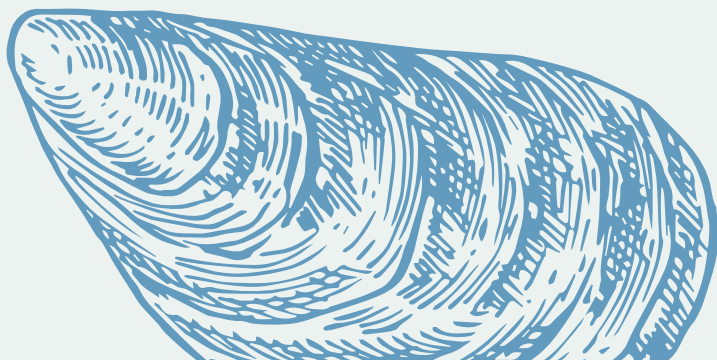
- The region's communities and stakeholders are able to understand the vision for industry growth and contribution to regional wellbeing from aquaculture.
- An annual Aquaculture Forum is held with a range of stakeholders including central government with ministers invited.
- Iwi aspirations for aquaculture are provided for, while recognising tikanga Māori, te ao Māori perspectives and kaitiakitanga.

Outcome 2: Ensuring a sustainable environment and a prosperous and resilient industry

1. Identify practical measures to increase spat supply and resilience including consideration of Waikato - West Coast spat sites, hatcheries and nurseries.
2. Support regulatory and non-regulatory initiatives to improve coastal water quality, with a focus on improving water quality entering the Firth of Thames.
3. Reduce monitoring and compliance burdens for industry.
4. Identify priorities for research to support industry sustainability, productivity, and resilience.
5. Use a combined approach to promote management of marine biosecurity through Top of the North pathway management planning, the industry A+ Biosecurity Standards and the Clean Hull Plan.

What does success look like?

- Long-term secure mussel spat supply is available to meet existing and projected growth.
- Environmentally sustainable practices are in place across the value chain.
- Biosecurity risks and threats to marine farms from exotic pests are minimised.



Outcome 3: Provide opportunities for aquaculture development including new species, technology and products

1. Identify the aquaculture needs for future marine space (including for marine farm relocations).
2. Collaborate across agencies to provide for aquaculture space in appropriate locations in the regional coastal plan and through iwi aquaculture settlements.
3. Undertake high level scoping of opportunities in new species (including seaweeds), methods (including freshwater, land based and floating upweller systems) and new technology. Include te ao Māori traditional knowledge in the analysis of future aquaculture opportunities.
4. Enable regulatory and other flexibility to allow industry to adapt to a rapidly changing natural and business environment.
5. Support research and innovation through the creation of a hub for aquaculture excellence.

What does success look like?

- New species, technologies and systems are identified and opportunities established within the regulatory framework operating.
- Diversification of species farmed is provided for, including seaweeds.
- Aquaculture activities are appropriately enabled in the Regional Coastal Plan and through national direction.
- Aquaculture settlement areas are set aside for iwi organisations under the Māori Commercial Aquaculture Claims Settlement Act 2004.
- A business model and initial funding enables establishment of a Waikato aquaculture excellence hub.

Outcome 4: Investment in infrastructure, people and services to enable aquaculture

1. Continue to drive new infrastructure and local and central government funded regional projects, including completion of:
 - Te Ariki Tahi (Sugarloaf Wharf upgrade) at Coromandel
 - Kōpū marine precinct - marine servicing, manufacturing and processing
2. Identify the priority infrastructure needs of the aquaculture industry in the Waikato and explore opportunities to secure regional infrastructure investment to support industry growth.
3. Develop a regional aquaculture workforce plan to deliver a skilled workforce that meets the needs of industry leveraging off existing national programmes and Te Pūkenga training.
4. Identify supply chain security risks especially State Highway 25 and develop solutions to address existing and future supply chain and route security.
5. Identify the land use provisions that will enable land based aquaculture activities and support industry services in appropriate locations.

What does success look like?

- New infrastructure delivered in partnership to support aquaculture investments.
- Wharf and hatchery infrastructure funding secured to support growth.
- Land use planning supports the required aquaculture infrastructure and enables land-based aquaculture opportunities.
- Land use provisions enable marine industry precincts around core infrastructure hubs.



Developed by the Waikato Regional Aquaculture Group.

This Implementation Plan will be reviewed at least five-yearly to ensure optimum progress towards outcomes.

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