Waikato Regional Council Policy Series 2023/17

Te Arotake Kaupapahere Waimāori – Rauna 2
Ngā kōrero a te hapori, tangata whenua me te rāngai/hunga whaipānga

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Freshwater Policy Review – Round 2 Community, Tangata Whenua and Sector/Stakeholder Engagement Feedback - 2023

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Te Kaunihera ā Rohe o Waikato

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He mihi | Acknowledgement

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The authors would like to acknowledge the staff and all who entered data, provided input into the report drafting and reviewed this report and provided feedback.

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Kōrero whakataki | Executive summary

The National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020 (NPS-FM) requires all regional councils to review the freshwater aspects of their Regional Policy Statement and Regional Plan by 31 December 2024, and this has given rise to the Waikato Regional Council's Freshwater Policy Review project. Two rounds of community, tangata whenua and sector/stakeholder engagement were completed, with the first round from mid to late 2022 and the second round from June to August 2023. This report provides the feedback gained from the second round of community, tangata whenua and sector/stakeholder engagement events, feedback received via email, online survey, and the first round of rangatahi engagement events.

To provide further input into the Freshwater Policy Review, citizen reference groups[1] (CRGs) and Ngā Tira Mātauranga (NTM)[2] were formed after the first round of engagement, and their process will be reported on separately.

Note that the executive summary provides an overall synopsis of the content of this report. For community, tangata whenua, sectors/stakeholders, and community and tangata whenua survey feedback responses, the areas summarised in the executive summary for each grouping include process and participants, Te Mana o te Wai, activities and actions and limits and rules. For long-term visions and environmental outcomes and target states topic areas, these have not been included in the executive summary for each grouping due to the scale of detail but instead summarised briefly below. Note that there are eight draft long-term visions, participants had the opportunity to comment on including Lake Taupō FMU, West Coast FMU, Coromandel FMU, Hauraki FMU and for Waikato-Waipā FMU, Upper Waikato, Middle Waikato, Lower Waikato and Waipā. There were 13 environmental outcomes participants could provide feedback on as well as the potential principles for setting target attribute states.

Long-term visions

For community, tangata whenua and sectors/stakeholders, there was support for many of the clauses within the draft objective long-term visions, though there were caveats. For some, certain descriptions and phrases were too vague and/or broad, and participants sometimes sought greater specificity. There were requests for terminology to be defined to help with comprehension of the objectives. There was concern from some that certain concepts might be difficult – if not impossible – to empirically define and measure e.g., defining and determining 'restored', clarity on why a 100-year timeframe was chosen. Though, there was support for and recognition of the importance of Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa – the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River and acknowledgement of restoration and protection. Some participants stressed the importance of using scientific data to guide the long-term visions. Respondents sometimes referred to the unique circumstances of the FMU and how this will influence what environmental improvements can be made and at what speed they can be accomplished.

When participants were asked if they felt the given timeframes for the long-term visions were ambitious and reasonable, the responses provided were typically a mixture of 'agree' and 'disagree.' Some believed the anticipated timeframes were appropriate, whereas others commented that WRC was not acting fast enough and that these goals have the potential to be achieved sooner. There were also those who felt that the current estimations were too ambitious and that more time was needed to reach the described outcomes. Regardless of whether respondents 'agreed' or 'disagreed' with the given timeframes, there was recognition that a considerable amount of work needed to be undertaken to accomplish the long-term

[1] The main purpose of CRGs is to provide input into policy direction based on the knowledge and experience members bring and provide advice about engagement with local communities. There are five CRG groups representing five FMUs – Lake Taupō, Waikato-Waipā, West Coast, Hauraki and Coromandel.

[2] The purpose of Ngā Tira Mātauranga is to increase the involvement of iwi and hapū (tangata whenua) in the Waikato Regional Council Freshwater Policy Review, provide a forum for technical discussion of policy development, assist staff with policy development, and disseminate project information to tangata whenua groups. Ngā Tira Mātauranga comprises nominated representatives from tangata whenua entities within the Waikato Region.

visions. The suggestion was often made that monitoring and scientific data should be used determine the appropriate timeframes.

Environmental outcomes

For community, tangata whenua and sectors/stakeholders, there was agreement with all of the draft environmental outcomes that were presented. Rarely was disagreement expressed. It was common for participants to provide suggestions for wording and/or phrasing, ask for clarification or definition of certain terms, and recommend possible additions. The suggestion was made that the outcomes of mahinga kai and wai tapu would benefit from being drafted by tangata whenua. The importance of water - for both humans and animals – was repeatedly acknowledged and it was said that this resource requires protection. That being said, some participants stressed the need to find a balance so that both economic and environmental needs can be met. Rules and regulations were thought to play an important role in achieving these outcomes.

Feedback on the potential principles for setting target attribute states for freshwater varied with some agreeing and some not agreeing with the principles. There were views that the targets were unrealistic and other views that the targets weren't soon enough. There were views that the aim should be minimum standards and other views to aim for improvement across the bands and even a suggestion to set catchment bottom lines more stringent than NPS-FM bottom lines. The economic implications and basing the targets on science were also mentioned.

Community engagement

Process and participants

Fourteen community drop-in sessions plus a community online session were held around the Waikato Region, with locations distributed across each of the indicative FMUs for Lake Taupō, West Coast, Waikato-Waipā, Hauraki and Coromandel. An estimated 111 people attended the various community engagement sessions (online and in person) representing members of the community, members of community groups, members of catchment groups, and iwi/hapū organisations, farmers and landowners, district and city council staff, district and regional councillors, stakeholders, agency staff, business owners, consent holders and rural professionals. Additionally, there were 127 responses to the community and tangata whenua online survey.

The community drop-in sessions were an opportunity for people to come in at any time, ask questions of staff, and stay for as long as they wanted to. 'Bus stop' stations or tables were set up to inform and encourage feedback from people including:

- An introduction to the Freshwater Policy Review
- The draft Te Mana o te Wai objective for the Waikato region and draft objectives for each Long-term Vision for each FMU
- Draft environmental outcomes and principles for setting target attribute states
- Activities and actions
- Potential limits and rules
- Any other feedback regarding the management of freshwater in their particular FMU

Key themes

Te Mana o te Wai

People provided a range of feedback both broadly and in response to particular clauses of the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai. Overall, there was support for the intent of the draft objective and a number of improvements suggested, such as defining terminology more clearly and adding in the effects of climate change and weather events. There were comments to consider the financial implications within the clauses as well as to apply minimum standards *"for*

maximum economic outcome for all". Alternatively, there was comment about the health and wellbeing of waterbodies as being more important than having water for farms and businesses.

There was mention of acknowledging the effects of urban activities on water quality and a comment to focus on urban infrastructure, for example, reinstating *"natural water management methods into urban environments e.g., swamp/wetland features, fish passage…".* There was a view that use of the term 'restored' was 'too strong' a word to use and maybe use 'improve' instead. Then there were queries as to what baseline was being used in reference to 'restore' and 'restoring to what'. Other queries included clarity on who would determine water quality and water quantity targets, with a suggestion that setting sufficient quality, quantity standards should be based on science, and applying minimum restrictions. There were questions on long-term water security and the impacts of not having enough water for farms and homes but also suggestions to encourage rainwater catchment systems including private property systems.

There were comments regarding inclusivity, such as community, farmers and tangata whenua within clauses but also acknowledgement and support for clauses relating to tangata whenua. It was noted the potential conflicts between clauses. In other feedback there were suggestions to remove wording from clauses or remove clauses. Alternatively, there were suggestions to both add to existing clauses or add new clauses.

Activities and actions

The range of feedback provided by people as to what the Freshwater Policy Review should focus on, to help accelerate positive change for freshwater included: focusing on farm practices (e.g., stock exclusion, riparian planting, eliminating farm runoff), incentives and funding support, controlling pests (animals and weeds), an integrated approach (e.g., iwi, mana whenua, farmers, community, stakeholders working together), water capture, consideration of the impacts of urban activities, educational awareness about freshwater resources/issues, consideration of the ongoing costs and scrutiny for irrigation and drainage, and other comments.

People provided a range of feedback on how the costs should be borne including: sharing of costs, co-funding and mixed funding arrangements (e.g., rural, urban, government, industry, taxpayers, rate payers, landowners), from central government, councils, water users (e.g., industry, agriculture and urban) and from rates (e.g., water rates per household), and taxes (e.g., tax synthetic N use).

Limits and rules

When asked 'what types of rules and limits do you think will help manage freshwater better', participants provided a range of feedback including: consideration and inclusion of urban impacts and activities, location specific rules (e.g., based on soil type, geography), catchment based solutions as opposed to regional rules, maintaining current rules, meeting minimum national standards, reviewing water takes, limiting water takes, streamlining farm plans, having rules based on science, and working with other sectors/stakeholders. Other feedback included flexibility to crop and fertilise crops, not be too prescriptive and restrictive, and a tax on nitrogen.

Tangata whenua engagement

Process and participants

Ten tangata whenua drop-in sessions plus two online wānanga/sessions were held around the Waikato Region, with locations distributed across each of the indicative FMUs for Lake Taupō, West Coast, Waikato-Waipā, Hauraki and Coromandel. An estimated 42 people attended the various engagement sessions (online and in person) with affiliations to various iwi, hapū, marae, whānau, collectives and other groupings. Additionally, there were 127 responses to the community and tangata whenua online survey.

The tangata whenua drop-in sessions were an opportunity for people to come in at any time, ask questions of staff, and stay for as long as they wanted to. Similar to the community sessions, 'bus stop' stations or tables were set up to inform and encourage feedback from people including:

- An introduction to the Freshwater Policy Review
- The draft Te Mana o te Wai objective for the Waikato region and draft objectives for each Long-term Vision for each FMU
- Draft environmental outcomes and principles for setting target attribute states
- Activities and actions
- Potential limits and rules
- Any other feedback regarding the management of freshwater in their particular FMU

Key themes

Te Mana o te Wai

There was overall support for the intent and content of clauses for the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai. Suggestions for consideration included acknowledgement of the role and recognition of "*Whanganui in [the] health and wellbeing of Taupō and Waikato River",* and acknowledgement of a whole of catchment basis where negative or positive impacts for one part of the catchment/environment affects other catchments/environments. Suggestions to add to the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai included recognition of puna (springs), addition of a clause that recognises mātaitai (customary seafood gathering site and associated rights), and acknowledgement of hapū involvement. There was a view that legacy issues may never be resolved and to focus on a future state and a comment that enabling human use *"enables all economic use"*. In reference to the clause that *'tangata whenua…enabled to participate in policy formulation and decision-making processes…',* there was overall support with one suggesting replacing 'enabled' with 'will' or 'do participate'.

Activities and actions

The range of feedback provided by tangata whenua as to what the Freshwater Policy Review should focus on, to help accelerate positive change for freshwater included: supporting catchment groups to assist with delivery and engagement, collaboration amongst kaitiaki, stakeholders, community and catchment groups, funding and support for training and education, and encouraging more youth to be involved.

Tangata whenua provided feedback on how the costs should be borne including: spreading cost across *"all who use and benefit from the river, and government entities with funding specific to the kaupapa of water management"*. There was also a comment that economic cost was not the most important cost and to consider the environmental and cultural costs.

Limits and rules

Tangata whenua feedback on the types of rules and limits they thought would better manage freshwater included: riparian planting and wider setbacks (e.g., 5 metres, 8 metres), stricter limits (e.g., on discharges and sediment upstream from mahinga kai and wai tapū), retaining the existing N cap market in Taupō, consideration of water use and water takes (e.g., meters on bore, monitoring of water use), locally governed water management, education and awareness on freshwater issues, iwi/hapū ability to trigger resource consent review, and collaboration with other stakeholders i.e., National Wetland Trust to form and implement a 'Wetland Qualmark' for the standard of wetland management on farms.

Rangatahi engagement

Process and participants

A youth-led forum called Rangatahi Voices (Waikato Regional Council coordinates the forum) participated in facilitation training and then facilitated their own youth-led engagement event. On both occasions the activities involved 'bus stops' and 'focused conversations', on the topic of freshwater. The 'bus stop' questions were similar to those used in Round 1 engagement for the Freshwater Policy Review. There were nine rangatahi at each of the two sessions. The common questions asked at both sessions which have been summarised in this report included:

- What do you value about freshwater?
- What local freshwater sites and features are important to you and why?
- What concerns you about the current state of your waterways?
- What would you like to see for freshwater in the future?
- In what timeframe would you like this achieved?
- What actions can we take in our catchments to improve freshwater? What can be done?
- What would be the best course of action?
- How could we get more rangatahi engaged in these actions?

Key themes

Special sites and features

Rangatahi identified a number of freshwater sites and features they viewed as special to them and where they undertake freshwater recreation and or activities. The sites included, rivers, streams, lakes, springs, camps, and swimming holes. Some of the reasons these sites and features are considered special included nature, swimming, cultural reasons, camping, walking, and memories with family and friends.

Values and outcomes

Rangatahi comments noted importance to all the four national compulsory values (Appendix 1A of the NPS-FM). In their responses, the participants commented on aspects of the values (Ecosystem health, Human contact, Threatened species and Mahinga kai). Rangatahi responses ranged from a focus on water quality, providing a safe habitat for biodiversity, connecting with freshwater, through to concern for threatened species. Rangatahi identified aspects of other values that must be considered (Appendix 1B of the NPS-FM) such as natural form and character, drinking water supply, and wai tapu.

Attributes and targets

Rangatahi raised some concerns about the current state of waterways mainly about the pollution of waterways (e.g., nitrates, E-coli, rubbish, farm runoff, microplastics, poison) and noted locations of concern. Rangatahi provided a range of responses of how they would like to see freshwater in the future including a range of biodiversity, return of tuna and aquatic life, having fresh, clear and pristine water, return of cultural activity and a sustainable collective approach and plan to look after waterways. Timeframes varied when rangatahi would like to see improvements achieved, ranging from "as soon as possible" to within the next decade.

Activities and actions

Rangatahi provided a number of suggested actions to improve freshwater including: reducing and preventing rubbish and pollution from entering waterways, educating and persuading people how to prevent pollution, riparian planting of native species with funded support including subsidised planting for farmers, having five metre boundaries on all waterways, supporting farmers to have more eco-friendly farms, enabling indigenous activities, clean-up projects, removal of dams to restore water flow, return to original owners, and removal of non-native plants and invasive species.

Community and tangata whenua survey feedback

Process and participants

An online survey was made available for community and tangata whenua via the Freshwater Policy Review page on 'Your Voice Matters.' This questionnaire received a total of 127 responses. Its contents covered and sought feedback on the following topics:

- The draft Te Mana o te Wai objective for the Waikato region
- Draft objectives for each Long-term Vision for each FMU
- Draft environmental outcomes and principles for setting target attribute states
- Activities and actions
- Potential limits and rules
- Any other feedback regarding the management of freshwater

Key themes

Te Mana o te Wai

Respondents expressed support for most of the described clauses, however, there were recommendations for improvement. Participants noted that while they agreed with the intention of the draft objective, the wording was vague in several places and required greater clarification. Suggestions for rewording were provided by some respondents. Other feedback stated that the clauses failed to acknowledge the impact of climate change and weather events In addition, respondents felt it was crucial to acknowledge that fluctuations in water, take place naturally throughout the year as seasons change. Certain individuals stressed the importance of engaging with the community both during the drafting of objectives and the delivery of the final policy. It was also viewed as necessary to avoid conflicts of interest and outside influences from different sectors and politicians. Similarly, it was recommended that monitoring should be independent and that there should be consequences for not protecting the water. Some felt that how WRC intends on delivering/actioning the policy needs to be discussed. The suggestion was made that relevant experts should authorise the decision-making process.

There was a view that humans will leave some kind of environmental footprint. While it is important to keep the size and impact of these footprints low, there was a view that water quality could not return to a 'pristine' state – but still important to strive for improvements. It was also recognised that regardless of where pollution enters the waterways, it will have an impact on the entire freshwater system.

Activities and actions

When asked what the Freshwater Policy Review should focus on to accelerate the positive change for freshwater, respondents presented a number of ideas. Changes to land use (management) were seen as necessary; in particular, preventing discharge from entering waterways. Two of the most cited industries of concern were forestry and farming. For the former, it was important to keep slash and sediment from ending up in the water. For the latter, there were concerns with run-off and faecal matter entering waterways. It was suggested that farmers should make use of fencing, reduce their livestock numbers, and lessen fertiliser application. To help with these changes, some recommended offering incentives to different industries.

Participants provided a range of feedback on how the costs should be borne including: sharing of costs between users of water (e.g., residents, industry), others who gain financial returns (economic benefit) from the resource, councils, central government, developers (where there are new developments), urban residents, and landowners and farmers whose activities on land negatively affect water quality. There was also feedback that there be no extra costs and to instead utilise existing taxes.

Limits and rules

When asked what types of rules and limits would help manage freshwater better, several respondents agreed with the examples provided by WRC. There was comment that a blanket [one-size fits all] approach cannot be used for rules and regulations. There was feedback to be flexible and to tailor approaches to different (sub)catchment needs. It was also thought that once in place, limits would require rigorous monitoring and there needed to be penalties for those not adhering to the rules. Other feedback included water infrastructure upgrades, compulsory water storage, and reducing water waste. There was suggestion of stricter rules for forestry in reference to erosion control and slash. Recommendations were also made regarding farming. It was said that livestock should not be allowed in or near freshwater – especially those areas that are used for drinking water or recreational use. Others proposed that farming should become a discretionary activity, with reduced fertiliser application and livestock numbers.

Sectors/stakeholder engagement

Process and participants

Altogether an estimated 89 people attended the range of sector/stakeholder sessions either online via Microsoft teams or in person. There were also 71 stakeholder responses to the online survey and seven stakeholder responses via email provided as written feedback. A series of facilitated workshops were held with sector groups. The general structure of the workshops included a presentation and opportunity to feedback on particular areas outlined below:

- An introduction to the Freshwater Policy Review and an update of activities including engagement to date and where the review process is currently
- The draft Te Mana o te Wai objective for the Waikato region and draft objectives for long-term visions for each FMU
- Draft environmental outcomes and principles for setting target attribute states
- Activities and actions
- Potential limits and rules
- Any other feedback regarding the management of freshwater in the Waikato region

The general structure described above applied to the Dairy, Beef and Lamb, Horticulture, Forestry and Environmental NGOs facilitated workshop sessions. Of note is that given time constraints not all sector sessions were the same i.e., there may have been a presentation followed by a questions and answers session, sessions were held online via Microsoft teams, or not all topic areas above were covered to receive feedback on. The variable sessions this applied to includes the Energy, Arable and Territorial Authority sector sessions, the ACRE (Advisory Committee for the Regional Environment) session, Futureproof meeting and the Pukekohe Vegetable Growers Association (PVGA) meeting.

Key themes

Te Mana o te Wai

There was support for the intent of the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai and numerous suggestions for improvement. There were suggestions to reword clauses and to add clauses including food production and a clause relating to water body erosion, and stability of the land surrounding waterbodies. Rewording of clauses included adding animals, referring to 'healthy freshwater ecosystems' instead of just 'ecosystems', and removing the term 'resource' (as refers to an asset) and instead use 'freshwater'. There was general feedback that the draft objective be based on community consultation and scientific information. There were requests that the targets and timeframes be based on science noting that water quality and quantity were important within freshwater ecosystems.

Clarity was sought as to defining 'restored' and 'protected' in reference to a baseline and suggested using the term 'improved'. There was also comment to extend water use for reasons

other than the health and well-being of waterbodies and to ensure water will always be available for human use. It was noted that there will always be variability of flow and reducing these variabilities should not come at the expense of people's relationships with freshwater (which connects to their cultural, social and economic systems).

There was feedback to consider an economic analysis and to acknowledge economic values with a comment that placing the environment at the top of the hierarchy, places restrictions on economic activity, with another stating that there is a need to be both financially and environmentally sustainable. Water allocation and water availability was raised as well as whether water storage would be addressed.

Alignment with Healthy Rivers Plan Change 1 (PC1) was mentioned and the concern with 'the goal posts being shifted'. There was reference to be inclusive of sectors and communities as well as tangata whenua.

In other feedback there was comment that not just human activities but factors such as weeds, pest animals, water use, climate change, land development, river control works and encroachment, and damage from recreational use all have an impact on the environment. There was comment that the existing degradation of the region's freshwater should be acknowledged with an emphasis on the need for improvement (on top of restoration). There were queries about climate change and resilience not being addressed, a query on how naturally occurring water quality features will be separated from impacts, and queries about flood protection, pest koi carp and clarity on what is meant by 'sufficient water available'. Other comments included consideration of indigenous values, acknowledgement that land and water are managed on a 'whole of catchment' basis and a comment that the objective needed to be more directive and clearer about the 'how', *"…as per the direction in the NPS-FM 3.2(3)".*

Activities and actions

The range of feedback from sectors/stakeholders as to what the Freshwater Policy Review should focus on, to help accelerate positive change for freshwater included: having good information and understanding of a range of factors (e.g., better land use information and risk of different land uses, better understanding of attenuation), a focus on farming practices (e.g., fencing and riparian planting with wide buffers, diversifying and looking at alternatives), incentives, eradicating and controlling pests (e.g., koi carp, weeds), managing sediment and erosion, consider the impacts of urban settings and activities, reducing and eradicating contaminants (e.g., setting nitrogen limits, banning water soluble phosphates, efficient nutrient use), implementing Freshwater Farm Plans, providing support (e.g., for farmer catchment groups, restoration programmes, protection of existing native habitat) as well as education and focusing on sustainable practices.

Sectors and stakeholders provided feedback on how the costs should be borne including: distributing costs fairly, sharing costs (e.g., across sectors/stakeholders, government, local authorities, regional council, communities), central government, councils, communities, those who benefit economically, and land and water users (e.g., industry, agriculture, forestry, urban, consent holders) who negatively impact waterways. Other comments included: costs to be borne over two generations, acknowledgement of the investment the rural sector has already made, targeted rates and a mixture of 'causer pays' and 'beneficiary pays' models.

Limits and rules

Sectors/stakeholder feedback on the types of rules and limits they thought would better manage freshwater included: focusing on the outcomes required and not applying blanket limits/rules to land use and intensification, whereas other feedback suggested limiting further intensification and limiting stock numbers. There was both support and criticism of PC1 provisions in considering limits and rules. There was support for Freshwater Farm Plans, acknowledging these should recognise best practice methods for fertiliser and farming practices.

There was feedback to encourage on-site water storage and water harvesting in both rural and urban settings and also comment to promote water efficiency on-farm. In regard to water takes, there were comments to place limits on water takes, and recommendations for no grandparenting and no 'first in first served' type rules. There were suggestions to consider urban impacts and activities (e.g., stormwater outfalls, maintenance upgrades), and issues in urban settings. There was other feedback to maintain the current rules and processes and to not be too prescriptive (e.g., fencing, effluent ponds, stock exclusions rules, consenting processes). Whereas there were other suggestions to be stricter (e.g., operate above nationally stipulated regulations, limit land use change, enforcement of forestry harvesting consent conditions). Other aspects for consideration suggested by sectors/stakeholders regarding limits and rules included: flexibility on land use (e.g., diversification, undeveloped land), regulation of contaminants, regulating other industries other than farming, provide for highly productive land, and encouraging on-farm treatment wetlands.

1 He tīmatanga kōrero | Introduction

The National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020 (NPS-FM) was released as part of the Essential Freshwater package to halt the degradation of freshwater and then to bring about improvements. The NPS-FM sets out expectations that tangata whenua and the community will be engaged on many aspects of freshwater management. These include the application of the concept Te Mana o te Wai to the management of freshwater in the Waikato region, setting long-term visions, and working through every step of the National Objectives Framework (NOF).

In addition to formulating long-term visions consistent with Te Mana o te Wai under the NPS-FM, the key NOF steps are to:

a. Identify Freshwater Management Units (FMUs) in the region
b. Identify values for each FMU (including Māori values)
c. Set environmental outcomes for each value and include them as objectives in regional plans
d. Set attributes for each value and set baselines for those attributes
e. Identify target attribute states, environmental flows and levels and other criteria to support the achievement of environmental outcomes
f. Set limits as rules and prepare action plans (as appropriate) to achieve the environmental outcomes.

The NPS-FM requires all regional councils to review the freshwater aspects of their Regional Policy Statement and Regional Plan by 31 December 2024, and this has given rise to the Council's Freshwater Policy Review project. The first rounds of community, tangata whenua and stakeholder/sector engagement were held in May-July 2022 (community and stakeholders/sectors) and in September-December 2022 (tangata whenua). The second round of community, tangata whenua and stakeholder/sector engagement was held June to August 2023 (see Appendix 1 to Appendix 3 for session details). To provide further input into the Freshwater Policy Review, citizen reference groups (CRGs) and Ngā Tira Mātauranga (NTM) were formed after the first round of engagement.

There are currently five CRG groups representing the Freshwater Management Units (FMUs): Lake Taupō, Waikato-Waipā (combining the Waipā and three Waikato FMUs), West Coast, Hauraki and Coromandel. CRG membership ranges from 5-14 members per group who represent their FMU. The main purpose of CRGs is to provide input into policy direction based on the knowledge and experience members bring about the local area and provide advice about engagement avenues to take emerging policy directions to local communities for input. CRG members helped shape the content of information for the second round of engagement. A progress report regarding details of the process CRG groups have undertaken to date will soon be available.

The purpose of Ngā Tira Mātauranga is to increase the involvement of iwi and hapū (tangata whenua) in the Freshwater Policy Review, provide a forum for technical discussion of policy development, assist WRC staff with policy development, and disseminate project information to tangata whenua groups. Ngā Tira Mātauranga comprises nominated representatives from tangata whenua entities within the Waikato Region who wish to have representation at Ngā Tira Mātauranga. The purpose, scope, work programme, and terms of reference for the group were developed by incorporating recommendations from tangata whenua representatives as to how the group should function. NTM members helped shape the content of information for the second round of engagement. A progress report regarding details of the process NTM members have undertaken to date will soon be available.

Of note and included in this report is feedback from rangatahi based on similar questions to those asked at the first round of engagement with community, tangata whenua and sectors/stakeholders.

The collated feedback will be used to inform revisions to the Waikato Regional Policy Statement and Waikato Regional Plan that will guide the management of freshwater in the region.

2 Āhuatanga mahi |Method

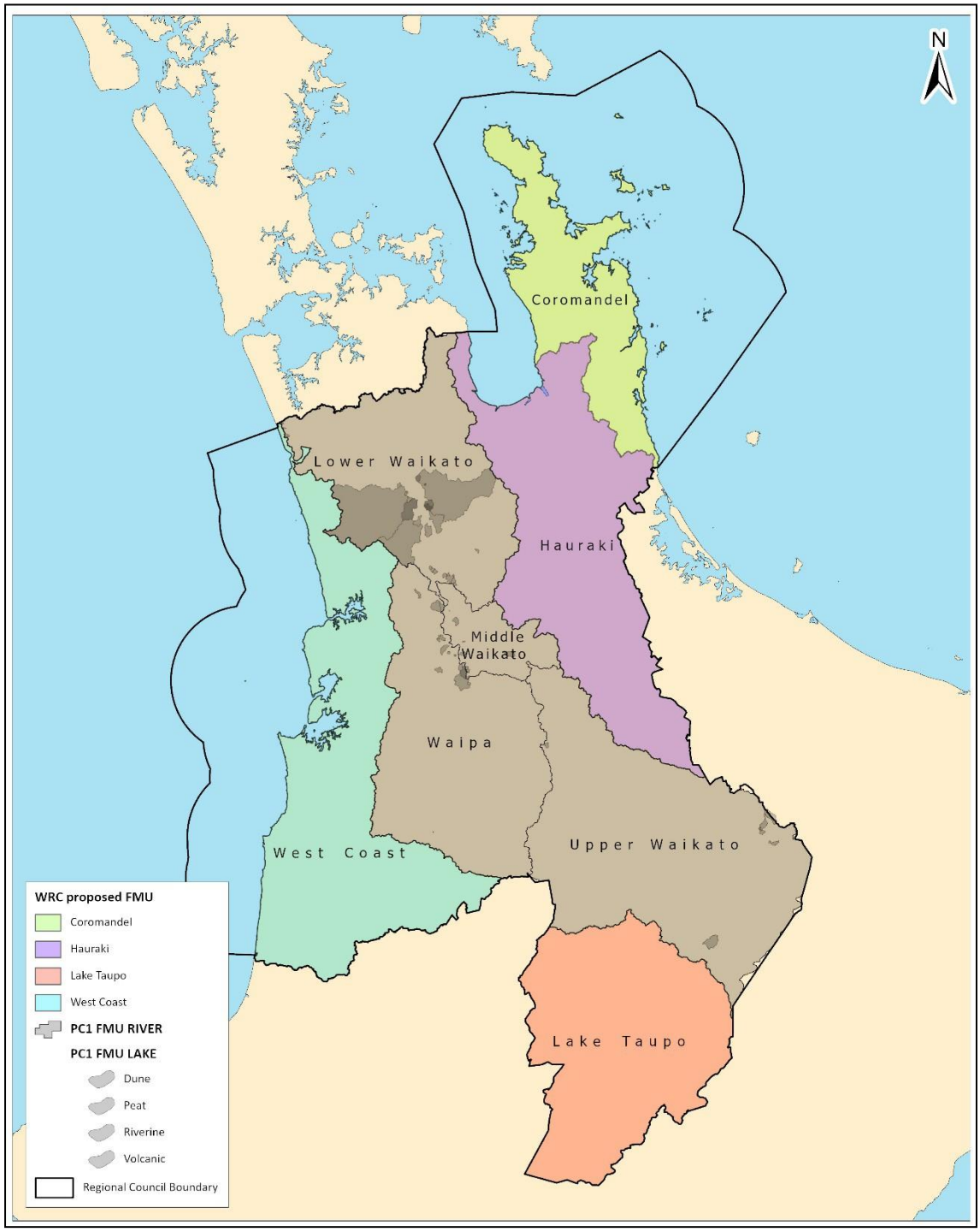
Round 2 engagement mainly included a series of 'drop-in' style events for community and tangata whenua and facilitated sessions with stakeholders/sectors from June to August 2023 to gain their input about the management of fresh water in the Waikato region. These events built on discussions from round one engagement by:

- Testing long-term visions (see Appendix 8 to Appendix 15) consistent with Te Mana o te Wai and community values and aspirations
- Sharing outcomes and target states aligned with these aspirations and legislative requirements
- Seeking feedback on potential principles (see Appendix 17) that could be applied when setting target attribute states
- Identifying how changes to improve freshwater can be encouraged and accelerated, and
- Seeking input on potential limits and rules (see Appendix 19)

The aim of these events was to understand the change required to implement the national directions for improving freshwater and to hear ideas on how to best manage the region's fresh water and freshwater resources for current and future generations.

The NOF process is aligned to spatial areas known as Freshwater Management Units (FMUs) and so the drop-in sessions and the online surveys were designed to ask people for feedback relating to freshwater management in their local area. The indicative FMUs are Hauraki FMU, Waikato and Waipā (river catchment combined) FMUs, West Coast FMU, Lake Taupō FMU and Coromandel FMU (refer to Figure 1 for the indicative FMU areas).

Figure 1: Indicative map of FMU boundaries



2.1 Online tools and website

Some background information on the project and the NOF was provided on the WRC website about the Freshwater Policy Review. Through EngagementHQ (an online engagement platform), community together with tangata whenua and sector engagement was supported with online surveys that collected similar information to the community, tangata whenua and stakeholder/sector drop-in or facilitated sessions. A link to the survey tool was promoted on WRC's website page about the Freshwater Policy Review and also promoted at each of the drop-in facilitated in-person and online sessions held throughout the Round 2 engagement period. The opportunity to provide feedback as part of Round 2 engagement closed on 7 August 2023. There were 127 responses to the community and tangata whenua online survey

(see Appendix 4). There were also 71 stakeholder participants who gave responses to the online survey (see Appendix 5) and seven stakeholder responses via email provided as written feedback.

2.1.1 Community and tangata whenua online survey

The original survey covered a total of six topics – Te Mana o te Wai, Long-term Visions, Environmental Outcomes, Actions and Activities, Potential Rules and Limits, and Additional Feedback. After receiving feedback regarding the length of the questionnaire, these sections were broken down into six separate surveys. The content for these six surveys was identical to the previous version, but now respondents could choose which of the topics they would like to focus on.

For Te Mana o te Wai, respondents were presented with the draft objective and then asked to indicate whether or not they supported each of the clauses within it. Afterwards, they were then provided with a textbox where they could provide any feedback regarding the wording of the draft objective. Note that the Te Mana o te Wai draft objective presented to community members and tangata whenua at their drop-in sessions and in the survey was in a different order to that which was presented to sectors and stakeholders in the survey and at facilitated sessions (see ***NOTE: These draft objectives for Te Mana o te Wai and long-term visions are not final, they were presented for feedback in this second round of engagement***

Appendix 6 and

Appendix 7 for the different versions). Where possible references to the content of the relevant clauses for the Te Mana o te Wai draft objective have been referred to rather than the clause numbers.

For the topic of Long-term Visions, participants were first asked to indicate which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on – Coromandel, Hauraki, Taupo, West Coast, Waipa, Lower Waikato, Middle Waikato, and/or Upper Waikato (see Appendix 8 to Appendix 15 for all draft objective long-term visions). For each option that was selected, respondents were presented with the draft Long-term Vision for that area. Participants were then asked to indicate whether or not they supported each of the clauses within the draft objective(s). A textbox was also provided at the end so that feedback on the wording of the Vision could be provided.

Within the Environmental Outcomes section/survey, participants were first asked to indicate which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on – Coromandel, Hauraki, Taupo, West Coast, and/or Waikato-Waipa. For each FMU, respondents were given a list of different Environmental Outcomes (see Appendix 16) and told to select which of these outcomes they would like to review. For each outcome selected, participants would be presented with a description of the outcome and given a textbox so that they would provide their feedback. After reviewing their chosen FMUs and outcomes, all respondents were then provided with some examples of potential principles that could be used to set target attributes (see Appendix 17). A textbox at the end allowed participants to provide feedback on these principles.

For the section/survey discussing Activities and Actions, respondents were first asked to indicate which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on – Coromandel, Hauraki, Taupo, West Coast, and/or Waikato-Waipa. For each FMU selected, participants would be provided with a brief description of the current state of freshwater within the area (see Appendix 18) and then given a textbox to provide their thoughts on what the freshwater policy review should focus on to accelerate positive change. Afterwards, all respondents were given a textbox and questioned on how they thought costs should be borne.

Within the Potential Rules and Limits section/survey, participants were first asked to indicate which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on – Coromandel, Hauraki, Taupo, West Coast, and/or Waikato-Waipa. For each FMU, respondents were provided with examples of potential rules (see Appendix 19) that could be applied in the future and then questioned on what regulations/limits they think will help manage freshwater better.

For the Additional Feedback section/survey, respondents were asked to indicate which area(s) they would like to provide any additional feedback on – Coromandel, Hauraki, Taupo, West Coast, and/or Waikato-Waipa. For each FMU selected, participants were given a textbox to write up any additional thoughts they had on the topic.

2.1.2 Sector online survey

The sector survey covered a total of six topics – Te Mana o te Wai, Long-term Visions, Environmental Outcomes, Actions and Activities, Potential Rules and Limits, and Additional Feedback.

For Te Mana o te Wai, respondents were presented with the draft objective and then given a textbox so they could provide feedback regarding the wording of the draft objective. Note that the Te Mana o te Wai draft objective presented to sectors and stakeholders in the survey and at facilitated sessions was in a different order to that which was presented to community members and tangata whenua at their drop-in sessions and in the survey (see ***NOTE: These draft objectives for Te Mana o te Wai and long-term visions are not final, they were presented for feedback in this second round of engagement***

Appendix 6 and

Appendix 7 for the different versions). Where possible references to the content of the relevant clauses for the Te Mana o te Wai draft objective have been referred to rather than the clause numbers.

For the topic of Long-term Visions, participants were first asked to indicate which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on – Coromandel, Hauraki, Taupo, West Coast, Waipa, Lower Waikato, Middle Waikato, and/or Upper Waikato (see Appendix 8 to Appendix 15 for all draft objective long-term visions). For each option that was selected, respondents were presented with the draft Long-term Vision for that area and then given a textbox so they could provide feedback on the wording of the draft objective.

Within the Environmental Outcomes section, participants were first asked to indicate which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on – Coromandel, Hauraki, Taupo, West Coast, and/or Waikato-Waipa. For each FMU, respondents were given a list of different Environmental Outcomes (see Appendix 16) and told to select which of these outcomes they would like to review. For each outcome selected, participants would be presented with a description of the outcome and given a textbox so that they would provide their feedback. After reviewing their chosen FMUs and outcomes, all respondents were provided with some examples of potential principles that could be used to set target attributes (see Appendix 17) and asked to provide their feedback in a textbox. In addition, participants were questioned how they would explain these principles to farmers or other sector representatives and given another textbox to express their thoughts.

For the section discussing Activities and Actions, respondents were first asked to indicate which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on – Coromandel, Hauraki, Taupo, West Coast, and/or Waikato-Waipa. For each FMU selected, participants would be provided with a brief description of the current state of freshwater within the area (see Appendix 18) and then

given a textbox to provide their thoughts on what the freshwater policy review should focus on to accelerate positive change. Afterwards, all respondents were given a textbox and questioned on how they thought costs should be borne.

Within the Potential Rules and Limits section, participants were first asked to indicate which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on – Coromandel, Hauraki, Taupo, West Coast, and/or Waikato-Waipa. For each FMU, respondents were provided with examples of potential rules (see Appendix 19) that could be applied in the future and then questioned on what regulations/limits they think will help manage freshwater better.

For the Additional Feedback section, respondents were asked to indicate which area(s) they would like to provide any additional feedback on – Coromandel, Hauraki, Taupo, West Coast, and/or Waikato-Waipa. For each FMU selected, participants were given a textbox to write up any additional thoughts they had on the topic.

2.2 Community engagement

Community drop-in sessions were advertised in local community newspapers, promoted on WRC's Facebook page and invitations were also sent out to an email list of those previously in contact with council about other freshwater processes. The local community drop-in sessions were held either during the day or evenings for a one to four-hour period, depending if it was an online session, day drop-in session or evening session. The sessions were an opportunity for people to come in at any time, ask questions of staff, and stay for as long as they wanted to. 'Bus stop' stations or tables were set up to inform and encourage feedback from people including:

- An introduction to the Freshwater Policy Review
- The draft Te Mana o te Wai objective for the Waikato region and draft objectives for each Long-term Vision for each FMU
- Draft environmental outcomes and principles for setting target attribute states
- Activities and actions
- Potential limits and rules
- Any other feedback regarding the management of freshwater in their particular FMU

Note that the Te Mana o te Wai draft objective presented to community members and tangata whenua at their drop-in sessions and in the survey was in a different order to that which was presented to sectors and stakeholders in the survey and at facilitated sessions (see ***NOTE: These draft objectives for Te Mana o te Wai and long-term visions are not final, they were presented for feedback in this second round of engagement***

Appendix 6 and

Appendix 7 for the different versions). Where possible references to the content of the relevant clauses for the Te Mana o te Wai draft objective have been referred to rather than the clause numbers.

Originally ten community drop-in sessions had been planned throughout the Waikato region plus one online community session to promote the survey, but to encourage more community feedback another five evening sessions were conducted from mid to late July. Two more requests were also received for sessions, one in Paeroa as requested by a regional councillor, and one in Te Kuiti from members of the King Country River Care group; these were additionally held in July. Of note was the cancellation of two drop-in sessions at Thames and Coromandel due to weather warnings on the 28th and 29th of June. A total of 14 community drop-in sessions with an additional online session to promote the survey, were therefore held during this second round of engagement (see Appendix 1 for session details).

An estimated 111 people attended the various community engagement sessions (online and in person) representing members of the community, members of community groups, members of catchment groups, and iwi/hapū organisations, farmers and landowners, district and city council staff, district and regional councillors, stakeholders, agency staff, business owners, consent holders and rural professionals.

2.3 Tangata whenua engagement

Council invited iwi authorities and hapū entities from across the region, as well as liaising with some iwi staff to assist and generate interest within their respective groups to attend drop-in sessions throughout the Waikato region. Invitations were also sent out to an email list of those previously in contact with council about other freshwater processes and these sessions were promoted on WRC's Facebook page. The local tangata whenua drop-in sessions were held during the day for a four-hour period. The sessions were an opportunity for people to come in at any time, ask questions of staff and stay for as long as they wanted to. Similar to the community sessions, 'bus stop' stations or tables were set up to inform and encourage feedback from people including:

- An introduction to the Freshwater Policy Review
- The draft Te Mana o te Wai objective for the Waikato region and draft objectives for each Long-term Vision for each FMU
- Draft environmental outcomes and principles for setting target attribute states
- Activities and actions
- Potential limits and rules
- Any other feedback regarding the management of freshwater in their particular FMU

Note that the Te Mana o te Wai draft objective presented to tangata whenua and community members at their drop-in sessions and in the survey was in a different order to that which was presented to sectors and stakeholders in the survey and at facilitated sessions (see ***NOTE: These draft objectives for Te Mana o te Wai and long-term visions are not final, they were presented for feedback in this second round of engagement***

Appendix 6 and

Appendix 7 for the different versions). Where possible references to the content of the relevant clauses for the Te Mana o te Wai draft objective have been referred to rather than the clause numbers.

There were ten drop-in sessions held with tangata whenua with an additional two online wānanga to promote the survey for this second round of engagement (see Appendix 2 for session details). Altogether, an estimated 42 people attended the drop-in sessions and online wānanga with affiliations to various iwi, hapū, marae, whānau, collectives and other groupings. Tangata whenua together with community members provided feedback via the online survey.

2.4 Rangatahi/youth engagement

Rangatahi Voices is an independent, youth-led forum created to give young people in the Waikato region a platform to influence positive change. It is designed by and for young people aged 14-27 from across the Waikato region and caters to a broad range of political and social interests. Waikato Regional Council (WRC) coordinates the forum. In the weekend of March 10th-11th 2023 (session 1) with the support of WRC, nine rangatahi at the Wintec marae, participated in facilitation training to enable them to engage better with others in their networks. The training involved demonstrations of 'bus stops' using a freshwater focus similarly used in round 1 engagement for the Freshwater Policy Review and a 'focused

conversation' on the topic of rangatahi and freshwater. Session 2 was held on 22 July 2023 at WRC, led by Rangatahi Voices members, with nine youth participating. The common questions asked at both sessions which have been summarised in this report included:

- What do you value about freshwater?
- What local freshwater sites and features are important to you and why?
- What concerns you about the current state of your waterways?
- What would you like to see for freshwater in the future?
- In what timeframe would you like this achieved?
- What actions can we take in our catchments to improve freshwater? What can be done?
- What would be the best course of action?
- How could we get more rangatahi engaged in these actions?

Additional questions for Session 1 included:

- What would be our priorities?
- What focus would we like to give the council?
- What specific actions?

Additional questions for Session 2 included:

- Share one connection or memory you have to do with freshwater.
- What do you know about how our fresh waterways are managed currently?
- What did you come here to achieve?

2.5 Sector/stakeholder engagement

An invitation offering sector representatives and stakeholders the opportunity to discuss freshwater with staff was sent out to an email list of those previously in contact with council about other freshwater processes. A series of facilitated workshops were held with sector groups. The general structure of the workshops included a presentation and opportunity to feedback on particular areas outlined below:

- An introduction to the Freshwater Policy Review and an update of activities including engagement to date and where the review process is currently
- The draft Te Mana o te Wai objective for the Waikato region and draft objectives for long-term visions for each FMU
- Draft environmental outcomes and principles for setting target attribute states
- Activities and actions
- Potential limits and rules
- Any other feedback regarding the management of freshwater in the Waikato region

Note that the Te Mana o te Wai draft objective presented to sectors and stakeholders in the survey and at facilitated sessions was in a different order to that which was presented to community members and tangata whenua at their drop-in sessions and in the survey (see ***NOTE: These draft objectives for Te Mana o te Wai and long-term visions are not final, they were presented for feedback in this second round of engagement***

Appendix 6 and

Appendix 7 for the different versions). Where possible references to the content of the relevant clauses for the Te Mana o te Wai draft objective have been referred to rather than the clause numbers.

The general structure described above applied to the Dairy, Beef and Lamb, Horticulture, Forestry and Environmental NGOs facilitated workshop sessions over a period of

approximately 4 hours. Of note is that given time constraints not all sector sessions were the same i.e., there may have been a presentation followed by a questions and answers session, sessions were held online via Microsoft teams, or not all topic areas above were covered to receive feedback on. The other types of sector sessions are described below.

The Energy sector session was held online for a period of two hours with an opportunity to provide feedback throughout the session. The session covered:

- An introduction to the Freshwater Policy Review and an update of activities including engagement to date and where the review process is currently
- Information regarding FMUs
- The draft Te Mana o te Wai objective for the Waikato region and visions and values
- The plan moving forward for the Freshwater Policy Review
- Identifying where WRC and the Energy Sector could be working together

The Territorial Authorities session was held in person over a four-hour period with an opportunity to feedback on particular areas. This session had a slightly different structure to the other sector sessions covering:

- An introduction to the Freshwater Policy Review and an update of activities including engagement to date and where the review process is currently
- The draft Te Mana o te Wai objective for the Waikato region and draft objectives for long-term visions for each FMU
- Draft environmental outcomes and principles for setting target attribute states
- Potential limits and rules
- The plan moving forward for the Freshwater Policy Review
- Any other feedback regarding the management of freshwater in the Waikato region

The Arable sector session was also held online for a period of one and a half hours with an opportunity to feedback on particular areas followed by a questions and answers session. The session covered:

- An introduction to the Freshwater Policy Review and an update of activities including engagement to date and where the review process is currently
- Freshwater Management Units
- The draft Te Mana o te Wai objective for the Waikato region and draft objectives for long-term visions
- Draft environmental outcomes, principles for setting target attribute states and examples for selected attributes
- Examples of possible ways to manage activities that may represent a shift from current policy settings
- Questions to seek feedback on all of the above for their sector

The online session with ACRE (Advisory Committee for the Regional Environment) was just for 30 minutes where a brief presentation was provided followed by a questions and answers session. The presentation covered:

- An introduction to the Freshwater Policy Review and an update of activities including engagement to date and where the review process is currently
- The plan moving forward for the Freshwater Policy Review
- Promotion of the online survey and all the areas the survey covers

The Future Proof[3] meeting was also an online session for one and a half hours followed by a questions and answers session. The presentation covered:

- An introduction to the Freshwater Policy Review and an update of activities including engagement to date and where the review process is currently
- The draft Te Mana o te Wai objective for the Waikato region and visions and values
- The plan moving forward for the Freshwater Policy Review
- Identifying how Futureproof want to be kept informed of updates

At request the Pukekohe Vegetable Growers Association (PVGA) called for their own meeting with WRC where members shared their views regarding the Freshwater Policy Review process.

Altogether an estimated 89 people attended the range of sector/stakeholder sessions either online via Microsoft teams or in person (see Appendix 3 for details).

Disclaimer: Spelling and grammatical errors in respondents' direct quotes have been corrected.

[3] Future Proof is a joint project set up by the partners to consider how the sub-region should develop into the future. The Future Proof Implementation Committee is made up of two elected members from each partner council and three representatives nominated by tangata whenua - one from the Tainui Waka Alliance, one from Waikato-Tainui and one from Ngā Karu Atua o te Waka. Additional representation includes Waka Kotahi, Whatu Ora, central government, Auckland Council and Tāmaki Makaurau iwi representation.

4 Ngā kōrero whakahoki a te hapori | Results – Community engagement

4.1 Lake Taupō Freshwater Management Unit – Taupō community drop-in session

Eight people attended the drop-session at Taupō including community members, one with affiliations to iwi/hapū, agency staff from the Ministry of Primary Industry and farmers.

Te Mana o te Wai

When asked to provide comment on the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai, references were made in regard to the clause:

> *Tangata whenua are enabled to participate in policy formulation and decision-making processes relating to freshwater management.*

There was agreement with this clause and another comment about elevating this clause *"to give better effect to the hierarchy of obligations"*.

Long-term vision

With regard to providing feedback on the draft objective long-term vision for Taupō there was comment to have all FMUs of Waikato in one collective to wānanga freshwater issues. There was also more specific feedback provided for some of the clauses as outlined below.

In reference to clause (b) more detail was sought to better define the meaning of 'holistically' in *"freshwater is holistically managed in a way that recognises that the health of people relies on the health of the environment".* Additionally, mention was made of clause (c) where it states "*freshwater management recognises Māori rights and interests in freshwater…"* to include '…recognises Māori knowledge rights and interests…'. Clause (d) was also mentioned:

> *The cultural, spiritual, educational, environmental and economic associations with freshwater are recognised.*

Instead of 'recognised' it was suggested this be replaced with 'provided for'. For clause (f) it was suggested that 'good' needed to be locally defined and not by 'NPS bands'. There was also comment that "*not all wai (streams, puna puna) should attract intervention if 'degraded', some have special history, purpose, mauri, hapū knowledge"* in reference to clause (f):

> *Water quality is maintained where good, and if degraded, improved for all freshwater attributes from the baseline state.*

When asked about an ambitious but reasonable timeframe to achieve a vision like the one proposed for the Taupō FMU there was comment about "*statistically significant improvements in each band by 2035"*.

Environmental outcomes and target states

In providing feedback on the draft environmental outcomes for Taupō there was comment about competing outcomes and meeting the hierarchy of obligations fundamental to Te Mana o te Wai. There was mention that (g) Animal drinking water, (i) Transport and Tauranga waka, (k) Irrigation, cultivation and production of food and beverages, and (m) Commercial and industrial use, *"do not give effect to Te Mana o te Wai"*. There was further feedback that clause m) could not be an outcome if meeting (a) Ecosystem health, (d) Mahinga kai and (e) Natural form and character requiring that clauses (g), (k) and (m) *"cannot be provided for"*.

References were also made to clause (l) Hydro-electric power generation, and that this should be phased out rather than maintained and *"replace with enviro-friendly alternatives"*. There was mention that clause (l) was not an environmental outcome but a commercial one. With regard to clause 2. "*Water quantity (ii) lake levels are maintained…",* an additional comment was for *"lake levels… to prevent foreshore erosion and sediment entering lake"*. Further feedback questioned why there was no mention of native freshwater fish species *"kōura, īnanga, kōkopu, kōaro"* for environmental outcomes.

People were asked to provide feedback on potential principles for setting target attribute states for Taupō freshwater. There was comment in relation to watching the water take of the local Whangamata stream. It was also questioned as to whether the correct Macroinvertebrate Community Index (MCI) methodology is being used for pumice-based streams.

Activities and actions

People were asked 'what should the Freshwater Policy Review focus on, to help accelerate positive change for our freshwater'? There was one comment about maintaining work done and another comment about *"earth works in high-risk erosion pumice soils"*.

When asked about what they 'would like to say in principle at this stage about how the costs should be borne', there was one comment about how the lake was nationally significant and that national and regional contribution was justified.

Limits and rules

People were asked 'what types of rules and limits do you think will help manage freshwater better'? There was comment about the inclusion of urban storm water, removal of permitted activities on stock water, questions on water ownership and water rights, and that an 'equal focus' should remain on land use and sewage reticulation. Additionally, there was comment to *"promulgate a rule which requires review of all 1) takes and 2) uses within x years".* Mention was also made of developing a local rule as national current stock exclusion regulations were inadequate for pumice lands.

General feedback

The last question asked, 'what else would you like to say about freshwater management in Taupō'? One person commented to "*include gully protection through urbanisation – reduce sedimentation of lake".*

4.2 Lake Taupō Freshwater Management Unit – Taupō community evening drop-in session

Five people attended an evening drop-in session at Taupō with one having affiliations with Huka Falls Cruise and one other with affiliations to Ballance.

General feedback

Unfortunately, the feedback provided via post-it notes was minimal and therefore all feedback has been reported together. There was no feedback regarding the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai and what was provided for the draft long-term vision for Taupō sought clarification on the meaning of clause (a) *'the health and well-being and mauri...'* and the meaning of 'restored' and understanding of the 'degradation' line for clause (h) regarding fisheries and freshwater habitat. In regard to the draft environmental outcomes for Taupō, there was one comment seeking clarification for clause (a) Ecosystem health, *"how do improved indigenous and trout health and wellbeing co-exist"?* In regard to activities and actions there was one comment regarding *"issues with maintaining drains vs minimising water disturbances".* In

regard to how costs should be borne there were queries about the cost of completing freshwater farm plans and the cost of not doing it.

There was no feedback regarding potential principles for setting target attribute states, activities and actions, or for types of rules or limits.

4.3 West Coast Freshwater Management Unit – Raglan community drop-in session

Three people attended the drop-in session at Raglan. One person worked at NZ Landcare Trust, one other was involved in drystock farming and the other a community member.

Te Mana o te Wai

When asked to provide comment on the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai, references were to the clauses below regarding water quality and quantity. For these clauses there was a question on who determines quality and quantity targets. Additionally, there was a suggestion to add livestock and wildlife to the following clauses:

> *That sufficient quality and quantity of freshwater is essential to the health and well-being of ecosystems and people.*

Clause:

> *Water quality and quantity targets are established and respected, to reflect the cultural, spiritual and ecological values of freshwater as understood by tangata whenua and the community.*

There was mention of clause (1.3) and the need to define the terminology, to clarify the positive and negative meaning:

> *The effects of human activities determine the health and well-being of the Region's freshwater bodies and ecosystems.*

Other references were made to the following clause:

> *There is sufficient water available to provide for the health and well-being of waterbodies, and provided that is achieved, water may be available for human use, provided it is allocated and used efficiently.*

Comments in regard to the above clause included questions on long term water security, not having enough water and what would that mean for other uses, impacts on farms/homes if water was no longer allowed to be accessed for example in Australian almond farming water trading means the water goes to the highest bidder and this is an unfair allocation of water. Mention was also made of land use changes impacting existing neighbours' land use.

Long-term vision

There was no feedback on the long-term vision. When asked about an ambitious but reasonable timeframe to achieve a vision like the one proposed for the West Coast FMU there was comment about the government and other organisations responsibility for waterways (e.g. geese) and a question about what support was available for improvements on private land.

Environmental outcomes and target states

In providing feedback on the draft environmental outcomes for the West Coast there was a comment about too much focus on trout and game fishing in reference to (a) Ecosystem health (3) Habitat (iii) and (iv) and for clause (j) Fishing(2).

People were asked to provide feedback on potential principles for setting target attribute states for West Coast freshwater. There was a comment about using eDNA (environmental DNA) and TICI (taxon-independent community index) scores for water quality. One other mentioned *"the sooner the better"* in reference to setting target attributes states for the West Coast and also commented *"never do we regret making environmental regulations even if it's a little painful or shocking at the time* [for example] *historically (DDT) [Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane – insecticide]"*.

Activities and actions

People were asked 'what should the Freshwater Policy Review focus on, to help accelerate positive change for our freshwater'? 'Farmer to farmer' audits were mentioned that 'could help with capacity and resourcing' and the suggestion for farmers to get paid/recognised for their skill and input to audit. Use of incentives was also mentioned as well as funding support for neighbour catchment groups to help accelerate positive change for freshwater.

When asked about what they 'would like to say in principle at this stage about how the costs should be borne', attendees provided a range of options. There was mention of an *"incentive/matrix of costs returned on improvement made or completed", "labour gangs employed by council to help plan/care for waterways", "long-term labour investment"* such as fencing, planting, watering and weeding rather than a one off activi*ty,* spending more on action rather than *"going back and forth about wording of the policy",* and lastly sharing the costs, co-funding, involving the government, corporate and landowners.

Limits and rules

People were asked 'what types of rules and limits do you think will help manage freshwater better'? There were mentions of science and data and suggestion the baseline data for water bodies should be the basis for limits and rules, for example when considering stock exclusion and what is healthy compared to an unhealthy waterway then the total E.coli number in the water should be the basis rather than trying to compare a situation or manage the activity where 800 dairy cows have access to a stream vs 10 calves. A better definition of 'best practice' was also suggested and "*managing exotic planting and harvesting"* .

General feedback

The last question asked, 'what else would you like to say about freshwater management in the West Coast'? Attendees provided more feedback including *"targeted sediment reduction",* the problems with *"urban sewage released into waterways", "acknowledging local farmer experience and expertise [as] experts in their area/land/farm", "real time E.coli monitoring"* and councils needing to be more accountable for current and past decisions.

4.4 West Coast Freshwater Management Unit and Waikato-Waipā Freshwater Management Unit – Te Kuiti community drop-in session

Six people attended the Te Kuiti community drop-in session. The attendees were local community members and farmers with affiliations to the King Country River Care group.

Te Mana o te Wai

There were various responses when asked for feedback on the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai, such as *"I like that it reflects values and ideas that every cultural background can relate to"* and *"it is essential to value and protect our precious water resources and to value all communities in their discussions"*. There was reference to the clause *'that people's relationship*

with freshwater is inextricably connected with their cultural, social and economic systems', and to be inclusive of all. One attendee commented that *"hierarchical values are all interlinked. Can't have one exclusively. We are all responsible for what has happened in the past 700 years… Future generations will have outcomes that we can't even appreciate"*, while another attendee thought that 'restored' was too strong a word. There was also mention of recent events on the East coast in regard to *"costs to communities, [and to] look at the big picture and where we will be in 50 years"*.

Long-term vision

West Coast

With regard to providing feedback on the draft objective long-term vision for the West Coast there were varied responses such as one attendee noting they thought *"the wording [was] appropriate"* while another attendee thought that *"restoration [and] rehabilitation [were] too strong [as] words. Implies 100% fixed – unlikely to happen and sets unrealistic expectations and rules, "improved' is better"*. There was one other comment regarding 'restored', noting that *"need to know scale of what is restored. Can we expect to take our land back to what it was like in history"*. Other comments included, *"we need to ensure that the West Coast plan takes into account the different unique attributes of this area and not be a replica of Waikato/Waipā plan", "some of these outcomes seem to have long timeframes – i.e 80 years before we can collect kai"!* and *"need to include all the waterways that used to be in urban areas and doesn't matter if not there now".*

Waipā

There were just a few comments providing feedback on the long-term vision for Waipā. There were broad statements such as ensuring all groups in the community are given opportunity to contribute to this vision, for another attendee, a vision that is broad was perceived as good but could be open to different interpretation, and to ensure Māori terms were clearly defined *"to drive engagement and inclusion and cultural awareness".* Reference was also made to clause (b), *"query the use of 100 years as a benchmark as there is no valid data to support this! It detracts attention from long-term vision and instead a more feasible time should be offered especially at this stage in consultation"*.

Timeframes

When asked for feedback on what they thought was an ambitious but reasonable timeframe to achieve a vision like this, the responses were varied, "80 to 100 years", depends on data to support timeframes, having measures in place and benchmarking.

Environmental outcomes and target states

West Coast

Specific feedback was provided on the draft environmental outcomes for the West Coast for (a) Ecosystem health. For (1) Water quality it was thought that *"restored is too hard/in-practice pipe dream to many people…",* while for (2) Water quantity, there was comment that *"storage of surface water needs to be encouraged particularly with more volatile weather"*, and a comment that *"sounds nice, very efficient to get back to the 60% forest stage…a lot of "excess" water gets to the coast".* Further feedback in regard to the draft environmental outcomes included concern with the costs of eradicating invasive species (e.g. koi carp, Asian gold clams), being *"pragmatic about what natural resource we have…"* and concern with the cost of securing *"survival of all species",* and concern with the impacts of urban environments on water flow.

People were asked to provide feedback on potential principles for setting target attribute states for West Coast freshwater. Responses from attendees regarding potential principles included *"focus[ing] on what is attainable. Can't expect swimmability 365 days a year", "include data from other groups… e.g. King Country River Care", "…recognition of river history…silt in some rivers pre-humans/farming",* and *"hard to comment on the target rates of improvement – how do they compare to what has been achieved elsewhere"?*

Waikato-Waipā

Specific feedback on the draft environmental outcomes for Waikato-Waipā included agreement with clauses (d) Mahinga kai, (f) Drinking water supply, (g) Animal drinking water and (h) Wai tapu but with the comment *"that does not mean it has to be in a freshwater farm plan"*. There were also questions about why there was protection of introduced species such as trout and salmon in reference to clause (a) Ecosystem health with one commenting *"an introduced species to the detriment of indigenous"* and another commenting *"then protect sheep & cattle habitat too"*.

In reference to clause (b) Human contact, there was one statement of disagreement with this clause noting *"the issue is what does "safely" mean, the how and level of change at the coal face".* Other comments in regard to the draft environmental outcomes included, *"this comes down to priority where can [get] best gains for least cost"* and *"a lot of good information/points but there is a lot to take in. If possible, maybe condense it somehow or lay it out differently to get better engagement"*.

When asked to provide feedback on potential principles for setting target attribute states for Waikato-Waipā freshwater, knowing what had been achieved elsewhere and having *"targets [that] should reflect what can be achieved"* were mentioned as well as stating *"money should be spent to achieve biggest/easiest gains… versus environmental gains".* Lake health was also raised as an issue with comments *"we need to do more to protect the peat lakes in the Waipā district",* and *"lake health is appalling! We need to reduce dairy intensification sooner".*

Activities and actions

People were asked 'what should the Freshwater Policy Review focus on, to help accelerate positive change for our freshwater'? A range of feedback was provided regarding actions including working together and *"alongside iwi and farmers [and] supporting catchment groups…".* Funding to help with the development of farms plans was suggested as an action and a suggestion that *"…incentives to change behavior should be market led i.e., meat companies and dairy companies and incentivising suppliers to do the right thing environmentally. Policy review should encourage this"*. Further feedback regarding actions included renewable energy generation, *"identify[ing] councils needing financial assistance to upgrade wastewater systems ASAP. This will encourage community uptake"* and a suggestion to not add NPS-FM rules.

When asked about what they 'would like to say in principle at this stage about how the costs should be borne', there was a range of responses such as *"costs need to be collaborative to empower our farmers to innovate and adapt… need to be fair and reasonable", "…WRC support farmers to create their own freshwater farm plans",* and questions about equity and resourcing, *"…who pays economic prosperity and encouraging investment innovation…"* and *"once the freshwater farm plans come on board, hopefully work done on farm will be prioritised so that the costs may be spread across several years".*

Limits and rules

People were asked 'what types of rules and limits do you think will help manage freshwater better'? The feedback on types of rules and limits had suggestions of not including PC1 type

rules in the West Coast *"as it will not be appropriate"* but instead have *"…plans/rules… based around the particular issues at this region and its very diverse nature".* Other feedback included, no new stock exclusion or additional controls but to instead consider *"diverse topography and farming systems"* in regard to rules and limits. Although not a limit or rule there were mentions of encouraging water storage especially during periods of high rainfall. In regard to land use comments included *"in some cases it might be more advantageous to have higher intensity stock systems on certain areas and use other mitigation on different land classes",* and *"…we are seeing more change of land use away from livestock. Let the market decide on best land use don't artificially distort this".*

General feedback

The last questions asked, 'what else would you like to say about freshwater management in the West Coast and Waikato-Waipā'? For the West Coast, responses regarding freshwater management included consideration of the catchment context *"taking into account all the unique attributes of the West Coast"*, inclusion of King Country River Care data, *"increas[ing] WRC water sites in the south side of the Kawhia harbour, to improve our knowledge",* and more local level data collection, and use of local knowledge and existing groups.

For Waikato-Waipā, responses regarding freshwater management included questions about what defined a water way, what support would be offered, how farm plans will be rolled out and how drains will be managed/cleaned. Further feedback regarding freshwater management included *"ensure the requirements and standards in farm plans don't become too onerous. Stock exclusion in future may be managed with animal devices that discourage them from waterways"*.

4.5 Waikato-Waipā Freshwater Management Unit – Te Kuiti community evening drop-in session

A total of 13 people attended an evening drop-in session at Te Kuiti. The attendees included farmers, those with affiliations to iwi/hapū, members of community and care groups, rural consultants and services and local community members.

Te Mana o te Wai

When asked to provide comment on the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai, various comments were made. There was a suggestion to focus on reinstating *"natural water management methods into urban environments e.g. swamp/wetland features, fish passages, less culverts"* and to address *"the impact of poor urban infrastructure".* There was a comment that *"we need water to survive. That should be highest priority health and wellbeing of waterbody…"* while another commented that *"this is all going to be compromised by the expected human population increases".* There was a view that the clause regarding people's relationship with freshwater linking with their cultural, social and economic systems was applicable to iwi only, and another view regarding the clause *'tangata whenua are enabled to participate in policy formulation…' "should be top of hierarchy [and] other points help to achieve this".* Other feedback regarding the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai included:

- *Encourage and fund private property water catchment systems (rainwater) to reduce demand from rivers to provide and catch large rain events.*
- *Time is overdue for a reset here.*

Long-term vision

Waipā

With regard to providing feedback on the draft objective long-term vision for Waipā, there was a comment about removing koi carp and a comment that new natural wetlands can't be created.

Upper Waikato

With regard to providing feedback on the draft objective long-term vision for Upper Waikato it was suggested to combine clauses (d) regarding mana whenua as guardians of wai and (e) regarding communities exercising stewardship.

Lower Waikato

There was one comment on the draft objective long-term vision for Lower Waikato in reference to clause (h) *'...the reduction in water takes and discharges of nutrients and contaminants to water in 10 years...'* and whether this accounted for the *"recognised load to come i.e. [nitrogen] travelling through ground water".*

Timeframes

Feedback was provided when asked about an ambitious but reasonable timeframe to achieve a vision(s) like the one(s) proposed. There was a view that 10 years was a reasonable timeframe, another view that the timeframe be as soon as reasonably possible and a comment that *"change is well overdue. The right action will see results sooner than 10 yrs".*

Environmental outcomes and target states

Feedback varied in response to the draft environmental outcomes. There was feedback about defining what 'restored' meant and levels of water quality and a query about the inclusion of trout and salmon. One other tended to agree with the draft environmental outcomes *"as long as plan protects and restores nurtures people, land, water, environment".* There was a view to *"focus on improving biodiversity [and to] incentivise using best practice".* There were queries on whether the draft environmental outcomes *"tied in with decarbonising the economy… we must all be responsible for decarbonisation [and] improving biodiversity key focus"* acknowledging that managing expectations will be a challenge. One other queried *"what 'solutions' are reliably proven to produce the required results, 'cause & effect'".* For clause (e) Natural form and character, there was a comment that *"mauri must be paramount. The characteristics listed do not fulfil mauri".* For clause (f) Drinking water supply, there was feedback that *"the rivers should be at drinking water quality".* For clause (l) Hydro-electric power generation, there was a view that *"no new hydro-electric power generation. Existing operations should be improved to maintain mauri"* and *"the needs of hydro-electricity should never dictate the rivers needs and should not be detrimental to the mauri of the awa".* Alternatively, there was a comment that in regard to hydro-electric power generation *"what if need requires this to be increased"*. For clause (m) Commercial and industrial use, there was comment that *"commercial use should never compromise mauri of waterways".*

People were asked to provide feedback on potential principles for setting target attribute states. Feedback varied where there was a view that *"aiming for grade A everywhere is unrealistic. Concentrate on improving the worst 10%"* and a query that *"specific targets need proven solutions so they can be achieved. How many of present "solutions" are scientifically proven"*? Other views included *"targets far too low synthetic N use must be phased out over 10 years max to improve outcomes", "overall principle – improve every attribute"* and *"long term target – 30 years max".*

Activities and actions

People were asked 'what should the Freshwater Policy Review focus on, to help accelerate positive change for our freshwater'? A few suggestions were made by attendees including education and action such as *"providing workshops to the wider community to water test. Having hubs around the area that cater to W/Quality needs", "build on what we already know", "an integrated approach where we learn from our past mistakes to improve future outcomes...with mana whenua involvement", "test... local solutions at catchment level" and "invest in local people to do the work".* Other suggested actions included phasing out synthetic N use over 10 years, banning agricultural chemical use, capping fertiliser use and subsidising and promoting organic fertilisers. Cleaning up waterways, poplar planting clearance and stopping intensive grazing in winter next to waterways were more suggested actions as well as focusing *"on what native biodiversity needs to survive and remov[ing] the factors that prevent it e.g., pest species, sediment, nutrients, toxic discharges etc"*. It was also noted that a change and shift of practices on the land was required by all stakeholders.

When asked about what they 'would like to say in principle at this stage about how the costs should be borne', attendees provided a range of options as outlined below:

- *Tax synthetic N use, support best practice eg diverse pastures and better soil mgt*
- *Costs have to be relevant to the size of the farming venture.*
- *Costs need to be evenly spread over rural and urban.*
- *Keep it simple. Keep it real. Additional rate offset to all overseas investors.*
- *Harsher penalties for breaches including those that council do.*
- *Some sort of funding to help with any cost associated from central or local Govt. rebate on rates for farmers properties. Subsidise use of organic fert sprays.*
- *Having worked on Plan change 1 – it is difficult to be invested in projects that keep changing.*
- *Need to clearly define what it's going to cost, and who is going to pay.*
- *By the time we've decarbonised our economy and upgrade our failing infrastructure and health system and education system there might be something left for the waterways.*

Limits and rules

People were asked 'what types of rules and limits do you think will help manage freshwater better'? Feedback on rules and limits included having *"catchment-based solutions… as opposed to regional rules", "limits and discharges for council operations"*, a focus on rules for contractors (referring to Southland Regional Council), *"N tax and supporting practice to transition to improving soil function and biodiversity"*, and a view that *"rules do not help. Solutions need to be negotiated reasonably and practical. All need to be specific to the site and the problem being addressed".* In regard to costs and limits and rules there was a query that *"if farms are considered to be property over 20Ha – how can property owners of small holdings afford to meet the paperwork requirements (Freshwater Farm Plans)".*

General feedback

Other feedback was provided by attendees covering a range of topic areas for consideration:

- *Be realistic not idealistic. Practical and pragmatic*
- *Localised together – with whānau, hapū, iwi, hapori (community)*
- *Give us the support at the local level, all catchments are different*
- *Govt has been promoting and funding intensification for last 100yrs*
- *Intensification having a massive impact*
- *Capacity and capability building in the sector*
- *Engage properly. Movers and shakers in the industry/on the ground.*
- *Where's a farmer portal FAQ – cleaning drains etc helping farmers out.*

- *Catchment plans… underlying geology that will determine timings. Timing and execution is critical*
- *Mindful of changed generation of farmers and how they want to connect*
- *Has anyone quantified the effects of substantially increased tree planting for carbon, on future stream flows?*
- *What about discharges from wastewater and sewage treatment. How is this managed. Chemicals added to water? Fluoride? Contaminants in the air end up in the waterway.*

4.6 Waikato-Waipā Freshwater Management Unit – Hamilton community drop-in session

A total of 22 people attended the Hamilton community drop-in session. The attendees included community members, those with affiliations to iwi/hapū, members of community groups, farmers, stakeholders/sectors (including dairy sector, energy sector, forestry, environmental NGOs), agency staff, city and district council staff, and Department of Conservation.

Te Mana o te Wai

When asked to provide comment on the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai, references were made in regard to clause (1) '*the health, resilience and wellbeing of the Waikato Region's freshwater resources is restored and protected…'* there was comment that there could be conflicts with the clause *'water quality and water quantity targets…'* stating, *"if targets are set that can't be met because of the human activities allowed then it won't be successful*" in respect of clause (1). It was also mentioned that *"restored and protected could conflict and go against tangata whenua decision making…".*

It was also raised that not only farming but cities and towns were causes of water pollution. *"Nobody will argue with the priorities, concerns are with how they will be implemented and over what time frame and needing to give farmers time and clarity to drive change".* There was mention that *"a balance must be made in the country's economy and clean water".*

Long-term vision

Waipā

With regard to providing feedback on the draft objective long-term vision for Waipā, there was comment about having a *"clear distinction between mana whenua and tangata whenua in relation to kaitiakitanga"*, another comment stating a need for *"more science and hard empirical data on the state now and desired levels"*, and one other commented that there was *"no mention anywhere on storage of water".*

Upper Waikato

With regard to providing feedback on the draft objective long-term vision for Upper Waikato, there were references to various clauses. Clause (b) mentions '*drinkable water for present and future generations…'*, one commented that they *"disagree[d] water quality has to be "drinkable." Three Waters show amazing costs to be drinkable"*. There was feedback that clauses (d) and (e) outlined below, could be conflicting and undermine one another or compete, clause (d):

> *Mana whenua are recognised as kaitiaki mō ngā wai - the guardians of Wai, customary practice and principles – tikanga are provided for and our mokopuna see the awa and wai as our tūpuna did.*

Clause (e):

> *Communities exercise stewardship for the water for present and future generations.*

In reference to clause (f) regarding '*sustainable land use… and management supports ecosystem health…'* it was mentioned that *"this would mean cannot use land for "urban" purposes"*. Clause (i) regarding water as being '*allowed to be itself, in its common, ordinary or normal state, flowing naturally…',* there was comment about the implications on hydro-dams and one other comment which stated, *"this means no "man induced" infrastructure/changes to flow - how is it possible when these impacts are already evident".* There were other comments about biosecurity needing more attention and that the management of water needing to be clearly defined.

Middle Waikato

With regard to providing feedback on the draft objective long-term vision for Middle Waikato, there were references to various clauses. For clause (a) it was suggested to "give effect to" rather than "recognise Te Ture Whaimana" [o Te Awa o Waikato - the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River]. For clause (e) it was suggested to add a comma before *'…and cultural practices'*. In respect of clause (f) which states *'land use opportunities have been recognised and taken within ecosystem health target attribute states.'*, there was comment that the meaning was unclear and questioned how the regional council could ensure that land use opportunities were taken and market forces would determine this. Clause (g) states that '*rivers are swimmable and the bottom of rivers are visible'.* In response to this clause there was feedback to support tangata whenua and look after Te Mana o te Wai. There was one other comment that the long-term vision was, *"vague and ambiguous, leaving room for loopholes. More quantitative goals and methods [and] how [would] this be monitored so people actually respect water."*

Lower Waikato

There were two comments on the draft objective long-term vision for Lower Waikato. One person stated agreement, "let us all have", for clause (b) below:

> *Freshwater is healthy, sustains abundant life and prosperous communities and the needs of present and future generations and improved back to [its attribute state 100 years ago].*

For clause (e), the other commented, *"must include fungus/fungi as part of biodiversity to be protected. Fungi are not flora nor fauna, but their own kingdom and need to be included."*

For all FMUs there were no comments when asked about an ambitious but reasonable timeframe to achieve a vision(s) like the one(s) proposed.

Environmental outcomes and target states

There were a range of comments from those providing feedback on the draft environmental outcomes for Waikato-Waipā. For clause (a) Ecosystem Health (1) Water quality (i) in regard to freshwater bodies being restored and protected there was a comment referring to *"restored to what date, can't go back to the giant wetlands that were in [the] Waipā and Waikato".* In reference to (c) Threatened species there was a comment to relate only to freshwater species and not species on land and one other comment about being clear on what is 'human induced' questioning major storm events and that, *"storms fall on indigenous vegetation areas".* One other commented that *"many threatened species need to be managed wider than just the FMU so connecting across 'mountains to sea' is important".* In regard to (k) Irrigation, cultivation and production of food and beverages, there was one comment in agreement for *"growing pasture for animals"* and another in disagreement but stating that quantity for irrigation was needed and could have storage on site. Feedback from another agreed with (l) Hydro-electric power generation and (m) Commercial and industrial use. There was however, comment about

"need[ing] to be careful about wording for hydro-dams as there are a range of issues that come from hydro dams".

Other feedback included agreement with the inclusion of trout, more focus needed on pest species such as koi carp, and the value of food production and biodiversity and biosecurity.

People were asked to provide feedback on potential principles for setting target attribute states for Waikato-Waipā freshwater. There were comments about what the real start point is, that the targets were too fast to be achieved and *"need[ing] to see economic effects before [making] comment on setting target state".* There were references to having clear goals and communication to all New Zealanders to support efforts to clean up the rivers and lakes as *"at the end of the day people want clean water to drink, wash, and swim in and a realistic timeframe is required".* There was also a comment about clear communication and having alignment with PC1 as being essential.

Activities and actions

People were asked 'what should the Freshwater Policy Review focus on, to help accelerate positive change for our freshwater'? Education, communication, and information was mentioned as a means to increase awareness and understanding amongst communities about freshwater resources, uses, conservation, management and all the different perspectives and values in regard to water. Transparency of information including monitoring of consented takes and actual use was mentioned as a method to help support change. There were comments about capturing rainwater and water harvesting rather than drawing on natural water resources for homes and businesses: *"should be collecting rainwater and incentives OR run a neighbourhood/area research - give 100 homes rain tanks (collect off gutters) and look at water usage decrease", "Put the onus on commercial/industrial sector to capture their own water from rain - with climate change, we cannot sustain commercial/industrial water needs into the future".* Other comments referred to ensuring all inland lakes and wetlands were included as FMUs and the issue of koi carp and weeds as obstructions in water ways.

When asked about what they 'would like to say in principle at this stage about how the costs should be borne', attendees provided a range of options as outlined below:

- *True cost where it lies = urban, agriculture, industrial.*
- *Costs proportionate to user. Costs need to be incentive performance. Sectors need to own their footprints.*
- *Charging businesses and farms for water use, and water processing – uptake, cleaning, sewage etc. Water rates per household might increase respective and mindful use of water.*
- *Industrial pollutants 1) forestry 2) farming 3) meatworks costs need to be aligned with discharges e.g., nitrate loading.*
- *Costs to be covered by all landowners and rate payers in the district.*
- *Costs to be shared by all parties, government, private, and industry.*
- *Cost borne by council. Not poor broke farmers.*
- *Mixed funding = government and private – incentives*

Limits and rules

People were asked 'what types of rules and limits do you think will help manage freshwater better'? There was one comment about *"land use rules [being] easier to monitor [providing] more certainty than "allocations" non-point source discharges"* to help manage freshwater better. One other commented, *"review, evaluate and monitor all water takes for industrial ethics to zero waste management – limit all aquifer/consents due to quality of water in comparison to surface takes".*

General feedback

The last question asked, 'what else would you like to say about freshwater management in the Waikato-Waipā'? Climate change was raised as an issue with the view that it didn't seem to be considered in this review with mentions of droughts and flooding, an intake of climate refugees, and finding ways to collect or store rainwater, *"water is going to be a scarce commodity in a matter of a few years and water collection (rain) must be a top priority for everyone as a key adaptation for survival", "NZ population is going to increase significantly and need to put a plan in place to account for increased demand on H_2O resources".* Other comments included more attention and money on biosecurity, fungi (rather than trout), quantitative outcomes, a holistic and systems focus, maintaining business across the different water catchments that is open, transparent, local community based – Māori, local towns informed, and attention to Waihou as not included in PC1.

4.7 Waikato-Waipā Freshwater Management Unit – Tuakau community drop-in session

Three people attended the community drop-in session at Tuakau including a farmer, environmental consultant, and vegetable grower. A regional councillor also attended.

Te Mana o te Wai

Attendees provided a few suggestions when asked to provide comment on the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai. Reference was made to clause (1) to reword to *'…connections with freshwater are sustained for present and future generations…*'. In regard to the clause about *'the effects of human activities…'* there was a suggestion to remove the clause. There was a comment that *"all people are enabled to discuss water".*

There was mention of *"need[ing] to reflect financial implications. Effect of the policy and who will pay"* in regard to the draft Te Mana o te Wai draft objective. Other comments included to *"take time. Once people understand. They will come on board. Education",* and to *"talk about why. Benefits to all".*

Long-term vision

With regard to providing feedback on the draft objective long-term vision for Lower Waikato, feedback was received on various clauses. For clause (b) '*freshwater is healthy, sustains abundant life and prosperous communities and the needs of present and future generations and improved back to [its attribute state 100 years ago]',* there was a suggestion to remove *'and improved back to [it's attribute state 100 years ago]'*. Comments for removal for this part of the clause included, *"attributes are unknown and unachievable. This is a vision but needs to provide attainable clauses", "need a quality measurable level to attain. Not 100 years",* and *"unrealistic 100 years. All humans have an influence. Roads, cars, walking, rubbish"*. Although unclear the specifics of what to reword, there was a suggestion to reword clause (g) *"waterways are safe, easier to access, and provide for swimming and drinking water, weed and pest free and in 10 years there has been no decline in water quality".* There was one comment that did not support clause (h), '*reduction in water takes and discharges of nutrients and contaminants to water in 10 years to provide for clause a) and b')*[4]*.* The reason for not supporting clause (h) was that "*water must be provided to grow vegetables and a reduction may lead to reduced vegetable supply".* Other comments included "*why reduce unless there is*

[4] Clause (a) refers to freshwater management that *'recognises Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato - the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River'* and clause (b) is '*freshwater is healthy, sustains abundant life and prosperous communities and the needs of present and future generations and improved back to [its attribute state 100 years ago]*'.

an issue. Don't reduce for reducing sake" and *"water fowl are pests. Need to be careful we don't supplement for a different issue. Remove fowl".*

When asked about an ambitious but reasonable timeframe to achieve a vision like the one proposed, one comment was given, *"the population is not what it was 100 years ago. Vehicles, buildings, road, industry, food supply are not what they were 100 years ago. As currently worded, the long-term vision cannot be achieved"*.

Environmental outcomes and target states

There were a range of comments regarding the draft environmental outcomes for Waikato-Waipā. For clause (a) Ecosystem Health (3) Habitat (ii) in regard to '*no loss in area or values of significant vegetation or habitat of indigenous fauna*' one person did not support 'no loss' stating *"workout size class… better definitions and ground truthing. A single tree could be considered habitat or significant but may not be practical to retain in a wider context".* For clause (a) Ecosystem Health (2) Water quantity (ii) in regard to '*lake levels are maintained to provide for ecosystem health*', one person commented, *"is it right to artificially keep a water level. Some lakes do get shallower and turn into wetland".* Additionally, one other commented *"are we taking a point in time to keep all lakes and wetlands in the same state. Or allow natural progression depending on the season".* In regard to water cleanliness there was comment that *"not all water is clean in its natural state. Some water is brown, dirty peat water for example".* In regard to clause (k) Irrigation, Cultivation and production of food and beverages, there was a suggestion that this clause become a compulsory outcome, to *"protect food security".*

Other feedback received regarding the draft environmental outcomes for Waikato-Waipā included, *"it is going to take time to change, people/farmers have started this process",* concern about cost, financially and emotionally, and defining Māori terms such as wai tapu and mahinga kai.

When asked about potential principles for setting target attribute states for Waikato-Waipā freshwater, one person commented that there was a *"need to consider specified vegetable growing areas and FMU as set out in the NPS-FM"*.

Activities and actions

People were asked 'what should the Freshwater Policy Review focus on, to help accelerate positive change for our freshwater'? Suggestions for change included *"utilising existing sector schemes and initiatives to support Farm Environmental Plans and adequate resourcing and knowledge. Don't reinvent systems leading to complexity and duplication as this does not result in operational outcomes or freshwater improvements at the rate intended*", "*incentivisation not restrictions for doing the right thing. Re: SNA "consideration of "urban activities… roads, city effluent/stormwater"* and the impact of koi karp and water fowl on freshwater bodies.

When asked about what they 'would like to say in principle at this stage about how the costs should be borne', different options were provided: one suggested the government as the review process was initiated by the government, the other suggested all people pay with the example of England where subsidies are provided to farmers for public good, and the final comment was that *"not all cost will be financial. It is understanding the work".*

Limits and rules

People were asked 'what types of rules and limits do you think will help manage freshwater better'? Responses to this question were tailored towards other considerations such as flooding effects, impacts of both dry periods and high rainfall, urban activities including roads and towns and the effects of water fowl and E-coli.

General feedback

The last question asked, 'what else would you like to say about freshwater management in the Waikato-Waipā'? E-coli was mentioned as an issue with the view that it was more of a problem than nitrogen and phosphorus. There was also comment that although efforts were being made to reduce water use it was getting more difficult to get a consent and a suggestion to have operational policy as well as environmental. A comment was raised about how the plan review incorporated *"the recent vegetable growing work by government Minister Parker".* There was one other comment stating that the Pukekohe Vegetable Growers Association would like to engage with the regional council throughout the development of this policy.

4.8 Waikato-Waipā Freshwater Management Unit – Tuakau community evening drop-in session

Four people attended an evening drop-in session at Tuakau.

Te Mana o te Wai

No feedback was provided on the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai.

Long-term vision

The only feedback regarding the draft long-term visions for Waikato-Waipā was to provide more of an understanding of Māori terms.

Environmental outcomes and target states

Feedback regarding the draft environmental outcomes included providing more of an understanding of Māori terms and a query to define what 'improved' meant as a target.

Activities and actions

A range of comments regarding activities and actions were provided:

- *Ease fertiliser usage, ease crop use area*
- *Age of cropping lands getting near needing a rest*
- *Councils should be spending money on core services i.e. infrastructure*
- *Need for a diversity of farming types*
- *Double water systems for residential water use – rain water capture – ease pressure on water bodies.*
- *Focus on less is more - pick top 5 and concentrate on these*

Limits and rules

Feedback regarding the types of rules and limits to help manage freshwater, included the need for flexibility to crop and the need for fertiliser to grow crops. One other commented that *"this unnecessary regulation is adversely affecting farmers"*.

General feedback

General feedback was provided by attendees including the impact of councils and urban development on water bodies, understanding the science and evidence, engagement, as well as other feedback.

The impact of councils and urban development was raised and to treat councils the same as others when an adverse event occurs, *"council let effluent go in harbour – how can this be okay yet in a stream there is outcry"* and *"impact and urban development on river bodies"*.

More science and evidence seemed to be a key theme, *"[be] good to know the source of contaminants where they are actually coming from…", "farmers and growers keen to see evidence i.e upstream or downstream of a village. Source faecal contamination", "[be] good to see figures – what it is? what it was? what are we aiming for?"* and *"understand groundwater chemistry – it is not all the same – take account [of] geology".*

Engagement with catchment groups and communities of interest was raised commenting that, *"this information should be going through catchment groups first"* with *"catchment groups driving decisions in their areas"* and *"communities of interest need to be maintained".*

Other feedback included: *"people have bigger problems than this", "be careful that in fixing one issue you may create another issue elsewhere", "justify it and simplify it", "most healthy ground is suitable, need to ensure land is looked after"* and *"this is just a process, you want to actually be able to be an influencer"*.

4.9 Waikato-Waipā Freshwater Management Unit and Hauraki Freshwater Management Unit – Putāruru community drop-in session

Four people attended the community drop-in session at Putāruru including a district councillor, and community members. A regional councillor also attended.

Te Mana o te Wai

When asked to provide comment on the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai a few comments were provided. References were made in regard to clarity between ownership and management of freshwater with a view that no one owns water and that the focus should be more on freshwater management. There was a view that clause 2 should reflect that all stakeholders need to participate including tangata whenua, farmers, industry and communities. In reference to the clause, '*the effects of human activities determine the health and well-being of the Region's freshwater bodies and ecosystems*', there was a comment about the fast growth of farming in South Waikato and population spread and the importance of water. Another response to the draft Te Mana o te Wai objective included the view that *"people don't appreciate water as much [and] sometimes what we do with waste isn't always good".*

Long-term vision

Hauraki

With regard to providing feedback on the draft objective long-term vision for Hauraki, a few comments were provided. There was agreement with clause (a) *'the health, well-being and mauri of waterbodies is protected and restored where necessary to provide for present and future generations and healthy ecosystems*'. For clause (b) there was support for sustainable land management practices rather that changing land use. There were some attendees who supported clauses (c) regarding the holistic management of freshwater recognising the health of people relies on the health of the environment and (d) regarding freshwater as '*suitable and accessible to provide for a range of values and uses*...'. For clause (e) '*freshwater management supports space for all generations to interact with the awa together and ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu, taonga and customary rights are protected from adverse effects and inappropriate use*', a word amendment was suggested in respect to private property rights. For clause (f) '*fisheries and freshwater habitats, riparian margins and natural inland wetlands that are degraded are rehabilitated and restored, and where they are not degraded they are*

protected', it was suggested to link with the flood schemes, areas you cannot plant. For clause (g) there was a query if the reference is to the NPS-FM national bottom line or any bottom line. There was agreement with clause (h) regarding the increase of natural inland wetlands, stating that it was good to link with environmental mitigation on farms and agreement with clause (i) to improve public access to waterways. For clause (j) regarding riparian planting with appropriate types of vegetation and with re-forestation of appropriate areas, there was a comment about how it comes down to one's view on what is appropriate.

Lower Waikato

There were two comments on the draft objective long-term vision for Lower Waikato. For clause (b) regarding the improvement of freshwater '*back to [its attribute state 100 years ago]',* there were questions about how it could be improved back to a state 100 years ago and whether that was achievable. For clause (c) *'ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu, taonga and customary rights are protected from adverse effects and inappropriate use',* there were questions about *"what is appropriate use? What does it mean? Who has a role to play"?*

Timeframes

Attendees were asked what they think is an ambitious but reasonable timeframe to achieve a vision like the one proposed. There was comment that the short-term timeframe is about setting the direction of travel and gathering information on what practices are occurring, giving landowners time to budget/plan ahead. With regard to long-term there was comment about percentage reductions [should have] alignment with climate targets and that it should be "*landowner choice rather than inputs*". Another comment about timeframes stated *"short term is 10 years quick action. Long term is [the] end goal [at] 80 years"*. One other response questioned what support was available for improvements on private land.

Environmental outcomes and target states

Hauraki

There were a number of comments regarding the draft environmental outcomes for Hauraki. For clause (a) Ecosystem Health (2) Water quantity (i) in regard to '…*provide for ecosystem health and life supporting capacity of aquatic species',* there was a view to apply this to native aquatic species and not introduced species. For clause (a) Ecosystem Health (3) Habitat there was a comment to not *"worry about trout as improving water quality did this anyway".* For clause (d) Mahinga kai (1) 'w*ater is safe for taking kai',* there was a view that this apply to *"taking kai in sites where this happens not just everywhere".* Clause (g) Animal drinking water, was viewed as important for Hauraki. For clause (i) Transport and Tauranga waka there was a response for council to manage access disrupted by willows etc. Waihou as an example. Clause (k) Irrigation, cultivation and production of food and beverages, was mentioned and to recognise the relationship with HPL (highly productive land) and need for more water. One other commented to include linking habitat with constructed wetlands on farm and incentivising non-regulatory improvements, while another commented that they *"would like to see WRC promote farmers using green water waste reticulation systems"*.

Attendees provided feedback on potential principles for setting target attribute states for Hauraki freshwater. There was reference to wanting to see minimum standards acknowledging *"the importance of protecting our water but also needing to protect peoples/industries interests and their reliance on water until we have reliable science".* The relationship between flood protection schemes, and what farms are allowed to do was mentioned. One other had the view that *"all below national bottom line breaches prioritised [and] not worry on B band as natural improvements are already happening".*

Waikato-Waipā

There were a range of comments regarding the draft environmental outcomes for Waikato-Waipā. For clause (j) regarding fishing the view was that *"people understand the importance [of water] because [its] used for recreation – it's the management of water, collection and storage that is important"*. Another commented that they used to fish the lakes when they were younger and they didn't question that the fish were safe to eat. An attendee commented that their neighbouring farmer irrigated all summer long taking from the little Waipā and stated that dairying is seasonal but water takes are increasing all around their farm. One other questioned whether there was a reduction in farm effluent reaching waterways as farmers were doing more to use dairy shed effluent on crops such as maize.

Attendees provided the following comments on potential principles for setting target attribute states for Waikato-Waipā freshwater, *"ten years is relatively short", "question if anything being done about the lakes to improve them [Waikare and Whangape]", questioned if "when you see a reduction in lake nutrients do you see an improvement in fish life?",* and *"humans can destroy things quickly, takes time to see improvement".*

Activities and actions

People provided a range of comments when asked 'what should the Freshwater Policy Review focus on, to help accelerate positive change for our freshwater'? There was one response for more *"to be done to mitigate koi carp populations".* One response was to focus on *"minimum [farming] standards until we have reliable science".* The state of the lakes was a concern and viewed as *"green and quite stagnant"* and that lakes around the region have been degrading over time. One other mentioned the *"level of nitrogen used by dairy farms around their propoerty, but lifestyle block are smaller and don't use nitrogen".*

Limits and rules

People were asked 'what types of rules and limits do you think will help manage freshwater better'? There was a response that exclusion of stock was viewed as generally going well for farmers. Another suggestion regarding rules and limits was to*, "work with the primary sector and those on land, not just DairyNZ, Fonterra etc [and] implement minimum standards for primary sector"*. Ensuring a streamlined farm plan process was suggested with the view that *"if farmers have to write multiple plans you will find it harder to get their buy in".* Incentives were suggested for wetland planting and large setbacks as a non-regulatory farm environment plan role, and to focus on the top percentage of leaching risk and incentivising lower risk with permitted activity status. Working closer with district councils to manage rules and regulations was suggested as well as the view that maybe councils should do more and that the focus should not just be on farming. Ditching earthed (unlined effluent) ponds as a permitted activity was suggested with another suggesting *"green water reticulation systems on farms".* Additionally, there was a question about whether there has been improvement in the management of sewage discharges from towns.

General feedback

The last question asked, 'what else would you like to say about freshwater management in the Waikato-Waipā and Hauraki'? For Waikato-Waipā, responses included a need "*for significant reduction in the use of nitrogen – massive increase in cost of urea has a seen a reduction in nitrogen use but the price of urea coming down won't encourage farmers to not use it so much. It's about moderation"*. Everyone taking responsibility not just councils was suggested in managing wastewater/stormwater runoff. The importance of having water available and therefore needs to be looked after was also noted.

When asked ‘what else would you like to say about freshwater management in Hauraki’, the need to *“tak[e] into account that Hauraki is our biggest food supplier”* was mentioned.

4.10 Waikato-Waipā Freshwater Management Unit and Hauraki Freshwater Management Unit – Matamata community drop-in session

Ten people attended the community drop-in session at Matamata including a district councillor, one attendee with affiliations to iwi/hapū, farmers and community members.

Te Mana o te Wai

Attendees provided a number of responses when asked for comment on the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai. In reference to the part of clause (1) regarding ‘…*the Waikato Region's freshwater resources is restored and protected*…’, there was a question of *“restor[ing] to what”* and knowing what the baseline is. A general comment was provided stating that Te Mana o te Wai did not give consideration to water use for food production and that *“stakeholders (e.g. landowners) also need to be enabled to participate not just sector representatives”.* There were comments relating to setting minimum standards, *“apply minimum standards to water for maximum economic outcome for all”,* and *“water quality must meet minimum standards”.* Also in reference to clause (1.1) regarding sufficient quality and quantity of freshwater, there was a view of *“setting sufficient quality, quantity standards in science, [and] apply[ing] minimum restrictions”.* For clause (1.2), ‘*that people's relationship with freshwater is inextricably connected with their cultural, social and economic systems’,* there was a response that *“farmers in place and history have personal connection to land and water”.* There was a view that, all people *“have equal ability to policy formation as all people connected to the land*”. In referring to human use there was a question as to why human use was included and to set minimum standards. One other questioned what the cost benefit analysis (CBA) looked like.

Long-term vision

Hauraki

With regard to providing feedback on the draft objective long-term vision for Hauraki, reference was made to clause (i), ‘*public access to waterways is improved*’. Feedback on clause (i) was that, *“private land access is private and controlled”* and *“public access on private lands must have private approval to ensure business can continue”*.

Waipā

There were a range of responses regarding feedback on the draft objective long-term vision for Waipā. One attendee commented *“totally in support of these objectives [and] planting of trees should be back from the banks*”. There was feedback to remove clauses (c), (e) and (f) with one view that it was *“no longer valid in 2024”.* Other comments weren’t specific to providing feedback on the draft objective with mentions of involving stakeholders in the conversation such as PLUG (Primary Land Users Group) and the Eastern Waikato Stakeholder group, economic viability and a call for the primary sector to remain a permitted activity, and ensuring planting follows a “*right plants in the right place”* type principle partnering with landholders.

Upper Waikato

With regard to providing feedback on the draft objective long-term vision for Upper Waikato, reference was made to clause (d), ‘*mana whenua are recognised as kaitiaki mō ngā wai - the*

guardians of Wai, customary practice and principles - tikanga are provided for and our mokopuna see the awa and wai as our tūpuna did'. One response to clause (d) was that *"the mana whenua emphasis will be controversial! As food producers we also rely on plus respect wai".*

Middle Waikato

With regard to providing feedback on the draft objective long-term vision for Middle Waikato, reference was made to clause (b), *'% improvement [% informed by science] in all aspects of freshwater across the region in 10 years'*, questioning *"what does % mean"?* For clause (g), '*rivers are swimmable, and the bottom of rivers are visible*', there was a question as to what swimmable means and a comment that in respect of *"visible river bottoms, turbidity is not always man made".* There were also other general responses to maintain minimum standards.

Lower Waikato

Attendees provided feedback on the draft objective long-term vision for Lower Waikato. Reference was made to clause (b), '*freshwater is healthy, sustains abundant life and prosperous communities and the needs of present and future generations and improved back to [its attribute state 100 years ago]*'. Comments in response to clause (b) questioned why 100 years was chosen and that a minimum standard should be set and that *"river water quality needs to match economic viability of the region. What's 100-year attribute in 1925"*? Other general comments included *"recognis[ing] current primary sector inputs to date and time requirements for outcomes", "water to support industry and agriculture",* and that *"agricultural and industry needs are also vital for our region"*.

Timeframes

Attendees provided feedback when asked about an ambitious but reasonable timeframe to achieve a vision(s) like the one proposed. There were responses suggesting a 100-year timeframe. The costs including a cost benefit analysis were suggested to be factored into timeframes and working towards and maintaining minimum standards were common responses. Additionally, there was a comment that, *"the Hauraki catchment is the biggest food producer in NZ, minimum national standards should be used to allow this to continue"!*

Environmental outcomes and target states

Hauraki

Attendees provided several responses when asked for comment on the draft environmental outcomes for Hauraki. The most common response was a call for maintaining minimum standards by many attendees, *"needs to meet minimum national standards and no more".* There were comments about biosecurity issues needing to be addressed including koi carp, Asian gold clams, and removing trout (for trout, refer to clause (a) Ecosystem Health (3) Habitat and (4) Aquatic life, and clause (j) Fishing) as not native species. Also, in reference to clause (a) Ecosystem Health (1) Water quality, there was feedback that *"urban also have a place to play as well as rural"*. In reference to clause (d) Mahinga kai, there was mention of putting limits on kai gathered. Ponding areas were also mentioned with one suggestion for WRC and the community to purchase farmland for ponding areas.

Attendees provided the following comments on potential principles for setting target attribute states for Hauraki, *"targets based on science and achievable",* and *"encourage use of green water reticulation systems".*

Waikato-Waipā

In reference to clause (a) Ecosystem Health (3) Habitat and (4) Aquatic life, and clause (j) Fishing, there was a response to *"eradicate all non-native fish".* One other comment referred to *"maintain[ing] minimum standards".*

Attendees provided the following comments on potential principles for setting target attribute states for Waikato-Waipā freshwater, *"maintain attribute standards. Move 100 years"* and *"DOC and Fish and Game have a role to play across the district".*

Activities and actions

Attendees provided few comments when asked 'what should the Freshwater Policy Review focus on, to help accelerate positive change for our freshwater'? Working with stakeholders and communities to implement policy was suggested and allowing industry to self-reflect and act and permitted activity suggested by another to help accelerate positive change for freshwater. There was also one other response for *"minimum standards but monitoring continuous improvement".*

When asked about what they 'would like to say in principle at this stage about how the costs should be borne', various comments were provided. There were requests for a *"true cost analysis"* to be provided *"before any policy changes and implementation"* and suggestion to *"spread cost to all for positive outcome".* One other response was that *"greater costs have a follow-on effect to food prices"*.

Limits and rules

People were asked 'what types of rules and limits do you think will help manage freshwater better'? A few references were made to meeting the minimum national standards with mentions of PC1 and one other commented that PC1 farm management plans *"are unworkable without being consented activity".* There was a suggestion to ensure the farm plan process was streamlined and in line with dairy company standards e.g. Fonterra, Open Country Dairy. References to "town wastewater" and "urban water tanks' were mentioned in respect of rules and limits not just focussing on rural such as farm effluent. Working with territorial authorities *"to enforce green water reticulation systems in dairy sheds"* was also suggested. Assessing economic outcomes and the impact of restrictions was mentioned as well as the effect on GDP. Other comments in respect of the question on rules and limits included, *"work with industries. Rainfall catchment is not water take", "intensification can be managed in permitted activity",* and *"farmers on board with stock exclusion".*

General feedback

The last question asked, 'what else would you like to say about freshwater management in the Hauraki'? Feedback was varied on what people wanted to say about freshwater management in the Hauraki and included comments such as *"Hauraki catchment is the biggest food producer in NZ", "Class 1 & 2 soil provide for both regional and national economic prosperity. This needs to be taken into consideration", "consider existing use", "we need minimum standards to continue"* and to *"please maintain minimum standards and be realistic".* Other comments regarding freshwater management in the Hauraki included, *"improvements on urban point source discharges", "protect and enhance wetlands. Community purchase of farmland for wetlands"* and *"freshwater management must be maintained to provide social and economic viability for rural communities to survive".*

4.11 Hauraki Freshwater Management Unit – Paeroa community evening drop-in session

Thirteen people (mostly local dairy farmers) attended a facilitated evening session at Paeroa. Two regional councillors were also in attendance.

The facilitated session included a brief power point presentation outlining the Freshwater Policy Review project including the NPS-FM 2020, timelines for the project, the freshwater policy process, Hauraki FMU, planning documents relevant to Hauraki and State of Environment information regarding Hauraki. Feedback was then received from those in attendance. This feedback has been themed accordingly regarding the Hauraki catchment, long-term visions, targets and attributes, activities and actions, limits and rules and general feedback.

Hauraki catchment

Feedback on the natural characteristics of the Hauraki catchment was provided and the view of complexity in determining good water quality:

- *Nature of water i.e., Ngatea, water already brown, how do we determine where the point of clear or goodness is, when naturally it may not have ever been clear as a result of things that we cannot control. Some aspects we have to do some we have a choice to do – need to focus on "is it achievable?"*
- *Mindful of the fact that it discharges to the Firth of Thames – and the fact that sedimentation gets stuck in there, it is not like other catchments that discharge to the sea and things go away, in the Hauraki it just churns around. We have the science from other projects we have done, hopefully we will be using this and not recreating the wheel.*
- *Types of rivers we have here drive the water quality that we see to a large extent – fundamental geology of catchment, that is what is a key influencer.*

There was also a comment about the Waitoa catchment:

> *Over extracted catchment, Waitoa catchment, using the resources so much and we are all trying to get things better but there are some areas where there is a lot of extraction and we won't be able to make the gains that are needed.*

Long-term vision

Feedback about the state of water quality historically was mentioned with queries about measures and determining the state as it was many years ago:

- *Water quality what is this gauged by – New Zealand's hundreds of catchments, water quality would have been different for each catchment back in pre-European/pre-Māori times – how can it be the same, how do we know what it was and is it even achievable going back to this state?*
- *Added time pressure of 70 years, getting it back to pre-human habitation in 70 years, that is a kicker. Working on a 10-year staged approach, it isn't going to be an overnight thing. Need to be mindful of the age of water and when will you actually see the results, you may not see them for some decades.*

There was also a comment about the science and information regarding the visions, values and aspirations stating that what was proposed was inappropriate for the catchment and information needed to be catchment specific.

Targets and attributes

Feedback on targets and attributes for Hauraki was provided acknowledging that there was agreement to improve waterways and the environment but not necessarily agreement with the targets and whether these would be achieved:

- *All agree that we want to improve water ways and the environment, there will be no one who will not want to be involved – it is about what can we practically do, and we need to set realistic stretch targets. There is a difference between what people might like and what reality actually is, what can be achieved. Acceptance that we can all do things better and farm better on productive land, acknowledge that we are taking little steps all the time – we are making the catchment better.*
- *If we have improved 80%, and effluent improved 80%, stormwater improved by x%, and then WWTP by 80% what is actually left to do?*
- *Some of the targets are pretty out there – and are very aspirational and not practical to achieve.*
- *Everyone aspires to improve what they have – always try to get better in what they do. Farm should be better, should be more efficient, should be allowed to make this happen.*

Modelling was also mentioned to better understand the implications of the Freshwater Policy Review in the Hauraki:

- *Modelling what the implementation of FWFP across the Hauraki – what would the change be on the bands – might this be enough?*
- *Outline of a farm model and how they would perceive how farming would be – a draft of a one pager of what this might look like. An A3 that has all the bits on it (the rules, etc) and then we know what we are dealing with.*

Activities and actions

A range of views regarding activities and actions were provided acknowledging actions farmers had already undertaken and were doing and willingness to make changes:

- *Understand the actions that farmers are undertaking and quantifying this.*
- *The will is there from the farmers to make the change but in a measured manner.*
- *Get credit for what is being done – how will that be woven into the system?*
- *How do we know that what we have been doing isn't enough, do we need to do more?*

The impacts of urban activities were also raised with a view that these should be considered in the Freshwater Policy Review project:

- *Add up all the town chemicals and in the stormwater, it would be colossal – have we got any of the science around this? if not then we should have.*
- *Need to be mindful of urban people's lack of performance of fixing the water.*
- *Water quality in urban area, whole community approach and shouldn't just be one sided. Rural community taking the brunt and everyone come together to make it work, urban folk need to work with rural as well, and the urban folk also need to do their bit too.*

Limits and rules

Attendees provided a range of feedback regarding the limits and rules. A main theme regarding limits and rules was a concern of being over prescriptive and restrictive:

- *Over prescription of how to farm is not the way to go, outline expectations and give flex within the systems – that is ultimately what we want.*
- *Favour outputs-based regulation, is okay for a farmer if they know what we can work under, we know what we need to do to achieve that, over prescription is not going to achieve the gains that you are seeking.*

- *Let us operate our farms in a certain manner, within parameters, keep it on that basis then many will understand what you are trying to achieve.*
- *This is the limit of what you can put in the environment, don't be overly prescriptive. May end up with perverse outcomes if you are too prescriptive.*
- *If you put rules everywhere and on everything this will be too restrictive, we need to allow people to be innovative. Allow farmers to test the boundaries, if you don't test the boundaries how do we know things won't work, and how might we be able to innovate?*

Farm plans and catchment plans were mentioned by attendees:

- *Everyone on a continual improvement – Farm Plans might be sufficient, is it going to be enough? All farms are on that journey of the farm plans – will this be enough?*
- *Direction of travel of farm plans are to improve. There may be some areas where there is a need for managed retreat of land from existing activities, need to be respectful of this.*
- *Farm Plan – every house should require a farm plan – chemicals to clean cars and house and everything goes down the drains – as harmful as what people think happens in the rural area.*
- *Sub-catchments plans – need to make these happen, farmers can make this happen on the ground*
- *Essential freshwater – so can we have a separate plan for this catchment?*

Other feedback regarding the limits and rules was also shared:

- *Set the limits at x and anyone who goes above this – they will need a plan, anyone who is under it let them do what they have to do.*
- *Make the plan as simple and easy to use as possible. Be mindful that there needs to be a time of grace to get some payback on this before we change the rules.*
- *Why invest in water treatment if you (WRC) don't accept it as sufficient. Need to be a change in the system, including incentivising the reuse of water on-site so that way it doesn't go into the water system.*
- *What the government is pushing they don't understand what is happening on the ground. Mother Nature could cut you in half tomorrow and everything could be lost.*

General feedback

Attendees provided a range of general feedback including their views on the economic implications of the Freshwater Policy Review and views on engagement and leadership.

References to cost and economic implications for farmers, communities and the region were made:

- *This region needs to make money, if we don't make money we can't afford the infrastructure to support our communities.*
- *Most farmers are struggling to make ends meet.*
- *Value of the resource to generate wealth for the region, 'we' need to talk long term. We shouldn't be regulated too much so that you can't change from dairy farming to arable uses, this should be allowed to occur. Dairying is only at a phase in its evolution, it will change. Must be allowed to use our land effectively as well – there will be a price to pay, can't plant entire catchment in native bush.*
- *Most farmers want to be profitable, to produce an income, and to be good citizens.*
- *It needs to be economic and sensible for people to farm.*
- *If you are running a business you want to know the costs, we need to know the costs of what the investment might look like, we need the costs of this and this needs to include job losses that will result.*
- *Aspirations need to be matched against costs and implications for our communities.*

- *What is the bottom line – what will be the costs?*
- *Make it practical and affordable, not cumulative and unaffordable.*
- *Turning the whole Waikato into trees will not fix the problem, need to balance the need to ensure economic resilience and that communities continue*

Types of engagement, with sectors, communities, landowners and farmers was raised as well as leadership and learning from past engagement processes:

- *A lot of work done by a lot of people, put a lot of time into PC1 and that has gone round and round the mulberry bush on this. Was lot of consultation, and was a lot of different views, and a lot of education on what we could or want to do.*
- *Valued PC1 collaborative process - what worked bringing cross-sector group together? Get people buying into the process.*
- *What can we do to mesh things together as possible – we need to do this so that it is easy for landowners to understand all the rules and requirements in an easy way.*
- *Use catchment committees – pie day on Friday Matamata Farm Source. How do we get sector engagement.*
- *Sector engagement – do the sectors actually represent us? Voice ready and willing, use this group – unique little catchment. Mum and Dad farming, keep the little group going.*
- *Engaged and sitting here – disappointing that sector isn't participating as much as they should be.*
- *Get the ideas from people and distil it down again. Engagement meetings – not well advertised, need to be. Advertise these better.*
- *Really amazing technical team supported PC1 we need them to be engaged in this process.*
- *Build leaders within catchments – they will be your best champions.*
- *Farmers need to work alongside farmers where working together is actively encouraged. Consulted with the community with what they want, people don't know what they want, real risk that we are not doing this in a piecemeal way – full implications and flow on effects of what they want and want they are after.*
- *Nervous in terms of what community wants and aspires to – will end up with something that we can't achieve.*
- *We need genuine engagement; we know you can't do everything.*
- *Deep diving into the nuances for this catchment, what are they and what can we do? Once we get engagement and get sensible guidelines then farmers will get in behind it and make it happen.*
- *We all need each other – some of the logic doesn't add up where we have pitched sectors and groups against one another.*
- *Farmers are hurting and there is a high level of anxiety out in the sector – feeling the brunt of these changes.*
- *Should have something that is well planned and well facilitated - evidence-focused session.*
- *Where do we create the leadership for others to follow?*

4.12 Hauraki Freshwater Management Unit – Thames community evening drop-in session

Two people attended the evening drop-in session at Thames with one person having affiliations with Landcare.

Te Mana o te Wai

When asked for feedback on the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai there was a comment that the statements/clauses should be referred to as goals. In reference to the clause regarding '*water quality and quantity targets... to reflect the cultural, spiritual and ecological values...',* there was comment that this clause was too broad and to be more specific *"e.g. cultural values of freshwater management".* In reference to the clause regarding *'...sufficient water available to provide for the health and well-being of waterbodies...for human use',* there was a query as to *"what would happen to existing settlement if insufficient to provide for it and wellbeing of waterbodies alone"*? There was also a suggestion to add clause (1.4) *"effect and climate change and weather events... also affect health and wellbeing".*

Long-term vision

Feedback on the draft long-term vision for Hauraki included agreement with clause (j) and riparian planting by 2034 and a query for clause (h) as to why only tuna populations are restored within natural inland wetlands.

Environmental outcomes and target states

Feedback received on the draft environmental outcomes for Hauraki suggested clauses (e) Natural form and character (include as a function) and (f) Drinking water supply should be in the compulsory category. Additional feedback for clause (e) suggested that there *"should… be more to removing stop banks where climate change will either 1). Destroy them or 2). Mean they continually need to be made longer. Channeling rivers is not always the best solution".* Other outcomes were suggested to add to the list including clause (n) eradication and control of invasive species and clause (o) *"drainage systems (infrastructure including weirs, pumps and screens) - need to allow for native species movement without injury – mechanism – drought – disease*".

Technical feedback was provided on the potential principles for setting target attribute states for Hauraki, *"suggest that the score QMCI [Quantitative Macroinvertebrate Community Index] be augmented with an eDNA based TICI [Taxon-Independent Community Index] as more robust than QMCI"*.

Activities and actions

When asked 'what should the Freshwater Policy Review focus on, to help accelerate positive change for our freshwater', the main response was riparian planting and stock exclusion, *"riparian planting on all drains and streams, in addition to exclusion of stock from waterways*", and *"stock exclusion is crucial and should be managed to include space for both grass buffers and riparian planting as a combo*". Other suggestions included:

- *Silt traps also have their place but farmers need more help and guidance*
- *Add eDNA to the water quantum data monitoring – benchmark all class 2+ streams*
- *Add % of stream length that has been fenced to exclude stock and also has riparian planting to achieve 50% shade. Index in % of KMS*

In regards to the question on how costs should be borne the following suggestions were provided:

- *Rating needs to be catchment based*
- *Costs for ongoing irrigation and drainage needs to be more heavily landed onto the beneficiaries of that (ratepayer supported) program. Pro-rated and metered in and out of the stream*
- *Drainage schemes need much closer scrutiny in the way they are consented and then managed. Too little oversight means serious issues are neglected for too long*

Limits and rules

No feedback was provided on the limits and rules.

General feedback

General feedback about freshwater management in Hauraki included a concern for silt build up in Hauraki waterways and Piako/Waihou with the hope improved freshwater management will lead to reduction in silt levels in the firth of Thames. There was also a comment that *"fish passage enhancement need[ed] more support – [and to exclude] pest fish"*.

4.13 Coromandel Freshwater Management Unit - Whangamatā community drop-in session

Three people attended the community drop-in session at Whangamatā including one with affiliations to the Tairua Action Care Group, another with affiliations to Whangamatā Harbour Care and a member of the local community. One councillor was also in attendance.

Te Mana o te Wai

There was just one comment regarding feedback on the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai stating that the *"health and wellbeing of water bodies is definitely much more important than water for farms/business/industry"*.

Long-term vision

There was no feedback on the draft long-term vision for Coromandel. However, when asked 'what do you think is an ambitious but reasonable timeframe to achieve a vision like this', the feedback was that *"this is essential to achieve as soon as possible so that implementation of new guidelines/rules can proceed to protect future generations".*

Environmental outcomes and target states

There was agreement on the draft environmental outcomes for Coromandel as demonstrated in the comments, *"there's a lot of philosophical ideology but things must be simple and clear and then managed well. I do agree with the environmental outcomes"* and *"natural form and character – the biological, visual and physical characteristics to be maintained and improved is an excellent ideal"*.

There was no feedback on potential principles for setting target attribute states for the Coromandel.

Activities and actions

When asked 'what should the Freshwater Policy Review focus on, to help accelerate positive change for our freshwater', the response was *"…we must focus on the ability to provide clean drinking water at the same time as catering for recreational and social and cultural needs of water above the needs of water for profit".*

There was no feedback given to the question about how the costs should be borne.

Limits and rules

No other feedback was given for the questions concerning rules and limits and anything else regarding freshwater management.

5 Ngā kōrero whakahoki a te tangata whenua | Results – Tangata whenua engagement

5.1 Lake Taupō Freshwater Management Unit – Tūrangi tangata whenua drop-in session

Three people attended the drop-in session at Tūrangi who all had affiliations to Raukawa and Tūwharetoa.

Te Mana o te Wai

There was feedback supporting the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai. For the clause regarding *'tangata whenua…enabled to participate in policy formulation and decision-making processes…*' there was support and a comment that *"tangata whenua needs to emphasise ahi kā roa*[5] *groups".*

Long-term vision

With regard to the draft objective long-term vision for Taupō there was feedback that *"tupuna awa need protection"*. When asked 'what do you think is an ambitious but reasonable timeframe to achieve a vision like this', the feedback was that *"think it's an achievable vision", "Five-year intervals - incremental – achievable" and "lots of people don't understand process so make the plan a 10 year one".*

Environmental outcomes and target states

Feedback on the draft environmental outcomes for Taupō included comments on recognising *"the impact turbines and dams have on species"* and phasing out hydro-electricity generation. Other comments on the draft environmental outcomes included *"no tourism on the foreshore or on private land (Tūrangi)", "trout fisheries competing with traditional kai resources"* and *"extremely essential for the future of mokopuna".*

There was no feedback on potential principles for setting target attribute states for Taupō.

Activities and actions

When asked 'what should the Freshwater Policy Review focus on, to help accelerate positive change for our freshwater', the response was *"Freshwater Policy Review should focus on encouraging more youth, others too, to train to have workshops to train up more people to help accelerate positive change. Training programmes to train in science, etc*".

When asked about what they 'would like to say in principle at this stage about how the costs should be borne', comments included, *"water is important so perhaps monies from regional council", "balance between taxpayer - rate payer - private user"* and *"re-prioritisation of rates toward freshwater management".*

Limits and rules

People were asked 'what types of rules and limits do you think will help manage freshwater better'? Comments on the rules and limits included more education and awareness on managing freshwater better, better regulation on recreational use by "*jet boaters, redirecting*

[5] 'ahi kā roa' – those that keep the home fires burning. In this context those tangata whenua marae, hapū and iwi that have been in a region/rohe continuously, for a considerable time.

funding to essential freshwater resources and quality" and *"protection of water at source. Locally governed water management".*

There was no further feedback from attendees regarding freshwater management in Taupō.

5.2 Lake Taupō Freshwater Management Unit – Taupō tangata whenua drop-in session

Seven people attended the drop-in session at Taupō. Attendees had affiliations with Tūwharetoa, Ngāti Rauhoto, Ngāti Te Urunga, Ngāti Tutetawha, Hikairo, Waewae, Parekaawa and Kohera.

Te Mana o te Wai

There was no feedback from attendees regarding the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai.

Long-term vision

Feedback on the draft objective long-term vision for Taupō, included a query on clause (f) in respect of water quality and *"how do we define degraded"?* This was followed by the comment *"Taupō catchment has excellent water quality so our most polluted awa (Whangamata Stream, Mapara Stream, Tokaanui, Whareroa) may seem clean in comparison to awa from other takiwā. Can we set a catchment bottom line more stringent than NPS-FM bottom lines? To uphold our excellent water quality or aim for all our awa to be in the highest attribute band or having specific outcomes for our more polluted awa/ground water*".

There was no feedback when asked about an ambitious but reasonable timeframe to achieve a vision like the one proposed.

Environmental outcomes and target states

Feedback on the draft environmental outcomes for Taupō focused mainly on lake levels and hydro-electric power generation. Thoughts on clause (l) Hydro-electric power generation varied, including phasing out hydro-electric power generation, and maintaining power generation but *"giv[ing] thought to communities suffering from erosion due to high lake levels"* noting that *"Poukura would like power generation stations to be phased out".* Reference was made to clause (a) Ecosystem health (2) Water quantity (ii) '*lake levels are maintained to provide for ecosystem health'*. Feedback on lake levels referred to Lake Rotongaio and other lakes, *"lake levels MUST be reduced. The maximum levels are CONSTANTLY exceeded with disastrous results in February 2023".*

There was no feedback on potential principles for setting target attribute states for Taupō.

Activities and actions

Attendees provided a range of feedback when asked 'what should the Freshwater Policy Review focus on, to help accelerate positive change for our freshwater'? Actions included support for the retention of provisions and the suggestion to *"support catchment groups such as Taupō Lake Care to assist with delivery, engagement"*. With regard to monitoring it was suggested to include communities (and children), and mana whenua *"to bring science and Mātauranga together in partnership"*. Other suggested actions included *"encourag[ing] District Councils to regulate clay-bird shooting on the lake, contaminating lake with plastics and lead", "Agroforestry staggered ETS farming with under-grazing - interception and grazing together"* and *"lysimeter network [tool to help understand how much nitrogen is lost and when] for N leachates underway. Facilities for on-the-ground improvements/monitoring being sure WRC is aware of*".

There was no feedback on the question about how the costs should be borne.

Limits and rules

People were asked 'what types of rules and limits do you think will help manage freshwater better'? Feedback on rules and limits included *"enabl[ing] barn constructions for standoff pads", "existing good practice being protected. Retain the N cap market it's working well", "enable pragmatic outcomes via catchment funding. Make it super clear what outcomes it will achieve e.g., poplar planting"* and *"freshwater farm plans, we know the fines but not the required measures".*

General feedback

Further feedback regarding freshwater management in Taupō included improving access to funding for farmers.

5.3 West Coast Freshwater Management Unit – Raglan tangata whenua drop-in session

There were four people that attended the drop-in session at Raglan all with affiliations to Ngā Toko Taru.

Te Mana o te Wai

When asked for feedback on the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai there was a response for puna (springs) needing to be recognised.

Long-term vision

Feedback on the draft objective long-term vision for the West coast included a response of concern with SNA (Significant Natural Area) classification *"prohibiting appropriate use. Can be used to oppress landowners"*.

Environmental outcomes and target states

Feedback on the draft environmental outcomes for the West coast made reference of support for clause (h) Wai tapu provisions. There were also comments as to whether the Whaingaroa Fish Plan had been included as part of this review (referring to mahinga kai) and to hui with whānau again and work with Māori landowners.

Potential principles were presented, and feedback requested about these potential principles for setting target attribute states for West coast freshwater. Feedback provided was not necessarily directly related to the potential principles including responses on the current negative impacts on mahinga kai and fish species, *"no pūpū left", "Pataki size changes in response to degradation".* Other comments included references to Waitetuna river as a source of sediment, Waingaro links to Ohautira and cultural significance of the river as critical, *"whitebait recording through observation",* and "*transfer of powers for monitoring".*

Activities and actions

Attendees provided feedback when asked 'what should the Freshwater Policy Review focus on, to help accelerate positive change for our freshwater', including training and education in partnership with local whānau, whānau interest in monitoring local fresh water, funding for signage to prevent rubbish dumping and more hui at Waingaro Pā, when the marae opens.

There was no feedback for the question on how the costs should be borne.

Limits and rules

No other feedback was given for the questions concerning rules and limits and anything else regarding freshwater management.

5.4 Waikato-Waipā Freshwater Management Unit – Reporoa tangata whenua drop-in session

There were 11 people that attended the drop-in session at Te Toke Marae in Reporoa. Almost all attendees had affiliations with Ngāti Tahu-Ngāti Whaoa while one attendee had affiliations to Ngāti Kearoa-Ngāti Tuara.

Te Mana o te Wai

When asked for feedback on the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai responses included agreement with clauses 1.1 regarding sufficient quality and quantity of freshwater and 1.2 '*that people's relationship with freshwater is inextricably connected with their cultural, social and economic systems'* and *"it being a 'whole catchment' basis*". Other comments regarding Te Mana o te Wai included, *"wholistic view of te taiao - that you understand that if one of the taiao is negatively impacted, this can have a negative impact downstream or on other resources"*, in respect of biodiversity and natural vegetation growth having *"less disturbance of whenua near waterways",* and a recommendation that *"for the policies, visions to be written in Te Reo Māori or to use Māori terms like mauri in the document".*

Long-term vision

Feedback on the draft objective long-term vision for Upper Waikato included reference to the importance of Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato - the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River and that an explanation maybe needed on how it sits above the NPS-FM and that *"we must give effect to it".* In reference to clause (h) *'fisheries and freshwater habitats that are degraded are rehabilitated and restored, and where they are not degraded they are protected',* there was comment that it's *"quite ambitious. Some we could bring to a manageable state, could be protect and enhance sounds more reasonable"*. For clause (i), *'water is allowed to be itself…'*, there was a view that *"water cannot be moved or redirected from its natural path and state including what is added in (species) or taken out without consult[ation] and research with mana whenua".*

There was no feedback when asked about an ambitious but reasonable timeframe to achieve a vision(s) like the one proposed.

Environmental outcomes and target states

Feedback on the draft environmental outcomes for Waikato-Waipā made references to various outcomes. For clause (a) Ecosystem health (3) Habitat (i) wetlands, it was suggested to add '*…wetlands', "through active management and support".* Also, for clause (a) Ecosystem Health (4) Aquatic life, it was suggested *"for Aquatic life to be returned to its former natural state (if known) or if it's to be increased - this checked if needed by assessing the whole ecosystem".* In reference to clause (d) Mahinga kai, there were suggestions to reword to *"water is safe for kai to grow and therefore be harvested"* and *"Mahinga kai species such as tuna (eel), kōura (freshwater [crayfish]) should have the same importance as trout"*. For clause (f) Drinking water supply, there was a suggestion to add *"…and remains above the cultural flow limit (ref (a)) and ensure there is enough water to marae along the awa"*. For clause (h) Wai tapu, there was feedback to *"identify potential 'adverse effects' specifically and create management and response plans".* There were two comments for clause (i) Transport and Tauranga waka including for (1) *'sites to launch and land waka and other watercraft are maintained and provided for'* to add *"…with clear cleaning stations with procedure[s] stated".*

The other comment for clause (i) was specific to (2) *'there are suitable flows to enable the continued access and use of watercraft for transport purposes'* to add *"to a required level. Power stations work with Council and Iwi/tangata whenua to protect the awa and taonga species such as tuna"*. For clause (j) Fishing there was a query to specify what is meant by 'suitable' in reference to '*…the numbers of fish are sufficient and suitable for human consumption, and water quality is suitable for human contact*'. For clause (l) Hydro-electric power generation there was reference to keeping areas clean of weeds and for clause (m) Commercial and industrial use, there was a query as to where companies dump waste e.g. concrete, asbestos, steel.

Potential principles were presented and feedback requested about these potential principles for setting target attribute states for Waikato-Waipā freshwater. Suggestions on the potential principles included *"attributes should all be improved above 'minimum' or Band D. They should all aim to be Band A and weighted and prioritised, and 'increasing' band to green needs to be carefully defined for attributes that are qualitative and not specifically measurable in terms of numbers", "attributes should be identified by tangata whenua and Council/or whoever is water monitoring with an iwi representative",* needs research on *"how to provide for targets and states for each tributary"* and *"cumulative effects from Band 'A'. Catchments should be considered"*.

Activities and actions

Attendees provided a range of feedback when asked 'what should the Freshwater Policy Review focus on, to help accelerate positive change for our freshwater'? Actions included, visual testing such as *"smell assessment, access and practical assessments"* and *"more hui… capturing tangata whenua whakaaro… keep engaging…"*.

Suggestions on on how the costs should be borne included spreading cost across *"all who use and benefit from the river and government entities with funding specific to the kaupapa of water management".* There was also comment stating *"the reason rivers are in this state isn't a specific group (i.e., farmers) fault. It's a combination of neglect, upper river commercial activities, residing whānau, farms, species changing".*

Limits and rules

People provided a range of responses when asked 'what types of rules and limits do you think will help manage freshwater better'? Feedback on rules and limits included:

- *Fencing setback from waterways at least 5 metres, preferred 8 metres.*
- *Riparian planting along waterways. This creates corridors for birds (who drop seeds when flying between native tracks).*
- *MPI biosecurity updating their methods (eDNA) sharing and actioning results.*
- *Educating people, land users on the 'why'.*
- *Stricter 'input' limits focusing on soil health and resilience (i.e. regenerative practices).*
- *Rules to limit discharge and sediment upstream of mahinga kai, wai tapu.*
- *Reconnection and access.*
- *Environmental limits to ensure wai tapu, mahinga kai (quality access) restoration and protection.*
- *Iwi/hapū ability to trigger resource consent review.*

General feedback

Further feedback regarding freshwater management in Waikato-Waipā included more education and awareness about protecting water, *"resourcing iwi to monitor their rohe"* another commenting, *"water quality monitoring and consent condition monitoring. Support transfer of powers (consent conditions) but a cost prohibitive process"*, and recognition of

customary and cultural rights in gathering kai *"that should have precedence and shouldn't require payment/permits. The same applies to water"*. There were other comments regarding plant life (nitrogen fixing plants) missing that help clean the water, plant species such as wiwi/knobby swamp rush, raupō/bullrush, nursery plants for healthy waterways, to allow waterways to take their natural course without engineering and to continue to wānanga.

5.5 Waikato-Waipā Freshwater Management Unit – Hamilton tangata whenua drop-in session

Four people attended the Hamilton community drop-in session. Attendees had affiliations with Waikato and Ngāti Maniapoto.

Te Mana o te Wai

When asked for feedback on the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai attendees provided a range of responses. There was broad support for the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai including comments *"support Te Mana o te Wai - do not amend its definition - the definition has mana through the Iwi Chairs Forum and submissions", "love the framework - we need to finish talking and start 'doing'"*. References were made to the clause regarding tangata whenua participation in policy formulation and decision-making processes including a comment regarding hierarchy for this clause, *"hapū involvement in consent decisions, conditions and monitoring",* recognition of Te Tiriti partnerships and *"keeping the Crown accountable"* and not amending this clause *"unless its intent remains".* There was support for clause (3) regarding sufficient water availability. Further feedback was provided in respect of Te Mana o te Wai and iwi expectations noting that *"Te Mana o te Wai [be] at the forefront of all decisions [with] structural changes expected, [that] Te Mana o te Wai [was the] responsibility of all New Zealanders [and that] co-governance shared decisions [is] critical to advancing Te Mana o te Wai"*. Other mentions of consideration included *"the role and recognition of Whanganui in [the] health and wellbeing of Taupō and Waikato River"*, that *"groundwater is included and not forgotten",* and that *"while we talk and talk our precious rivers, lakes, wetlands and lakes and forest keep degrading - we need action now. Our grandchildren's grandchildren will thank us"!* Lastly there was view that *"Te Mana o te Wai will never be achieved… if legacy issues are not resolved so maybe our focus should be on a future state".*

Long-term vision

Waipā

There was support for the draft objective long-term vision for Waipā and a comment stating restoration was key. One other response queried the term 'Mauri' in clause (b) and (f), *"who defines it, measures and monitors it, from what perspective and what baseline*".

Upper Waikato

There was one response regarding the draft objective for Upper Waikato, *"my vision includes people experiencing our natural places in many ways - harvesting kai, swimming, paddling waka, etc., walking/cycling and quiet contemplation - "bathing" in these wonderful natural places - good for people's physical, mental and spiritual well-being. People need to do this and not be on devices"*!

Middle Waikato

There was one broad response regarding the draft objective for Middle Waikato, *"people "immersed" in these wonderful places - not on their devices"!*

Lower Waikato

There was one broad response regarding the draft objective for Lower Waikato *"people "immersed" in these wonderful places - not on their devices"*!

For all FMUs there was no feedback when asked about an ambitious but reasonable timeframe to achieve a vision(s) like the one(s) proposed.

Environmental outcomes and target states

Feedback on the draft environmental outcomes for Waikato-Waipā made references to various outcomes. There was one broad statement fully supporting the draft environmental outcomes but also stating *"needs flexibility to offset trade-off within limits / all in context of net improvement in environmental qualities"*. For clauses (e) to (h)[6] there was a statement of full support with the comment *"needs some ability to offset changes related to change/new uses in a way that supports overall environmental improvement"*. For clauses (i) to (k)[7] there was also a statement of full support with the comment *"need flexibility to offset/tautuutu[8] in context of overall positive effects on environmental quality"*. For clauses (l) Hydro-electric power generation and (m) Commercial and industrial use, there was feedback that *"…renewable energy generation is a more precise term - related to support for decarbonisation".* Other comments included *"consideration for pest control and bioscecurity - e.g., koi grass carp"* and *"Add value: Patunga Tapu "sacrosanct". Too important for business, infrastructure development, etc - e.g., Tūpāpaku[9] washed on these stones. "Sites of significance" allow adverse activities all around the site - not good. Different to wai tapū and sites"*.

Potential principles were presented, and feedback requested about these potential principles for setting target attribute states for Waikato-Waipā freshwater. There was one response to the potential principles and setting target attribute states which stated, "existing long- term consents and renewals will undermine short-term targets".

Activities and actions

Attendees were asked 'what should the Freshwater Policy Review focus on to help accelerate positive change for our freshwater'*?* Comments included, *"collaboration across catchment from kaitiaki, stakeholders, community groups, environmental restoration [groups]",* and *"WRC ratepayers facilitating catchment collaborations – Waikato River Authority/Waikato Catchment Ecological Enhancement Trust, Department of Conservation. Council funds used to catalyse action".*

There was no feedback on how the costs should be borne but a comment that *"economics [is] not the most important cost. The environmental and cultural costs of not changing are currently being experienced".*

Limits and rules

People provided a range of responses when asked 'what types of rules and limits do you think will help manage freshwater better'? Feedback on rules and limits included:

- *Riparian areas need to be wider – Water quality and biodiversity and decarbonisation benefits.*

[6] (e) Natural form and character, (f) Drinking water supply, (g) Animal drinking water, (h) Wai tapu

[7] (i) Transport and Tauranga waka, (j) Fishing, (k) Irrigation, Cultivation and production of food and beverages

[8] 'tautuutu' in this context is taken to mean 'reciprocation'

[9] Tūpāpaku means deceased person's body

- *Good practice/exemplary practice by landowners/farmers need better explicit authentic recognition/celebration.*
- *WRC's clean streams work and work done on the ground with good practice advice by catchment management officers is excellent - needs to grow!*
- *Could use a collaboration between National Wetland Trust/WRC (especially catchment management officers on farm auditing farm plans) to form up and implement a Wetland Mark - a "Wetland QualMark" for the standard of wetland management on farms (Gold/Silver/Bronze). This would recognise and celebrate voluntary efforts by landowners/farmers.*
- Getting industry sectors onboard

General feedback

Attendees provided additional feedback regarding reports and plans about water that could be useful including *"cultural values assessments or mana whenua reports associated with large water related consents e.g., Northern Metro, wastewater treatment plan town structure plans".*

5.6 Waikato-Waipā Freshwater Management Unit – Tuakau tangata whenua drop-in session

Four people attended the drop-in session at Te Awamarahi marae near Tuakau. Attendees had affiliations with Ngaa uri o Tahinga and Ngaati Aamaru.

Te Mana o te Wai

When asked for feedback on the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai attendees provided a range of responses. There was support for, clause (1) regarding the '*health, resilience and wellbeing of the Waikato Region's freshwater resources is restored and protected…*', and support for clause (1.2) regarding *'people's relationship with freshwater is inextricably connected with their cultural, social and economic systems'*. In regard to clause (2) *'Tangata whenua are enabled to participate in policy formulation…'*, it was suggested to replace 'enabled' from this clause with 'do participate' and instead *"put 'enable' in implementation of policy".* There was support for clause (3), '*…water may be available for human use…*', however, there was comment that *"enable human use enables all economic use. Will enable too much damming".* There was suggestion to add a fifth clause, *"recognise mātaitai[10] customary rights in a new provision – only applies to Fisheries Act[11] and other tools available to Māori"*.

Long-term vision

Feedback on draft objective long-term visions for all four Waikato-Waipā freshwater management units suggested the addition of another clause, *"customary rights including mātaitai tools*". In regard to the question about an ambitious but reasonable timeframe to achieve a vision(s) like the one proposed, 2044 was provided as a date for all Waikato-Waipā freshwater management units.

Lower Waikato

For clause (a) for the draft objective long-term vision for Lower Waikato, '*freshwater management recognises Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato - the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River',* it was suggested to replace 'recognises' with 'give effect'. There was also

[10] 'mātaitai' means seafood

[11] The Fisheries (Kaimoana Customary Fishing) Regulations 1998 apply to the North Island and Chatham Islands. Mātaitai reserves recognise and provide for traditional fishing and are developed and managed by tangata whenua. See Managing customary fisheries | NZ Government (mpi.govt.nz)

support for clause (e) regarding *'biodiversity of flora and fauna, endemic species including porohe, īnanga and matamata (whitebait species) are protected',* with the comment currently *"whitebait spawning sites are being left dry, need higher quantity, suggest dams do seasonal release for spawning season"*.

Environmental outcomes and target states

Feedback on the draft environmental outcomes for Waikato-Waipā made reference to supporting clause (d) Mahinga kai. All other feedback in this section focused more on mahinga kai monitoring and base line assessments that had already been done locally by mana whenua. It was recommended to draw and build on local assessments and continue monitoring as described in the following comments, *"draw on tangata whenua monitoring to understand environmental trends, mahinga kai areas", "setbacks from waterways can be determined by mahinga kai monitoring",* and *"monitoring is one of the biggest issues that needs to occur. Need to be able to force best practice".*

There was no feedback on potential principles for setting target attribute states for Waikato-Waipā.

Activities and actions

There was no feedback on activities and actions nor feedback on how the costs should be borne.

Limits and rules

People provided a range of responses when asked 'what types of rules and limits do you think will help manage freshwater better'? Feedback on rules and limits included:

- A comment that damming was *"far too permissive".*
- Improved *"monitoring of water use by vegetable growers".*
- In regard to water takes suggestions to *"put meters on the bore, take what's needed to support stock,"* and pay more if more water is needed.
- Involvement of WRC in the acceptance of farm plans. There was comment that *"agronomists need to inform [farm plans]"* and mentions of a template, setbacks, drain cleaning and user pays.
- A comment to *"target areas across the Waipā as they contribute most".*

General feedback

Other feedback provided by attendees regarding freshwater included, *"hav[ing] to re-adjust our thinking with how we use water - understanding upstream effects - are they nature or human or both", "wai is not a commodity", "wasting water on grass is not good",* mention of the Israeli method of water management, *"protect[ion] of significant waters for the people (food [plants, fisheries], karakia, recreation)"* and a comment that through degradation it was unsafe to swim in local rivers.

6 Ngā kōrero whakahoki a te rangatahi | Results – Rangatahi/youth engagement

6.1 Rangatahi Voices

Nine rangatahi attended a facilitated session in March 2023 (session 1) and nine rangatahi attended a youth-led session in July 2023 (session 2). The structure of both sessions included similar questions to those used in Round 1 engagement for the Freshwater Policy Review.

Special sites and features

Rangatahi identified a number of freshwater sites and features they viewed as special to them and where they undertake freshwater recreation and or activities. The sites included rivers, streams, lakes, springs, camps, and swimming holes. Some of the reasons these sites and features are considered special included nature, swimming, cultural reasons, camping, walking, and memories with family and friends:

- *Maratoto / Komata swimming holes, river in back of Paeroa – Lots of family spots that are special to people and great clear water*
- *Blue Springs near Putāruru – It's the clearest water, have good memories there and love the environment*
- *Pirongia and Kaniwhaniwha for camping*
- *Lake Taupō for swimming.*
- *Mi camp near Taupō - has nice water for swimming (it tastes nice too).*
- *Hamilton Lake – Lovely walk. Good memories with friends*
- *Hamilton Gardens.*
- *Walking with family as I grew up following along the Waikato River.*
- *Blue lake (Rotorua) - Love it with family, so pretty.*
- *Waipā river – Connecting Maniapoto people. Descendant to river. Water used to heal, cleanse and for cultural activities for Ngāti Unu, Ngāti Kahu – Te Kōpua*
- *Lake Ngāroto – Site where Tainuiatua found*
- *Waitawheta river – Beauty/absolute. Love it here*
- *Cathedral Cove – Love it, many memories grown up here*

Values and outcomes

Rangatahi comments noted importance to all the four national compulsory values (Appendix 1A of the NPS-FM). In their responses, the participants commented on aspects of the values (Ecosystem health, Human contact, Threatened species and Mahinga kai). Rangatahi responses ranged from a focus on water quality, providing a safe habitat for biodiversity, connecting with freshwater, through to concern for threatened species. Examples of rangatahi comments included: *"beautiful ecosystem that feels special when you see it in a form that has been taken care of", "necessary for life and home of many animals and fish and insects and literally most things", "watching the native species happy in their environment like tuna", "it connects people from across large distances"* and *"it provides a beautiful spot for whānau to connect with fresh awa"*.

Rangatahi identified aspects of other values that must be considered (Appendix 1B of the NPS-FM) such as natural form and character, drinking water supply, and wai tapu. Examples of rangatahi comments included: *"it is something unique to Aotearoa - that we can drink from most streams", "it provides essence/healing/life to people across ngā rohe", "how it's special to families and cultures"* and *"the ability to heal, connect Māori, source of life".*

Attributes and targets

Rangatahi raised some concerns about the current state of waterways. Concerns raised included pollution of waterways (e.g. nitrates, E-coli, rubbish, farm runoff, microplastics, poison) and noted locations of concern for Hamilton Lake, University of Waikato Lake and surrounds, Raglan, Pirongia, Thames, and Waikato river through to Port Waikato. Other concerns included the impact on aquatic life, animals and fish in a polluted environment, illness that could arise from polluted waters, the *"lack of clean environment for life to thrive in", "loss of traditions and cultural activities",* safety in the future (to swim), and a concern that *"my future kids or mokopuna won't have memories around fresh and clean rivers and lakes if we don't do something now*".

Rangatahi provided a range of responses of how they would like to see freshwater in the future. Rangatahi responses mentioned having a *"better range of biodiversity introducing animals back into the environment",* return of tuna and aquatic life and having fresh, clear pristine water that is *"drinkable, swimmable, survivable for animals, clear of invasive species".* There was a response for the "*return of authority to the original owners to uphold the values of the Treaty/Te Tiriti - Tino Rangatiratanga"*. Other comments included *"return of cultural activity", "I would like to see people picking up rubbish, even if it's not theirs"* and having a *"sustainable and collective plan to look after our streams".*

Timeframes varied when rangatahi would like to see improvements achieved, ranging from "as soon as possible" to within the next decade. Examples of comments from rangatahi included:

- *Doesn't smell. Has native animals living in it. Timeframe ASAP*
- *Safe to swim in, nourishing for the flora and fauna. YESTERDAY.*
- *I would like improvement in freshwater to occur within the next decade*
- *I would like water to be clean by 2024 January.*
- *I would like to be able to drink and swim in the Waipā and see the bottom of the river like my family could 30 years ago. I want this achieved next week, NOT NEXT MONTH, NOT NEXT YEAR.*
- *I want to enjoy my cultural practices on the river one day soon.*

Activities and actions

Rangatahi provided a number of suggested actions to improve freshwater. Suggested actions included reducing and preventing rubbish and pollution from entering waterways, educating and persuading people how to prevent pollution and how, e.g. washing cars on grass instead of concrete driveways, use of reusable products, and *"being mindful of what we put down our drains".* Riparian planting was another suggestion with planting of native species and to support these actions with *"grants/funding/koha allocated to all districts*", and providing support to farmers with subsidised planting. It was also suggested that five metre boundaries be established on all waterways and to remove non-native plants and invasive species. Other suggested actions included *"supporting farmers to have more eco-friendly farms", "enabl[ing] indigenous activities", "removal of dams to restore water flow", "return to original owners",* and *"working bee/clean up. Incentivise/clean-up projects – regularly".*

When asked 'what's the best course of action', rangatahi made the following comments:

- *Ban single-use plastic – government set standard*
- *Annual planting – riparian*
- *Go back to the source – ban chemicals found in waterways – find alternatives/ways around it.*
- *Farmers not using land as they do now e.g constant grazing needs fertiliser. Having less cows would need less (have to weigh it up – supply of food products etc.)*
- *Look at setup of farms e.g place stock concentrate or hosing-down places – locate further away from water*
- *More education opportunities. Reshape entire system to have new world view. Promote healthy lives, caring for others and nature (not just jobs and money)*
- *Remove dams to let the river return to its undisrupted state.*
- *Eradicate invasive species.*
- *Return authority to those with historical/ cultural connection.*

7 Ngā whakautu uiuinga a te hapori, tangata whenua | Results – Community and tangata whenua survey feedback

7.1 Waikato region

Te Mana o te Wai draft objective

1. *The health, resilience and wellbeing of the Waikato Region's freshwater resources is restored and protected, present and future generations' connections with freshwater are sustained, and land and water are managed on a whole of catchment basis, to give effect to Te Mana o te Wai, recognising:*
    - *1.1 That sufficient quality and quantity of freshwater is essential to the health and well-being of ecosystems and people;*
    - *1.2 That people's relationship with freshwater is inextricably connected with their cultural, social, and economic systems;*
    - *1.3 The effects of human activities determine the health and well-being of the Region's freshwater bodies and ecosystems.*
2. *Tangata whenua are enabled to participate in policy formulation and decision-making processes relating to freshwater management.*
3. *There is sufficient water available to provide for the health and well-being of waterbodies, and provided that is achieved, water may be available for human use, provided it is allocated and used efficiently.*
4. *Water quality and quantity targets are established and respected, to reflect the cultural, spiritual, and ecological values of freshwater as understood by tangata whenua and the community.*

Te Mana o te Wai

Participants were presented with the draft objective and asked to indicate whether they supported each clause.

- The majority (n = 49; 86%) of respondents supported clause (1).
- The vast majority (n = 56; 98%) of respondents supported clause (1.1).
- Over four fifths (n = 47; 82%) of respondents supported clause (1.2).
- The majority (n = 50; 89%) of respondents supported clause (1.3).
- Just over half (n = 31; 56%) of respondents supported clause (2).
- The vast majority (n = 50; 91%) of respondents supported clause (3).
- Just over two-thirds (n = 38; 69%) of respondents supported clause (4).

Respondents were also given the opportunity to provide feedback on the wording of the draft objective. A mixture of general comments and references to specific clauses were provided by 42 participants. In reference to clause (1), it was expressed that the term 'restored' requires clarification/definition. The respondent also explained that it should be expected that water quality and quantity will vary over time and after events (for example, earthquakes, cyclones, droughts). It was believed that unrealistic expectations will reduce engagement setting the legislation up for failure. In a similar vein, another participant questioned as to what standard or measure of restoring to meant in reference to the phrase 'protected and restored'. Another respondent suggested that the term 'freshwater resources' be replaced with 'freshwater

ecosystems'. With regards to clause (1.1), there was comment to define the term 'sufficient quality.' Another participant suggested that the word 'abundant' would be more appropriate than 'sufficient', which was seen as too vague. Greater clarification/specification was requested for clause (1.2).

In reference to clause (1.3), there was comment that human activities are not the only factor influencing the health of freshwater (for example, volcanoes and tsunamis can destroy ecosystems). Removing waste (slash) produced by the forestry industry was recommended. Similarly, another individual believed that not only human activities impact water. There was also concern regarding human activities that fall outside of the realm of individual control. Another respondent stated that the principle of rahui needs to be incorporated when thinking about the management of human activities related to freshwater.

For clause (2), the term 'decision-makers' was suggested instead of 'enabled to participate'. While one respondent expressed agreement with clause (3), they requested clarity as to whether the clause is talking about quantity alone – or if quality is included. For the same clause, another individual suggested that the word 'abundant' would be more appropriate than 'sufficient', which was seen as too vague. Likewise, another participant proposed to add 'and equitably' onto the phrase 'used efficiently.' Another recommended using the phrase 'used responsibly' rather than 'used efficiently.'

Clause (4) was seen as too vague and open for broad interpretation. Similarly, it was asked what the term 'spiritual' meant/encompassed. Another commented that water quality and quantity targets should be based on science. A third respondent suggested that the content after 'to reflect' should be deleted.

In terms of more general feedback, one participant said that they agreed with all of the clauses within the objective. Another respondent said that the draft objective was a "*good start*" but too vague. It was noted that no reference was made to climate change and resilience. The participant said that difficult but necessary conversations with citizens are required to provide certainty to landowners and these discussions would then lead to agreements and objectives for how we can transition to a different Waikato. It was felt that WRC has a conflict of interest (i.e., strategic assets, drainage and stopbanks) so the conversations need to be led by an independent body with an open dialogue. Similarly, another respondent emphasised the importance of community engagement. It was cautioned, however, that humans cannot be greedy and must protect the Wai. In contrast, one respondent commented that relevant experts – after consideration of policy formulation – should authorise decision making processes. Another participant viewed the objective as "*nice well-crafted words,*" but noted that the delivery of policy is important. The participant stressed that rules and regulations cannot be weakened by sectoral and political influence, that monitoring should be independent, and consequences need to be faced for not protecting and improving water quality. It was also suggested that making sure that there were sufficiently funded programmes would make an important difference for delivery of the policy.

One respondent stated that water quality factors into the overall well-being of all humans, so it is necessary for long-term survival stating that when water quality is poor, it is vital to restore the quality and protect it from further degradation. Another individual believed that there should be clean, quality water available for all. It was noted that the key focus should be on protecting our water for future generations. With regards to focus/direction, one individual suggested that an immediate objective should be to have all public waterways healthy enough to sustain all aquatic life and be at least swimmable. Furthermore, polluters need to be held accountable and emphasis be placed on trout, tuna, koura, and whitebait. Another felt that there should be a greater emphasis on restoration and less on water usage. One participant

believed that the objectives required clear timeframes and 'solid' actions in order to fulfil them.

A respondent commented that the "*pollution inputs from agricultural activities exceed the assimilative capacities of the receiving water bodies.*" The claim was made that industry pressures will prevent WRC from implementing policy that achieves Te Mana o te Wai. *"The water is not available as discrete streams, 'this much for health and well-being, and this much for industry'. It is all mixed in, and the moment industry pollutes with their discharges, the clean water is downgraded, and health and wellbeing is lost".* One participant stated that we have high pollution that has led to the waterways being in a dire state, which affects/impacts different factors – for example, the ability to swim in the water. Support was expressed for tangata whenua kaitiaki being enabled to lead on water restoration based on their whakapapa connections to the water. To reverse degradation in the water, the number of cows and the use of nitrate needs to be reduced [across the Waikato]. On a similar note, another respondent recommended that attention be given to [talk about and act on] the use of manufactured chemicals (for example, herbicides, insecticides, and fungicides) chemical salts as fertilisers. There was a view that humans will leave some kind of environmental footprint, noting importance of the size and impact of that footprint and that there needed to be a balance between 'pristine' and 'polluted'. There was recognition that season and climate will create fluctuations (in water quality) and the need to have broader discussion to avoid unintended consequences. Likewise, another commenter stated that water cannot be returned to the quality it was prior to Europeans, but that we should still constantly strive for improvements. There was a comment that resources will need to be used for economic purposes. In terms of specific areas, one participant expressed that the North Waikato lakes and Whangamarino are in *"serious trouble"* with a significant decline in waterfowl and plant life, and a prevalence of algal blooms. It was believed that this was caused by poor resource management and flood protection schemes.

Target states

Target States - Draft principles for setting Target States for the Waikato region
Note we are required to improve sites where water quality is below a national bottom line, and we are required to maintain sites that are good.

Overall principle

- *Maintain or improve for each attribute (as required in the NPS-FM).*

Long-term target

- *Move all attributes up a band (e.g. from D band to C band).*
- *Achieve this by [years]? For example, Plan Change 1 for Waikato Waipā has an 80-year timeframe.*

Short-term target – 10 years

- *Target could be a 10% improvement on baseline state (2017 state) OR*
- *Close the gap between baseline state and target by 20% of the difference.*

Participants were presented with potential principles for setting target attribute states for freshwater and asked for feedback. Eighteen individuals expressed their thoughts. Four participants agreed with the draft principles with one respondent suggesting 20 years as a long-term target and for short-term, a higher percentage of change from 20% to 40% acknowledging that visible results would take time. Another respondent thought that the 10-year targets were fine *"but not achievable in terms of livestock (number) reduction and limits on fertilisers".* A respondent thought that it was unnecessary to work on A and B bands but to

focus on raising the lower bands. Alternatively, another respondent wanted more stringent measures than set in the NPS-FM, to ensure all waters (particularly in the Lake Taupō FMU) within the A band stay within that band, and queried whether tangata whenua would be able to set numerical targets for attributes for their awa. There were other views that the examples provided were not ambitious enough and that the aim should be for pristine waters, that WRC needed to act quickly, and sooner rather than later, *"targets are a great way to begin any significant changes that need to take place starting now to minimise greater negative outcomes in the future that are harder to mitigate".*

There were other suggestions to adopt an incremental improvement approach and 20-year timeframe to moving up bands, not use 2017 as a benchmark year given there had been a lot of change since then, and to use the principles for setting target attributes as a guide only and not for enforcing. There was recognition that some attributes may not improve, while others may improve slower than others. For attributes such as these, there was the view of needing flexibility *"and not attached to penalties or enforcement. The main aim is to gain involvement and to implement best practice".*

A respondent commented that it was important to consider the interactions between the overall Waikato Region, the different FMUs, catchments and individual sites and to consider the trade-offs in achieving or not achieving the target attribute states. Another respondent also acknowledged that the Waipā catchment influenced the West Coast catchment. One other commented that greater specificity was needed, especially if community engagement is sought and wanting to know the gains from moving up a band. There was a view that with better understanding, there is more confidence in establishing timeframes. There was also a suggestion to have a gradient system that clearly describes expected outcomes.

7.2 Lake Taupō Freshwater Management Unit – Community and tangata whenua survey feedback

Draft Objective – Taupō long-term vision

a) *By 2034, the health, well-being and mauri of waterbodies is protected and restored where necessary, for present and future generations.*
b) *By 2034, freshwater is holistically managed in a way that recognises that the health of people relies on the health of the environment.*
c) *By 2034, freshwater management recognises Māori rights and interests in freshwater, creates an environment for sharing of traditional knowledge and practices and protects customary activities and principles - tikanga.*
d) *By 2034, the cultural, spiritual, educational, environmental and economic associations with freshwater are recognised.*
e) *By 2034, sustainable land and water management practices support the achievement of clause (a) and ensure no new aquatic pest species are introduced.*
f) *By 2034, water quality is maintained where good, and if degraded, improved for all freshwater attributes from the baseline state.*
g) *By 2034, freshwater supports natural flows and ecosystems and is available for traditional and customary uses.*
h) *By 2034, fisheries and freshwater habitat that are degraded are rehabilitated and restored, and where they are not degraded they are protected.*

Long-term vision

Participants were provided with the draft objective of the long-term vision for the Lake Taupō FMU and then asked to indicate whether they supported each clause it contained.

a) Three quarters (n = 3; 75%) of respondents expressed support for clause (a).
b) All respondents (n = 5; 100%) expressed support for clause (b).
c) Only one fifth (n = 1; 20%) of respondents expressed support for clause (c)€.
d) Three fifths (n = 3; 60%) of respondents expressed support for clause (d).
e) All respondents (n = 5; 100%) expressed support for clause (e).
f) All respondents (n = 5; 100%) expressed support for clause (f).
g) All respondents (n = 3; 100%) expressed support for clause (g).
h) All respondents (n = 5; 100%) expressed support for clause (h).

Respondents were then given the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the wording of the draft objective and two individuals gave their thoughts. There was a response agreeing overall with the long-term vision for Lake Taupō but also the potential to expand and include concepts from iwi environmental management plans/documents, i.e. "*Te Kaupapa Kaitiaki, these are: Ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu, taonga and customary rights are protected from adverse effects and inappropriate use, the community collectively takes responsibility and action to protect and restore freshwater habitat and water quality, clean drinking water, swimming etc., "Wetlands" and "Riparian". In my view these long-term visions should be considered for our takiwā also, regardless if they are beyond the scope of Te Kaupapa Kaitiaki. These values are represented in the draft FMU environmental outcome example for Lake Taupō and as such should be included in some way within the long-term visions".*

When asked if they thought the given timeframes for the Lake Taupō vision were ambitious and reasonable, three respondents answered 'Yes'. One individual said that the vision appears to be achievable, and it is necessary that we act as soon as possible. Another commented that

while ten years is more ambitious than reasonable, it would put pressure on decision-makers to implement mechanisms that result in positive change over longer periods of time.

Environmental outcomes

Ecosystem health
Two participants expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome.

Human contact
One respondent expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome.

Threatened species
One participant expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome.

Mahinga kai
A commenter requested that definitions of different terms be provided.

Natural form and character
Two participants expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome.

Drinking water supply
One participant expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome. Another respondent asked us to provide further information. What is the scope for this outcome? In reference to groundwater, would the goal be for all aquifers to be drinkable – or will it be limited to those that are currently used for drinking water?

Animal drinking water
One respondent expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome.

Wai tapu
While one participant expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome, another requested that definitions of different terms be provided.

Transport and Tauranga waka
One respondent expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome.

Fishing
Three participants expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome. Another questioned whether we should be protecting introduced species and if a fishing license should be needed to cull introduced species.

Irrigation, cultivation, and production of food and beverages
One respondent expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome, while another stated that the water used here should not come from groundwater.

Hydro-electric power generation
One participant expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome. For this environmental outcome, another commented that we must take into account the effects that hydro-electric power generation has – for example, erosion that is exacerbated by control gates remaining closed. Mechanisms need to be put in place to protect vulnerable communities and show that they are being listened to.

Commercial and industrial use
One participant expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome while another requested more details – for example, what are these activities? How necessary are they? How responsible are they?

Activities and actions

When asked what the Freshwater Policy Review should focus on to help accelerate positive change for freshwater in the Lake Taupō FMU, one respondent suggested no discharges into water catchments.

Limits and rules

When asked what types of rules and limits they think will help manage freshwater better, one participant said we should focus on minimising all forms of contaminants and manage them to ensure they are kept out of waterways.

General feedback

When asked if they would like to provide any additional feedback regarding freshwater management, one respondent believed that tangata whenua principles and practices should guide freshwater management as they provide a basis for caring and respecting both water and people. Another participant commented that communications around community events requires improvement as the current approach was insufficient. Suggestions included working with hapū/iwi and other groups to host events e.g., at marae.

7.3 Waikato-Waipā Freshwater Management Unit – Community and tangata whenua survey feedback

Long-term vision

Draft Objective – Upper Waikato long-term vision

a) By 2044, freshwater management recognises Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato - the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River and Te Mana o Te Wai.
b) By 2044, the health, well-being, mauri and mana of waterbodies is protected and provides for a range of freshwater values including drinkable water for present and future generations.
c) By 2044, freshwater is holistically managed in a way that recognises the health of the people relies on the health of the environment.
d) By 2044, mana whenua are recognised as kaitiaki mō ngā wai - the guardians of Wai, customary practice and principles – tikanga are provided for and our mokopuna see the awa and wai as our tūpuna did.
e) By 2044, communities exercise stewardship for the water for present and future generations.
f) By 2044, sustainable land use and management supports ecosystem health and the achievement of clause a) and b) while also conserving and protecting the productive capacity of land.
g) By 2044, freshwater management supports an environment for sharing of traditional knowledge and practices with present and future generations.
h) By 2044, fisheries and freshwater habitats that are degraded are rehabilitated and restored, and where they are not degraded they are protected.
i) By 2044, water is allowed to be itself, in its common, ordinary or normal state, flowing naturally, and through our everyday lives.
j) By 2044, water quality and habitat is improved with established riparian areas and native plantings and rubbish is removed from waterways.

Upper Waikato

Participants were provided with the draft objective of the long-term vision for Upper Waikato and then asked to indicate whether they support each clause it contained.

- The majority (n = 5; 83%) of respondents expressed support for clause (a).
- Half (n = 3; 50%) of respondents expressed support for clause (b).
- The majority (n = 5; 83%) of respondents expressed support for clause (c).

- A third (n = 2; 33%) of respondents expressed support for clause (d).
- The majority (n = 5; 83%) of respondents expressed support for clause (e).
- The majority (n = 5; 83%) of respondents expressed support for clause (f).
- The majority (n = 5; 83%) of respondents expressed support for clause (g).
- All (n = 6; 100%) respondents expressed support for clause (h).
- Two-thirds (n = 4; 67%) of respondents expressed support for clause (i).
- All (n = 5; 100%) of respondents expressed support for clause (j).

Respondents were then given the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the wording of the draft objective and four individuals expressed their thoughts. One participant simply said that the draft vision *"looks good."* With regards to clause (e), this was viewed as the responsibility of local authorities. According to the same respondent, both culture and science were seen as important in clause (g). In terms of clause (i), they suggested the removal of hydro-dams if they fall within this.

In reference to clause (b), by 2044 add 'swimmable'. With regards to clause (d), the same participant recommended the word 'see' be replaced with 'connect with.' This individual also suggested adding two additional clauses – *"k) Mahinga kai is plentiful and safe to eat l) No more wetlands are lost but instead, more are reinstated".*

When asked if they think the given timeframes for the Upper Waikato vision were ambitious and reasonable, the majority (n = 5; 83%) of the respondents answered 'Yes'. The participant who disagreed with the timeframes felt that the objectives could be accomplished sooner. The respondents who agreed with the timeframes viewed them as reasonable and stressed the importance of acting sooner rather than later. Another commented that quicker outcomes were better for the health of the environment and people.

Draft Objective – Middle Waikato long-term vision

a) *Freshwater management recognises Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato - the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River and achieved the Vision in 80 years.*
b) *% improvement [% informed by science] in all aspects of freshwater across the region in 10 years.*
c) *By 2074, the health, well-being and mauri of waterbodies is restored and protected for present and future generations in a way that enhances the environment.*
d) *By 2074, fisheries and freshwater habitats that are degraded are rehabilitated and restored, and where they are not degraded they are protected.*
e) *By 2074, ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu, taonga and customary rights are protected from adverse effects and inappropriate use and cultural practices and relationships are retained.*
f) *By 2074, land use opportunities have been recognised and taken within ecosystem health target attribute states.*
g) *By 2074, rivers are swimmable and the bottom of rivers are visible.*
h) *By 2074, the built form of urban areas contribute to improved water quality and urban communities value freshwater and manage it sustainably.*

Middle Waikato

Participants were provided with the draft objective of the long-term vision for Middle Waikato and then asked to indicate whether they support each clause it contained.

- Three-quarters (n = 9; 75%) of participants expressed support for clause (a).
- The majority (n = 10; 83%) of participants expressed support for clause (b).

- Two-thirds (n = 8; 67%) of participants expressed support for clause (c).
- The majority (n = 10; 83%) of participants expressed support for clause (d).
- Two-thirds (n = 8; 67%) of participants expressed support for clause (e).
- Three-quarters (n = 9; 75%) of participants expressed support for clause (f).
- Two-thirds (n = 8; 67%) of participants expressed support for clause (g).
- The vast majority (n = 11; 92%) of participants expressed support for clause (h).

Respondents were then given the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the wording of the draft objective and six people gave their opinions. While one respondent stated that the *"wording sounds just right,"* another requested that more detailed and greater specifications be provided. There was some confusion around the opening statement saying 80 years but clauses (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h) using 50 years. In reference to clause (g), the respondent stated that while they expected to be able to swim in the rivers in 50 years, they did not think the bottom of all rivers will be visible. In reference to clause (h), the respondent felt it was important to recognise the impact that urban environments had on water quality – in particular, sewage discharges into waterways. Another individual questioned whether swimming, as noted in Clause (g), has a negative impact on water ecosystems – and if so, how will the water be protected. In reference to clause (a), it was felt that 40 years would be a more suitable timeframe. In reference to clause (c) and (d), it was suggested that 35-40 years would be more appropriate. In reference to clause (e), there was comment that 'all sites' would be impractical given current (land) usage. In reference to clause (h), the timeframe should be 30 years.

In reference to clause (b), respondents were asked what state they think water quality should be returned to. A variety of standards were suggested by the participants, including potable; drinkable; swimmable; water so clear you can see the bottom; and clean enough to both swim in and drink from. It was also proposed that water should be in the *"best state it can be".* One individual suggested that improvements should be determined by field experts.

When asked if they thought the given timeframes for the Middle Waikato vision were ambitious and reasonable, over half (n = 7; 58%) of the participants answered 'No'. Of those who agreed with the given timeframes, one stated that the timeframe seemed achievable and that it was necessary to act as soon as possible. Similarly, another individual felt that the sooner we acted, the better and an additional person felt that the timeframe was realistic. It was noted that these goals will take some time, but another respondent hoped that they be achieved in the given timeframes. While one commenter recognised that change would take time, they hoped the goals could be reached sooner. Three of the respondents who disagreed with the given timeframes proposed that the objectives could be done sooner. For example, one individual suggested a timeframe of 20 years. It was stated that we need to give the topic more urgency to encourage participation. In contrast, another individual commented that it would take longer to achieve. One commenter suggested that 80 years was a more suitable timeframe (than 50 years) to clear waterways and change the social views of the urban majority.

Lower Waikato

Draft Objective – Lower Waikato long-term vision

a) *By 2074, freshwater management recognises Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato - the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River.*
b) *By 2074, freshwater is healthy, sustains abundant life and prosperous communities and the needs of present and future generations and improved back to [its attribute state 100 years ago].*
c) *By 2074, ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu, taonga and customary rights are protected from adverse effects and inappropriate use.*
d) *By 2074, the community and tangata whenua collectively takes responsibility for the restoration and protection of the health and wellbeing of the freshwater.*
e) *By 2074, biodiversity of flora and fauna, endemic species including porohe, īnanga and matamata (whitebait species) are protected.*
f) *By 2074, natural inland wetlands areas have been enhanced and increased; provides safe habitat for wetland birds to thrive; increased freshwater species, and access to mahinga kai.*
g) *Waterways are safe, easier to access, and provide for swimming and drinking water, weed and pest free and in 10 years there has been no decline in water quality.*
h) *Reduction in water takes and discharges of nutrients and contaminants to water in 10 years to provide for clause a) and b).*

Participants were provided with the draft objective of the long-term vision for Lower Waikato and then asked to indicate whether they support each clause it contained.

- Three quarters (n = 6; 75%) of participants expressed support for clause (a).
- The majority (n = 7; 88%) of participants expressed support for clause (b).
- Just over one-third (n = 3; 38%) of participants expressed support for clause (c).
- Just under two-thirds (n = 5; 63%) of participants expressed support for clause (d).
- The majority (n = 7; 88%) of participants expressed support for clause (e).
- The majority (n = 7; 88%) of participants expressed support for clause (f).
- The majority (n = 7; 88%) of participants expressed support for clause (g).
- All (n = 8; 100%) of participants expressed support for clause (h).

Respondents were then given the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the wording of the draft objective and six individuals gave their thoughts. One individual described the vision as "*hollow*" and stated that we needed to act now. Another said that the objectives were "*mostly ok,"* but they requested that the term 'inappropriate use' in clause (c) be defined. In reference to the same clause, a different participant suggested that we remove the term 'wāhi tapu' as it is included in the phrase 'customary rights.' In reference to clause (c), another person stated that all sites of importance should be included. With regards to clause (d), it was stated that this should be the responsibility of local authorities rather than members of the public. A different respondent said that clause (e) needs to include "valued exotic birds and fish." That same participant recommended that the phrase 'waterways are safe' in clause (g) be removed as it is *"illogical."*

In terms of more general feedback, it was expressed that the Lower Waikato, because of its placement downstream, receives the water that has passed through other FMUs. The respondent indicated that they felt that the vision was overly ambitious. It was stated that they wanted water to be safe to swim in and take food from – but not pristine. There should be recognition that sediment and pathogens will be flushed down during storm events.

In reference to clause (b), respondents were asked what state they think water quality should be returned to. One individual said that water should be swimmable and able to have food

taken from – but not be pristine. Similarly, another person recommended that safe to swim in and drink from should be the standard. While one commenter stated that pre-1920 would be an acceptable standard, another suggested in reference to Lake Waikare, that the water quality be returned to what it was 50 years ago as it was cleaner, there was more birdlife and eels, and no pest fish. Another participant felt that 100 years ago was not achievable and suggested that the sentence should be finished after the word "generations."

When asked if they thought the given timeframes for the Lower Waikato vision were ambitious and reasonable, just over half (n = 5; 56%) of the respondents answered 'No'. One of the participants who agreed with the timeframes, explained that they believed 50 years was reasonable based on their previous experiences seeing the deterioration of water quality – though they would like to see it done in a shorter time. Similarly, another individual felt the timeframes were very ambitious but hoped the goals could be achieved within them. One person simply stated that work needs to be done while another said, *"all water should be restored to its original state no matter where it is so reasonable time frames are important".* Of those who disagreed with the timeframes, one shared that the objectives could be reached sooner. Likewise, one participant proposed 2035 as a more suitable timeframe while another suggested 2044. While they felt that they did not possess enough information, one commenter thought that 50 years might be too long and suggested 35 to 40 years instead. Another explained that tangible targets were required, emphasised the importance of education and engagement with the community and recommended that 5-year targets be used.

Waipā

Draft Objective – Waipā long-term vision

a) *By 2044, the FMU is managed in accordance with Te Ture Whaimana o te Awa o Waikato – the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River.*
b) *By 2044, water quality, the mauri and integrity of all freshwater bodies, and their biodiversity is restored and protected for present and future generations by bringing the waterbodies back to as close as possible to their state [100 years ago].*
c) *By 2044, freshwater management reflects kotahitanga and mātauranga Maori knowledge and wisdom, customary practices and principles as well as the best available scientific information.*
d) *By 2044, fisheries and freshwater habitats that are degraded are rehabilitated and restored, and where they are not degraded they are protected.*
e) *By 2044, ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu, taonga and customary rights are protected from adverse effects and inappropriate use, and wai supports traditional practices, mahinga kai, birthing and education in order to sustain cultural, spiritual, and social and kaitiaki needs.*
f) *By 2044, the community and tangata whenua take collective responsibility to sustainably care for and nurture the mana and mauri of wai as a treasure.*
g) *By 2044, existing natural inland wetlands are enhanced and protected and new natural inland wetlands are created to improve indigenous biodiversity and water quality.*

Participants were provided with the draft objective of the long-term vision for Waipā and then asked to indicate whether they support each clause it contained.

- Four fifths (n = 8; 80%) of participants expressed support for clause (a).
- Four fifths (n = 8; 80%) of participants expressed support for clause (b).
- Over half (n = 6; 60%) of the participants expressed support for clause (c).
- All (n = 10; 100%) of participants expressed support for clause (d).
- Less than half (n = 4; 44%) of the participants expressed support for clause (e).
- Two-thirds (n = 6; 67%) of participants expressed support for clause (f).

- Four fifths (n = 8; 80%) expressed support for clause (g).

Respondents were then given the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the wording of the draft objective and six people expressed their opinions. In reference to clauses (c) and (e), the importance of scientific evidence was emphasised. In reference to clause (f), it was felt that this is the responsibility of the local authorities rather than individuals/communities. For clause (f), another respondent commented that the objective should be expanded beyond community and tangata whenua to include sectors/industry since sectors that have contributed to degradation. With regards to clause (g), it was suggested that the clause be broken down into two clauses – there was agreement that existing natural wetlands should be enhanced, but there were concerns that the goals of creating natural wetlands is too broad "*an indigenous biodiversity cannot be quantified*". Another participant recommended that, after the word 'indigenous', we include the phrase *"and valued exotic."*

In terms of overall feedback, there was objection to the use of timeframes within the objectives. It was believed that the work done so far to improve water quality should be acknowledged. Another individual stated that rivers, lakes, and streams are sacred bodies of water and should be categorised as such. Restoring the purity of the water is restoring the sacred site.

In reference to clause (b), participants were asked what state they would like water quality to be returned to. Respondents provided a range of standards, including safe to swim in and drink; *"100%"*; the standard it was in 1820; and pre-1920. One participant expressed agreement with the phrasing of the clause and would like to see water return to the same condition it was prior to the arrival of European settlers. Questions regarding how we can know water quality from 100 years ago. The approach should be "best practice, with best outcomes aimed for." After posing the same question, another respondent suggested that potable/swimmable would be better standards.

When asked if they thought the given timeframes for the Waipa vision were ambitious and reasonable, over half (n = 6; 60%) the of respondents answered 'Yes.' Of the participants who agreed with the timeframes, one stated that the sooner we act, the better. Another said, that based on past experiences, the timeframes appear reasonable. A different individual stated that it was necessary for us to act as soon as possible, and the given timeframes seem to be reasonable. One individual said that they had mixed feelings towards a 2044 timeframe, andnoted that an 80-year timeframe may be more realistic from an economic and technical perspective. The 2044 timeframe requires land use change on a large scale which may result in economic issues. In terms of participants who disagreed with timeframes, one stated that 2044 was too far away and that clauses (a), (c), (e), and (f) should already be taking place. Similarly, another believed that we could achieve these objectives sooner. For example, one respondent suggested that 2030 would be a suitable timeframe. In contrast, another individual commented that the timeframe should be based on monitoring – a date is seen as irrelevant.

Environmental outcomes

Ecosystem Health

Four respondents expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome. In reference to clause (c.iv) a participant said they would like to see whitebait added – *"areas of trout and whitebait fisheries and spawning habitat maintained and enhanced."* With regards to clause (d), a participant would like to see an additional outcome included – *"iii) Exotic pest biota are minimised or eradicated".* Another respondent stated that clauses (a) and (b) are large goals. In reference to (c.i), a request that a requirement be included for connectivity and habitat in the context of mobile species. Clause (d.i) appears to be an oxymoron. In reference to (b.i) and (c.ii) variability is important for diversity vs. expectation for water bodies to be static. Be explicit in management plans about enabling variability – in particular, adapting to

climate driven variability. Another individual said that the objectives were okay, but they should not be considered in isolation from the receiving waterbodies (such as estuaries) – so these outcomes should be met in a way that also achieves those described in coastal/marine NES and NPS.

Human contact

Four participants expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome. Another commenter noted that *"the term 'safely connect' does not have a definition and is completely meaningless. A specific state or states should be named, to go with the connection value. Is it 'safe to look at', 'safe for wading in', 'safe for swimming in', 'safe for drinking' etc?"*

Threatened species

Two respondents expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome. In reference to (sub)clause (i), another participant suggested we remove the phrase 'human-induced' as this is perceived to create an 'out' for climate change induced loss. They felt that there should be no loss of threatened species.

Mahinga kai

One participant expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome. Another recommended we add *"accessibility is enabled*" to (sub)clause (iv).

Natural form and character

Three respondents expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome. Another participant stated that we must be mindful of not trapping waterbodies into static forms. A respondent stated it was important that this outcome remain practical. If natural form results in large areas of land being flooded, this is not a sustainable outcome. Balance should be considered here.

Drinking water supply

Four participants expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome – with one of those noting that drinking water should not be sold overseas. Drinking water was recognised as important but another respondent disagreed with the notion that anyone should have to pay for drinking water. They believed that drinking water should be free and accessible to all. Another commenter stated that *"protection of the quality of the water supply goes hand in hand with quantity. To substantially reduce the quantity will in due course affect the quality of water ways and any water taken from that water way."*

Animal drinking water

Two respondents expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome. In relation to the previous outcome, one participant assumed that if the water is safe for humans, it would also be safe for animals. Another believed that any water consumed by humans and animals should be safe for consumption. It was felt that this is the responsibility of farmers and that most of them are already fulfilling this role.

Wai tapu

Two participants expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome.

Transport and Tauranga waka

While one respondent agreed with this environmental outcome, another stated that waters must be safe to travel on in terms of water quality. One individual believed that this objective was already in place.

Fishing

Five participants expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome. Another respondent said they would like to see whitebait added to (sub)clause (ii) – so that trout and whitebait spawning is protected, and number of trout and whitebait increased. In reference to (sub)clause (ii), a different individual stated there should be no increase in trout – need to focus on catching koi-carp. Another commented that water quality must be maintained for everyone's well-being.

Irrigation, cultivation, and production of food and beverages

Four participants expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome with one adding that this should not include bottling water for overseas sales and irrigation for sport and recreational fields. Another stated that it is important that we use the water we have in a respectful and responsible way, while a different individual commented that this outcome is *"extremely vital for the survival of the human race".* One respondent stated *"this type of statement has a long history of abuse. For example, in Canterbury the term 'quantity is suitable for irrigation needs' has been used to justify the almost complete takeover of freshwater resources by the agricultural industry, because the irrigation needs are so large to grow ryegrass in that climate. This has come with massive groundwater and river pollution. I don't see how this outcome can possibly reconcile with the primary objectives."*

Hydro-electric power generation

Three participants expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome. Another agreed so long as there are no negative consequences and mana whenua support is provided. One respondent recognised that while hydro-electric power generation may be of national significance, it should not be used at the expense of cultural and environmental outcomes. They recommended a wording amendment/rephrasing: *"i) Hydro-electric power generation is managed and maintained to avoid further negative cultural and environmental outcomes."* Similarly, another agreed with the maintenance of hydro-electric power generation but stated we must be aware of the negative environmental effects. For example, another individual said that the water quality of Lake Arapuni must be monitored. Until an alternative source of power is identified, one participant said, there is no choice but to maintain hydro-electric generated power.

Commercial and industrial use

Four respondents expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome, with two of them saying that they did not support selling (bottled) water overseas. Another participant agreed so long as poison and toxic waste do not enter waterways. One individual commented that they would like to see this outcome promote sustainability. For example, rephrasing it to say *"i) Water quality and quantity can provide for sustainable commercial and industrial activities".*

Activities and actions

When asked what the Freshwater Policy Review should focus on to help accelerate positive change for freshwater, 12 respondents provided feedback. One individual recommended to start by finding out what is having the greatest impact on the quality of our waterways and begin acting as soon as possible. Another participant emphasised that improving water quality will benefit everything that comes into contact with it. One respondent agreed that the current system is not working and Te Mana o te Wai is a valuable tool. It was acknowledged that there is landowner and community desires to restore rivers and to futureproof and safeguard the draft objectives previously described. *"In allocating resources and setting up management entities, I believe 5.4.2 option B is the better management option. I also think that the Lake Waikare / Whangamarino wetland should have special status and resources."*

It was suggested to have control measures to protect the river system from weeds, pest fish and crustaceans and to maintain riparian planting to fully benefit from it. The respondent added that future legislation must recognise the impact of urban environments/intensification of water ecosystems and to incentivise agriculture and horticulture. One respondent suggested focusing on land use; in particular, dairy farms. Another respondent suggested placing restrictions on stock numbers. Reducing sediment and nutrient levels in rivers and lakes caused by both farming and pest fish was suggested by one individual. Likewise, another respondent suggested the eradication of pest fish, and allow water to move/flow to help maintain its health stating that nitrogen is a 'natural occurrence.' The same participant, however, believed that farmers should not be the only ones charged/penalised as they were taking steps to reduce their impact. Other suggestions from a participant included, whole scale

and immediate land use change to reduce sediment, during the restoration period have strict control of all nutrients, managing pest fish, stronger controls on recreational users that are vectors for aquatic weeds, and innovative and systematic approaches to internal nutrient loads. The same participant thought it was important that people understand the severity of degradation and that messaging/marketing was important with the need to act now i.e*., "30 years ago vs now vs what we won't have in 10-20-30 years' time if we don't act now"*. One participant recommended we incentivise agriculture and horticulture and stop intensification without sufficient infrastructure being built prior. In a similar vein, another individual suggested offering financial incentives to the agricultural industry for improving local waterways. In contrast, another felt that the focus should not be on reducing farming or increasing costs – but mitigating harm, *"get serious about dealing with the causes."*

Limits and rules

When asked what types of rules and limits they thought would help manage freshwater better, nine participants expressed their thoughts. One individual agreed with the examples provided by WRC. In contrast, another participant believed that the current rules and limits are working and do not require change. One respondent commented that a blanket approach [one size fits all] cannot be used and the need to be flexible and tailor approaches to different (sub)catchment needs. The respondent added that with people living in the region, it has to be understood that there will be some kind of environmental footprint – the question is, what is an acceptable size of that footprint? It was also suggested that a farm-plan framework was needed that includes a guidance document, as well as a land-use framework to help identify land-use options. One respondent recommended there be careful consideration of activities within or near wetlands, consider the work farmers have already done to improving wetlands and waterways, and introduce practical limits and adequate time to implement them. Whereas another respondent suggested the need to focus on water being wasted particularly in urban areas such as Hamilton City. A respondent suggested monitoring of the number of dairy farms and the quantity of cows in any given area of water catchment – as well as implementing a cap. In relation to farming, another individual suggested mandatory stock exclusion with 10m buffers, as well as limits on all nitrogen and retiring all public land adjoining waterways. It was also suggested that hydro-electricity generation should not be done at the expense of cultural and environmental outcomes, noting that resource consents expire in 2041 but conversations could start now.

General feedback

When asked if they would like to provide any additional feedback regarding freshwater management within Waikato-Waipa, two respondents emphasised the importance of urgent action to prevent further deterioration of waterways. One example of such an action was mandatory catch and release. A respondent shared that they had seen a gradual deterioration in water quality and believed that this was caused by silt and intensive agricultural practices impacting the lower catchment and that urgent action was needed to save the waterways. In contrast, a different respondent noted that the past 20 years have seen improvements in water quality and management. One participant mentioned the need for "*hard scientifically based targets".* In a similar vein, another suggested that changes to limits should be based on science and local history of the area should be taken into consideration and to keep problematic land for uses other than housing. A participant mentioned the need to pay more attention to wetlands and that discussing cost too early may hinder progress as people will focus too much on that aspect – shouldn't elevate economic costs above benefits. Another participant provided their feedback: *"Waikato Delta needs to be restored to its natural state to support diverse bird population by 2044. Whangamarino wetland (RAMSAR site) needs protection within next decade to prevent anoxic events to curtail fish and bird deaths. Given linkage to Whangamarino and Lake Waikare likewise needs to be restored to its natural state*

by 2044. Health of Lake Arapunui also needs to be restored to its natural state by 2044 to hold abundant populations of trout and native fish species".

7.4 West Coast Freshwater Management Unit – Community and tangata whenua survey feedback

Draft Objective – West Coast long-term vision

a) By 2050, the health, well-being and mauri of all waterbodies and their biodiversity is protected and if necessary, restored for present and future generations to sustain cultural, spiritual, social, economic and kaitiaki needs.
b) By 2050, fisheries and freshwater habitats that are degraded are rehabilitated and restored, and where they are not degraded, they are protected.
c) By 2050, ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu, taonga and customary rights are protected from adverse effects and inappropriate use.
d) By 2050, the community is involved in contributing to the sustainable needs of freshwater allowing freshwater to sustainably meet the needs of the community.
e) Clean drinking water has been maintained, waterways are safe for human contact in 10 years and water quality restored for safe swimming swim and gathering kai in 80 years.
f) Public access to waterways is improved.
g) Waterways are maintained, and the life sustaining ecosystems and habitat for freshwater flora and fauna have been safeguarded by 2050.
h) By 2034, waterways are clean, provide a safe habitat for all wetland birds free of predators and riparian margins are managed by removing pest species, fencing and replanting with native species to support a thriving environment.

Long-term vision

Participants were provided with the draft objective of the long-term vision for the West Coast FMU and then asked to indicate whether they support each clause it contained.

- All (n = 2; 100%) respondents expressed support for clause (a).
- All (n = 2; 100%) respondents expressed support for clause (b).
- All (n = 2; 100%) respondents expressed support for clause (c).
- All (n = 1; 100%) respondents expressed support for clause (d).
- All (n = 2; 100%) respondents expressed support for clause (e).
- One opposed Clause (f).
- All (n = 2; 100%) respondents expressed support for clause (g).
- All (n = 2; 100%) respondents expressed support for clause (h).

Respondents were then given the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the wording of the draft objective and one individual expressed their opinion. That participant agreed with the long-term vision but felt that action for the West Coast could be done sooner - in particular, they recommended 2030. When asked if they think the given timeframes for the West Coast vision were ambitious and reasonable, one respondent said 'Yes.' The individual who agreed with the timeframes stated *"Although 2050 seems far away, I believe there is a lot of work to be done, especially in terms of water quality improvements. The goal to have wetlands and riparian margins free of predators and pest plants and replanted with natives seems near impossible. But I encourage the ambition!"* The participant who disagreed with the proposed timeframes suggested that 2030 would be more suitable than 2050. They commented that we need to see tangible change sooner.

Environmental outcomes

Ecosystem Health

One participant expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome while another commented that there needs to be a plan regarding farming and how to limit the effects that farming has on the ecosystem. The ecosystem should be returned to a level that approaches pre-farming/industry.

Human contact

One respondent expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome and stated that *"in some circumstances rahui needs to be implemented."*

Threatened species

The participant who reviewed this environmental outcome stated that the management of land use and its effects will be crucial.

Mahinga kai

The participant who reviewed this environmental outcome expressed their agreement and stated that the goal should be to restore the ecosystem to previous – ancient – levels.

Natural form and character

One respondent agreed with this environmental outcome while another stated that willow trees should be removed and recommended that natural bush needs to be restored as well as indigenous water plants.

Drinking water supply

One participant expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome.

Animal drinking water

One respondent agreed with this environmental outcome but with the condition that large herds should be kept away from streams and other waterways.

Wai tapu

One participant agreed with this environmental outcome and stated that lakes, streams, and rivers should be categorised as sacred.

Transport and Tauranga waka

One respondent expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome.

Fishing

Two participants expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome.

Irrigation, cultivation, and production of food and beverages

One respondent expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome.

Hydro-electric power generation

One participant disagreed with this draft environmental outcome and stated that hydro-electric power generation should not be used in this FMU.

Commercial and industrial use

The participant who reviewed this draft environmental outcome said that taking into consideration the industry type and commercial aspects were needed.

Activities and actions

When asked what the Freshwater Policy Review should focus on to help accelerate positive change for freshwater, three respondents gave their thoughts. One participant suggested that we upgrade wastewater treatment facilities and monitoring of septic systems in coastal areas to reduce leaching of faecal bacteria into the environment. Another commented that we need to implement changes to land use. For example, reducing the number of dairy farms and increasing the number of beef and sheep farms. Another respondent stated that we need hard evidence that demonstrates: the decline in freshwater ecosystems, the anticipated consequences if we do not address this, and potential solutions moving forward.

Limits and rules

When asked what types of rules and limits would help manage freshwater better, three participants provided feedback. One respondent agreed with the examples provided by WRC. Another individual commented that if water is not drinkable, then it should not be allowed to go into streams. One participant said we should place limits on human occupancy and industry and focus on restoring bushlands.

General feedback

When asked if they would like to provide any additional feedback regarding freshwater management within the West Coast, one participant said that the partnership between iwi and government is important and that forming good legislation will help with the restoration of the environment. Another individual said they hoped we would meet our goals.

7.5 Hauraki Freshwater Management Unit – Community and tangata whenua survey feedback

Draft Objective – Hauraki long-term vision

a) *By 2054, the health, well-being and mauri of waterbodies is protected and restored where necessary to provide for present and future generations and healthy ecosystems.*
b) *By 2054, the community collectively takes action and sustainable land management supports ecosystem health, freshwater values and the achievement of clauses a) and e).*
c) *By 2054, freshwater is holistically managed in a way that recognised that health of the people relies on the health of the environment.*
d) *By 2054, freshwater is suitable and accessible to provide for a range of values and uses, including drinking, swimming, mahinga kai and other traditional and customary practices.*
e) *By 2054, freshwater management supports space for all generations to interact with the awa together and ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu, taonga and customary rights are protected from adverse effects and inappropriate use.*
f) *By 2054, fisheries and freshwater habitats, riparian margins and natural inland wetlands that are degraded are rehabilitated and restored, and where they are not degraded they are protected.*
g) *Water quality is above any national bottom line, further degradation is avoided and gradual improvements made over the next 10 years with water quality returned to a [point in time or other state] in 50 years.*
h) *Extent of natural inland wetlands is increased, and natural inland wetland tuna populations are restored.*
i) *Public access to waterways is improved.*
j) *Riparian planting of waterways with appropriate types of vegetation is achieved by 2034 with re-forestation of appropriate areas within catchments by 2074.*

Long-term vision

Participants were provided with the draft objective of the long-term vision for Hauraki and then asked to indicate whether they support each clause it contained.

- Over four fifths (n = 9; 82%) of participants expressed support for clause (a).
- Over four fifths (n = 9; 82%) of participants expressed support for clause (b).
- Over four fifths (n = 9; 82%) of participants expressed support for clause (c).
- The vast majority (n = 9; 90%) of participants expressed support for clause (d).
- Over two-thirds (n = 7; 70%) of participants expressed support for clause (e).
- The vast majority (n = 10; 91%) of participants expressed support for clause (f).

- Four fifths (n = 8; 80%) of participants expressed support for clause (g).
- The vast majority (n = 9; 90%) of participants expressed support for clause (h).
- Over four fifths (n = 9; 82%) of participants expressed support for clause (i).
- The vast majority (n = 10; 91%) of participants expressed support for clause (j).

Respondents were then given the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the wording of the draft objective and nine people expressed their thoughts. One individual said, *"I think the wording for the long-term vision has great aspirations and goal posts and would like to see it implemented."* While another respondent said that the objectives are "ok", they viewed the timeframes as being too slow. It was also pointed out that there was no reference to reducing stock numbers. One commenter stated that the word 'restored' is subjective. Another respondent commented that there was a need for an economic outcome and that funding will be required to achieve the clauses described. There was a suggestion also to have community discussions and conversations when designing the objectives. There was a view that a 50-year long-term vision was not appropriate – a 80-to-100-year goal was seen as more suitable. The same respondent also expressed that they did not support wording that suggests directed land use change. *"Landowners should be supported to minimise their impacts on current land uses".*

In terms of specific clauses, one individual felt that clauses (b), (c), and (e) were too vague and required either rewording or removal. In reference to clause (i), there was comment that public access is already good enough. In reference to clause (b), another respondent suggested that the timeframe should be changed to 2034. For clause (i), there was comment that it should be rephrased to "*public access to all freshwater bodies is available, other than to sacred sites defined by tangata whenua and ones defined collectively by communities".* With regard to clause (j), it was recommended that native regeneration should be sought by 2054. For clause (a), one individual suggested that the term 'mauri' be replaced with the phrase 'ecosystem services', while the use of 'wāhi tapu' in clause (e) should be removed since it is already included in the phrase 'customary rights.'

In reference to clause (g), participants were asked what state they would like water quality to be returned to. A variety of responses were given, including pre-colonial state; healthy for all life forms; conditions that allow for drinking and swimming; science-based bottom-lines developed in the next five years; a state that is an improvement over the current situation but is also realistic; and – if benchmark data is available – the state it was in during 1996. A commenter stated that improvements should be customised to an individual catchment rather than a national blanket level approach. One respondent recommended the following, *"meet national bottom lines in first 10 years which helps us prioritise initial action. Setting to wider net will risk targeted investment being spread too wide. Depending on the long-term timeframe I think we can be more ambitious. 50 years is too short to be ambitious".* Similarly, another participant believed the outcomes should be achieved within 50 years.

When asked if they thought the given timeframes for the Hauraki vision were ambitious and reasonable, two-thirds (n = 8; 67%) of respondents answered 'No'. Of those who said 'Yes', one participant said that the timeframes provided were *"better than any longer ones"* while another expressed that they hoped the objectives would be achieved sooner. A different respondent noted that many factors will need to be taken into consideration – for example, the importance of the dairy industry in Hauraki. While one of the 'No' respondents felt that the timeframes were too idealistic and ambitious and would discourage community engagement with the goals, another felt the goals could be reached sooner. Likewise, another participant believed that 2044 was a doable timeframe, with focused action. Another suggested that 2030 would be an appropriate timeframe. One person stated that while 10 years is an acceptable timeframe, 50 years is not. A respondent expressed that both land-use change, and future population growth need to be taken into consideration. Another

participant explained that they were unsure of the cost of the changes and how long they will take.

Environmental outcomes

Ecosystem Health

Three respondents expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome, while another questioned whether Hauraki has lakes. One participant commented that there needs to be recognition that some kind of balance will need to be achieved between dairy farming industry activities (which results in fertilisers and nitrates) and ensuring freshwater protection. Another individual said that the objectives were "okay," but they should not be considered in isolation from the receiving waterbodies (such as estuaries) – so these outcomes should be met in a way that also achieves those described in coastal/marine NES and NPS.

Human contact

One participant expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome. Another respondent requested that greater specificity be provided. They also stated that, in order for the outcome to be consistent with the previously stated vision, it should read 'swimmable' and 'drinkable'. Another commenter noted that *"the term 'safely connect' does not have a definition and is completely meaningless. A specific state or states should be named, to go with the connection value. Is it 'safe to look at', 'safe for wading in', 'safe for swimming in', 'safe for drinking' etc?"*

Threatened species

In reference (sub)clause (ii), it was recommended to replace the term 'reduced' with 'minimised to insignificant'. In reference to (sub)clause (iii), it was recommended to replace 'recreated' with 'regenerated.'

Mahinga kai

A participant expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome – but with the recognition that this outcome should be drafted by tangata whenua.

Natural form and character

Two respondents expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome. Another requested that the following phrase be added: *"and work that alters or damages the natural form and character is avoided".*

Drinking water supply

Three participants expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome. Another commented that drinking water is essential and houses require secure water sources – but this does not mean that the take of water is of drinking standard.

Animal drinking water

One respondent expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome. Another participant suggested that while treating water to ensure it is safe is important, the most important factor is water security. A different commenter requested that the following phrase be added: *"after the needs of freshwater ecosystem, human health, and tangata whenua cultural practices are met."* One individual commented that the focus should be on water quantity and human drinking should be prioritised.

Wai tapu

Two participants expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome – but with one recognising that this outcome should be drafted by tangata whenua. Another stated *"If our waters had the same status as Mt Taranaki there would be a roopu [group] who would be kaitiaki of the various waters and then our waters would be appropriately observed and maintained. Those who purposefully pollute the waters should be charged for assault by the courts. Harsher penalties would make people think about their actions".*

Transport and Tauranga waka

Two respondents expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome.

Fishing

Three participants expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome. In reference to (sub)clause (ii), another individual requested that the following phrase be added *"within the capacity of freshwater ecosystems and without compromising native species".*

Irrigation, cultivation, and production of food and beverages

One respondent expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome. Another commenter requested the following phrase be added: *"after the needs of freshwater ecosystems, human health, and tangata whenua cultural practices are met."* In a similar vein, one individual questioned whether we could incorporate the words 'provided' or 'available.' It was stated that we need to think about water being provided for food production. Another stated that economic stability of the region needs to be taken into consideration and that projects to improve water quality cannot be done without funding. It was also noted that environmental outcomes are typically linked to productivity. Another respondent shared their views: *"this type of statement has a long history of abuse. For example, in Canterbury the term 'quantity is suitable for irrigation needs' has been used to justify the almost complete takeover of freshwater resources by the agricultural industry, because the irrigation needs are so large to grow ryegrass in that climate. This has come with massive groundwater and river pollution. I don't see how this outcome can possibly reconcile with the primary objectives".*

Hydro-electric power generation

While one respondent agreed with this environmental outcome, another questioned if there was any hydro-electric power generation within the Hauraki FMU [and if not, would 'maintain' mean keeping them non-existent]. One individual commented that if we are becoming entirely electric, we will require more power and our current system cannot cope as it is and that water storage is needed for both economic and electricity needs.

Commercial and industrial use

One participant expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome. Another requested that the following phrase be added: *"after the needs of freshwater ecosystems, human health, and tangata whenua cultural practices are met."* A different individual believed that economic and environmental needs have to be considered equally important, *"environmental ideals must walk hand in hand with economic interests"*.

Activities and actions

When asked what the Freshwater Policy Review should focus on to help accelerate positive change for freshwater, eight individuals gave their thoughts. One respondent suggested to focus on improving the ecosystem whereas another recommended better water management infrastructure so that there is less wastage. One participant suggested making farming within Hauraki a discretionary activity, reducing livestock numbers, and fertiliser application to rates that do not compromise freshwater ecosystems. Other suggestions included maximising: land use change from farming to native ecosystem regeneration, planting trees on farms, wetlands and wide riparian strips, and practices that enable increasing soil organic matter. In a similar vein, another respondent suggested placing restrictions on stock numbers while another proposed regenerative changes to farming – including reduced livestock numbers and fertiliser application. A respondent recommended focusing on public areas as people cannot use private waterways and certain areas within the Hauraki plains. The respondent also queried that some areas cannot be planted due to flood protection – so how are improvements meant to happen? One respondent said that there needs to be knowledge sharing and community involvement stating that discussions need to be independently led as WRC has a conflict of interest i.e., "*strategic management of drainage and stopbanks".* Another respondent commented to *"get serious about dealing with the causes",* and that *"what is really needed is a step change, coming from better standards which will drive the innovation needed to make the change".*

Limits and rules

When asked what types of rules and limits they thought would help manage freshwater better, eight participants provided feedback. One individual expressed their agreement with the examples provided by WRC where another believed that *"many of the current rules are adequate… We need new techniques and rules for managing sediment".* One participant suggested making farming a discretionary activity within Hauraki, and to reduce fertiliser application (maximum amounts) and livestock numbers (for example, limited quota of livestock number) so that the health of freshwater ecosystems is not reduced even further. On the topic of farming, another respondent said that further farming of land should be limited and that public land should be excluded from grazing and restored to wetlands. A different individual proposed excluding stock from all waterways and believed that water storage and dams were needed urgently. In terms of water storage, another participant suggested that all homes should be fitted with rainwater tanks as subsidised by the government and that livestock should not be allowed near freshwater that is used for drinking or recreational use. Yet another respondent proposed that the minimisation of waste was important, as is the upgrading of council infrastructure and providing water storage. It was also suggested there be no more intensification on the Hauraki Plains. There was also comment that fencing waterways would not prevent urine leachate from intensive farming nor nitrate pollution from fertiliser.

General feedback

When asked if they would like to provide any additional feedback regarding freshwater management within Hauraki, one participant said "a*t some point the kaitiakitanga of the wai should be returned to iwi. It should be done before the estimated achievement dates."* Another individual said there needs to be a limit on drain inverts to prevent wetlands from drying out. There was also concern that inaction will result in Tikapa Moana (Hauraki Gulf) being a 'deadzone.'

7.6 Coromandel Freshwater Management Unit – Community and tangata whenua survey feedback

Draft Objective – Coromandel long-term vision

a) *By 2054, people contribute to the creation of healthier waterways as the health of water and our community are a reflection of each other and freshwater is the essence of life for all species.*
b) *By 2054, freshwater is clean, safe for drinking and contact recreation, swimmable, supports sustainable food harvest, and water supply is secure, for all species and for future generations.*
c) *By 2054, freshwater management supports healthy clean water for traditional and customary practices and space for all generations to interact with the awa together and to pass on to future generations.*
d) *By 2054, water quality is above any national bottom line and improved from the baseline state for all attributes.*
e) *By 2034, waterways have a riparian strip of native flora, contain corridors for native birds and insects and are aesthetically pleasing.*
f) *By 2034, sediment sources entering headwaters from upstream activities are reduced and water quality is maintained.*
g) *By 2034, the extent of natural inland wetlands and freshwater wetlands in the coastal environment have increased and are abundant with native wetland flora and fauna species.*

Long-term vision

Participants were provided with the draft objective of the long-term vision for Coromandel and then asked to indicate whether they support each clause it contained.

- The majority (n = 10; 83%) of participants supported clause (a).
- The vast majority (n = 11; 92%) of participants supported clause (b).
- Two-thirds (n = 8; 67%) of participants supported clause (c).
- The majority (n = 10; 83%) of participants supported clause (d).
- The entire sample (n = 12; 100%) of participants supported clause (e).
- The vast majority (n = 11; 92%) of participants supported clause (f).
- The entire sample (n = 12; 100%) of participants supported clause (g).

Respondents were then given the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the wording of the draft objective and five people expressed their thoughts. In terms of general feedback, one participant requested that certain terms (for example, awa) be defined. Another individual encouraged WRC to be more ambitious in their goals. One respondent commented that the timeframes were too far into the future and change needed to happen sooner.

With regards to thoughts on specific clauses, one respondent claimed that the ideological concept discussed in clause (a) cannot be measured. That same individual felt that clause (c) is superfluous if clause (b) is achieved. There were concerns that, taking previous attempts into consideration, the given timeframes for clauses (f) & (g) were too optimistic.

When asked if they think the given timeframes for the Coromandel vision were ambitious and reasonable, just over half (n = 7; 54%) said 'Yes.' Of the respondents who said 'Yes', one hoped that the changes did not take long, but recognised they lacked the scientific background to know what is achievable. Another agreed with the timeframes but was concerned about the

potential impact that future weather events may have. A third stated that the sooner the vision was achieved, the better. While clauses (e), (f), and (g), are somewhat measurable, the 2054 timeframe was seen as more of a 'wish-list' by another participant, with uncertainty as to what would happen over the next 30 years. One of the participants who said 'No' believed that the timeframes were too long. Another individual felt that this vision should have been established years prior and we are not acting fast enough; 2030 was seen as ambitious but a necessary timeframe to save Tikapa Moana (Hauraki Gulf) and our waterways. There was a view that the state of freshwater in the Coromandel is better than in other FMUs within the Waikato, which means visions can be achieved faster. The participant recommended that clauses (a) through to (d) should be changed to 2034, while clauses (e) to (g) should be 2029. In contrast, a different respondent felt that, for clauses (f) and (g), a timeframe of 20 years may be more achievable.

Environmental outcomes

Ecosystem Health

Four respondents expressed their agreement with this draft environmental outcome. In reference to clause (a.ii), one participant expressed confusion regarding wording – current phrasing suggests that only degraded waterways will be restored and protected. Another individual said that the objectives are okay but they should not be considered in isolation from the receiving waterbodies (such as estuaries) – so these outcomes should be met in a way that also achieves those described in coastal/marine NES and NPS.

Human contact

Three participants expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome. Another respondent requested that greater specificity be provided. They also stated that, in order for the outcome to be consistent with the previously stated vision, it should read 'swimmable' and 'drinkable'. A different commenter noted that *"the 'term 'safely connect' does not have a definition and is completely meaningless. A specific state or states should be named, to go with the connection value. Is it 'safe to look at', 'safe for wading in', 'safe for swimming in', 'safe for drinking' etc?"*

Threatened species

Two respondents expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome. A different participant recommended two changes - for (sub)clause (ii) replace the term 'reduced' with 'minimised to insignificant' and for (sub)cause (iii), replace 'recreated' with 'regenerated'.

Mahinga kai

A participant expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome – but with the recognition that this outcome should be drafted by tangata whenua.

Natural form and character

Three respondents expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome. Another requested that the following phrase be added: *"and work that alters or damages the natural form and character is avoided".*

Drinking water supply

Three participants expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome. Another added that we have quality water supply that complies with government specifications/regulations.

Animal drinking water

Two respondents expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome. Another participant requested that the following phrase be added: *"after the needs of freshwater ecosystems, human health, and tangata whenua cultural practices are met."*

Wai tapu

Two participants expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome – with one participant acknowledging that this outcome should be drafted by tangata whenua. Another

stated *"If our waters had the same status as Mt Taranaki there would be a roopu [group] who would be kaitiaki of the various waters and then our waters would be appropriately observed and maintained. Those who purposefully pollute the waters should be charged… Harsher penalties would make people think about their actions".*

Transport and Tauranga waka

Two respondents expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome.

Fishing

Four participants expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome. Another suggested that, for (sub)clause (ii), the following phrase be added: *"within the capacity of freshwater ecosystems and without compromising native species".*

Irrigation, cultivation, and production of food and beverages

Two respondents expressed their agreement with the draft environmental outcome. Another requested that the following phrase be added *"after the needs of freshwater ecosystems, human health, and tangata whenua cultural practices are met".* A different individual stated that *"this type of statement has a long history of abuse. For example, in Canterbury the term 'quantity is suitable for irrigation needs' has been used to justify the almost complete takeover of freshwater resources by the agricultural industry, because the irrigation needs are so large to grow ryegrass in that climate. This has come with massive groundwater and river pollution. I don't see how this outcome can possibly reconcile with the primary objectives".*

'Hydro-electric power generation' and 'Commercial and industrial uses'

It was noted that the above two outcomes were not identified in the Coromandel FMU. Participants were asked if they were applicable and why/where. While one respondent was unsure, another stated that they do not apply. One participant felt that while power generation seems unlikely to happen, it is possible that commercial and industrial use may occur. They questioned whether it was possible to add-in protection for this later. Another respondent pointed out that the topic of *"homes was missing e.g., large wetland water systems such as the Hauraki Plains".*

Activities and actions

When asked what the Freshwater Policy Review should focus on to help accelerate positive change for freshwater, nine respondents provided a number of recommendations. In reference to logging, it was seen as important to include a permanent median strip of native plants that was wide enough to prevent sediment and slash from entering rivers. It was also suggested to ensure farmers whose pastures could influence streams/creeks/waterways use adequate measures to prevent discharge. In a similar vein, another participant recommended enforcement of FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) rules as forestry is seen as the biggest threat. An additional respondent noted that the issue of slash within the forestry industry requires review. The same individual recommended planting flora to help stop erosion. Another participant recommended making both farming and forestry within the Coromandel a discretionary activity. It was suggested to prohibit farming and clear-felling forestry on slopes greater than 25% and ensure livestock numbers and fertiliser application are at a rate that do not compromise freshwater ecosystems. Other actions included shifting land use from forestry to native regeneration, maximising tree planting on farms and maximising wide riparian strips and wetlands. Some streams, a respondent noted, carry farm run off and faecal matter into estuaries – especially after heavy rainfall events – making them un-swimmable. There is concern with sediment also washing into estuaries, as well as bank erosion caused by recent extreme weather events. A respondent suggested, *"fencing of riparian land to keep stock out of streams should be mandatory, both for landowners who own stock, and for TCDC. For example, the stream that enters the sea in Waitete Bay is infested with cattle that are obviously being grazed on the riparian reserve".* Another suggested focusing on land use and ensuring land practices minimise sediment. There was also comment that *"if coastal outcomes were factored in it would be more difficult to fudge the numbers on stream states in isolation".* One other participant commented that there needed to be knowledge sharing and community

involvement and that discussions needed to be independently led as WRC has a conflict of interest i.e., strategic management of drainage and stopbanks.

Limits and rules

When asked what types of rules and limits they thought would help manage freshwater better, nine individuals provided feedback. Three respondents said they agreed with the examples provided by WRC – with one stating that control over forestry needs to be included: in particular, strict rules regarding erosion control and slash. In contrast, one individual said *"many of the current rules are adequate… We need new techniques and rules for managing sediment".* Another participant suggested that all homes should be fitted with rainwater tanks as subsidised by the government, and that livestock should not be allowed near freshwater that is used for drinking or recreational use. Likewise, another respondent suggested keeping all forms of livestock away from streams. One respondent perceived the biggest threat to the Coromandel to be weather events as cyclonic events can hinder/prevent measures and building more resilient stormwater roads and flood protection schemes needed to be a high priority. One other respondent commented that rules and limits require rigorous monitoring and consequences for rule breaking such as pollution. There was comment that the rules and limits should be determined by community engagement conversations that are independently led. The same respondent recommended use of a mixture of tools – for example, incentives and credits to provide income streams different than dairy.

General feedback

When asked if they would like to provide any additional feedback regarding freshwater management within the Coromandel one participant said "a*t some point the kaitiakitanga of the wai should be returned to iwi. It should be done before the estimated achievement dates".* Another respondent stated that the focus should be on forestry, farming, wastewater increases in summer, leachate risks from old mines, and Waihi tailing dams. One other respondent encouraged the continual eradication of pests – for example, Canadian Geese in estuaries. One individual commented that the sewage system required an upgrade, the impacts of forestry harvesting needed greater control, and increased attention needed to be given to the influence of building activities on waterways.

8 Ngā kōrero whakahoki a te rāngai ahuwhenua/hunga whaipānga |Results – Primary sector/stakeholder engagement

8.1 Dairy

Eleven people attended the facilitated dairy sector meeting with representatives from Fonterra, Synlait Milk, DairyNZ, JD & RD Wallace, Open Country Dairy, Dairy Goat Co-operative, Tatua Dairy Company, Maui Sheep Milk, Spring Sheep and OFI NZ (Olam Food Ingredients). Four regional councillors were also in attendance.

Te Mana o te Wai

There were a range of responses and queries when asked for feedback on the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai. The main queries regarding the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai included requests for an economic analysis of policies, requests for targets and timeframes to be based on science, and request for how targets will be measured. In reference to clause (1) regarding '*the health, resilience and wellbeing of the Waikato Region's freshwater resources is restored and protected…',* there were queries for clarity as to what state freshwater is to be

restored to and protected. For clause (1.3) regarding '*the effects of human activities determine the health and well-being of the Region's freshwater bodies and ecosystems*', there were further queries as to "…*what human activity can be changed, flood protection, koi, [and the] Hauraki landscape is highly modified", "what about wildlife on DOC land", "how will naturally occurring water quality features be separated from impacts i.e. native bush, E.coli",* and one other disagreeing with this clause, *"reads as though it is solely human activities affecting water quality, but we disagree with this. Not all water quality issues are caused by humans e.g., storms".* For the clause *'there is sufficient water available to provide for the health and well-being of waterbodies, and provided that is achieved, water may be available for human use, provided it is allocated and used efficiently',* there was a request to remove 'may' as water should be available if it meets health and well-being. There were also queries including whether *"human use included manufacturing or non-consumptive use",* and *"what about animal welfare (drinking water)"?* For the clause regarding *'water quality and quantity targets are established and respected, to reflect the cultural, spiritual and ecological values of freshwater as understood by tangata whenua and the community*', there was a comment to link in to the NPS-FM. There were other comments regarding questions on, water allocation, water availability, aligning with PC1 timeframes, consideration of indigenous values, financial support for farmers regarding planting, and statements that *"wealth is not number 1", "we are seeing the result of intensification"* and *"water should have rights".*

Long-term vision

There were a couple of comments that the draft long-term visions should be the same for all FMUs and that there was inconsistent wording.

Waikato-Waipā

Feedback regarding the draft long-term visions for all of Waikato-Waipā included aligning with PC1, having science-based measures and targets, tracking of water quality measures and progress (and a query who will do this?), "*strategically placing wetlands to have maximum impact",* and a query about *"what will be changed to make [wetland creation] easier for farmers with consents"?*

Upper Waikato

Feedback on the draft long-term vision for Upper Waikato made reference to clause (b) '*…provides for a range of freshwater values including drinkable water…'*, there was a question regarding geothermal water sources as not drinkable. For clause (f) regarding *'sustainable land use and management…*', there was a comment, *"land management is adjusted to meet water quality objectives"*. In regard to clause (i), *'water is allowed to be itself, in its common, ordinary or normal state, flowing naturally…'*, there was comment about how this clause was not helpful, nor measurable and subjective, how "*hydrodams need to be removed to fulfil this clause",* this *"cannot be turned into a reasonable policy",* and a question on *"how would this affect flood defence planning"*?

Middle Waikato

Feedback on the draft long-term vision for Middle Waikato made reference to clause (b), *'% improvement [% informed by science] in all aspects of freshwater across the region in 10 years'*, with comments of agreement and a suggestion to include this objective across all FMUs. For clause (g*), 'Rivers are swimmable, and the bottom of rivers are visible'*, there was a comment that an assessment of what is required to [achieve this is needed] before agreeing to the clause and another comment with the view that it is *"unrealistic to see [the] bottom of Waikato River".* There were other comments requiring an economic and scientific analysis.

In regard to feedback on an ambitious but reasonable timeframe to achieve a vision like this, there was a comment that a middle and lower timeframe of 2074 was more reasonable.

Lower Waikato

Feedback on the draft long-term vision for Lower Waikato made references to clause (b), *'freshwater is healthy, sustains abundant life and prosperous communities and the needs of present and future generations and improved back to [its attribute state 100 years ago]'.* Comments regarding clause (b) queried '100-year state', what this meant, whether this was achievable (in respect of population and industry increases), how to determine the state 100 years ago, and noted the continued negative impact of Koi carp. There were other comments that pest free needed to link in with the national predator programme and to *"have separate tidal zone water allocation to allow Auckland's water use without limiting use/growth in the catchment. Lower Waikato (and other Waikato)".*

In regard to feedback on an ambitious but reasonable timeframe to achieve a vision like this, there was a comment that a middle and lower timeframe of 2074 was reasonable.

Waipā

Feedback on the draft long-term vision for Waipā made references to clause (b), *'water quality, the mauri and integrity of all freshwater bodies, and their biodiversity is restored and protected for present and future generations by bringing the waterbodies back to as close as possible to their state [100 years ago]'.* Comments regarding clause (b) queried '100-year state', what this meant, whether this was achievable (in respect of population and industry increases), how to measure the state 100 years ago to compare and that this "*need[ed] to be a more measurable value".* For clause (g) regarding existing natural inland wetlands and the creation of new natural inland wetlands, there was a query as to who will fund land and the construction of new wetlands.

West Coast

Feedback on the draft long-term vision for the West Coast made reference to clause (a), *'the health, well-being and mauri of all waterbodies and their biodiversity is protected and if necessary, restored for present and future generations to sustain cultural, spiritual, social, economic and kaitiaki needs*', there was a suggestion to replicate this clause and the other clauses in the West Coast in place of the current draft long-term vision clauses for Hauraki. For clause (c), *'ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu, taonga and customary rights are protected from adverse effects and inappropriate use'*, more clarity was sought regarding 'inappropriate use'. There were references to clause (h), '*by 2034, waterways are clean, provide a safe habitat for all wetland birds free of predators and riparian margins are managed by removing pest species, fencing and replanting with native species to support a thriving environment*'. Feedback on clause (h) was mainly concerned with the timeframe of 2034, with views that this was not achievable nor reasonable, the timeframe should be longer (e.g., 20 years) and suggestions for more consultation on the objective. One other comment on timeframes mentioned that PC1 2080 was ambitious and reasonable and that 2050 was too ambitious.

Hauraki

Feedback on the draft long-term vision for Hauraki made references to various clauses. In regard to clause (a) *'the health, wellbeing and mauri of waterbodies is protected and restored…*', there was a view that more information was required before providing feedback. For clause (c), *'freshwater is holistically managed in a way that recognised that health of the people relies on the health of the environment*', there was a view that this was not true. For clause (d) '*freshwater is suitable and accessible to provide for a range of values and uses…',* there was a query as to whether this included *"providing for economic wellbeing"*, and a note that there are *"areas in which access is not provided".* There was a query about not knowing what clause (e) meant, *'freshwater management supports space for all generations to interact with the awa together and ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu, taonga and customary rights…*'. For clause (f), *'riparian margins and natural inland wetlands that are degraded are*

rehabilitated and restored…', there were queries about stop banks and restoration, and that *"timeframes are too short if farmers are self-funding this. Lack of clarity on impact - what waterways, sizes, existing fencing, etc"?*

There was some feedback for clause (g),*'water quality is above any national bottom line, further degradation is avoided and gradual improvements made over the next 10 years with water quality returned to a [point in time or other state] in 50 years'*. Comments for clause (g) included a statement of "*30 years"*, and queries *"what if water quality is naturally below the national bottom line e.g., peat drainage", "…takes time to respond to land use change. How will measures be used to capture change",* and *"depends on what is being asked, either (a) more ambitious and longer times, (b) less ambitious and quicker/shorter times".* For clause (h) regarding the increase of natural inland wetlands and restoration of tuna populations, comments included, *"preserve peat areas and wetlands", "recognition or payment to landowners for land given to public benefit*" and a query regarding drainage schemes. For clause (i), '*public access to waterways is improved*', the feedback was *"this change is not on removing private waterway rights".* Feedback was received for clause (j), *'riparian planting of waterways with appropriate types of vegetation is achieved by 2034 with re-forestation of appropriate areas within catchments by 2074"*. Queries regarding clause (j) included clarification whether re-forestation meant native or pine, how this clause *"linked with flood protection in Hauraki, can't plant council drains",* and *"definition of waterway, is a drain a waterway and need riparian planting".* General feedback for the draft long-term vision for Hauraki included more consideration of the economic impacts and values, more 'hard data', the term 'restored' could be misinterpreted, and consideration of the effects of climate change.

Environmental outcomes and target states

A range of feedback on the draft environmental outcomes was provided for the Waikato region. For clause (a) Ecosystem health, (1) Water quality and (2) Water quantity comments included, *"lake levels and dams may contradict ecosystem health - any take would adversely affect",* climate change affects lake levels, *"…[Lake] Waikare is lowered for flood protection which has adversely affected water quality outcomes …","water quality - should be 'enough variability is maintained' so that water takes can also continue", "don't use the word 'restored' as it creates unreasonable expectations. Use 'improved' instead",* a query on groundwater allocation and a query as to what measures for restoration this is being benchmarked against.

For clause (a) Ecosystem health (3), Habitat and (4) Aquatic life comments included, *"Koi and trout conflict with health and wellbeing of water", "effect of trout on indigenous species",* query on why salmon is included in the FMU outcomes, *"disagree[ment] that trout health and wellbeing should be improved"*, and clarity on targets for fish numbers. Other comments for Ecosystem health included, *"outcomes should form the content of a [farm environment plan] FEP", "conflicts with public access"* and *"should include soil health and protection".*

- For clause (c), Threatened species, there was agreement for *"no human induced loss, but their natural range should have some qualification in length/amount affected".*
- For clause (e) Natural form and character, comments included, *"conflicts with hydro", "…may limit future drainage schemes",* and *"not sure how…[this] relates to operation of flood management systems"*.
- In regard to clause (f) Drinking water supply, comments included *"controls on municipals to ensure effective and efficient use (vs too much car washing)", "safe drinking water = number 1 priority", "...is sufficient or easily treatable for drinking water supply otherwise all birds on a stream are an issue", "created wetlands, increases E.coli from increased bird activity",* and a query regarding *"water with 'naturally' high levels of iron/manganese".*
- For clause (j), Fishing there was one comment to remove the clause.

- For clause (k) Irrigation, Cultivation and production of food and beverages, there was feedback *"to include positive benefit of water harvesting and storage", "climate adaptation needs to provide further allocation and storage", "include water use for frost protection", "…include dairy shed washdown and cooling"*, and a query *"is this an increase or maintenance of irrigation"?* There was also a suggestion to move clause (k) after clause (g) Animal drinking water *"as one requires the other"*.
- For clause (l) Hydro-electric power generation there was feedback to increase hydro-electric power generation and that is has *"more positive environmental impacts"*.
- There was feedback to include clause (m) Commercial and industrial use, for the Coromandel FMU *"Thames/Coromandel needs (m) for Thames industry"*. There was a suggestion to replace 'can' with 'shall' for clause (m), *"water quality and quantity can provide for commercial and industrial activities*".

General feedback for the draft environmental outcomes included, additional outcomes for climate change, and *"storage of water to adapt to climate change - dams store during high flows", "factor[ing] in new population numbers", "community values haven't been costed. Community outcomes checked by science targets followed by economic analysis"* and aligning planning to the PC1 process.

Feedback was provided on potential principles for setting target attribute states. Inequity was mentioned in comments, *"B to A is harder than D to C, farmers with better water quality should not be asked to do the same as bad farmers",* and *"moving all bands to the same number could cause inequities"*. Other comments regarding the bands included, *"no separation of ease of moving* [between] *band target[s] i.e., D to C or A to A at 10% improvement", "long-term target - D* and *C bands should improve, B bands can maintain. Any more than this requires economic analysis to be considered in consultation", "link time length to each banding i.e., will take 10 years to go from C to B", "band states not linked to the draft outcome/objectives"* and *"prioritise the worst catchments and allow industry standards to improve better catchments B/C band"*. Economic impact was mentioned in feedback, *"need to be clear on how the proposed movement to higher band will be achieved while monitoring economic prosperity",* and *"[PC1] economics needs to be considered as a useful reference. Socio-economic impacts of moving bands not costed - could impact communities"*. Another supported an 80-year timeframe and aligned to PC1, and the short-term target in closing the gap by 20% of difference. Other feedback on the potential principles for setting target states included *"target the major contaminant first. Low hanging fruit", "need to mention when we cannot beat/meet A band e.g., Hauraki", "need to ensure that faecal indicators are eDNA'd before determining management options", "depends on if we focus on how fast we want to do something vs how far we want to go"* and queries as to how water quality will be tracked and whether people know the impacts of each contaminant.

Limits and rules

Whole of region

Comments were provided generally on limits and rules for the whole region:

- *Intensification limits - feed pads/housing and importing feed would have more impact overall than N [nitrogen] use.*
- *Support off-stream water storage. Need to link in with consents to build or a permitted activity rule to make it easier.*
- *Intensification based on outcomes not just no dairy intensification.*
- *Look to industry standards/direction.*

- *Stock exclusion - should be more nuanced than generic 3 or 5m setbacks. The parts where water flows into waterways should be focused on. Queries about what defines a waterway, and whether different setbacks for different size and issue waterways.*
- *Limit land use change … needs to have a clear pathway for change where it can occur and be lower overall. Need a pathway, not Overseer based for phosphorus in particular.*
- *Model what freshwater farm plans and other national regulations will achieve.*

Hauraki

A range of responses were provided by attendees when asked for feedback about the types of rules and limits that will help manage freshwater for Hauraki. Feedback on rules and limits included:

- *Stock exclusion from waterways on extensive farms would intensify land use (non-dairy).*
- *PC1 has to drive the Freshwater Policy - they must be consistent. Contaminants: good to see that PC1 provision could be used.*
- *Water efficiency on farm promoted.*
- *Wastewater: moving Hauraki site from D to C* [band] *will see significant costs to urban wastewater upgrades. This needs costing.*

West Coast

One comment was received for the West Coast regarding the types of rules and limits, *"need to ensure origin of E.coli before implementing regulations on one sector*".

General feedback

General feedback was provided that covered various topic areas including economic analysis and costs, timeframes, science and engagement. Feedback regarding an economic analysis and costs included, *"focus on getting economic analysis to inform direction", "econometric modelling in engagement groups to align priority", "community values are set without the cost being_known "* plus other similar feedback. Comments in respect of timeframes included, *"needs to be consistent timeframes and objectives across FMUs", using* PC1 timeframes *",* and timeframes for riparian planting. There were a range of comments referring to science, more research and monitoring, for example *"learn from other regions where water quality has improved", "understand by site testing where E.coli is entering the waterways"* carp in the Waikato/Waipā rivers and E.coli infections*, "values must be measurable by science that is proven"* and *"what timeframe does the science advise for long term target changes"* and using the same science-based standards in PC1. Reference to soil was made also, *"must take account of high value soils - and the fact that they will limit alternative uses other than for farming".* General feedback included more engagement with catchment groups, community and more rounds of engagement and working groups through the process. Other general feedback included encouraging farm drainage maintenance and *"identify[ing] opportunities for improving waterway management at farm level e.g., farm environment plans",* the view that *"less dairy is already predicted (do not need to legislate)", "remove rates from retired areas/riparian margins", "if there are limits imposed, they should be based on outputs (contaminant loads) rather than land use or stocking rates", "use PC1 as a base to move from"*, and *"water clarity is totally dependent on weather events. This is not pollution as such".*

8.2 Dairy sector survey feedback

A total of 16 participants indicated that they represented the 'Dairy' sector. Of those 16, two also selected the 'Beef and Lamb' option and one respondent chose 'Horticulture' and 'Beef and Lamb' in addition to 'Dairy'.

Te Mana o te Wai

Respondents were presented with the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai and asked to provide their thoughts on the wording. A mixture of feedback was given by twelve individuals, with some points focusing on individual clauses and others being more general statements about the overall objective.

In terms of general feedback, one participant stated the need to be both environmentally and financially stable. Another individual expressed concerns that there are elements in this objective which are intangible – for example, cultural and spiritual values – making it difficult to give effect to the objective. The respondent explained that *"there needs to be an even playing field for all water users".* One individual stated that they agreed with all the clauses within the objective but noted that consultation with farmers will need to take place. In reference to clause (1), it was suggested that the term 'restored' is vague and should be replaced with 'improved or protected.' For that same clause, the meaning of the phrase 'connections with freshwater are sustained' is unclear and the participant suggested that it be removed. The following alternative phrase was recommended: *"the health, resilience and wellbeing of the Waikato Region's freshwater resources is improved or protected for present and future generations, and land and water are managed on a whole of catchment basis, to give effect to Te Mana o te Wai, recognising...".* It was felt that clause (1) should be based on community consultation and scientific information.

In reference to clause (1.1), it was suggested that there is *"reference to communities which incorporates people, economy, social aspects of water quality outcomes".* With regards to clause (1.1), a respondent agreed that both quantity and quality are important within freshwater ecosystems. They went on to say that koi carp are the biggest problem within Waikato waterways. There was also comment that this clause should be based upon scientific evidence and community consultation.

One respondent expressed agreement with clauses (1.1) and (1.3), but not clause (1.2). It was stated, however, that clause (1.2) must be informed by community consultation and scientific evidence. Another participant indicated that they fully agreed with clauses (1.1) and (1.2). In regard to clause (1.3), there was comment that human activities are but one of the factors that impact the health and wellbeing of waterways. It was also questioned how clause (1.3) affects human activities that cannot be controlled.

In reference to the clause *'there is sufficient water available… water may be available for human use',* the use of the word 'may' caused concern. Participants felt that if meeting the needs of the water, then it should be used to supply community needs. It was suggested that the phrase 'may be' be replaced with 'will be.' Another individual stated that, while the intention for this clause seemed good, there needs to be a clear definition of 'health and wellbeing of water bodies.'

For the clause regarding water quality and quantity targets, a participant expressed that they were concerned that targets were being based on spiritual values. There was comment that those targets need to be based on scientific evidence and be measurable using established methods. Their suggested alternative phrasing was *"water quality and quantity targets are established and respected, to reflect the community and ecological values of freshwater".* Similarly, another respondent indicated that although it makes sense to establish targets, it could be problematic to base physical targets on spiritual values. One participant stated that *"water targets need to be realistic rather than aspirational as understood by community".* The participant stated this clause must be based on community consultation and scientific information.

With regards to the clause *'tangata whenua are enabled to participate…'*, it was acknowledged that it 'makes sense' that tangata whenua are part of the process. Another respondent also emphasised the importance of having both urban and rural populations involved in the consultation process.

Long-term vision

Participants were asked which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on for the topic of long-term visions. For each area, they were given a draft objective outlining the long-term vision and then given the opportunity to leave their feedback about the wording of the vision.

Taupō

The participant who was interested in the long-term vision for this FMU questioned whether this should fall under the responsibility of the Lake Taupō project. This individual was 'Unsure' if the given timeframes are ambitious and reasonable. They expressed concern over how the objectives would be funded.

Upper Waikato

Three participants provided feedback on the Upper Waikato long-term vision. One respondent recommended consideration of the effects of wastewater from sewage ponds as well as negative chemicals/by-products that enter the stream – beyond those that have been identified. There was also the suggestion to identify companies that are releasing contaminants and to review WRC processes that may involve these. Another participant believed that clause (i) is unrealistic and will create conflict. A different individual stated that there is nothing listed in this draft objective that is not already being done.

One participant viewed the timeframes as being ambitious and reasonable, a second person disagreed, and the last said they were uncertain. The individual who agreed with the timeframes stated that many actions are already being undertaken and several of these visions will be realised before 2044. In contrast, the respondent who disagreed believed WRC do not understand the task at hand. The unsure participant acknowledged that there is a lot of work to be done, there is a lack of resourcing at the council, and the council is placing obligations onto stakeholders.

Middle Waikato

Three respondents provided their feedback on the Middle Waikato long-term vision. One individual stated that the long-term vision required more "*substance*". Another participant believed that the word 'long' needed to be defined as it can be interpreted in a number of different ways. In reference to clause (g), it was believed that rainfall will prevent seeing the bottom of rivers such as the Waikato. The same respondent also stated that swimming should not be promoted in the Waikato river as it is (terribly) dangerous. With regards to clause (b), respondents were asked what state water quality should be returned to. One individual said the answer to this depends on what and how willing people are to achieve the targets. Another respondent stated *"freshwater needs to be returned to the highest quality we can get it to - this may mean that it doesn't get back to the quality that existed pre-settlement".* The third recommended focusing on preventing human waste entering the waterways.

Two participants said 'No' when asked if the given timeframes were ambitious and reasonable while the third indicated that they were 'Unsure.' Those who said 'No' believed that people were not equipped to handle the task and that the given timeframes were unrealistic. The uncertain individual explained that it *"feels that there is too much to get done and no firm foundation from which to base it on".*

Lower Waikato

Three respondents gave their feedback on the Lower Waikato long-term vision. One participant stated that the long-term vision is "admirable but very aspirational". They were also uncertain if the 10-year timeframe was realistic or achievable. Another respondent requested that clearer terms be used to describe the objectives. The third said the draft vision was *"not great"* and that koi carp needed to be eradicated to return the water to the state it was 100 years ago. In reference to clause (b), participants were asked which state they think water quality should return to. One individual said that *"freshwater needs to be returned to the highest quality we can get it to - this may mean that it doesn't get back to the quality that existed pre-settlement".* Another agreed with the notion of it being like it was 100 years ago whereas another participant questioned whether there was data on water quality 100 years ago and made the suggestion of *"something manageable".* There was one participant who believed the water quality, as it is now, is 'good.'

When asked if they thought the given timeframes were reasonable and ambitious, one participant said 'Yes' whereas three said 'No.' The individual who said 'Yes' stated that economic assessment needs to be given greater priority. One of those who said 'No' instead recommended a timeframe of 15 to 20 years. Another explained that *"given that there are many different sectors and stakeholders to bring together to achieve the vision as well as the reality that it takes time for water quality to be changed significantly, a decade does not appear to be doable".* Furthermore, respondents stressed the importance of physically collecting and analysing samples for policy formation – rather than relying on modelling. The other participant who selected 'No' believed that the water quality was 'good enough' already.

Waipā

Three participants provided feedback on the Waipa long-term vision. There was a query as to how 'ambitious' and 'reasonable' would be reconciled as the two almost seem in conflict with each other. Clause (e) was viewed as too open to interpretation and this may have significant repercussions. Another participant simply stated that they agreed with the draft objective. In reference to clause (b), resepondents were asked what state water quality should return to. One individual was concerned that 100 years may be 'too prescriptive' and believed that there may be some areas where the water was degraded 100 years ago but doing 'much better' now. The other stated that there was a need to show what water was like 100 years ago and asked if water today is better than it was 30 to 40 years ago, whether progress was being made and if this trajectory was good enough. One other participant perceived the given timeframes as being ambitious and reasonable, two did not. The individual who agreed with the given timeframes emphasised the need to act as soon as possible and progress towards ambitious targets. One of the participants who said 'No' commented that there was no understanding of the task being undertaken. The other stated that the objectives were indeed ambitious but not reasonable and added *"you need to do a lot more work on the impact to our productivity to our rural and urban communities and to all rural support industries".*

West Coast

The respondent who was interested in the West Coast long-term vision noted the importance of acting sooner rather than later. In reference to getting rid of pests, the use of 1080 poison was strongly discouraged. When asked if they thought the given timeframes were ambitious and reasonable, the participant said 'No' and explained that the timeframes will depend on how it's decided to deliver on these objectives.

Hauraki

Six individuals provided their feedback on the Hauraki long-term vision, with the vast majority of the comments discussed individual clauses. In reference to clause (a), it was suggested the term 'improved' should be used instead of 'restored.' Furthermore, the term 'mauri' – unless

it can be defined in practical, measurable terms – should be removed. Another respondent stated that the terms 'protected' and 'restored' require clarification since these terms are open to interpretation. With regards to clause (b), a participant believed that sustainable land management needs to be worked through with engagement with the whole community. One respondent felt that, unless there was scientific evidence to support clause (c), it should be removed. Similarly, another individual felt that this clause should be deleted since the wording is too vague, and a third stated that clause (c) should be removed as the term 'holistically' is too ambiguous. For clause (d), one participant said it was unclear how the term 'accessible' is being applied in this context and perceived it to be outside the scope of freshwater management. In reference to both clauses (d) and (i), one respondent stated that increasing riparian planting will increase water quality outcomes but will also decrease public access. It was suggested that *"wording needs to reflect access where existing access is provided but limited due to water quality or maintenance factors rather than suggesting this plan aims to take action to find more private land for public use".*

With regards to clause (e), the wording was described as "*very sloppy*" and rewording is required – but the intent was seen as "*ok*." One participant queried what is meant by the term 'site.' Two respondents suggested that clause (e) be removed. One individual believed that the content of this clause had already been adequately covered in clause (d); the other stated that the content goes beyond the scope of freshwater management, and they were uncertain what it meant in practical terms. For clause (f), it was stated that definitions would need to be used. It was noted that it could potentially lead to huge costs being borne by landowners and their property rights being infringed upon.

For clause (g) the following statement was made, *"must allow for situations where water quality would naturally be below bottom lines (iron content, peat staining, etc.). Any requirement to improve water quality must be justifiable".* The respondent added that the proposed 50-year timeframe seems to be arbitrary and thought 80 years may be more appropriate. Another respondent indicated that they supported the short-term direction of change whereas, long-term, would need to be funded for large scale plantings and *"would rather be more ambitious seeking 80 years."* For clause (g), one participant agreed with this clause but stated that the 'point in time or other state' needs to be widely discussed and agreed upon. Another asked how far above the national bottom-line was intended and what the cost to the community would be; they also recommended a two-generation timeframe. In reference to clause (h), it was questioned whether this was an increase in natural wetlands or forced retirement of (other) land. Another respondent described the clause as "*good"* so long as a plan was put in place. One other individual felt that the content within clause (h) was largely redundant as the content was adequately covered in clause (f) and they suggested removing the clause.

A respondent viewed the content of clause (i) *'public access to waterways is improved*', as being outside of the scope of freshwater management and they felt it should be removed. With regards to clause (j), it was noted that the wording needs to take into consideration that some areas cannot be planted. Another respondent stated that re-forestation areas should be clarified.

In terms of more general feedback on the objective, one participant stated that the vision was too long and needed to be simplified. Another believed that, in general, the vision for all areas of the Waikato should be consistent, with unique exceptions/expectations only included where justified. One respondent expressed concern, where private land was involved, over increased inland wetlands, increased riparian margins, and public access to waterways.

With regards to clause (g), participants were asked what state they thought to return water quality to. One individual suggested focusing on the *"worst issues not meeting national bottom*

lines". The respondent felt that sector progression in technology, science, and skills will bring up the average and water quality over time. Another person stated that this should be determined by science. Similarly, one other respondent emphasised the importance of using expert advice acknowledging that the catchment has undergone a lot of transformation and while improvements can and have been made, returning to a quality prior to human habitation is unrealistic. They suggested that targets be ambitious but also recognise the realities of the human population and activities within the area. One respondent believed that *"trying to return water quality to a level above national standards will be economically prohibitive".* They suggested that gradual improvements should be made over time and questioned what water quality originally was. The following comment was also made by a respondent:

> *The state of the water would be determined on a catchment-by-catchment basis, taking into account ecological benefits, natural influences on water quality, community preferences, economic implications, and availability of feasible improvement opportunities. There should be no broad-brush water quality expectations.*

When asked if the given timeframes for the Hauraki long-term vision were reasonable and ambitious, two participants said 'Yes', three said 'No', and two others indicated that they were 'Unsure.' One of the respondents who selected 'Yes' stated that *"care needs to be taken around achieving objective goals that meet economic needs",* whereas the other stated that using the terms 'ambitious' and 'reasonable' within the same sentence is confusing – they also felt that any timeline should be used as a guide only. A participant who picked 'No' expressed that while the short-term goals were appropriate, the long-term targets should be 80 plus years to allow for communities to be more ambitious. Another felt that the timeframes should be two generations long. The third respondent stated "*the proposed 30-year timeframe is very ambitious, but not achievable in a way that would sustain the ongoing economic prosperity of the region. The 80-year horizon, as included in Plan Change 1, while still ambitious, is more reasonable*". One of the people who was 'Unsure' suggested that it would depend on what state the intention was to return water quality to. The other individual believed that the timeframes and whether they could be met would depend on funding, resources, and support committed and available to the wider community.

Coromandel

The respondent who selected this FMU stated that they supported the draft objective – except for clause (e). They believed that this clause *"needs to be reworded to focus on natural waterways. Riparian strips are not always a good option for drains or floodways. They can be encouraged but utilised only if appropriate on these waterways".* This respondent also expressed that there needed to be recognition of both the initial and on-going costs for landowners with extensive natural waterways and while all will benefit from an improved ecosystem, the cost of this should not be borne by a select few.

When asked if they thought the given timeframes were ambitious and reasonable, the respondent said they were 'Unsure.' They explained that the timeframes and whether they could be met would depend on funding, resources, and support committed and available to the wider community.

Environmental outcomes

Participants were asked which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on for the topic of environmental outcomes. For each area, they were presented with a list of possible outcomes. When they clicked on an outcome, the draft objective was shown and they were provided with the opportunity to leave comments.

Taupō

Hydro-electric power generation

A respondent commented that*, "the water can't move and gets stagnant, and sediment build up, floods other lands because the water is backed up".*

Waikato-Waipā

Ecosystem health

The respondent believed that until koi carp are eliminated, not many other fish will be able to live within the waters.

Drinking water supply

A respondent said that it would be *"great to have all water from the Waikato drinkable".*

Animal drinking water

This was described as a "*good outcome which must be achieved*". Another respondent agreed that water should be suitable for all animals.

Fishing

A respondent described their experience fishing in the lower Waikato and stated that they caught mostly koi carp and very few flounder.

Irrigation, cultivation and production of food and beverages

One participant said they supported the described outcome *"but the Council will need to ensure continued access to water for these activities. Significant amounts of money have been and is being spent on the required infrastructure for these activities and there needs to be some form of certainty that water as a resource can continue to be accessed".* Another respondent stated that all of the activities described in the outcome already take place and the issue is not with water quality but quantity.

Commercial and industrial uses

The respondent said that the water is "*fine*".

Hauraki

Ecosystem health

In reference to clause (a), it was suggested that the word 'improved' might be better than 'restored' and restoration may raise an argument regarding to what extent. In a similar vein, another participant recommended that the word 'restored' in clause (a.i) should be replaced with 'protect.' For clause (a.ii), it was unclear how the term 'degraded' is defined within this context. The following phrasing was suggested: *"surface water and ground water quality is maintained or improved where justified".* For clause (b), one participant said there were no lakes in Hauraki that they are aware of and – specifically for subclause (iii) – groundwater takes are important for rural communities and farming. Another respondent also questioned whether there are any lakes within the Hauraki FMU. For clause (c.ii) a respondent said *"the scope of this clause should be limited to situations where there is a demonstrable link between vegetation and freshwater quality. Also, habitat of indigenous fauna (other than aquatic fauna) is out of scope here".* With regards to clause (d.ii), the term 'degraded' required definition. In terms of more general feedback, one respondent stressed the importance of eliminating koi carp and keeping other pests out. Another individual questioned why trout and salmon were being protected if they are not indigenous. One participant simply stated that they "*agreed*" with the draft environmental outcome.

Human contact

For this outcome, one individual suggested the phrase "*a thriving community*" be used. Another participant expressed their support for this draft outcome. A second person said they were "*generally supportive*" but noted the need to recognise that there will be specific areas where this would not apply e.g., immediately downstream of a municipal sewage plant discharge.

Threatened species

One respondent said the outcome was 'fine' but questioned whether this was freshwater, or biodiversity focused. Another said that they were 'generally supportive' but, in reference to clause (i), to acknowledge that areas that have been modified as a part of flood control cannot practically be reversed and suggested adding 'further' between 'no' and 'human-induced'.

Mahinga kai

For subclause (i), this was viewed as reasonable for public, commonly utilised areas that can be accessed – but shouldn't expect to be able to take kai out of farm drains. In reference to subclause (ii), there was a query as to how this would impact farmers/landowners being required to plant these species where they have been lost and the impact on areas where aquatic weeds have taken over. Another respondent, still talking about subclause (ii), believed that take limits may need to be set to ensure there is 'enough for long-term harvest'. Clause (iii) was seen as being outside the scope of freshwater management.

Natural form and character

While one respondent described this outcome as 'sufficient', another stated that – given the highly modified nature of waterways within the Hauraki FMU – this is not a reasonable expectation.

Drinking water supply

One participant described this outcome as being 'sufficient' and another explained that while water can be treated to achieve the desired quality for drinking, there is a need to ensure that the quantity is sufficient. A third respondent stated that *"it would be unreasonable, and likely illegal under Tau Mata Arowai requirements, to expect human drinking water to be taken from open water sources without any form of treatment. This clause should be removed*".

Animal drinking water

There was comment that there are some areas of the Waikato that will require treatment because they naturally possess high levels of iron and manganese. Another respondent described this outcome as being 'appropriate.' The third participant stated *"as for human drinking water supplies, there is a reasonable expectation that water for animal consumption will require some form of treatment, often to remove excess amounts of iron and manganese. In terms of available volume, the priority for stock watering should sit above that for crop irrigation".*

Wai tapu

The participant expressed concern that targets include spiritual relationships, *"If this target is included, it must be made clear what the practical implications for water quality are".*

Transport and Tauranga waka

For this particular FMU, there was comment that access needs to be both improved and maintained. Willows and lack of maintenance have left areas such as Waihou and Piako inaccessible for boats. Another respondent said that they supported the draft outcome.

Fishing

One respondent said that they do not support (sub)clause (ii) and would recommend removing it. They believed that increasing native fish populations will improve trout numbers. It was stated that trout damage native fish numbers and the latter should be prioritised over the former. Similarly, another participant stressed that salmon and trout should not be favoured at a cost to native species; and they emphasised the importance of keeping koi carp out. On a similar note, a third respondent said that it would be appropriate to include species other than trout in subclause (ii). One participant simply said that they 'agree' with the draft outcome. Another stated *"generally agree that fish should be suitable for human consumption, but a major determining factor of the number of fish available will be the pressure of fishing on the fishery. The target state must recognise that controls on fishing may be necessary in some cases".*

Irrigation, cultivation and production of food and beverages

A participant expressed that they supported this environmental outcome, and another agreed that it is important to have water available for the purposes described. A third individual

stated, *"generally agree, but there can be no guarantee that the quantity of water available will be sufficient to meet all desired irrigation needs".*

Hydro-electric power generation

One respondent stated that, to their knowledge, there are no hydro-schemes in their catchment. Another commented that *"any electricity generation needs to be cognisant of impacts on waterways and other activities".*

Commercial and industrial uses

While one participant agreed with the described outcome, another expressed "*water used for commercial and industrial uses will almost certainly be subject to some form of treatment prior to use in any case, and the volume available cannot be guaranteed".*

Coromandel

Ecosystem health

In reference to clause (c), it was stated that trout and salmon should not be favoured if it is detrimental to native species. Koi carp need to be removed.

Fishing

Once again, it was emphasised that trout and salmon cannot be favored if it is at a cost to native species.

When asked if the outcomes of 'Hydro-electric power generation' and 'Commercial and industrial uses' are applicable to the Coromandel, one respondent stated, *"more focus on economic outcome required".*

Target states

Participants were provided with some examples of potential principles that could be applied when setting target attribute states and were then asked to give their feedback on potential principles. Ten respondents gave the following feedback.

- One participant said that these principles need to be achievable, realistic, and supported by the primary sector.
- Another said they prefer a *"close the gap type system".* They also emphasised the importance of information gathering.
- It was said that any target that is set has to be achievable with current technology.
- If the state of the water is poor compared to pre-human habitation levels, then improvement is good. How much improvement and the speed of the process needs to be collectively decided.
- Agreement with the principle of improving water but would like to know beforehand what the measurements of improvement (e.g., 10%) are based on.
- One respondent was supportive of an 80-year timeframe and of 10% improvements over 10 years, *"support moving from D to C band where it is practically achievable based on natural processes, and improving beyond that, where justified based on associated ecological or social benefits. Do not support a requirement to move up bands where there is no/weak demonstrable ecological or social benefit".* They also noted that for areas outside of the PC1 boundaries, it may take some time to raise awareness of new targets and implement on-farm changes.
- It was felt that the baseline data was not substantive.
- Emphasised the importance of koi carp extermination.
- Another stated that the examples provided appear to be 'reasonable.'

Respondents were then asked how they might explain this to farmers or other primary sector representatives. Eleven individuals provided the feedback below.

- It was stated that the council needs to be consistent in their application of these principles. To explain the principles, they would use 'plain English' to help with comprehension.
- *"Most effective way is via in person meetings and conversations where an industry or council staff member can direct the questions to the target farmers".*
- Share credible information on the state of waterways and what improvements will be sought to help people understand – this will work better than 'arbitrary rules and regulation.' The size and speed of improvements need to be collectively decided upon.
- It was believed that farmers would agree with the examples presented by WRC.
- Include farmers/primary sector representatives in the decision-making process, to get a better 'buy in'.
- *"Farmers are generally receptive to change where there are demonstrable benefits and targets can be met using available technologies/practices over timeframe that allows ongoing economic viability".*
- One respondent thought it was easy to understand and believed most farmers would think the same.
- Another participant said the responsibility fell on WRC to explain.

Activities and actions

Respondents were asked which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on for the topic of Activities and Actions. For each area, they were given a high-level summary of the state of freshwater within that FMU and were then questioned on their thoughts regarding the freshwater within that same area. No feedback was given for this topic for the West Coast FMU.

Taupō

The respondent did not have any feedback regarding the state of freshwater within Taupō but suggested focusing on shading waterways to accelerate positive change.

Waikato-Waipā

Six respondents provided their thoughts on the state of freshwater within Waikato-Waipa. One individual thought a good start would be to acknowledge that there were a variety of causes for waterways being in such poor condition e.g., lack of compliance with waste and stormwater consents. Another believed that water quality is affected by koi carp stirring up waterways and making them unlivable for most other fish. One commenter expressed concerns with vehicles such as boats and jet-skis being used in rivers and lakes. Another stated that while there are several examples of nitrogen being decreased, pest fish are still a significant problem and will require considerable resources to be kept under control. One respondent made the following comment, *"I think that with all the riparian planting that a lot of this will improve in time. Of bigger concern is the urban sewage that spills into our water ways and consents for such 'emergency spills' still being granted. Also storm water that drains into water ways from roads and streets".* One of the respondents felt that the quality of water was already "*good enough".*

When asked what the Freshwater Policy Review should focus on to accelerate positive change, five respondents provided answers. One participant recommended distributing accountability fairly. Another respondent said to focus on the leakage from urban areas/settings. Another stated that pest fish are degrading many streams and it will be difficult for native fish to reestablish if the natural habitat is being eliminated. In a similar vein, a commenter stated that efforts should be directed to eradicating koi carp.

Hauraki

Six respondents gave their thoughts on the state of freshwater within Hauraki. One person generally agreed with the high-level summary provided by WRC. They said additional work is required to confirm the sources of faecal bacteria so that actions can be correctly targeted. The same was said for phosphorus. Another individual believed *"clarity is needed on what we are comparing our lowland water way health to. Lowland waterways have natural characteristics that will be higher in nutrients and lower in dissolved oxygen than many other waterways".* The respondent commented that WRC needs to identify the sources of faecal eria and target those. There was also a need to determine what nitrogen and phosphorus levels are compared to their 'natural' state and work on moving closer to that natural state – taking into consideration the catchment's geology. It was thought that addressing land and streambank erosion would help with phosphorus levels.

It was noted that the Hauraki catchment has flood protection and highly modified farms and queried how farmers could meet targets/requirements in areas where planting cannot be done. Another respondent stated that it takes time for any investment to be reflected in water quality and stated that while farmers have spent capital in fencing waterways and upgrading effluent systems, there has been little investment from industry and towns. Another participant believed that sediment was a significant concern for water quality. It was thought that during Covid lockdowns, the water quality in the Firth of Thames improved.

When asked what the Freshwater Policy Review should focus on to accelerate positive change, five individuals expressed their opinion. One respondent emphasised the need to incorporate urban aspects. Another participant suggested focusing on the areas with the biggest potential positive impact – which was presumed to be sedimentation and could be addressed by considering: decreasing land and streambank erosion, eliminating koi carp, encouraging wetlands, and catching sediment that makes its way to water via silt traps. In a similar vein, it was advised to focus on land management to control erosion and run-off into waterways. It was also recommended to focus on efficient nutrient use to minimise surplus nutrients entering waterways and cautioned that *"before targeting action we must have a clear understanding of contaminant sources. A possible exception to this is nitrogen, where there is a strong link to intensive land use. As such, this is likely to be the most appropriate contaminant to initially focus on".* A respondent also made the following comment:

> *Information gathering - how intensive are dairy, drystock and hort systems. Capping where we are at and then only allowing intensification where offsetting or mitigation actions are introduced to allow so. Build a direction of travel path and aim for farmers to make better practices occur. Start picking up on management then long-term aim for land use change/big infrastructure giving farmers time to make long term decisions on farm. Feed-pads, cowsheds and other projects are budgeted over 50+ years so we cannot expect change to be budgeted in a couple of years.*

Coromandel

Participants were asked to give their thoughts on the state of freshwater within the Coromandel. One individual agreed with the description WRC had provided while another said that all sources of sediment need to be addressed and that they have a significant impact on harbours and estuaries. This was also their recommendation when asked what the Freshwater Policy Review should focus on to accelerate positive change within freshwater. The other respondent said to consider riparian zones and silt run-off.

How costs should be borne

Respondents were asked what they would like to say in principle at this stage about how costs should be borne and thirteen people expressed their opinion.

- It will take an integrated response and collective responsibility to increase the health of our waterways – hence, the costs should not be borne by one sector.
- Landowners will need time to budget and plan for infrastructure. It should be recognised that projects will require time, money, and science to improve before they can be picked up on a regional basis.
- It was stated that the rural sector has also invested considerably.
- Costs should be publicly funded if the benefit is for public good. There was comment that, *"landowners have responsibility for their actions, but can easily be required to contribute to the greater good without recognition of the true costs".*
- Since the benefits are targeted to all people, central government should provide a contribution (i.e., taxes). There are a number of contributing factors and some of the costs should be attributed to these causes.
- It was felt that the regional council needs to more widely promote their funding to let interested parties know what is available.
- Suggested that the costs be borne over two generations.
- A respondent suggested, *"as a general principle, the costs should lie where they fall, although the WRC, Council and Community groups have an important role to play in providing assistance and subsidies where appropriate. Also important when considering costs is the timeframe over which change is required, and the need to maintain a vibrant regional economy".*
- It was noted that the economic impact will be significant and there is a need to proceed carefully. The participant thought that farming will feel the initial impact, but the brunt will ultimately be felt by 'the poor urban'.
- Another suggested that costs should be borne by the land-user and if it is excessive, it should be paid over time.

Limits and rules

Participants were asked which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on for the topic of potential limits and rules. For each area, they were presented with some examples of limits and rules to manage activities to improve freshwater within that FMU. They were then asked what specific rules and limits they thought would help manage freshwater better.

Taupō

The respondent interested in this FMU stated that the power companies needed to be controlled.

Waikato-Waipā

Six individuals gave their thoughts on what rules could help with freshwater management. One respondent said *"perhaps a more holistic approach rather than just focusing on farming. PC1 should not be a good starting point as it has been going on for over a decade, has fundamental flaws in it, the Council is relying on data that was done back in the early 2000s and is also relying on other appellants to do their job for them. Perhaps the Council should look at getting itself sorted out as well as having up to date data that isn't model-based. This would be a better foundation from which to build a freshwater policy review from".* Another participant expressed disagreement with the examples provided by WRC. One other respondent recommended that pond-drop tests need to be maintained. It was believed that the rules already in place regarding fencing and effluent ponds on farms haven't had enough time to create an impact – but they will. There was comment that farm plans and industry standard reports do not recognise modern fertiliser and better methods of application and the need to consider farming practices which will have a big impact while limitations should be placed on run-off.

West Coast

The respondent called for recognition of the work farmers have done to exclude stock, and acknowledgement that farming is not the only issue.

Hauraki

Six participants gave their thoughts on better freshwater management. One respondent stated *"a broad range of actions (including those mentioned above) will likely be needed to ultimately achieve the desired level of improvement. As far as possible these should be outcome based rather than prohibiting specific activities, as this recognises that changes in technology could significantly reduce future contaminant losses. Supportive of the PC1 provisions being used as the basis for future Hauraki FMU provisions. These have been well considered and should be transferrable in most cases".* It was also suggested that, unless a farmer can demonstrate how they will offset/mitigate, intensification should be limited. There was comment that where E. coli is a priority, larger setbacks are reasonable – but this could be difficult in Hauraki. Another stated that *"restricting farmers needs to come alongside water storage and innovation. Farmers need water for drinking and industrial needs. Council currently does not provide for storage or innovation to adapt to climate change".* With regards to land-use intensification, another participant suggested focusing on the outcomes required rather than applying blanket limits to land-use. In reference to stock exclusion, a catchment-by-catchment basis was suggested and prior to spending money, it needed to be clear that it is E. coli from stock.

Concerns were expressed with beaches in urban areas having to be closed due to poor water quality – and needing to invest to improve this. One other made the following comment,*"I think in some instances, land intensification can be managed to minimise or reduce contaminants entering waterways, this needs to be assessed on a case by case basis rather than a blanket rule".* It was felt that the costs associated with providing water for communities was becoming excessive and the RMA rules related to water-take for drinking water needed to be relaxed.

Coromandel

With regards to land-use intensification, the participant suggested focusing on the outcomes required rather than applying blanket limits to land-use. In reference to stock exclusion, a catchment-by-catchment basis was suggested and prior to spending money, it needed to be clear that it is E.coli from stock.

General Feedback

Respondents were given the opportunity to provide any additional feedback regarding freshwater management within the different FMUs and/or the whole Waikato region. No additional feedback was provided for the Taupo and West Coast FMUs.

Waikato-Waipā

One individual stated that they had seen improvements in both riparian plantings and fencing and in upgrades to farm plans. It was pointed out that while farmers have fenced off their drains, cars and trucks are still using roads – so tyres and fuel are still leaving waste on the roads and that ends up in the waterways. Koi carp was identified as a significant pest within the Waikato and needed to be addressed. One commenter noted the need to acknowledge farmers who are *"acting at a significant cost".* Another commented that*, "this is an awesome opportunity to get freshwater management right and fit for purpose. The Council needs to suspend judgments and adopt a neutral approach towards its stakeholders so it can engage fairly and objectively if it wants to gain the information it should have to develop sound and robust policy".*

Hauraki

One participant provided the following comment*, "regulation can be helpful, or ineffective. Let's make sure anything we put in place addresses real issues and makes positive improvement without undue negative impacts on our communities".* Another respondent emphasised the importance of using science to reach goals.

Coromandel

A respondent provided the following comment*, "regulation can be helpful, or ineffective. Let's make sure anything we put in place addresses real issues and makes positive improvement without undue negative impacts on our communities".*

Whole Waikato region

One respondent believed improvements had been made but expressed that *"it would be devastating if we overshoot and kill the economy for that last 20% gain".* There was a suggestion that "*PC1 be used as a template for all other WRC FMUs, acknowledging that there will be tuning required to reflect a range of FMU specific attributes. This will not only save a considerable amount of time and resource, but also help ensure a consistent approach across the Waikato Region. The PC1 approach was robust, and its outcomes well considered".*

8.3 Beef, Lamb and Drystock

Seven people attended the facilitated session with representatives from Beef+Lamb, Deer NZ and Federated Farmers. Also in attendance were farm owners, and an agricultural consultant. Two regional councillors were also in attendance.

Te Mana o te Wai

There were a range of responses and queries regarding feedback on the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai. For clause (1) there were queries as to what 'restored' meant, to what level and what time, clarification on what '*…connections with freshwater are sustained…'* meant and a comment that *"protection of freshwater means Territorial Authorities can't discharge into streams otherwise discharges will need to be managed in other ways".* For clause (1.1) '*that sufficient quality and quantity of freshwater is essential to the health and well-being of ecosystems and people*', there was a suggestion to include 'animals' after 'people'. For clause (1.2) *'that people's relationship with freshwater is inextricably connected with their cultural, social and economic systems',* feedback included *"add[ing] food production specifically in with cultural, social and economic systems"* and to replace 'inextricably connected' with 'ability to provide for'. For clause (1.3) '*the effects of human activities determine the health and well-being of the Region's freshwater bodies and ecosystems',* regarding human activities there was comment that this *"should be equal across all rural/urban"* and to change 'determine' to 'contributes to'. For the clause '*tangata whenua are enabled to participate in policy formulation and decision-making processes relating to freshwater management',* there was a suggestion to change 'participate' to 'engage', another suggestion that *"sectors should have ability to participate in policy formation and decision making"* and to include communities. For the clause, '*there is sufficient water available to provide for the health and well-being of waterbodies, and provided that is achieved, water may be available for human use, provided it is allocated and used efficiently',* there was a suggestion to replace 'may' with 'shall', a comment that this clause needed to reflect economic values and another comment that *"this is repetition of the priorities of TMotW but goes a step further by saying that even if you achieve providing for the health and wellbeing of waterbodies you still only 'may' be available for human use 'provided' it is used efficiently"*. For the clause *'water quality and quantity targets are established and respected, to reflect the cultural, spiritual and ecological values of freshwater as understood by tangata whenua and the community'*, there were queries regarding how quantity would be determined, and how spiritual water quality targets differ

from ecological targets. Other general feedback included references to the hierarchy of obligations, for example, *"very hard to practically prioritise", "no strict hierarchy is possible in TMotW", "if hierarchy - putting environment to the top means all economic activity is at risk of being restricted"* and *"can't be a strict hierarchy - would mean nothing could/would happen".*

Long-term vision

There were a couple of comments that the draft long-term visions should be the same for all FMUs and that there was inconsistent wording.

Upper Waikato

Feedback on the draft long-term vision for Upper Waikato included feedback on clause (i) *'water is allowed to be itself, in its common, ordinary or normal state, flowing naturally, and through our everyday lives'*, with views that it was unclear and can't be measured and suggestions to delete this clause.

Middle Waikato

Feedback on the draft long-term vision for Middle Waikato included consideration of costs and economic viability, the view that *"urban people must be implicated in payments, not just the farm owner",* and clarification on timeframes i.e. Vision and Strategy needs to be done within 80 years whereas the timeframes for other clauses for the long-term vision for Middle Waikato is by 2074.

Waipā

Feedback on the draft long-term vision for Waipā was provided on a range of clauses. For clause (b) *'…bringing the waterbodies back to as close as possible to their state [100 years ago]*', reference to a state '100 years' ago was viewed as not measurable and one suggestion to replace 'possible' with 'practical'. For clause (d) *'fisheries and freshwater habitats that are degraded are rehabilitated and restored, and where they are not degraded they are protected*', there was feedback that all fisheries and freshwater habitats should be protected no matter if degraded or not to prevent further degradation while one other disagreed with this clause. Feedback was provided for clause (e), *'ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu, taonga and customary rights are protected from adverse effects and inappropriate use, and wai supports traditional practices, mahinga kai, birthing and education in order to sustain cultural, spiritual, and social and kaitiaki needs'.* Comments for clause (e) included that this clause was inconsistent with other FMUs, *"cultural practices may be a better term"* to use and this clause would affect landowners' ownership rights. There was one who disagreed with the inclusion of clause (f) *'The community and tangata whenua take collective responsibility…'.*

In regard to the question about ambitious and reasonable timeframes there were suggestions to align dates with PC1, *"…have timeframes leading into objectives, by xx we want to have achieved yy",* have consistency across all FMUs in regard to timeframes, and the view that 2044 was unachievable though there was also a view that *"Waipā has a tighter timeframe for far more stringent requirements. Timeframes can be challenged and are open for conversation. The sector agreed that things needed to occur within 10 years*". Other feedback requested inclusion of economic values in long-term visions for all FMUs.

West Coast

Feedback on the draft long-term vision for the West Coast was provided on a range of clauses. For clause (a) '*the health, well-being and mauri of all waterbodies and their biodiversity is protected and if necessary, restored for present and future generations to sustain cultural, spiritual, social, economic and kaitiaki needs'*, it was suggested to replace 'necessary' with 'possible', and a query as to why the draft long-term vision for Hauraki did not make reference

to or include 'economic' as this clause did. For clause (c) *'ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu, taonga and customary rights are protected…*', there was a view that this clause was too broad and not water related. For clause (g) '*waterways are maintained, and the life sustaining ecosystems and habitat for freshwater flora and fauna have been safeguarded by 2050',* clarity was sought on what 'life sustaining ecosystems' meant, why it was special to this FMU and inconsistency between this clause and clause (h) *'by 2034, waterways are clean…'* regarding timeframes. Other comments for clause (h) included "ambitious but not reasonable", clarity on what is meant by 'clean', "predator objective says by 2034 when there is a predator free 2050" while there was a view to remove clause (h). Other feedback for the draft long-term vision for the West Coast included *"consistency across FMUs where possible but accept variations where valid", "need to ensure there is information about discharges vision and limits and rules"* and to align dates.

Hauraki

Feedback regarding the draft long-term vision for Hauraki was provided. For clause (a) there were queries on what 'restored' meant and to what level. There was also a query as to why clause (a) did not make reference to or include 'economic' as the West Coast draft long-term vision did for their clause (a) '*the health, well-being and mauri of all waterbodies and their biodiversity is protected and if necessary, restored for present and future generations to sustain cultural, spiritual, social, economic and kaitiaki needs'*. For clause (b) *'the community collectively takes action and sustainable land management supports ecosystem health, freshwater values and the achievement of clauses a) and e)'*, there was feedback regarding 'community collectively' and 'sustainable land management - that is landowner specific' and one suggestion to instead include, *"land is managed to support…".* There was a query regarding the term 'holistic' in clause (c) and for clause (d) "…*provide for a range of values and uses, including drinking, swimming, mahinga kai and other traditional…",* there was a suggestion to add 'but not limited to' after 'including'. For clause (f) '*fisheries and freshwater habitats, riparian margins and natural inland wetlands that are degraded are rehabilitated and restored, and where they are not degraded they are protected',* there was comment to add *"where they are not degraded they are <u>maintained</u>",* clarity between this clause and clause (h) regarding an increase in natural inland wetlands and restoration of tuna populations, and a comment that *"fish to be restored is a separate issue".* For clause (i) *'public access to waterways is improved'*, there was a view that *"this would have huge implications for privately owned farmland".* For clause (j) *'riparian planting of waterways with appropriate types of vegetation is achieved by 2034 with re-forestation of appropriate areas within catchments by 2074',* there was feedback that by 2034 was not practical or achievable.

Other general feedback regarding the draft long-term vision for Hauraki included concerns for economic viability across all catchments.

Environmental outcomes and target states

A range of feedback on the draft environmental outcomes was provided for the Waikato region. For clause (a) Ecosystem health, (a3) Habitat and (a4) Aquatic life, comments included focusing on indigenous species and removing trout habitat protection, a query regarding 'to what extent' *to 'increase in the extent and quality of the FMUs wetlands'*, and query on how to control water flow with regard to clause (a) Ecosystem health, (a2) Water quantity. For clause (a) Ecosystem health, (a1) Water quality, it was suggested to *"make it clear that surface water and ground water quality is maintained or, where degraded, improved".* For clause (b) Human contact, the feedback was that *"quantity is often out of our control"*. For clause (d) Mahinga kai, clarity was sought for 'extent desired' in regard to '…*customary resources are available for use, customary practices are able to be exercised to the extent desired…*'. For clause (g) Animal drinking water, there was a view that this should read *"… including whether it is safe for consumption (remove the word palatable)"*. For clause (j) Fishing, there was a view

that *"abundant fish numbers is a result of fishing pressure not just water quality",* while one other commented, *"creating freshwater habitat for fish numbers to increase (not about fish numbers)"*. For clause (k) Irrigation, Cultivation and production of food and beverages, there was a comment that these were two separate matters, another commented that *"irrigation is not tied to a sector but to water quality and quantity. It is the wording which has been pitched differently. It should be tied to water use"* and another comment that *"agriculture shall be provided for like commercial and industrial activities in (m). Agriculture is more than just those activities irrigate and not recognised in these environmental outcomes".* For clause (m) Commercial and industrial use, there was a comment to include farming. There was a suggestion to include a new *"clause (n) Food production. Food production is maintained".*

Feedback was provided on potential principles for setting target attribute states. Feedback covered various topic areas including a focus on improvement generally, economic costs, timeframes, science and movement of bands. In regard to a focus on improvement generally there were similar comments such as, *"get improvement, don't wait. If numbers are dependent upon anything happening nothing will happen. Once changes begin to occur, they will continue to snowball"* and *"we just need to get started and get improvement. Should we be focused on this and not on regulation which takes too much time".* In regard to economic costs, examples of comments included *"without economics a decision cannot be made", "costs are not only environmental costs. If nothing is done what is the cost to that water body and the environment overall",* and *"costings need to be taken into account when setting up targets for improvement"*. In reference to timeframes comments included *"there is nowhere else in the document where 80 years is mentioned, all others sit at 2034, 2054"* and a query *"are the suggested timeframes achievable across the entire region"*? In regard to science, comments included *"what is the science telling us is achievable - lineal - current - flattening. 10% in 10 years is not how the environment works"* and *"interim targets, require scientific measurements to understand how big the "jump/change" that is needed".* There was a range of feedback and queries regarding the movement of bands. There was a suggestion for a long-term target *"no streams below D and to improve each site"*, another suggested focusing investment in the lower bands and another commented *"principles of 10% improvement or close the gap between baseline state and target by 20% of the difference for all target attributes may not be appropriate for all target attributes e.g., 'A' Band or 'B' Band if the community wants to invest/prioritise in e.g., 'D' Band".* Other comments noted how water quality *"at the start of a water body was better off to reach up a band in comparison with those at the end of a water body where water is poorer in quality", "some natural contaminants cannot be changed as they occur naturally (e.g., arsenic in lakes at Rotorua due to geothermal activity, native bush - contaminants due to animals and birdlife). Farms can limit contaminants"* and a query to *"look at MCI - is that the best attribute to nail a number of other attributes? Should we focus here"?*

Limits and rules

Waikato-Waipā

Feedback about the types of rules and limits for Waikato-Waipā included aligning farm plan requirements with PC1 so as not to produce two farm plans instead of one, and including the management of discharges in Waikato-Waipā.

West Coast

Feedback about the types of rules and limits for the West Coast included comments about sediment loss and managing soil on land with a view it wasn't linked to intensification, "*it is about managing soil on land not about intensification. Better land management is required*". There was feedback to apply minimum national standards, stock exclusion, off-stream water storage "*setting up situations for farms to use excess water during dry periods so stock can still drink. Not for irrigation. A resilience protection set up*", and "*linkage to earthworks rules to*

enable some small off-stream water storage". Other comments regarding rules and limits for the West Coast included "*wouldn't want to see PC1 provisions in West Coast*" and "*hydro electricity needs for West Coast*".

Hauraki

Feedback about the types of rules and limits for Hauraki was mainly about land use intensification restrictions. There was a view that intensification should not be linked to contaminants, *"a blanket 'no intensification' should not be linked to contaminants", "restricting intensification may impede ability of farmers to raise cash to invest in mitigations".* There was also a view of understanding the link between intensification and contaminants, *"historically linkage between intensification and contamination have been proven".* There was the suggestion to have stronger wording for managing discharges, *"managing discharges needs to be strong worded - at the moment it looks like continue to do existing. We need step-change to be signalled here. Seems too soft*" and *"…limit further farming intensification and managing discharging should reflect each other"*. Other feedback included, *"off-stream water storage… (does not mean damming"), "upgrades to improve existing system to move toward best practice", "stock exclusion",* that *"costs should be borne by everyone"* and the view that *"everybody, both urban and rural should perform best practices for quality of water".*

General feedback

General feedback overall was provided that covered various topic areas including timeframes, target states and views on the Regional Policy Statement. Comments regarding timeframes included having consistent timing across the region, an 80-year timeframe for all objectives and suggestion to *"put timeframes [within the] vision, by xx we will…".* Feedback on target states included having information about economic costs before *"agree[ment] with moving all attributes up a band"* and going with minimum standards. Feedback regarding the Regional Policy Statement (RPS) included, *"RPS needs to have an adaptive management objective/policy framework to allow future plan changes to be adjusted as new information and implications of previous plan changes come to light".* Other comments of general feedback included *"economic viability across the region",* and *"include improvement in stormwater and wastewater".*

8.4 Beef and Lamb sector survey feedback

A total of 13 participants indicated that they represented the 'Beef and Lamb' sector. Of those 13, two also selected the 'Dairy' option, one respondent chose the 'Forestry' as well, another picked 'Horticulture', and one participant selected both 'Dairy' and 'Horticulture' in addition to 'Beef and Lamb'.

Te Mana o te Wai

Respondents were presented with the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai and asked to provide their thoughts on the wording. While some references to specific clauses were made, most of the feedback from the eleven participants discussed the objective in a more general sense.

It was felt that although Te Mana o te Wai is grounded in a Māori worldview, it provides values to all people within New Zealand. There was comment that *"ecosystem health provides the bottom-line metrics, some are very tangible others less so. The metrics however must be well considered and appreciated by all stakeholders and that the thresholds or limits are not unrealistically over the top in quest of pristine outcomes".* There was the view that productive/profitable use of a natural resource will leave some kind of environmental footprint. There was also comment that metrics cannot be rigidly established and instead, a

threshold should be applied with flexibility relative to the time of year (seasonality). Another participant stated the need to be both financially and environmentally sustainable. The phrase *"Water is life"* was used, and to look after this commodity for current and future generations with one individual suggesting using incentives to create more wetlands. There were concerns with elements that were viewed as intangible – for example, cultural and spiritual values – making it difficult to give effect to the objective. The respondent explained that *"there needs to be an even playing field for all water users".* One respondent said they agreed with all of the clauses within the draft objective while another stated that *"in appearance it reads well and makes sense".* Another expressed agreement with clause (1) and its three subclauses. In reference to the clause *'there is sufficient water available'*, there was comment that WRC needs to adopt a better water allocation system than 'first in, first served.' Another expressed concern with the use of the word 'may' in the clause *'may be available for human use'*. One commenter expressed agreement with the clause regarding *'water quality and water quantity targets',* while another felt that this clause could incorporate aspects of the clause regarding *'tangata whenua are enabled to participate…'*. There was also agreement with the latter clause, but on the condition that there is hapū level consultation.

Long-term vision

Participants were asked which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on for the topic of long-term visions. For each area, they were given a draft objective outlining the long-term vision and then given the opportunity to provide their feedback about the wording of the vision.

Taupō

Three respondents provided feedback on the long-term vision for Taupo. One person expressed their agreement with the entire long-term vision. In contrast, another respondent said that the current long-term vision is too high level. It was felt that Taupō is iconic and cannot be allowed to deteriorate. The respondent shared their view that two of the biggest pressures are human population waste - sewage and landfill(s). There was comment that this project was recreating the Lake Taupō project and perhaps this should fall under their jurisdiction. When asked if the given timeframes were ambitious and reasonable, one person said 'Yes', another picked 'No', and the third said they were 'Unsure.' The person who agreed with the timeframes commented that if this cannot be accomplished within the 10-year term there was risk of further degradation of the water supply however, 10 years was too short and likely to fail. Another made the comment, *"the ones who want to take up the challenge will do so from the outset leading by example not only in this space but also in biodiversity, riparian and indigenous planting plus other sectors like pest management - all these things have an accumulative effect and become part of a circular economy around water".* The respondent who said 'No' stated that until there is correct information about the pre-existing state and the future goal, this question cannot be answered. The 'Unsure' respondent expressed concerns about the financial costs of funding the project.

Upper Waikato

Six respondents gave their thoughts on the Upper Waikato long-term vision.While one participant expressed that they agreed with all the clauses included in the long-term vision, another commenter felt a "*basic all encompassing statement"* should be made to encourage engagement. One respondent believed that the recent geothermal electricity generators could result in unintended consequences. They also expressed that recent land-use changes and intensification have created significant issues with increasing externalised contaminant loss – particularly, load-to-come. Another recommended to include incentives to encourage landowners to be more involved. It was suggested to consider wastewater from sewage ponds

and the hormones and pharmaceuticals that this contains. Clause (i) was seen as 'unrealistic' and it was suggested that this will create conflict.

When participants were asked if they thought the given timeframes were reasonable and ambitious, two said 'Yes', three indicated 'No', and one expressed that they were 'Unsure.' One of the respondents who said 'Yes' believed that a shorter timeframe would not be achievable, but 20 years allowed for budgeting restrictions, planting opportunities, and availability/growth of the product. Another simply stated that a starting point was required. Of those who disagreed with the timeframes, one participant commented that there were too many unknowns. Another participant commented that there was not a full understanding of the task being undertaken. The third respondent emphasised the importance of 'little by little' and assistance via government initiatives and tax incentives. The individual who said they were uncertain stated that there was a lot to be done, there was a lack of resourcing at the council, and that the council places its obligations onto stakeholders which is not appropriate.

Middle Waikato

Five participants expressed their opinions on the long-term vision for the Middle Waikato. One individual commented that the vision needed "*more substance.*" Another pointed out that the term 'long' has the potential to be interpreted in a variety of ways. It was stated that there is no certainty about the states of attributes 100 years ago and there needs to be more clarity about the 'bigger picture.' The respondent stated that attempting to have no decline in water quality in 10 years was not feasible – especially when the FMU is downstream and therefore receives everything from upstream. In contrast, another participant said that improvements can and need to be made now. One other individual stated that *"to return the land and or rivers to how they were meant to be, no one should have any issues with this"* and thought it would be "*amazing*" to have clear rivers and to see their bottoms, and to swim in these areas. With regards to clause (b), participants were asked what state water quality should be returned to. It was felt that the bottom-lines within the NPS-FM were already challenging enough for this FMU – so should be the target state. Another respondent believed that *"freshwater needs to be returned to the highest quality we can get it to - this may mean that it doesn't get back to the quality that existed pre-settlement"* A participant commented, *"as fresh and clear as possible for all to enjoy and for our ecosystem to thrive and flourish".* One individual simply stated "*clean*." Another commented that this question cannot be answered unless it's known what and how targets will be achieved.

When asked if the given timeframes are ambitious and reasonable, four of the respondents said 'No' while a fifth individual indicated that they were 'Unsure.' The uncertain person explained that it feels as if there is too much to get done and we do not possess a firm foundation to base it on. For those who disagreed with the timeframes stated, one suggested that 10 to 20 years would be a more suitable timeframe. Another respondent who said 'No' stated that there is no understanding of the task at hand. One other participant said 'No' due to a lack of interim steps, and the belief that the vision was "*simply unachievable*." It was stated that overly ambitious targets will discourage community ownership and engagement. Another explained that the timeframes were not ambitious and suggested working towards goals '*little by little*' by doing our own part and with government initiatives and incentives.

Lower Waikato

Four participants provided feedback on the long-term vision for the Lower Waikato. One respondent described the vision as "*fantastic*". Another said that while the long-term vision is "*admirable*", it was very aspirational. The same participant was uncertain if 10-year timeframes were realistic or achievable. Another individual believed that it is important to acknowledge the good work that has already been undertaken. It was stated that there is no certainty about the states of attributes 100 years ago and to have more clarity about the

'bigger picture.' The respondent commented that attempting to have no decline in water quality in 10 years was not feasible – especially when the Lower Waikato is downstream and therefore receives everything from upstream. In reference to clause (b), participants were asked what state to aim for to return water quality to. For the Lower Waikato, it was felt that the bottom-lines within the NPS-FM were already challenging enough – so they should be the target state. In contrast, another respondent said that *"freshwater needs to be returned to the highest quality we can get it to - this may mean that it doesn't get back to the quality that existed pre-settlement".* One other suggested that it would be advantageous for current and future generations to have water quality of 100 years ago.

When asked if they thought the timeframes were reasonable and ambitious, one respondent said 'Yes' while three responded 'No.' The individual who agreed with the timeframes explained that it is important to get the entire community '*on board*.' One of the respondents who said 'No' commented that there was a lack of interim steps, and the vision was "*simply unachievable*" and believed that overly ambitious targets will discourage community ownership and engagement. Another 'No' participant stated that a decade is not doable given that this project will require the cooperation of several sectors and stakeholders, along with the fact that it takes time for water quality to change. It was recommended that WRC stop relying on '*in-house modelling*' and instead physically collect and analyse samples from the field to ensure policies are based on '*real life data*.' The final respondent who did not agree with the timeframes explained that the timeframes could be reasonable if *"we all start doing a little bit in our own backyard now, fencing off streams and other catchment areas",* however, this will be financially difficult for those who have large areas to fence off. Given that this is a government initiative, it was suggested that some financial help or tax incentives may help to ease the load on some people.

Waipā

Four respondents gave feedback on the Waipa long-term vision. There was the view that the vision lacked knowledge about the sub-catchments and risks to achieving targets. There was also comment that *"there is no reference about what an integrated vision of success looks like whereby the landscape could be a mosaic of diverse and different land use having good fit limiting the breach of bottom lines".* For clause (c), it was suggested to prioritise scientifically backed decision-making processes. In reference to clause (b), participants were asked what state water quality should be returned to. One individual believed that the standard should be the bottom-lines incorporated into the NPS-FM. In comparison, another recommended that water should be clean, chemical free, and lacking in fertiliser, and this needed to happen as soon as possible. One other respondent felt that waterways should be safe to recreate in and gather food from. The participant also expressed an interest in knowing exactly what the water quality was 100 years ago since agriculture was '*in full swing*' by the 1920s and water degradation had likely already begun.

All four respondents said 'No' when asked if the given timeframes were ambitious and reasonable. One person explained that given what it will take to achieve the goals within a single generation, they thought the timeframe is *"extremely optimistic."* Similarly, another individual believed, based on past experience, that it seems to take a long time for change to take place in Waikato. The individual emphasised the importance of acting now; in particular, stopping drainage and ceasing damage to wetlands. One commenter proposed that WRC does not possess the necessary knowledge to undertake the task given. The final participant noted, *"a timeframe needs to be tested against current state and change required. Until this is quantified a reasonable timeframe cannot be discussed".*

West Coast

Three participants expressed their thoughts on the West Coast long-term vision. One respondent expressed their agreement with all the clauses within the vision. In comparison, another individual saw the visions as being overly aspirational. There was comment that the geographical context is unknown and certain concepts require definition/clarification – for example 'public access to waterways' and 'safe habitat for all wetland birds free of predators.' One other participant recommended not waiting 80 years to act. For removing predators, it was advised against using 1080 as it would enter waterways and instead use other means of trapping.

When asked if the given timeframes were ambitious and reasonable, one participant said 'Yes' while two others said 'No.' The individual who felt the timeframes were appropriate explained that "*dairy farmers prefer inland*". One of those who said 'No' stated that until there is information about the pre-existing state and the future goal, this question cannot be answered. The other participant who said 'No' said that the timeframes will depend predominately on the Freshwater Policy Review.

Hauraki

When asked to provide their feedback on the wording of the Hauraki long-term vision, the respondent stated that more research is required to establish the existing state. A respondent made the comment, *"where does breach of limits already occur, where is the modelling to identify future breach given various options business-as-usual and/or staged reduction"* and suggested that WRC should be examining 'what-if scenarios.' In reference to clause (g), the participant stated "*water quality should by and large consider the time of year to be swimmable and allow mahinga kai. Plus there is a component of biodiversity that needs restoration. Noting however some attributes may never be attainable because of natural features".* It was also suggested that there needs to be management of anthropogenic externalised contaminant loss and work towards reducing nitrogen, phosphorus, and pathogens.

When asked if they thought the timeframes were ambitious and reasonable, the respondent said 'No.' They commented that until there is information about the pre-existing state and the future goal, this question cannot be answered.

Coromandel

No feedback was provided regarding the wording of the Coromandel long-term vision. When asked if the given timeframes were reasonable and ambitious, a respondent said 'No' stating that WRC needs to be prepared for bumps in the road that will hinder progress. It was shared that a key part of achieving these objectives will be community and stakeholder engagement. There was a comment that the current long-term vision did not appear to understand the interconnectivity of land-use and that it is important to understand all the actions that will be required to achieve the objectives. Furthermore, there was a view that WRC needed to acknowledge the differences within the individual FMUs such as the problems unique to Coromandel, e.g., "*being heavily influenced by holiday / tourism people greatly outnumbering local community will have serious issues arising from built infrastructure, provision of high peak demand potable water, landfill waste, and sewage disposal*". It was suggested that the timeframes be re-examined for the vision and that "*better identification is required [regarding] existing state vs bottom lines and where breach is or likely to occur*".

Environmental outcomes

Participants were asked which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on the topic of environmental outcomes. For each area, they were presented with a list of possible outcomes.

When they clicked on an outcome, the draft objective was shown, and they were provided with the opportunity to leave comments.

Taupō

Ecosystem health

The participant who reviewed this outcome stated they agreed with what was described.

Threatened species

The participant who reviewed this outcome stated they agreed with what was described.

Mahinga kai

The participant who reviewed this outcome stated they agreed with what was described.

Animal drinking water

The participant who reviewed this outcome stated they agreed with what was described.

Fishing

The participant who reviewed this outcome stated they agreed with what was described.

Irrigation, cultivation and production of food and beverages

The participant who reviewed this outcome stated they completely agreed with what was described.

Hydro-electric power generation

The respondent who read this outcome noted that since the water is not allowed to move, it becomes stagnant, and sediment builds up. Water being backed up can lead to other lands being flooded.

Waikato-Waipā

Ecosystem health

One respondent stated action was too slow in fixing this issue. Another said anthropogenic usages of natural resources has caused the degradational impact. The following suggestions were made: land-use at paddock scale (on every farm) needs to be better managed; externalised contaminant loss must be managed directly at the source, polluters must pay, and *"there can be no grandparenting or seeking offset from others*". There was comment that it was important that farmers be made to fence off their streams and any other areas that lead into streams or water surfaces. Another stated that *"seeing the river and all its bodies returned to a former healthier state would be an outcome for all to benefit from".* In reference to clause (b), there was comment that fertiliser leaching into ground water is an issue that requires further research. In addition, for clause (c) it was suggested to not just focus on trout and salmon, all relevant species must be included and that waterfowl are equally important.

Human contact

The participant who reviewed this outcome reasoned that water must be of high quality if it is safe to swim in.

Threatened species

One participant stated action was too slow in fixing this issue. Another questioned if this clause only included animals that are classified as 'threatened species' or if plants are included. Another respondent believed that fresher waters and habitat restoration is beneficial for all that live in, on, and by the water.

Mahinga kai

One participant stated action was too slow in fixing this issue. Another commented that although environmental attributes may be in a good state, this still may not enable a plentiful enough population of desired species. A third respondent said *"this should be a part of a greater food harvest clause - not just customary harvest but about general waterway health for all users looking to harvest food".*

Natural form and character

There was comment that returning areas to a natural state could help with surface flooding and allow water to follow its original path.

Drinking water supply

There was comment that water for Waikato consumption is important and should be prioritised over other cities (e.g., Auckland). Another participant described this outcome as "*ambitious but great"*. One other respondent noted that it would be "*amazing*" to be able to drink from our river and to know that pets and children are safe to swim in the water (without fear of infection).

Animal drinking water

One participant stated action was too slow in fixing this issue. Another individual commented that this must be maintained and secured. Similarly, another participant stated that this was a "*good outcome which must be achieved*".

Wai tapu

The following comment was made, *"the cultural, spiritual and historic relationship between Māori and the waters should be at the front of all. At the same time this needs to be implemented by all, the only way we can move forward in a positive proactive cause is to move as one. One with the interest of all waters at the forefront".*

Transport and Tauranga waka

The following comment was made, *"with the river offering so much for all water sports from rowing, waka ama, ski races and general public this all needs to be addressed with the quality of the water and strict guidelines to be followed and/ or policed to make sure that the quality of our water stays at the forefront while still offering the above sports. For now and for future generations for all to enjoy".*

Fishing

One participant stated action was too slow in fixing this issue. Another participant believed that trout should not be prioritised over indigenous species. Another stated that the described outcome was "*great*" but that it should also include waterfowl harvest. One participant commented that fishing should not be allowed in the river,*"we are trying to improve the quality not take away from it, that being said, pest fish (such as koi carp) need to have their numbers reduced".*

Irrigation, cultivation, and production of food and beverages

One participant stated action was too slow in fixing this issue. Another individual stated that they supported the outcome *"but the Council will need to ensure continued access to water for these activities. Significant amounts of money have been and is being spent on the required infrastructure for these activities and there needs to be some form of certainty that water as a resource can continue to be accessed".* A third respondent said the draft outcome was "*great*".

Hydro-electric power generation

One participant expressed their agreement with this environmental outcome; whereas another commented that although renewable energy/electricity must be maintained, to also acknowledge the degradational impact due to impoundment by dams and recognising the cost to other sectors.

Commercial and industrial uses

One participant stated action was too slow in fixing this issue. One other participant was concerned about the use of heavy metals, temperature, toxicity, and discolouration, and another stated that no pollutants from any industry should be released into the river.

West Coast

Ecosystem health

It was suggested that clause (3) state that various species of fish (tuna, kōkopu, piharau, kāeo, etc.) are protected as well as wetland birds, and their numbers increased.

Threatened species

The participant who reviewed this outcome stated they agreed with what was described.

Natural form and character
The participant who reviewed this outcome stated they agreed with what was described.

Drinking water supply
The participant who reviewed this outcome stated they agreed with what was described.

Hauraki
No feedback was provided for the environmental outcomes for this FMU.

Coromandel
Ecosystem health
The respondent who reviewed this outcome agreed that there is a need for improvement. They commented that only anthropogenic effects can be managed, and that land-use change has occurred post-human settlement. The participant added that trout fishers can sometimes conflict with indigenous species.

Fishing
There was comment that even if all attributes that support fish populations are in a good state, there can be no guarantee of fish numbers.

Hydro-electric power generation and Commercial and industrial use
When asked if the outcomes of 'Hydro-electric power generation' and 'Commercial and industrial use' were applicable to the Coromandel FMU, the respondent stated that limits should always be placed on heavy metal contaminant loss.

Target states
Participants were provided with some examples of potential principles that could be applied when setting target attribute states and were then asked to give their feedback on potential principles. Nine individuals expressed their thoughts.

- One participant believed that these principles were 'slow.'
- Another respondent felt that 10% improvements would be challenging enough (without asking for more).
- There was a view that the overall approach should be to improve and move as quickly as possible.
- One individual agreed with the example principles provided while another said they were 'great.'
- It was stated that a respondent did not understand what the different 'Bands' were.
- Another participant stated that the principles used needed to be 'realistic, achievable and supported by the primary sector.'
- It was said the principles provided were great in theory; but better examples should be provided.
- One individual commented that these principles seem 'too long' – suggesting they want to see action/change sooner.

Respondents were then asked how they might explain these principles to farmers or other primary sector representatives.Nine participants provided feedback.

- One said they would encourage farmers to test their water.
- There was comment that the current state of freshwater needed to be better understood, articulated well; and certainty regarding target states so that the direction and pace of travel to reach these can be mapped out. There was also comment that farmers take individual responsibility (polluters pay), and attributes should be set at the 'right' level (which cannot be pristine). To support this, there was a view that there needed to be real-time monitoring that was transparent.

- There was comment that 'this stuff is a no-brainer' and if farmers fail to see the bigger picture, they should reconsider being in their industry.
- One individual recommended that hard copies be provided as this is the preferred method of reading for some individuals in which they can take notes, access the necessary information in a format that they can use and come back to at any time.
- It was suggested to keep the explanation straight forward and easy to understand as possible and that consistent application by the council is important.
- There was comment that changes do not need to happen overnight, but it does need to happen sooner rather than later – should attempt to do them 'bit by bit, year by year.' There was a view that people should be put in front of profits and consider what's being left behind for future generations to clean up.

Activities and actions

Respondents were asked which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on for the topic of activities and actions. For each area, they were given a high-level summary of the state of freshwater within that FMU and were then questioned on their thoughts regarding the freshwater within that same area. No feedback was given for this topic for the Hauraki FMU.

Taupō

Two respondents expressed their thoughts on the state of freshwater within Taupo. One individual explained that they farm on the shores of Lake Taupō and work under a nitrogen cap. They recognised that farming activities can influence water quality as it flows through the farm and out to the lake.

When asked what the Freshwater Policy Review should focus on to accelerate positive change, two individuals gave answers. One participant recommended shading waterways while another noted that the *"implementation of Fresh Water Farm Plans with effect from July 2024 will certainly assist in ensuring water quality is maintained".*

Waikato-Waipā

Eight participants provided their thoughts on the state of freshwater within Waikato-Waipa. One individual agreed with the description provided of the Waikato-Waipā FMU. One respondent simply said that freshwater *"should improve",* and another expressed that it was *"very sad"* that lakes cannot be swum in or have water taken from them. One respondent stated the need to recognise that there are multiple causes for the current state of freshwater. In terms of causes, another respondent described freshwater as *"generally poor and not enough pressure has been put on adjacent title holders for regulating negative impacts"* (for example, erosion, stock in waterways, and nutrient loads). In a similar vein, another participant stated that *"the current state has occurred because of poor management that has failed to establish limits on land use change and intensification".* There was a view that rectifying this situation will not occur overnight and that a transitional pathway was needed to be map out interim step changes supported and encouraged by incentives. There was comment that early adopters or those with low environmental footprints should not be penalised and that the bottom lines needed to be supported by clear, irrefutable, peer-reviewed science. An individual noted that their neighboring lands and streams contain a large amount of silt coming from gardens affecting water quality and life. Another participant commented that too much fertiliser was going into the river.

Respondents were then asked what the Freshwater Policy Review should focus on to accelerate positive change. Seven individuals provided feedback. One stated, *"I think it needs to focus on all factors that are causing this. But what is the greatest one that is stopping plants and other animals that would flourish in these areas that are nature's cleaners".* As examples

of these different causes, participants suggested banning water-soluble phosphate fertilisers; stop pollution from town and farms; reduce run-off from fertiliser; and focus on how large polluters are managed. It was also recommended to target nutrient loadings and classify land into 'risk categories' that are based on soil type/hydrology and catchments. There was recognition that sections of land shouldn't be used agriculturally due to the negative impacts. One participant proposed several ideas, including:

- *Identify what the vision of success looks like*
- *More frequent engagement with key stakeholders (without secrecy or hidden agenda)*
- *Identify at landscape scale success is a mosaic of different and diverse land use that does not breach ecosystem health limits whilst supporting progressive and resilient rural community*
- *Identify current state in every subcatchment, more real-time monitoring*
- *Better mapping using LiDAR or similar to enable LUC paddock scale mapping and identify low slope*
- *Better land use information - who does what where and level of intensification*
- *Understand risk of different land use externalised contaminant loss*
- *Better understanding about attenuation*
- *Reintroduce Overseer or similar to manage nutrient flow and set limits*
- *No blanket one-size-fits-all rules*
- *Support farmer catchment groups*
- *No grandparenting or picking land use winners*
- *Support land use change of truly marginal lands with incentives (steep erodible lands → afforestation, manuka honey etc and poorly drained pasture → rewetting*
- *Ensure there is certainty to encourage investment for change*

West Coast

The participant recommended fencing off all waterways, planting wide margins, and shifting (away) from meat production. When asked what the Freshwater Policy Review should focus on to accelerate positive change, the same individual emphasised the importance of education.

Coromandel

When asked on their thoughts regarding the current state of freshwater within the Coromandel FMU, the participant stated that *"native areas can erode".*

How costs should be borne

Respondents were asked what they would like to say in principle at this stage about how the costs should be borne and ten expressed their thoughts.

- One comment was *"user pays".*
- It was suggested that the costs must be identified in a transparent manner. While some costs should be borne by everyone (shared), others should be paid by polluters which needs to be determined. Another commented that *"high costs of change will inform pace of transitional change via policy settings".*
- One individual commented, *"more interest…in the various means and methods to monetise the indigenous sequestration, the biodiversity and generating credits from this activity and then there is the voluntary carbon market. These things should mitigate some of the costs…".*
- One other commented, *"sponsors that need nature credits".*

- There was a comment that the costs cannot be borne by one sector – it will take an integrated response and collective responsibility to improve the health of waterways.
- A respondent noted that more onus needs to be put on landowners, but WRC also needs to be more proactive and aggressive to achieve change.
- There was a view that while the environment and water levy from rate payers could be used, a major contributor should be the government.
- Another respondent said that there were two groups who should pay. Firstly, the government as they have allowed pollution to happen; and secondly, towns for the pollution they put into rivers and streams.

Limits and rules

Participants were asked which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on for the topic of potential limits and rules. For each area, they were presented with some examples of limits and rules to manage activities to improve freshwater within that FMU. They were then asked what specific rules and limits they think would help manage freshwater better. No feedback was provided for this topic for the Hauraki FMU.

Taupō

Two participants provided feedback on rules for freshwater management. It was suggested that water harvesting and/or storage would be beneficial and, depending on where the storage is located, could potentially be used for hydro power generation on a very small scale. Another respondent felt that it is important to control power companies.

Waikato-Waipā

Six participants expressed their opinions on rules for freshwater management. One respondent suggested stricter rules with water-takes and their uses. Two recommendations from another participant were: 1) treat all large animals the same regardless of property size; and 2) more thorough management of large (potential) polluters. One individual believed that any change would be beneficial at this stage. In contrast, another respondent recommended aiming higher with the view that it would be great if WRC is able to operate above the nationally stipulated regulations. There was comment that while stock exclusion has been widely adopted, many farmers do not adhere and there should be more stringent guidance on stock exclusion. There was a suggestion for councils to provide rates support/rebate for ecological protection measures as one way of encouraging sound ecological practices. Another respondent proposed the following: *"perhaps a more holistic approach rather than just focusing on farming. PC1 should not be considered a good starting point as it has been going on for over a decade, has fundamental flaws in it, the Council is relying on data that was done back in the early 2000s and is also relying on other appellants to do their job for them. Perhaps the Council should look at getting itself sorted out as well as having up to date data that isn't model based. This would be a better foundation from which to build a freshwater policy review from".* Another respondent provided several recommendations:

- *At the moment it is a dog's breakfast shrouded in secrecy of Environment Court mediation process*
- *Limits should be no more stringent than NPS Freshwater 2020*
- *Imperative to have good sub-catchment plans*
- *Farm Plans should be supported with good guidance*
- *Farm plan certifiers (qualified and with experience) will be thin on the ground so cannot have unrealistic timeframe to deliver*
- *No grandparenting*
- *Undeveloped land needs a pathway to intensify (within limits)*
- *Need to resolve allocation issues i.e., nitrogen loss*

- *Natural Capital approach needs to be embraced*
- *It is about direction of travel and less so about pace of travel*

West Coast
One participant recommended: increased controls, enforced compliance, good management systems and looking for causes beyond farming.

Coromandel
When asked what types of rules they thought could manage freshwater better, the respondent who was interested in this FMU stated that authorities need to familiarise themselves with the knowledge that farmers and growers already possess.

General Feedback

Respondents were given the opportunity to provide any additional feedback regarding freshwater management within the different FMUs and/or the whole Waikato region. No feedback was received for Coromandel, Hauraki, Taupō and West Coast FMUs.

Waikato-Waipā
One participant emphasised the importance of starting as soon as possible. Another stated that *"this is an awesome opportunity to get freshwater management right and fit for purpose. The Council needs to suspend judgments and adopt a neutral approach towards its stakeholders so it can engage fairly and objectively if it wants to gain the information it should have to develop sound and robust policy".* It was noted that both aquatic pests and terrestrial pests exist in proximity to water, and the need to include pest plant management.

Whole Waikato region
There was a suggestion to incorporate an engaging and supportive framework and not set unrealistic targets. One participant stated, "*personally… from [a] farming perspective that if we all started to do a little bit now, in the long run will make the whole approach less daunting…little by little everyone and maybe with tax incentives or financial help with supplying plants to farmers such as us it will make it a bit more feasible for many more".* It was shared that Waikato freshwater is in a terrible state, there is a need to take action and to shorten the time provided to industries/sectors/people to change their ways.

8.5 Horticulture

Five people attended the facilitated session with representatives from Zespri, NZ Kiwifruit Growers Association, Balle Brothers, and A.S Wilcox. Two regional councillors were also in attendance.

Te Mana o te Wai

There were a range of responses and queries regarding the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai. There were suggestions to add another clause for food or vegetable production, *'there should be an objective regarding food production and food security"* and stating that vegetables were different to horticulture, *"vegetables should be in a completely different sector of their own as horticulture is above ground. Vegetables need clean water".* For clause (1) feedback included clarity on the meaning of 'restored', *"what is the baseline for restoration"?* and the meaning of 'a whole of catchment basis' and whether this applied to individual waterways. For clause (1.3) *'the effects of human activities determine the health and well-being of the Region's freshwater bodies and ecosystems',* there was a view that it was *"not exclusively through human activity"*. For the clause *'…water may be available for human use, provided it is allocated and used efficiently",* it was suggested to change 'may' with 'should' or 'shall' be available, a query whether this clause meant charging for water use and to also refer

to productive use not just human use. For the clause regarding *'tangata whenua are enabled…'* there was feedback to standardise referencing community and tangata whenua in this clause and other clauses. Other feedback questioned whether water storage would be addressed and what the timeframes were.

Long-term vision

Waikato-Waipā

General feedback on the draft long-term visions for Waikato-Waipā was provided. Comments included having *"food production and protection of same needs to be front and centre in future documentation", "more holistic considerations required for vege production e.g., riparian planting, water supply, focus on improving good agricultural practices", "prescriptive sub-catchment plans regarding not enabling continued rotation costs begin occurring and causing veges to increase in price… National Planning Framework vege production needs to be allowed for"* and consistency in legislation *"current legislation does not dovetail - NPS Biodiversity riparian margins requires x number of metres of setback whereas other legislation requires greater/lesser setbacks - this is costly to farmers".*

Upper Waikato

Feedback on the draft long-term vision for Upper Waikato was provided. For clause (b) '*…provides for a range of freshwater values including drinkable water*…' clarity was sought *"unclear whether the intention is for all waterbodies to be drinkable and whether this means with or without treatment. If it means all waterbodies without treatment this will be unachievable within the timeframe".* There was a suggestion to include clauses (e), (f) and (j) from Waipā's draft long-term vision and a suggestion to remove clause (i) regarding water flowing naturally.

Middle Waikato

Brief feedback on the draft long-term vision for Middle Waikato included clarity on *"visible - from what distance",* for clause (g) '*rivers are swimmable and the bottom of rivers are visible'*, and a comment for clause (h) *"infers urban areas will share in the costs of the plan".*

Lower Waikato

Feedback on the draft long-term vision for Lower Waikato was provided. For clause (b) there was a query about the state of water quality 100 years ago and the measure of water quality back then. For clause (c) *'ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu, taonga and customary rights are protected…',* there was a query as to whether this was within scope. For clause (g) '*waterways are safe, easier to access, and provide for swimming and drinking water, weed and pest free…*', there was feedback that this applied to surface water but not groundwater.

Waipā

Feedback on the draft long-term vision for Waipā was provided. For clause (b) there was a query about the state of water quality 100 years ago and what benchmark will be used and a comment that it *"seems very ambitious and maybe unachievable by 2044. Would prefer the objective to relate to values rather than a state 100 years ago".* For clause (d) it was suggested to split fisheries and freshwater habitats that are *"degraded, are rehabilitated and restored; or, where they are not degraded, they are protected".* In reference to clause (e) there was comment that all, including mana whenua and landowners, were guardians of the environment.

Hauraki

General feedback on the draft long-term vision for Hauraki was provided. There were suggestions to add *"production of food"* or *"enabling supply of fresh fruit and vegetables"* to the draft long-term vision, *"needs to be a vision to enable supply of fresh fruit and vegetables (consistent with Select Committee report on NBA)", "add a vision re production of food to maintain a healthy population at a reasonable cost*". It was also noted that *"an integrated management plan had already been developed by a number of bodies with answers to long term objectives for Hauraki and North Waikato"*. References to cost and whether the community was "*prepared to pay for rules impacted under this vision*" was mentioned, as well as impact on food production and price and cost to increase wetlands and who would pay. There were queries as to whether this vision applied to groundwater and comments that the vision was too prescriptive, *"don't want to inhibit investment in existing - not just about growth",* and whether *"everything needed to be done - all riparian or prioritised and funded collectively"*. Specific feedback on the draft long-term vision for Hauraki included for clause (a) seeking clarity on what 'restored' meant, and one other commented that 'protect and restore' in this draft long-term vision was better worded than in the draft Te Mana o te Wai objective. There was a query that *"if we were try to protect everything, will we protect anything"?* For clause (d) clarity was sought as to what *'suitable and accessible"* meant and for clause (e) regarding ancestral lands there was comment that this was not water-specific and that it is *"too wide"* in scope.

Environmental outcomes and target states

Feedback on the draft environmental outcomes was provided. The main topic of feedback included the addition of another outcome for Food Production, to be placed after the first four draft environmental outcomes as a way to *"elevate in importance".* There was comment about the importance of domestic food supply that should be recognised, but also the importance of food supply for export. Though the production of food is included in clause (k) Irrigation, cultivation and production of food and beverages, feedback sought to separate food production, *"food production protection for fresh fruit and vegetables", "specific reference to food production outcomes in its own right "i.e., protect food production".* Feedback was also received for clause (j) Fishing, with mentions that *"native fish should be considered, not introduced fish such as trout", "trout is focused on but not insofar as it impacts other attributes - water health", "question the need to protect trout spawning and increase the number of trout in all waterways. Maybe identify the significant waterways where these outcomes are appropriate"*. Comments for clause (l) Hydro-electric power generation, included *"NPS and NES regarding renewable power generation and infrastructures recognise power schemes as being vital assets for the country (i.e., Waikato Scheme, Tongariro, Waitaki, Manapouri). Smaller schemes (e.g., King Country do not have the same importance as the larger schemes do for the country)".* Feedback for clause (m) Commercial and industrial use, *'water quality and quantity can provide for commercial and industrial activities'*, there was a suggestion to replace 'can' with 'must'. Feedback was also received about the effects of pest species including pest fish on water quality particularly in the Lower Waikato, and whether drinking water should be elevated in values *"drinking water higher up in the outcomes - reordering along TMotW lines".*

Feedback on potential principles for setting target attribute states included *"we may not achieve some things but put steps in place to get better over the long term", "interim targets for Hauraki - Upper – Lower"* and queries on whether the targets were achievable.

Limits and rules

Hauraki

Feedback about the types of rules and limits for Hauraki was mainly about intensification. There were comments about defining 'intensification', views that *"intensification doesn't equal*

bad", "…it is how the land is used and managed - about increased contamination not intensification". There was also comment to have *"appropriate land uses enabled on appropriate location[s]", "not growing crops in Hauraki in high leaching times of year"* and *"practices in Pukekohe not replicated in Hauraki as a result of climatic conditions".* There was also a view that *"diversification should be allowed for arable, grazing, vegetable production work well together".* Comments about Commercial Vegetable Production (CVP) were made in respect of *"suitability of land for CVP is narrow", "CVP rotation is critical for sustainability of system"* and *"CVP doesn't mean contaminant loading - can have positive impact".* Other feedback about the types of rules in limits in Hauraki included learning from PC1.

General feedback

General feedback overall was provided that covered various topic areas including vegetable production and fruit growing, prescriptive plans, an integrated approach and other topics. Feedback on vegetable production included *"vegetable growing importance adds value to the region and community", "the importance of the North Waikato vegetable growing area… requires recognition in the plan"* and a query regarding *"vegetable growing vs fruit growing".* There was a view that *"prescriptive plans may have unintended impacts on vegetable growing which supports national vegetable production all year round"* and *"should be recognised in the objectives 'domestic food supply'".* Another, suggested growers to identify practices they *"can do to promote water quality - more integrated approach to how to grow food [which was key]"* and there was mention of an integrated catchment management plan *"re-wording to gain understanding of each other's views"* and *"less focus on vegetable growing areas - getting more into systems and approaches to how things are done"* and *"supporting more positive ways of doing things".* Other general feedback included *"futureproofing/addressing climate change", "who benefits and who pays", "manage… at FMU scale vs sub-catchment", "consents to undertake works"* and *"…certainty to invest in positive works... ",* and *"industry QA [Quality Assurance] programmes, National Industry Standards should be equal to NPS Standards. People don't know what to do and how to invest in the interim - what are the messages"?*

8.6 Pukekohe Vegetable Growers Association (PVGA)

Nine people attended a meeting with the Pukekohe Vegetables Growers Association (PVGA). Eight people had affiliations with the PVGA and one person had affiliations with Horticulture NZ. Four regional councillors were also in attendance.

General feedback

Attendees provided a range of feedback regarding engagement, the importance of vegetable production and moving between FMUs, and getting the policy development right. Comments regarding engagement included better communication, early conversations and involvement throughout the planning process (that may include WRC attendance at PVGA meetings), consideration of vegetable growers' views, and expert-to-expert conversations on technical matters including consideration of vegetable growers and Horticulture NZ research.

The importance of vegetable production and flexibility and movement between FMUs was raised:

> *"There is a need to be able to move between FMUs and recognition that productive areas do shift around – allowance needs to be made for this. Whilst there is some movement and growth in growing in and around the MPDC [Matamata Piako District Council] area this is only seasonal. Is a need to look at extending the Special Vegetable Growing Area (SVGA) area in the Lower Waikato FMU, there is a need for WRC to understand how the SVGA gazetted by the Minister and understand the importance of the ICMP [integrated catchment management plan] that is being worked through.*

Acknowledgement needs to be made that the catchments where PVGA operate in support a larger catchment of population, they are not just feeding the immediate population but that of the entire catchment, unlikely to be similarly experienced elsewhere in the country."

Getting the policy development right throughout the planning process was also emphasised, taking into consideration the industry context, economic modelling to understand the impacts of the proposed policy, and learnings from PC1.

8.7 Horticulture New Zealand

Staff at Horticulture New Zealand (HortNZ) provided feedback in the form of a written submission.

Te Mana o te Wai

In relation to Te Mana o te Wai, HortNZ stated that fruit and vegetables for domestic supply should be a second priority under the Te Mana o te Wai framework, given it relates to the health needs of people. They state that most vegetables and some fruit are produced predominantly for domestic supply, while other foods are produced mainly for export (meat, milk, kiwifruit). Horticulture New Zealand acknowledge that despite this priority, growers will still need to manage their environmental effects through Good Management Practices and operate within freshwater limits.

HortNZ support the Te Mana o te Wai objective, noting clause 1.1 and 1.2 aligns with HortNZ on how Te Mana o te Wai should be applied locally to the Waikato region. However, they suggested the wording of the objective should be aligned with Policy 5 of the NPS-FM. HortNZ recommends replacing 'protected' with 'maintained' in clause 1 of the objective.

HortNZ does not support objective 1.3 as the effects of human activities are not the only determination that affects the health and well-being of freshwater bodies. They note weeds and pest animals, water use, land development, river control works and encroachment, climate change and damage from recreational use can all have an impact to the environment. HortNZ recommends changing the objective to:

A range of activities can determine the health and well- being of the Region's freshwater bodies including human activities.

HortNZ suggest a new objective with an outcome that land and water management practices provide for the health and well- being of water bodies and fresh water ecosystems and improve resilience to the effects of climate change, as per Policy 4 of the NPS-FM.

Long-term vision

HortNZ consider that the long-term visions do not provide sufficient context for food production. Food production should be recognised in each FMU, alongside other freshwater values including irrigation, cultivation, and production of food and beverages. They state that it is impractical for all water to be safe for drinking, and that the wording should be changed to 'sufficient drinking water'.

Lake Taupō

The Lake Taupō long-term vision clause (e) states that by 2034, '*sustainable land and water management practices support the achievement of clause (a) and ensure no new aquatic pest species are introduced*'. It is not clear why the issue of aquatic pests has been bundled into the same vision statement. Horticulture NZ seek clarification on clause (h) of this vision, seek clarity

on limit setting basis, is it based on fish retention? As currently drafted, it is unclear what fisheries and freshwater habitat are to be rehabilitated.

Upper Waikato

The Upper Waikato clause (f) states that by 2044, 's*ustainable land use and management supports ecosystem health and the achievement of clause (a) and (b) while also conserving and protecting the productive capacity of land*'. The respondent supports the vision while noting that the vision should not be about conserving and protecting the productive capacity of land (this is achieved through the NPS-FM) but would be better expressed as a vison that ensured food production is enabled through freshwater management. This vision could be replicated across all FMUs.

Middle Waikato

In the Middle Waikato FMU statement Hort NZ as per the Upper Waikato consider this would be improved with a vision that ensured food production is enabled through freshwater management.

Lower Waikato

In the Lower Waikato long-term vision statement clause (b) refers to improving freshwater back to a state 100 years ago. As with previous comments on relating freshwater quality outcomes to a point in time, HortNZ does not support this approach. They query how the attribute state would be known from 100 years ago. Clause (g) states that *'waterways are safe, easier to access, and provide for swimming and drinking water, weed and pest free and in 10 years there has been no decline in water quality'*. There were queries as to what 'safe' means and '10 years from when'.

In the Lower Waikato long-term vision statement HortNZ suggest reference should be made to integrated catchment management in the plan vision including:

> *'Te Ora o te Wai: a healthy freshwater environment flowing within and from Pukekohe where its wellbeing is protected and enhanced while supplying fresh vegetables for the health and wellbeing of the peoples of Aotearoa/New Zealand.'*

They also consider that the Lower Waikato long-term vision is deficient as it doesn't include an integrated catchment management plan (ICMP for the Pukekohe Growing catchment) objective, nor does it recognise that highly productive land dominates the FMU. They recommend that the vision should include the following:

> *'Highly productive land within the FMU retains access to freshwater while managing water quality; to ensure utility for fruit and vegetable production. The stewardship of highly productive land is essential for the protection of ecosystem services derived from the use of water on highly productive land.'*

HortNZ notes that Lower Waikato clause (h) seems "*very strange*" in a number of respects and queries what '*safe*' means and 10 years from what point?

Waipā

As with previous comments on relating freshwater quality outcomes to a point in time, HortNZ does not support Waipa FMU clause (b), asking how would the attribute state be known from 100 years ago?

HortNZ would like clarification on Waipa FMU clause (d) as currently drafted, it is unclear what fisheries and freshwater habitat are to be rehabilitated.

Hauraki

The Hauraki vision statement clause (b) states that by 2054, the '*community collectively takes action and sustainable land management supports ecosystem health, freshwater values and the achievement of clauses a) and e)*'. The respondent considers that actions are likely to be before 2054 and that those actions will likely also support land use change and sustainable water management as a response to climate change and adaptation. While Horticulture NZ supports the Hauraki vision clause (g), they recommend removing the wording that returns water quality to a point in time gone by as they state there may not be sufficient water quality data available to support what that was, suggesting instead:

> *'Water quality is above any national bottom line, further degradation is avoided and gradual improvements made over the next 10 years'.*

Coromandel

HortNZ state that for the Coromandel FMU long-term vision statement, the interpretation of '*sustainable food harvest*' in clause (b) '*freshwater is clean, safe for drinking and contact recreation, swimmable, supports sustainable food harvest, and water supply is secure, for all species and for future generations',* is unclear including why food has not been recognised in other FMUs. Clarification from council is sought on what it means by '*sustainable food harvest*' as opposed to just '*food harvest*'.

Environmental outcomes and target states

HortNZ supports the majority of the environmental outcomes (or values as stated in the NPS-FM). Specific feedback are as follows:

Commercial and Industrial Use

- This value does exist in Coromandel FMU. There are 470 hectares of orchards and short rotation cropland in the Coromandel. In addition, one of the bulk suppliers to the kiwifruit industry has a significant greenhouse located in Coromandel which supplies bulk plants and grafted rootstock for green, gold and red kiwifruit plants to orchards throughout New Zealand. There is also a cool store and packhouse in Whenuakite.
- This value should be included for all FMUs where these activities occur, including Coromandel.

Irrigation, cultivation and production of food beverages

- HortNZ is happy that the value of food has been recognised, however in their view food production and cultivation should be afforded environmental outcomes separate to other irrigation needs.
- The issues are different from for example sports field irrigation needs. Appendix 1B of the NPS-FM unhelpfully bundles many uses but in the Waikato, there is the opportunity for a more nuanced approach. The suggested wording is:
- Water quality and quantity is suitable for ~~irrigation needs, including~~ supporting the cultivation <u>and production</u> of food crops~~, the production of food from farmed animals, non-food crops such as fibre and timber, pasture, sports fields and recreational areas~~.

HortNZ state that a suitably robust modelling decision support tool to inform decision making on target states is required. For those places where robust analysis indicates a timeframe for achieving bottom lines cannot be established, they recommend interim targets and interim timeframes are set and reviewed to account for improving information and technology. Further points included:

- Regulators must use best practice based on good science when determining the current state. Furthermore, the measurement, data collection and reporting requirements must

be relevant, practical, achievable and necessary. HortNZ considers that it is essential the current state is described in a statistical manner that accounts for natural variability and sampling error.

- Essential human health needs of people and the social, economic and social wellbeing of people is considered, in the process of selecting and prioritising values, outcomes and the associated attributes for FMUs. Must also be a key consideration in determining the appropriate time scale for achieving target attribute states.
- HortNZ supports a 'maintain and improve' approach to establishing target attributes, but this should be within attribute bands and provide for statistical variability to ensure effort directed towards halting and reversing deterioration is not misdirected.

Actions and rules

HortNZ suggest the focus of policy review for each FMU should include:

- Coromandel – Maintaining state of water quality and support water harvesting in times of high flow – eg water storage
- Hauraki – Improve water quality by reducing contaminants entering waterways
- Taupō – Maintain water quality
- Waikato-Waipā – PC1 provided recognition of the value of commercial vegetable production (CVP) regionally and nationally and provisioned the expansion of CVP as a discretionary activity in some (limited in number and areal extent) identified sub-catchments; HortNZ currently has a number of appeals which are progressing to the Environment Court on PC1. The main changes sought are that CVP can practically operate and that freshwater limits within PC1 protect enough discharge allocation for CVP, so growers can produce enough vegetables to support the nation's health. The state of the environment must acknowledge the activity and identify the actions to give effect to 3.33 of the NPS-FM 2020 and food production values elsewhere in the region.

In terms of costs, HortNZ state that growers have been hit with significant compliance costs over the last few yearsand particularly smaller growers, will find it difficult to absorb any further financial pressures. HortNZ urges council to significantly consider any additional costs relating to this review and to absorb these costs within council as much as practically possible.

HortNZ considers that the types of activity limits the plan should cover should include the following:

Food production

- The plan must provide a tailored response to give effect to 3.33 of the NPS-FM 2020 and food production values elsewhere in the region. This may require a suite of rules and limits on other activities to enable food production to occur.
- Water quality and quantity suitable for supporting the cultivation and production of food crops extends to all aspects of the activity from propagation, irrigation, frost fighting, spray needs to wash and processing water.

Environmental Flows and Limits

- Environmental flows and levels must be set to support the "freshwater outcomes", All freshwater management should start with the fundamental building blocks of a natural resource accounting model. This will enable better freshwater accounting particularly in catchments where ground and surface water hydrology are not appropriately measured and biophysical relationships are complex.

Identifying Take Limits

- Volume or rate should both be specified when appropriate. For groundwater the rate may be less important. For surface water the volume may be less important. However often both are desirable limits – but sometimes they are not.

Water allocation

- Council must develop criteria for transfers, identify methods for efficiency and to claw back overallocation so that the limits on resource use and take limits are reduced to levels that meet the outcomes sought.

Highly Productive Land

- Rules and limits should specifically provide for the utility of highly productive land.

Freshwater accounting systems

- Natural resource accounting requires the development of integrated biophysical models that are continuously improved through data collection to help predict spatial and temporal changes in the impacts of climate, soil, weather and ultimately land-use.
- Decision support models are critical.

8.8 Horticulture sector survey feedback

A total of five participants indicated that they represented the 'Horticulture' sector. Of those six, one also selected the 'Beef and Lamb' option while another picked 'Other' as well; and one respondent chose both 'Beef and Lamb' and 'Dairy' in addition to 'Horticulture'.

Te Mana o te Wai

Respondents were presented with the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai and asked to provide their thoughts on the wording. Three individuals gave a mixture of feedback that referred to the overall objective and the specific (sub)clauses. One participant viewed the objective as being a '*good start*', but also said that it was too vague and failed to acknowledge climate change and resilience. They commented that difficult but necessary conversations are required to provide certainty for landowners. It was felt that there is a conflict of interest for WRC, so these conversations need to be led by an independent body with open dialogue. Another respondent expressed agreement with clauses (1.1) and (1.2). For clause (1.3), it was suggested that the word 'determine' be replaced with 'impact.' It was also noted that climatic events play a significant role in the health and well-being of freshwater. With regards to the clause regarding *'there is sufficient water available…'* there was comment that the information necessary was lacking to determine what is 'sufficient water available' to provide for the health and well-being of water bodies, and until that is established, a robust system of water allocation is needed. For that same clause, concern was expressed with the notion that water *'may'* be available for human use. In reference to the clause regarding *'water quality and quantity'*, it was suggested that the phrase 'and quantity' be removed.

Long-term vision

Participants were asked which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on for the topic of long-term visions. For each area, they were given a draft objective outlining the long-term vision and then given the opportunity to leave their feedback about the wording of the vision. No feedback was provided for the Taupo long-term vision.

Upper Waikato

A respondent recommended consideration of the effects of wastewater from sewage ponds and consideration of other chemicals and by-products that negatively impact streams beyond those already identified. It was recommended that WRC identify companies that are releasing contaminants and to review WRC processes that may involve these. When asked if the given

timeframes were reasonable and ambitious, the respondent said 'No' and explained that they did not believe there was adequate understanding of the task to be undertaken.

Middle Waikato

The only participant who provided feedback on the wording of the vision.They commented that the draft objective required more 'substance.' In reference to clause (b), participants were asked what state we should return the water quality to. One individual stated that this depended upon the methods chosen to achieve the goals; whereas another suggested 'swimmable' be the standard. One respondent said 'Yes' and another 'No' when asked if the given timeframes were ambitious and reasonable. The individual who agreed with the timeframes stated: *"coming up with a % will be a challenge, all sources will likely be different and have a range of difficulties and timeframes to correct them (to 1 set %)".* The respondent who disagreed with the timeframes did not believe there was adequate understanding of the task to be undertaken.

Lower Waikato

The participant who was interested in the long-term vision for this FMU emphasised the importance of recognising the 'good work' that has already been done. When asked if they felt the given timeframes were reasonable and ambitious, the participant selected 'Yes' and stressed the significance of getting the whole community on board.

Waipā

Although no feedback was provided on the wording of the long-term vision for Waipā, a respondent did say 'No' when questioned if the timeframes were ambitious and reasonable. The respondent did not believe there was adequate understanding of the task to be undertaken.

West Coast

The respondent recommended that 1080 not be used for reaching the goal of 'predator free', and that trappers and other means should be used. This individual also felt that there needed to be action sooner than 80 years. The participant said 'No' when asked if the given timeframes were ambitious and reasonable and explained that the timeframes would depend on the intention of how the policy would be delivered.

Hauraki

The participant believed that the objectives for this vision should emerge from community negotiated discussion with knowledge sharing being a part of that journey. The respondent felt the same way when asked, in reference to clause (g), what state the water quality should be returned to. When queried if they felt the given timeframes were ambitious and reasonable, the participant said 'No' and explained that they believed these goals could be reached sooner.

Coromandel

One respondent felt that this vision was too vague and not ambitious enough. In reference to clause (f), another participant felt that 2034 was too long a wait for the issue to be addressed. When asked if they felt the given timeframes were ambitious and reasonable, one respondent said 'Yes', while the other said 'No'. When prompted to explain their reasoning, the respondent who agreed with the timeframes explained that this was the 'minimum' that could be done. The participant who disagreed with the timeframes stated that clause (b) should be within 10 years; and clause (f) should be within 5 years.

Environmental outcomes

Participants were asked which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on for the topic of environmental outcomes. For each area, they were presented with a list of possible outcomes.

When they clicked on an outcome, the draft objective was shown to them and they were provided with the opportunity to leave comments. No feedback was provided for the Hauraki, Taupō and West Coast FMUs.

Waikato-Waipā

Irrigation, cultivation, and food and beverage production

The participant who reviewed this draft outcome stated *"any improvements will be good, but for my area, water quality is okay now. Just below national drinking standard".*

Coromandel

Participants were asked if the outcomes of 'Commercial and Industrial Uses' and 'Hydro-Electric Power Generation' were applicable to the Coromandel FMU. One observed that homes (e.g., large wetland water systems such as the Hauraki Plains) were missing and questioned *"what landuses are appropriate doable in this dynamic landscape, do we transition out, how, any incentives, supports, if stay on what does this look like?"*. Another thought that 'Commercial and Industrial Uses' should be included, "*there is a significant kiwifruit and avocado Post Harvest Facility sited at Whenuakite that employs around 80 seasonal staff. Water use within this facility would surely be considered as commercial".*

Target states

Participants were provided with some examples of potential principles that could be applied when setting target attribute states and were then asked to give their feedback on potential principles. The individual who responded to this question said that they did not possess enough knowledge about which targets are achievable to provide meaningful feedback.

When asked how they might explain these principles to farmers or other primary sector representatives, three participants expressed their opinion. One respondent emphasised the importance of community conversations. Another participant believed that farmers were already aware of information such as this and are working on solutions. There was comment that the challenge was getting urban Waikato on board. The third individual stated *"achieving targets requires actions and ability to measure outcomes. There needs to be a robust cost-benefit analysis done before targets are finalised. This should include input from all sector bodies that represent primary producers. Only then will the plan be presentable to farmers and other primary sector representatives".*

Activities and actions

Respondents were asked which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on for the topic of activities and actions. For each area, they were given a high-level summary of the state of freshwater within that FMU and were then questioned on their thoughts regarding the freshwater within that same area. No feedback was received for Taupō and West Coast FMUs.

Waikato-Waipā

While they did not comment on the state of freshwater within this FMU, one participant did provide feedback on what the focus should be to accelerate positive change and sought to acknowledge the impact that urban settings have on freshwater.

Hauraki

The participant interested in this FMU described Hauraki freshwater as an "*unhealthy water system*." They recommended to first consider intrinsic values and mana "*instead of a 'snapshot in time farmscape' and how to manage that within stopbanks. As presupposes that's [the] only way to do it*", in order to accelerate positive change.

Coromandel

Three participants gave their feedback on the state of freshwater within the Coromandel FMU. One simply stated that "*native areas can erode*." Another described the state of freshwater as being "*diminished*." The third explained that the Parakua area, while it is '*generally good quality*', would benefit from control over forestry slash/silt contamination and eradication of sources of E. coli. There was comment that Whenuakite, in comparison, would benefit from the exclusion of stock run-off as it has poorer quality water and typically lower dissolved oxygen than Parakau.

When asked what the Freshwater Policy Review should focus on to accelerate positive change for freshwater, two responses were provided. One explained that community involvement and knowledge sharing is necessary prior to decision-making. It was also recommended that this be done independently of WRC due to conflicts of interest. The other participant stated the focus should be water that is safe for drinking and use in food production and, to prevent further deterioration, work towards a better understanding of the impact that land-use has on water quality. The respondent thought that *"if we stop the contamination, nature will take care of the rest".*

How costs should be borne

Respondents were asked what they would like to say in principle at this stage about how the costs should be borne. One respondent recommended using incentives rather than regulation and making use of science and technology to promote positive change. Another thought that the *"costs of conforming with the national plan belong to Council. Costs associated with Resource Consents for extraction belong to the users. These should be worked out to cover the costs of running the system and not based on volumes extracted".*

Limits and rules

Participants were asked which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on for the topic of potential limits and rules. For each area, they were presented with some examples of limits and rules to manage activities to improve freshwater within that FMU. They were then asked what specific rules and limits they think would help manage freshwater better. No responses were received for Hauraki or Taupō FMUs.

Waikato-Waipā

The participant interested in this FMU expressed disappointment that the examples provided by WRC focused solely on agriculture. The respondent recommended focusing on water storage in times of excess to help in times of need (in both rural and urban settings) as well as acknowledging urban issues/rules/limitations.

West Coast

The respondent interested in this FMU commented that farmers have done a lot to exclude stock from waterways and WRC need to look at regulating industries other than farming.

Coromandel

Three participants provided their feedback on rules for freshwater management. One individual stated that it was important for authorities to possess as much knowledge as growers and farmers. Another said that these rules and limits will emerge from conversations with the community and recommended a mix of tools – for example incentives and credits to provide income streams different from dairy. Another respondent commented that they *"do not agree with limiting farming land use cover in the Coromandel FMU. Sort out how to prevent contamination from any land use, especially forestry. WRC consents already have a process in place where takes are reduced in low flow rate situations. This generally works well providing accurate flow data is available".*

General feedback

Respondents were given the opportunity to provide any additional feedback regarding freshwater management within the different FMUs and/or the whole Waikato region. Feedback was only received for the Coromandel FMU.

The participant who provided feedback for The Coromandel FMU stated that *"all of us have a vested interest in improving…water quality".*

8.9 Arable

Seven people attended an online arable sector session. There were attendees who had affiliations with Federated Farmers, those who affiliated to the Foundation for Arable Research (FAR) and others who were farmers.

General feedback

Attendees provided a range of feedback regarding learnings and consideration of PC1, getting the policy development right and economic considerations. Consideration of the impacts of PC1 and learnings from the PC1 process were raised where one respondent queried how PC1 and the current policy process were going to work, *"how does this relate, as a farmer, are we going to be trying to comply with two things that are similar"?* One other respondent was disappointed with the PC1 process as they felt their suggestions were not taken on board. The main point the respondent wanted to raise was that time was needed to make changes, *"if I've been farming 150 years, it's going to take 30-50 years to fix it, happy to fix it as agricultural, that allows you to get rid of capital, a new cow shed lasts 30-50 years depending on the shed, a lot of development to get the farm to the operating level so it takes 30-50 years to get rid of capital, so we need time, we cannot do 5 or 10 years".* Another respondent commented that PC1 was concerning for those in cropping and arable farming, *"the cap on nitrogen for pastoral, cropping uses a lot more fertiliser input, the setbacks in PC1, how close you can cultivate to the waters, a drain verses a stream. If I have to have a 15m setback on a peat farm, can you play with that a little bit? It affects them quite a bit with the uncertainty".*

Getting the policy development right was a common theme with respondents querying any proposed rules, *"in cropping is there going to be 5 different rules for different soil types? If there's science saying one is worse than the other, will that be something to look at"? "Cropping in Gordonton where it's not next to any river will that have a different rule to other farming in the Waikato? I guess, I'm looking for more detail once we get closer to it"?* A respondent commented about cycles of change *"the market price of food dictates what we do from year to year… where its good, average and bad and want the flexibility to have change",* and another mentioned *"the wall of regulation hitting businesses"* and a request to farm as a permitted activity rather than consented.

Economic considerations in the planning process were raised by attendees at a local level and societal level, *"arable is different from pastoral, and similarities to horticulture and vegetable growers. Got to keep farmers viable, keep bottom line of profitability viable",* and *"talk about economics, it shouldn't only be for on farm, it should be for NZ, nothing in our economy that can take over from agricultural. Society has to make a decision".*

8.10 Foundation for Arable Research (FAR)

The Foundation for Arable Research (FAR) provided feedback in a written submission.

Te Mana o te Wai

FAR noted that, while giving effect to Te Mana o te Wai requires the prioritisation of the health and wellbeing of water bodies and freshwater ecosystems, this does not mean that all other activities must come to a halt. They also noted that not all water bodies need to be restored to a pristine state before the other needs of communities can be addressed. FAR emphasised that Waikato Regional Council must consider its statutory obligations to allow communities to provide for their economic and social wellbeing and take these into account when producing long-term visions, environmental outcomes and the actions required to achieve them.

Long-term visions

FAR asked that the importance of arable production be recognised during the Freshwater Policy Review process and outlined several areas that they recommend be considered.

FAR said firstly that the compatibility of arable production systems with healthy water bodies and freshwater ecosystems should be recognised. It was stated that, while all forms of land use have an impact on freshwater, there has been significant work done on the environmental impacts of arable production. The impact of arable production on freshwater is also determined by the land being cropped and the intensity of activities occurring. FAR said that, while land use change may be required in some areas of the Waikato, arable production should be able to operate viably and sustainably in these areas. They noted that they recognise that farm operations may need to change and suggested that arable growers are well-placed to adjust to regulatory requirements because of the agility in their farm systems and the support of FAR.

FAR recommended that the contribution of the arable sector to the economic and social wellbeing of communities and the region be recognised. They noted that the ability of people to provide for their economic and social wellbeing is included in the Resource Management Act 1991, Local Government Act 2002 and the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020. FAR recommended careful balancing to ensure that freshwater requirements are met while also providing for the economic and social wellbeing of the community.

FAR also emphasised the importance of arable production to food security, noting that arable production supplies both food staples and inputs to other primary production sectors. They said that a growing population means the region must be capable of supporting arable production systems into the future.

FAR suggested that community aspirations should be tempered with an understanding of the actions and costs required to achieve them. They expressed their support for an iterative process where long-term visions can be refined to ensure that they are reasonable and practical.

FAR also recommended that timeframes for change should be ambitious but reasonable, noting that ‘going too far, too fast’ may have unreasonable consequences for arable production. It was noted that it has taken decades for water to reach its current state and that improving it will not happen overnight. FAR said that imposing short timeframes for compliance could make many arable farms unviable, which would be highly unreasonable and affect the wellbeing of Waikato communities. Several reasons for this were cited:

- Farmers/growers have assets that need to be utilised over their natural lifespan.
- Science and technology to enable change is still developing.
- There are lag times between changes on land and improvements in freshwater.

- Input constraints applied with short compliance timeframes can render farms financially unviable.

It was suggested that adequate timeframes will allow research to support growers to make gradual adjustments to their practices.

FAR noted that there are several long-term visions which relate to the same goals, but which have different wording across FMU's. They referenced Lake Taupō Draft Vision clause (e), Upper Waikato Draft Vision clause (f), and Middle Waikato Draft Vision clause (f), which all relate to productive land use. FAR recommended that, where long-term visions have the same intent, they should be worded consistently to minimise complexity and avoid differences in interpretation between FMUs. They noted that farmers and growers are already overwhelmed by the complexity of freshwater management and that consistent wording would enable better understanding of requirements by users (especially those operating across FMU boundaries).

It was noted that the draft visions for some FMUs, including the West Coast and Lower Waikato, do not mention sustainable land use and that this does not reflect the catchment areas. FAR noted that the NPS-FM 2020 requires local authorities to adopt an integrated approach to freshwater management that recognises the interconnectedness of the whole environment and the interactions between freshwater and land; they stated that long-term visions should therefore include visions for land uses that interact with waterbodies and freshwater ecosystems within each FMU. It was recommended that the draft visions for all FMUs which support arable farming include the following clause:

> *"Sustainable and innovative primary production practices support the health and well-being of water bodies and freshwater ecosystems and contribute to food security and the social and economic well-being of the region".*

Limits and rules

FAR recommended 'flexible and adaptive approaches' that give farmers the ability to adapt and which facilitate ongoing improvement. They suggested the following:

- The use of Freshwater Farm Plans in place of resource consents. The use of resource consents to control activities that could be accounted for within farm plans adds unnecessary complexity and administration and compliance costs.
- Outcome-based rules that give farmers and growers more flexibility in determining how to achieve required environmental outcomes, rather than action-based rules.
- Provisions that enable the transition of pastoral land to arable land.
- The necessary time, confidence and investment required to implement on-farm changes, including adequate lead-in times for change and long-term consent durations.

General feedback

It was noted that the arable sector supports the overall objective of improving the health of water bodies and freshwater ecosystems in the Waikato region and that farmers view water as having importance beyond its relation to the industry. FAR said that the way in which improvements are achieved will be crucial for the viability of the arable sector into the future.

8.11 Forestry

Six people attended the facilitated session for Forestry organisations with representatives from Manulife Forest Management, NZ Forest Managers, Wood Marketing Services, Waikato Federated Farmers, Timberlands. One regional councilor was also in attendance.

Te Mana o te Wai

Participants identified a tension between economic activity and environmental outcomes. They noted that the wellbeing of the community is related to its economy and that restoring water should not come at the expense of social deprivation. It was noted that there is no provision for economic development in clause 1 or its sub-clauses and concern was expressed about clause 1.2.

Participants questioned how PC1 will be incorporated in the Freshwater Policy Review. They also noted that a review of Te Ture Whaimana is underway and will take precedence if there are any inconsistencies.

Participants questioned the inclusion of tangata whenua in the draft objective and asked whether this duplicates legislation and/or the Waikato Regional Policy Statement. It was noted that clause 4 is legislated and is actually a matter of process, rather than an objective. It was suggested that this clause could be better framed around *"effective"* recognition and reflection of legislative requirements. Participants suggested that the effects of Koi carp and Canada geese be included in the objective (eg. recognising effects in Lake Waikare).

Particular concern was expressed about the use of the words 'restored and protected' in clause 1 of the draft objective. Participants noted that it is unclear what state water would need to be restored to and said that the word 'restore' suggests returning water to a natural state. They indicated that this is not realistic and is different from managing water quality. They also noted that our knowledge of the original state of water bodies is limited and that this affects our ability to 'restore' them to their original state. Participants similarly questioned what the word 'protected' means, what level of 'protection' would be required, and whether this suggests returning water to its original state. Participants also noted that the responsibility belongs to "*more than just farmers"*. Various amendments to clause 1 were suggested, including:

- Using the term 'sustainable use' instead.
- Changing the wording to more closely align with the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management. It was noted that the intent of the National Policy Statement is to stop degradation and improve quality, and that this does not align with the word 'restore'.
- Using the word 'improved' instead of 'restore', because it suggests good stewardship.
- Amending '*Health, resilience and wellbeing of the Waikato Region's freshwater resources are ~~restored and protected~~ supported'*.
- Adding "*Freshwater resources are managed for future generations".*

Participants commented that clause 1.2 is an 'aspiration rather than an objective'. It was recommended that clause 1.2 be amended as follows: "*~~That~~ people's relationship with freshwater ~~is inextricably connected with their cultural, social and economic systems~~ provides for their social, economic and cultural wellbeing*".

In reference to clause 3, participants said that water quality and quantity targets should be science-based, not a community aspiration, and should be practically achievable and consider realistic land use expectations. Participants also questioned whether the word "spiritual" is defined and whether it includes alternative/Western views regarding cultural and spiritual connection. It was suggested that clause 3 be amended as follows: '*Water quality and quantity targets are established and respected, ~~to reflect the cultural, spiritual and ecological values of freshwater as understood by tangata whenua and the community.~~'* It was also suggested that this clause could be amended to remove the following section: '*as understood by tangata whenua and the community.'*

Long-term vision

Participants noted that the long-term visions are '*too fluffy*', but are required to address the outcomes. It was noted that '*more specific wordin*g' and goals are necessary which identify what communities aspire to and limits should be determined, though participants also commented that '*restrictive rules are not wanted*'.

It was noted that the long-term visions have costs attached, which have not been considered. The '*economic sustainability of catchments'* was mentioned. It was also noted that the long-term visions should be *'futureproof*' and consider the next 5-10 years.

Upper Waikato

Clause (b) of the draft long-term vision for the Upper Waikato FMU refers to the '*health, well-being mauri and mana of waterbodies being protected and provides for a range of freshwater values including drinkable water for present and future generations'*, by 2044. Participants felt that being drinkable at all times is unrealistic. Draft clause (c) seeks that by 2044, freshwater is holistically managed in a way that recognises the health of the people relies on the health of the environment. Participants noted that they felt this clause was "*too wordy*."

Draft clause (e) refers to '*communities exercising stewardship for the water for present and future generations',* by 2044. Participants stated that they felt this clause is a good statement. However, they asked where it is relevant and state that the water starts off clean then goes through dams and geothermal influence. Draft clause (i) seeks that by 2044, '*water is allowed to be itself, in its common, ordinary or normal state, flowing naturally and through our everyday lives*'. Participants seek the deletion of water being allowed to be itself stating that it is impossible to flow naturally. They also question if this clause means to remove all dams. Participants stated that there is no mention of the importance of the dams, guidance on water takes, the importance of the dam for electricity generation, flood mitigation, or high recreational use.

Draft clause (j) seeks for '*water quality and habitat to be improved with established riparian areas and native plantings and rubbish removed from waterways'*, by 2044. Participants felt that the statement of removing rubbish was oddly specific. The participants then stated that plantings should be used to promote the objective and that native plants do not always survive in some areas or achieve what is required. The participants also question why native planting is required when other measures and planting would improve quality. Overall, participants feel that 'native planting' should be replaced with just 'planting'.

Participants noted several gaps in the draft vision, including electricity generation, flow management (and water yields), flood management and mitigation, strategies to replenish aquifers, and water harvesting long term with the prospect of future water shortages. Participants sought a fair method of water allocation for irrigation and for people/towns. They note that the present system constrains low contaminant activities. They also noted that there is nothing that enables change in land use in aggregate.

Participants sought that the vision also enabled economic outcomes, by recognising and providing for a prosperous community and economic uses (including farming, forestry etc), the availability of water for primary production and electricity generation. Some sought that the vision recognised positive attributes of primary production. Participants suggested that there are tensions between aspirations and reality (the costs of meeting aspirations, as well as the implications for current practices) and that compromises should be made.

In relation to giving effect to the vision, a participant queried whether the vision should include equal treatment based on effects. It was noted that it is important to understand the

implications if any vision created winners and losers, and there is a need to be aware to where people can be gamed.

In terms of timeframes, participants suggested breaking visions into different timeframes, and extending timeframes, '*to be realistic*.' Participants also feel that the timeline (20 years) is too short and they felt it should be more like 50 years. They also felt that water targets should only need to be met in the summer months, not 12 months of the year.

Participants had concerns that the long-term visions of FMUs repeated the top objective (Te Mana o te Wai) and did not actually address the "*fingerprint*" of the catchment. They comment on the importance of being honest and transparent about what is being written. The participants also commented that there will be unintended consequences of new technology and knowledge that comes along.

Lower Waikato

Participants note that forestry is pushed onto Class 7 land and state that this is difficult for forestry and makes harvesting more expensive. The participants note that Lower Waikato has very little forestry and that forestry on West Coast land is not permitted due to the land Class.

Waipa

Clause (a) of the draft long-term vision for the Waipa refers to the FMU being managed in accordance with Te Ture Whaimana o te Awa o Waikato – the vision and Strategy for the Waikato River, by 2044. Participants queried if this clause was a legal requirement.

Draft clause (b) refers to water quality, '*the mauri and integrity of all freshwater bodies, and their biodiversity is restored and protected for present and future generations by bringing the waterbodies back to as close as possible to their state 100 years ago'*. Participants commented that this clause is completely unachievable, and definitely not by 2044. They also stated that 'restore and protect' are concerning as again, they do not believe this can happen in 20 years. They comment that this clause is impossible as the timeframe is pre-dams and -farms, and wonder what was the standard in 1923. Participants asked how mauri and mana are relevant to water quality. Ultimately, the participants stated that clause (b) should be removed.

Waipa clause (c) seeks that by 2044, '*freshwater management reflects Kotahitanga and mātauranga Māori knowledge and wisdom, customary practices and principles as well as the best available scientific information'*. Participants stated that they appreciated the reference to both mātauranga and science. Draft clause (d) seeks that by 2044, '*fisheries and freshwater habitats that are degraded are rehabilitated and restored, and where they are not degraded they are protected*'. The participants wondered whether this clause will improve or degrade water quality. They also query whether koi carp are going to be removed. The participants note there is a tension between management of water flow and habitat, using willow management in the catchment as an example. Participants had an issue with the term 'restored' and asked what is this referring to, what will it be restored to?

Draft clause (e) seeks that by 2044, '*ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu, taonga and customary rights are protected from adverse effects and inappropriate use, and wai supports traditional practices, mahinga kai, birthing and education in order to sustain cultural, spiritual, and social and kaitiaki needs'*. Participants stated that some of the items are unrelated to water quality (e.g. birthing). They comment that "ancestral lands" is quite broad and that what happens on these grounds should not impact water. They also comment that lands are not water, which caused some confusion. The participants ultimately found that this clause was off subject and not relevant to water quality. They comment that there is a need to know about ancestral streams and these waterways, now, rather than later. Participants considered that if

looking from a connected perspective, then water values do contribute to cultural and social values. Participants note that there is a tenuous connection with NPS-FM objectives.

Draft clause (f) states that by 2044, '*the community and tangata whenua take collective responsibility to sustainably care for and nurture the mana and mauri of wai as a treasure'*. The participants note that it is a nice goal but not sure if achievable and that not everyone sees all water as treasure.

Draft clause (g) states that by 2044, '*existing natural inland wetlands are enhanced and protected and new natural inland wetlands are created to improve indigenous biodiversity and water quality'*. Participants comment that if wetlands are 'created' they are not natural, but support 'recreating wetlands'. They comment that the principle of adding wetlands is positive. However, participants seek to remove the word 'natural' as they comment that most will be man-made. The participants queried why the use of the term 'indigenous' biodiversity rather than biodiversity. They also expressed concern with the word "restored."

Participants also commented on the sediment issues in the area and there is a need to acknowledge silt as an issue in the Waipā and allow its harvesting (i.e. see it as a resource, and not a problem). They felt sediment catchment traps would be a useful mitigation tool and that a natural capturing system, such as a wetland is good. They commented that some associated land-based rules may need to be considered to aid with cleaning waterways (for example, sediment retention dams). The participants asked again where is the support of economy/use of water (such as for industry/farms)?

The participants noted the connectivity of wāhi tapu and wai tapu. Finally, participants noted that there needs to be something about access to water for uses, such as for economic return, as this needs to be reflected.

Coromandel

Clause (a) of the draft Long-term vision for Coromandel refers to people contributing to the creation of healthier waterways and notes that the health of water and the community are a reflection of each other and freshwater is the essence of life for all species, by 2054. In reference to clause (a), participants noted that it would require a continual improvement, and that there would be tension between economic viability and regulations. Participants questioned if 'contribute' means a monetary contribution. They stated that the clause could reference continual improvement.

Draft clause (b) seeks that by 2054, '*freshwater is clean, safe for drinking and contact recreation, swimmable, supports sustainable food harvest, and water supply is secure, for all species and for future generations'*. Participants considered clause (b) applies to all waterbodies and every part of water bodies, and suggested that customary practices be added to clause (b). However, some participants noted that clause (b) needs to recognise demands of current societal demands and that the expectation that all waterways are safe for drinking and swimming may not be scientifically achievable, even with no humans in the catchment. Participants worked through how coastal water is interrelated with freshwater and questioned how far inland saltwater intrusion goes and if this is as far as the Te Aroha bridge.

Some objections were raised in relation to the reference to "sustainable food harvest", with questions on how "sustainable" is defined, whether the requirement is for instream water or providing for extracted use. They suggested that the clause is amended to include *"sustainable food [production] and harvest…".*

The participants suggested that clause (b) and (c) could be amalgamated, which would make (d) redundant. Ultimately, the participants felt the provision of (b) is unclear. Draft clause (c)

of the long-term vision refers to freshwater management supporting healthy clean water for traditional and customary practices and space for all generations to interact with the awa together and to pass on to future generations, by 2054. Participants stated that it is not possible to achieve 'healthy clean water' due to the presence of pests, such as possums and goats.

Draft clause (d) of the long-term vision seeks that by 2054, '*water quality is above any national bottom line and improved from the baseline state for all attributes'*. Participants noted that this clause is required by law already, and seems to be repetitious of statute, and therefore is redundant. An alternative option was provided by participants: *"water quality is improved from baseline state for all attributes above any national bottom line".*

Draft clause (e) seeks that by 2034 in the Coromandel FMU, waterways have a riparian strip of native flora, contain corridors for native birds and insects and are aesthetically pleasing. While some participants thought that this clause was achievable, others noted that a riparian strip is unachievable in urban areas and will be difficult in cable logging areas. Participants noted that they did not feel that native riparian corridors for birds/insects is a freshwater objective.

Participants felt that expectations in clause (e) are concerning for a plantation manager, although from the high level it does not appear to be a heavy-weight clause. Participants wondered how this will affect access to private land, and state that this is irrelevant seeing as most streams come straight out of bush with possibly a strip of farm in between. They also queried how important native flora is, compared to other vegetation.

Overall, the participants stated that the objective of by 2054 needs to be realistic. They noted that 'reasonable' could be thought of as 'what can be delivered within the next 10 years'? Participants then noted that gold mining streams' health and quality will not be clean within 30 years. Participants stated that it is too difficult for forest managers to address this. Participants also noted that the wording for the vision in the West Coast FMU is different but seeking the same outcomes.

Participants stated that the draft objectives are not reflective of the Coromandel. They question what words should be used to reflect the Coromandel. They stated there are no links with the draft WRC objective. They noted that there are a lot of smaller catchments while attempting to maintain infrastructure on clay-based soils which are affected by water. Participants mentioned that there needs to be an acknowledgement of soil types in the Coromandel, which are extremely poor for farming. Participants took note that there was no mention of estuaries in the objectives. They also noted that there is no measure of financial cost, and seek economic viability to be provided for. The participants note that Coromandel's waters have slightly elevated levels of heavy metals; this is by virtue of the underlying geology and stream. They also noted that some of the clauses appear to be contradictory. They also stated that the cost of rehabilitation (e.g., riparian margin planting) needs to be recognised. They noted that the opportunity to diversify should be allowed (for example, diversifying land use from dairy to horticulture, or forestry).

Overall, the draft long-term visions are noted by participants as applying to all water courses. However, the participants noted that it would be potentially unachievable for some water courses (e.g., legacy contamination or naturally elevated heavy metals. They then asked If all these issues were going to be fixed at whatever the cost. They also asked if water going was going to be drinkable and swimmable year-round or just summer. The participants also stated that the legacy of past mining land use has affected water quality and water quality goals may never be able to be achieved.

A participant mentioned including a clause for water use. They also noted the contribution of short run streams, to quality in estuaries and harbours. They noted that the objective cascades down to things of more relevance to FMUs. Therefore they seek the need to extract from Te Mana o Te Wai objectives for the Coromandel-specific matters. They noted a lot of short run catchments and the challenges of maintaining intra clay based soils and their characteristics, therefore referencing the uniqueness of soil.

Participants commented that there is a need for recognition of the practicality of forest management practices. They noted that some practices (such as cable logging) have less impact on, for example, sedimentation. However, certain activities, such as cable logging, can only be done a certain way.

Participants noted that the temporary nature of activities has not been picked up. They noted that during deforestation, there is a need to be able to 'pull' across, through or around waterways. They state that forest owners/companies can't do operations amongst or between waterways. The participants state that if this was a requirement then operations would need to be reduced in order to meet targets. It was noted by the participants that culverts must be kept clear and that the practical management of infrastructure overlay must be put over objectives. The participants stated that Te Mana o Te Wai must be considered.

Limits and rules

The meeting was reminded that the items were draft in nature. Participants noted that rules and limits should support outcomes but are specific to FMUs. Overall, there was preference for forestry to continue to be managed under the National Environmental Standard for Plantation Forestry. Participants provided the following feedback in relation to activities that are relevant to their sector:

- Limits on water takes
    - providing for small off-stream water storage,
    - metering/measuring use of water to assist with water conservation
    - provide water availability in instances such as forest fires
    - inequity regarding 'first in first served'
- Farm plans
    - should be aspirational and directional, rather than prescriptive
    - avoid any duplication with freshwater farm plans.
- Consent duration:
    - operators should be given a consented period which allows depreciation of asset (farm effluent)
    - participants stated that a 25-year lead-in time is required to make changes to farming/forestry/arable systems
    - participants expressed concern that farming and land use systems cannot be changed within 10 to 20 years.

Waikato-Waipā:

For Waikato-Waipā, participants commented that water takers have created inequity in the sector. They note that Farm Plan requirements need to be aspirational, and not prescriptive and that duplication of farm plans needs to be avoided at all costs. They note that the existing Farm Animal Effluent systems need time to make change to their systems.

Coromandel:

For the Coromandel FMU, participants noted a focus on suspended sediment. They also had concern about over-complication or duplication with existing regulations. They seek to "control the controllables." These include water conservation and the potential need for water metering. They note that water storage is a good idea, but a larger scale should be considered.

Target attribute states

Overall targets were briefly explained to the meeting with the approach of moving all attributes up one band. In total there are 23 attributes to be considered. Each attribute has its own band.

Participants felt that the word "restore" needs to be avoided and instead the word should be "improved". Regarding aspirations, participants commented that these should be for a waterbody as a whole, instead of just at monitoring points. They noted that seasonal variations will cause changes to targets. This led the participants to then question the monitoring requirements, stating that this should allow for seasonal variation. The participants commented that target states will depend on location and should allow for extreme events (e.g., Gabrielle). Finally, participants noted that while it is a nice aspiration to move all streams up a band in regard to the long term target, it may not be scientifically achievable.

Environmental outcomes

Participants were asked what feedback they had about the potential principles for setting target attribute states for freshwater, as well as what they thought about the draft outcomes. Generally, it was queried how community/economic outcomes were provided for in the outcomes. Participants noted that the outcomes extended to terrestrial values, and should apply to riparian or wetland habitat only, stating that "no loss" in habitat outside these areas will prevent harvest activities. It was also commented that the outcomes should not provide for exotic species (such as trout).

There were concerns raised that some environmental outcomes were more stringent than existing rules for SNAs in some areas. They noted that environmental outcomes would benefit from having a scale for context, such as a landscape scale. Participants questioned how competing outcomes will be balanced and how decisions will be made over an allocated resource, such as water. They noticed that there was reference to restored or enhanced and questioned, what if it is already good or as good as it could be?

In relation to specific environmental clauses:
Draft environmental outcome a) (Ecosystem health) raised questions including what the ecosystem is being restored to. They noted that afforestation in any species will change river flows and variability returning it to a more 'natural state' and the participants feel this needs to be made clearer under 'water quality'.

Regarding c) Threatened species, participants state that it should not apply to terrestrial species that do not rely on waterbodies. The fourth bullet point states that the FMU or part of an FMU that supports a population of threatened species has the critical habitats and conditions necessary to support the presence, abundance, survival, and recovery of the threatened species, and these are protected and improved. Participants questioned if this is at population level or individual animal. They also stated the need to make the relationship with freshwater more explicit, and they questioned if it applies to animals that live totally on water. Discussing c) in general, participants asked what protection means, and over what time period in relation to the management of a plantation forest. Participants also made comment on the interaction between the draft environmental outcomes c) Threatened species, and the National Policy Statement – Indigenous Biodiversity (NPS-IB). They noted that there is overlap in the habitat and threatened species requirements in the NPS-IB with biodiversity requirements. They stated that it needs to be ensured that these are aligned and do not contradict.

Regarding (e) (natural form and character), participants stated that the value needs to be measured at a landscape scale.

For clause (f) (water quality and quantity being sufficient for water to be taken and used for drinking water supply), participants noted that as the population increases, so do drinking water requirements and therefore they wondered how ethical is large cities' water use regarding quantity. They stated that f) must be read in conjunction with a number of other provisions. They felt that more specificity is needed regarding drinking water quantities and water bodies. Participants stated that it is unrealistic to expect all water to be safe to drink and there are natural limits to how much water is available for human consumption.

In relation to clause (k) (Irrigation, cultivation and production of food and beverages), participants questioned how quantity is determined in all items listed, and which gets priority, noting that you cannot guarantee quantity. They noted that a well-known outcome of farmed animal irrigation is groundwater pollution; therefore, participants felt it is not appropriate to provide for this. Participants noted that as worded, it is currently unrealistic as they noted there is already insufficient water for irrigation demand.

General feedback

Participants noted the need to consider climate change. It was stated that we '*can't continue to do the same thing*' and '*need to make allowance for change*'. Participants questioned how and if forestry can adapt.

Participants noted that intensification does not necessarily have an adverse impact on water bodies and discussed moving to a '*blend of farming types*' in the same farming unit. They noted that the Freshwater Policy Review should provide for this and the ability to *'flex'* land use, rather than locking land into one particular use. Participants noted that '*forestry is pretty good for maintaining water quality*'.

Participants discussed the FMUs and noted that clarity is required for farms or land holdings that sit on the boundary between two FMUs. It was suggested that the Hauraki and West Coast FMUs could be split, as they are both very large, though it was noted that there could be difficulties with this approach (eg. some may be advantaged and others not). Participants noted the differences between the water bodies in different parts of the region (the Coromandel has 'short run streams to ocean', while Taupō is quite different).

- Allocation across the plan is a too simplistic tool. Attribution and allocation now deal with those who must make the biggest change for targeted improvement.
- Participants sought clarity on the word "drains" and asked whether there will there be an applicable definition in the plan.
- Participants noted that the Freshwater Policy Review should be realistic about the current state of the environment (for example, the Waipā already has a high natural sediment load).

8.12 Forestry sector survey feedback

A total of four participants indicated that they represented the 'Forestry' sector. Of those four, one also selected the 'Energy' option while another chose 'Beef and Lamb' as well.

Te Mana o te Wai

Respondents were presented with the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai and asked to provide their thoughts on the wording. All four expressed their thoughts. One participant expressed agreement with the objective(s) but stated that they "*would like to see an objective explicitly relating to water body erosion, and stability of the land surrounding our waterways".* It was suggested that while this topic may be implicitly referred to in one or two of the objectives drafted, it needed to be bought into focus. Another respondent stated that *"the*

objectives are vague and open to interpretation". One participant expressed agreement with clause (1) and the three subclauses. In reference to the clause regarding sufficient water being available there was comment that WRC needed to adopt a better water allocation system than 'first in, first served'. There was agreement with the clause regarding water quality and quantity targets. For the clause regarding *'tangata whenua are enabled to participate in policy formulation…'* the following comment was made *"manawhakahaere[12] and only manawhakahaere, meaning whānau and hapū only via marae are the only ones to determine how this gets implemented".*

Long-term vision

Participants were asked which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on for the topic of long-term visions. For each area, they were given a draft objective outlining the long-term vision and then given the opportunity to leave their feedback about the wording of the vision. No feedback was provided for the Hauraki FMU.

Taupō

One participant explained that while the objectives "*seem okay*", they also noted that "*water is intrinsically linked to the land that it sits on, and is surrounded by, and to focus only on the water, and not the land that contains it seems unsystematic and sub-optimal".* The other respondent simply stated that they agreed with the clauses described.

When asked if they thought the given timeframes for the vision were reasonable and ambitious, one respondent indicated 'Yes' while the other said they were 'Unsure.' The individual who agreed explained that while less than 10 years would be too short and will be likely to fail, pushing change out further than 10 years risks further degradation of the water supply. The participant who was uncertain believed that the timeframe depended on resourcing to achieve the objectives.

Upper Waikato

No feedback was provided on the wording of the long-term vision. When asked if they felt the timeframes were reasonable and ambitious, a respondent said they were 'Unsure' since they did not feel qualified enough to comment.

Middle Waikato

The participant who selected this FMU recommended focusing "*on what is reasonable and achievable over the next 10 years".* In reference to clause (b), there was a suggestion to not aim for achieving pristine water quality. This participant did not view the timeframes as being ambitious and reasonable and felt they were not qualified to comment.

Lower Waikato

The respondent who expressed an interest in this FMU stated that they agreed with the draft objectives. When asked, in reference to clause (b), what state they think water quality should be returned to, they suggested *"not to an utterly pristine state – here is a balancing act".* There was also a comment to work in a positive way with stakeholders. This respondent said they were 'Unsure' whether the provided timeframes for the vision were ambitious and reasonable since they did not feel appropriately qualified to comment.

Coromandel

The respondent stated that the vision "*appears to preclude human occupation or activity*" and queried how these objectives would fit within urban and rural productive areas. When asked

[12] Manawhakahaere, refers to governance, authority

if they felt the given timeframes for this vision were reasonable and ambitious, the participant indicated 'No' and explained that they felt the vision was unreasonable and unbalanced.

Environmental Outcomes

Participants were asked which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on for the topic of environmental outcomes. For each area, they were presented with a list of possible outcomes. When they clicked on an outcome, the draft objective was shown, and they were provided with the opportunity to leave comments. No feedback was provided for the environmental outcomes of Hauraki and the West Coast.

Taupō

Ecosystem health

One respondent suggested that there should be an explicit clause for invasive species that focuses on their removal. The other participant stated that they agreed with the described outcome.

Threatened species

The respondent who was interested in this outcome expressed agreement with the draft.

Mahinga kai

The participant who selected this outcome indicated that they agreed with the draft.

Animal drinking water

The respondent who was interested in this outcome expressed agreement with the draft.

Fishing

The participant who selected this outcome indicated that they agreed with the draft.

Irrigation, cultivation and production of food and beverages

The respondent who was interested in this outcome expressed complete agreement with the draft.

Hydro-electric power generation

The participant who picked this outcome stated that while hydro-electric power generation is important, this does not give licence to degrade the environment such as high lake levels causing erosion.

Waikato-Waipā

Despite one individual expressing an interest in this FMU, they did not select any outcomes and therefore did not provide any written feedback.

Coromandel

Ecosystem health

The respondent believed that this environmental outcome is based on a narrow definition of the term 'ecosystem', and (consequently) fails to provide for communities and people.

Threatened species

The participant explained that "*climate change will have an adverse effect on indigenous flora and fauna with experts predicting further extinctions as a result*". The respondent commented that while clause (3.i) was admirable, the extent and rate of climate change is likely to prevent this from being achieved.

Natural form and character

It was stated that the described outcome *"makes no provision for people and communities and their cultural, social, or economic wellbeing. Urban growth will impact on natural form and character of freshwater bodies, but this Outcome makes no recognition of this".*

Wai tapu

The participant stated that there needs to be recognition of private property rights. They also commented that not all adverse effects will be avoidable.

Target attribute states

Participants were provided with some examples of potential principles that could be applied when setting target attribute states and were then asked to give their feedback on potential principles. Two respondents expressed their thoughts on the issue. One individual said that they agreed with the examples provided. The other person suggested that – in some cases – baselines should be considered acceptable targets, and that *"there does not seem to be any recognition of people and communities in the approaches being taken".* When asked how they might explain this to farmers or other primary sector representatives, three participants provided feedback. One respondent stated that "*we all need incentives to do the right thing. Environmental objectives give the ecosystem a voice, so it can be heard, and not be punished by poor management practices by us*". Another believed that if people cannot see the bigger picture, they should not stay in the farming sector/industry. The third participant explained that they would encourage farmers to actively engage "*to ensure the outcomes [are] realistic, [and] reasonable, and [to] allow for people and communities to provide for th[eir]e social, economic, and cultural wellbeing*".

Activities and actions

Respondents were asked which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on for the topic of activities and actions. For each area, they were given a high-level summary of the state of freshwater within that FMU and were then questioned on their thoughts regarding the freshwater within that same area. No feedback was received for the Hauraki, West Coast and Waikato-Waipā FMUs.

Taupō

Two respondents expressed their opinions regarding the state of freshwater in Taupo. One individual explained that they farm on the shores of Lake Taupō and work under a nitrogen cap. They recognised that farming activities can influence water quality as it flows through the farm and out to the lake. The other participant commented that, *"the delays in nitrogen moving through the water table are very concerning, as poor management practice will only manifest itself a decade or more later. We know the cause and source of these problems and must put limits on nitrogen on a catchment basis in line with the objectives of improving water quality baselines".*

Participants were then asked what the Freshwater Policy Review should focus on to help accelerate positive change, one person identified three key areas: 1) setting limits on nitrogen; 2) establishing incentives to do the right thing; and 3) enforcing rules adequately. The other believed that the *"implementation of Fresh Water Farm Plans with effect from July 2024 will certainly assist in ensuring water quality is maintained".*

Coromandel

The participant explained "*more or less as stated above though the identification of forestry and farming fails to acknowledge the soils and geology of the region, the impact of storm events of slips, erosion, and sediment generation - regardless of land cover, or the impact of urbanisation on water quality*". When asked what the Freshwater Policy Review should focus on to help accelerate positive change for freshwater, the respondent stated the need to consider how both communities and landowners can be supported to help them maintain – and where possible, improve – water quality; while also recognising that climate change and afforestation will determine quantity.

How costs should be borne

Respondents were asked what they would like to say in principle at this stage about how the costs should be borne. One participant suggested that a good way to spread the burden of cost across the community would be to implement a mixture of 'causer pays' and 'beneficiary pays'

models. A participant added that "*the costs will be what the costs are but I am more interested in the various means and methods to monetise the indigenous sequestration, the biodiversity and generating credits from this activity and then there is the voluntary carbon market. These things should mitigate some of the costs at least".* Another commented that *"if the community expectation is for a higher water quality than the established baseline, then the community should be prepared to cover the costs of achieving that water quality".* The respondent added that, beyond managing the effects of their activities in accordance with best management practices and environmental baselines, individual landowners should not have to bear social benefits.

Limits and rules

Participants were asked which FMU(s) they would like to provide feedback on for the topic of potential limits and rules. For each area, they were presented with some examples of limits and rules to manage activities to improve freshwater within that FMU. They were then asked what specific rules and limits they think would help manage freshwater better. No feedback was received for the Hauraki, West Coast and Waikato-Waipā FMUs.

Taupō

One respondent suggested that there should be limits on livestock numbers within the catchment to prevent a significant increase in dairy farming and to help keep nitrogen levels to a baseline standard. The other participant believed that water harvesting or storage would help and, depending on where the storage is located, could be used for hydro-power generation on a very small scale.

Coromandel

The respondent interested in this FMU commented, *"I have no specific comments on the examples given but reiterate my previous comments about the need for a robust cost-benefit analysis - especially where the action is driven by a community desire for increasing water quality above stated environmental bottom lines".*

General feedback

Respondents were given the opportunity to provide any additional feedback regarding freshwater management within the different FMUs and/or the whole Waikato region. General feedback was only received for the Coromandel FMU.

This individual stated *"the management of freshwater in Coromandel not only needs to meet the requirements of the NPS-FM but also the social, economic, and cultural wellbeing of all of those that live, work, and recreate in the Coromandel. The big challenge the Plan has is balancing the needs and wants of those that live and work in the Coromandel with those that see Coromandel as a holiday destination".*

9 Ngā kōrero whakahoki a te rāngai pūngao/hunga whaipānga | Results – Energy sector/stakeholder engagement

9.1 Energy

Eleven people attended the facilitated online session for the energy sector with representatives from Contact Energy, Genesis Energy, Manawa Energy, Mercury Energy, Pioneer Energy and Elemental Group.

Te Mana o te Wai

Feedback was received regarding the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai. A topic of discussion was the 'hierarchy of obligations' for Te Mana o te Wai which prioritises:

1. *The health and wellbeing of waterbodies and freshwater ecosystems*
2. *The health needs of people (such as drinking water)*
3. *The ability for people and communities to provide for their social, economic and cultural wellbeing*

In response to tier (2) there was a query as to whether the environment would be able to provide high quality water for use, *"as a hydro operator the attenuation of water and the environment which it has been created around – tier 3 use… tiers 1 and 3 are clear however, tier 2 is unclear. Does tier 2 extend to electricity needs (e.g., warmth, etc) of people not just from an economic perspective - all this could sit in (2)"*. Feedback regarding the clause, *"tangata whenua are enabled to participate in policy formulation and decision-making processes…"*, included comments about existing processes such as through Joint Management Agreement (JMA) processes and *"decision-making process[es] [where] JMA members participate on hearings panels under [the] Local Government Act and Resource Management Act"*.

Long-term vision

General feedback was received regarding the draft objectives for long-term visions in reference to Te Kaupapa Kaitiaki (Taupō catchment plan) and Te Ture Whaimana O te Awa o Waikato currently under review. Queries were raised about how both documents/processes (Te Kaupapa Kaitiaki and Te Ture Whaimana) would be included in the freshwater policy review process, *"Te Ture Whaimana needs to be addressed before this aforementioned otherwise it permeates through and work will need to be re-done. The two will need to be joined together or Te Ture Whaimana's scope will need to be dealt with within this process".*

Environmental outcomes and target states

A range of feedback regarding the draft environmental outcomes was provided. In regard to clause (a) Ecosystem health (2) Water quantity, comment was made about lake levels *"hydro generation and Waikato hydro system - operating flows are within operating range, there is no impact on ecosystem health…", "river flows in context of hydro chains are always challenging overnight - what goes in at the top and what comes out at the bottom… minimum flows would severely constrain operations. Interpretation of hydro flows - currently run at low rate if required to run lower this might have consequences out the other end", "if the requirement for overnight minimum flows was expected through the catchment the ability to peak in the early morning (i.e., 4am) and evening would prove problematic".* For clause (b) Human contact,

feedback included being more specific about what it means i.e. recreational contact. Other feedback regarding clause (b), included *"recogni[tion] that infrastructure may need to reduce access for safety. There is no safety implication for safe operation of the whole system. That is a weakness. If Tier 2 was Health & Safety or Health & Wellbeing rather than water quality as there are actual H&S implications regarding human contact with water. Human contact needs to be fleshed out in policy when written".* For clause (d) Mahinga kai, there was a view that not everyone would be gathering kai in respect of customary resources across all types of water bodies.

For clause (i) Transport and Tauranga waka, feedback included *"assuming the environment provides for it. Supply of electricity is important too",* and a query, *"is launching and landing craft more important than provision of electricity? Low flows in rivers means watercraft can't be landed. It appears that watercraft are higher up the list than the need for electricity".* For clause (k) Irrigation, cultivation and production of food and beverages, water storage was mentioned and a query about *"what might this look like in context of water quantity".* Examples were given of how possible storage options are being looked at in the North Island and *"what that might look like both in terms of out of river storage and in-river storage. There needs to be flexibility for 'national good' benefits. The hydro system could perhaps store the unallocated winter water component and make water available during summer periods. What can operators assist with that can benefit the environment and other users without having unintended consequences. A cross-sector conversation could be held between the primary sector and energy companies".* For clause (l), feedback emphasised the importance of hydro-electric power generation and the impact of climate change. There was a recommendation that clause (l) be moved further up the list with a new heading 'hydro-electric power generation and climate change reslilience' with improved wording to reflect the role that hydro-electric power generation has in respect of freshwater and other benefits it provides, *"hydro is [an affirming] renewable resource [and] becoming more and more important as we move towards intermittent renewables like solar and wind. If wind or solar are lacking hydro can step in","if the status quo is kept hydro generation will [diminish] and the environment will become more volatile…Need more hydro generation", "if attenuation is reduced, the resilience of the environment is affected and the ability to produce electricity is affected" "secure, protect, enable are what is required to operate hydro. There's no recognition of electrification or why we're de-carbonising the economy which helps the environment because de-carbonising offsets greenhouse gases and that is essential for the environment to survive", "maintain operating flexibility, enhance generation, adaptation to climate change".*

Feedback on the potential principles for setting target attribute states for freshwater included a query about the practicalities of moving from B to A band *"when B is pretty good anyway", "what effort is involved",* and a query whether this was the *"best bang for your buck compared to other attributes".* There was also feedback about the connection between attributes and the view that improving one attribute could benefit others, *"attributes are all connected… these bands need to be flexible to natural processes and cycles. The 23 attributes are connected and will affect each other"*. Other feedback regarding the potential principles for setting target attribute states for freshwater raised the question on how the targets would be achieved versus whether the targets were appropriate, *"it's not necessarily the target itself, it's about what you do to meet those targets".*

General feedback

Other general feedback was provided about the inflows into the Taupō catchment through the Tongariro Diversion, Diversions and water allocation, the importance of hydro-electric power generation and Te Ture Whaimana. There was feedback *"to recognise the importance of the Tongariro Diversion - water allocation for municipals, irrigation, all benefiting from this diversion. It's recognising in this process the importance of those, not just for electricity*

generation", "there is a significant amount of water flowing through the catchment… Tongariro diversions are responsible for significant inflow. Whanganui River strategy is to be released soon. What would it mean if the water was no longer in the catchment? This also needs to be considered". Feedback was provided about diversion consents due in 2039 and whether *"people [were] still comfortable with water being diverted out of their catchment… This is a Waikato Inc issue that needs to be solved. There should be a specific water strategy plan written to recognise the importance of diversions and to get people thinking about how this consenting is dealt with because it's significantly one of the biggest risks, not just to electricity generation or hydro-generation but to Waikato Inc from allocation perspectives".*

There was mention of the importance of *"hydro-electric generation not just for Waikato but for the country. Climate change mitigation from freshwater in its use for renewable power generation and storage is specific and more current than hydro power generation. It would be a huge loss to the country due to storage loss if hydro generation is phased out".* Te Ture Whaimana was discussed in regard to engagement and participation *"rather than arriving at the formal stage"* and was suggested to have cross sector engagement with iwi to enable building an understanding of each sectors work/requirements.

9.2 Mercury

Staff at Mercury provided feedback in the form of a written submission. Of note is that Mercury provided feedback in reference to WRC's document '*Waikato Regional Policy Statement (WRPS), high level policy direction, Freshwater policy review',* Waikato Regional Council Policy Series Report – P23-12.

Te Mana o te Wai

Mercury supports the implementation of Te Mana o te Wai, including the hierarchy of obligations. As a hydro operator, Mercury has a role to play in all tiers of the implementation of Te Mana o te Wai.

Mercury support objective 1 and support the implementation of Te Mana o te Wai as a guiding concept and use of resilience as an outcome, which underpins the environment, as well as water users. Mercury acknowledges that by looking after water as an essential resource, communities can prosper through the sustainable and equitable use of the resource, and achieve long term water quality outcomes. However as drafted policy outcomes are not clear, nor is it clear how existing activities such as hydro generation can align with the objective. Further development of the planning framework is needed so policy context can be reviewed to ensure a broader suite of outcomes, including those relating to decarbonisation and critical infrastructure safety. Management of flows and lake levels may form part of mitigation to ensuring water quality outcomes are improved over time. However, until FMUs are confirmed, attributes implemented and policy created to give effect to the NPS-FM, it is not clear how Te Mana o te Wai can be balanced with the need to decarbonise New Zealand's economy and critical infrastructure adaptation to ensure safe outcomes for people and communities, as well as the environment.

Mercury supports clause 2 of the objective to focus on water availability to assist water quality outcomes. However, the current wording refers to "sufficient water available". Contaminant loading in water is proportionate to environmental flows and needs to be also managed. The ability to provide environmental flows is limited and can change depending on resource scarcity. It is anticipated climate change will result in longer periods of drought, which could bring into focus water quality issues. The ability to mitigate contaminant loading in water through releasing flows can only occur if there is enough water to release. The efficient use of water needs to incentivised through higher value activities and flexible water rights. Mercury is willing to work with water users to ensure the allocation of water can be facilitated through

controlled release of water, to ensure both environmental outcomes and the efficient end use of water is realised. The objective as drafted is considered too simplistic, as the objective should relate to the implementation of mechanisms in the NSPFM. An alternative wording is suggested below.

'*Provide for the health and well-being of waterbodies as a priority through management of water quality levers, including sufficient environmental flows proportionate to contaminants, whilst ensuring water users and activities are managed to ensure the efficient end use of water*'

Mercury supports implementation of policy outcomes in clause 3 of the objective to give effect to Te Kaupapa Kaitiaki and Te Ture Whaimana. Mercury supports engagement with all river iwi and hapū to ensure this Freshwater Plan can also consider issues as they progress and evolve. Further detail is needed specifically relating to methods and targets within relevant iwi management plans. There are challenges with running two parallel processes, noting that Te Ture Whaimana will also be concurrent to this Freshwater Plan process and needs to be considered as a priority. Clarity is sought on this engagement and the role of this freshwater policy process. Mercury supports the implementation of NOF attributes.

Mercury supports clause 4 in the objective, including early involvement with Tangata Whenua across all FMUs.

Specific recognition for existing capacity, which is reliant upon the non-consumptive use of freshwater should be provided to minimise the ever-increasing requirement to consent new greenfield renewable generation becoming an unattainable moving goalpost.

Feedback in relation to the priorities in Te Mana o te Wai more generally, and issue of relevance for Mercury in the Waikato Hydro Scheme (WHS):

First priority in the objective:

- Benefits arise from the operation of the WHS, including providing attenuation of water, which supports resilience of the environment during dry periods, as well as the ability to safely manage flows during higher flows, which are natural events. The existence of the WHS has shaped and altered the natural environment around the formation of hydro lakes, and a run of river hydro system.
- Some natural risks will be exacerbated by climate change. Generally infrastructure that is critical for the health and safety of people and communities needs to be secure and resilient to sudden or unexpected threats, risks or shocks, such as flooding, earthquakes, as also relevant to providing some environmental resilience. The safe passage of water is primarily contextualised with regard to public safety, however extreme events are potentially catastrophic for the environment as well. This concept needs to be thought through, as to the freshwater policy outcomes sought from the implementation of Te Mana o te Wai.
- Flows from the Tongariro diversions also underpin environmental flows and the resilience of the existing environment, which has adapted around an altered natural state.

Second priority in the objective:

- Flows are attenuated through the WHS and in the lower Waikato River, benefiting municipal and other water supplies, water infrastructure and the operation of the Huntly Power Station, which provides critical security to the national electricity system. Mercury considers that electricity is an essential need in modern society.

- Mercury owns and/or operates four geothermal power stations (Rotokawa, Nga Awa Purua, Ngatamariki and Mokai) in the Waikato Region with a total net capacity of 367 MW. These geothermal power stations provide baseload electricity that is not subject to climatic constraints, which complements the variable (peaking) generation on the WHS. These geothermal generation activities rely on freshwater from the Waikato River for operational and drilling purposes.

Third priority:

- The existence of the WHS provides benefits to other water users and industry, through the attenuation of water, which increases resilience in water supply.
- Mercury supports the 6 principles of Te Mana o te Wai and can help improve long term outcomes. Mercury is committed to these principles in working with the community and stakeholders to work towards positive solutions.
- Mercury considers cross sector engagement is needed across many policy issues, with a focus on policy solutions where the environment is constrained or degraded from a water quality perspective, as well as on water allocation which is needing to progress and modernise to assist with the efficient and equitable use of water within the next policy iteration of the Regional Plan. Mercury considers greater flexibility in water use is needed to ensure more efficient use of the overall allocation, where if allocated water is not being utilised by one user, needs to be made available for others, subject to a hydrological connection and management of effects. Mercury can provide some benefit through the storage of water in Lake Taupō and potentially assist with the controlled release to assist with water allocation pressure under certain conditions. This is a shift in thinking from previous planning processes, but Mercury is open to discussing to find policy solutions.

Freshwater Management Units

Regarding the options outlined for FMUs in the WRPS policy direction summary on FMUs Mercury supports the preferred option (Option B). Clarity is sought on how PC1 defines a lake versus a river environment in terms of how Waikato hydro schemes are considered within the Upper Waikato FMU. Mercury seek clarity on how the policy direction provides an integrated approach between upstream FMU catchments and how effects on downstream activities in other FMUs will be managed.

Long-term visions

Reference was made to the non-specific FMU vision statements outlined in the *Waikato Regional Policy Statement (WRPS), high level policy direction, Freshwater policy review* document that may apply to more than one FMU. Mercury queried the safety considerations to consider for traditional customary activities, as well as marae or rivers communities which could be adversely impacted by natural hazards. Acknowledging that natural hazards are covered in point (f) of the non-FMU specific draft vision. With increased volatility in extreme weather, it is anticipated larger more frequent flood events will occur. Mercury has some ability to mitigate high flow events, but there is still uncertainty about the magnitude of floods expected. To maintain public safety it is anticipated significant upgrades to the WHS will be required. Mercury query the intent of point h) that reduced water use is the focus. Water as an essential resource is required a number of important activities, including, drinking water, electricity generation, primary industry and food production.

Mercury have suggested the following wording in point h) of the non-specific visions as below:

‘h) *Access to freshwater for use, including non-consumptive uses is provided while improved efficiency of use and water management reduces future demand., effects on the environment*.’

Lake Taupō and Upper Waikato

Within the Lake Taupō FMU and Upper Waikato FMU vision statements environmental flows are enhanced through the Tongariro diversions, as well as storage and controlled release of water from Lake Taupō through the Waikato Hydro control scheme, which is essential for the generation of renewable electricity generation. Mercury seeks recognition of the benefits of electricity infrastructure , which is provided for in the NPS-FM.

Decarbonisation of New Zealand's economy is reliant upon the efficient use of the freshwater resource for hydro-electricity. The NPS-FM acknowledges this balance, with some pragmatism around freshwater limits through clause 3.31(2). Freshwater policy needs to achieve the correct balance between implementing Te Mana o te Wai while ensuring that people and communities can provide for their wellbeing, and environmental outcomes.

Mercury seek clarity on Point h) of the Upper Waikato long-term vision. Protect could imply there is no use of that resource. Mercury supports use of hydro lakes as managed fisheries. Mercury seek acknowledgment of the need to manage invasive pest species such as hornwort, and recently the gold clam. The invasive macrophyte can cause operational outages, which are an ongoing issue for Mercury. Mercury currently use mechanical shredding to minimise impact as well as diquat chemical to manage excessive growth as certain times of the year. The chemical use of diquat is under current review from the EPA. In the future Mercury would support greater resource and assistance in the management of Hornwort. Amendments to point h) in this Upper Waikato vision could include *'Fisheries and freshwater habitat that are degraded are rehabilitated and restored, and where they are not degraded they are managed to maintain or improve water quality outcomes.'*

Mercury seek clarity to how a protectionist approach will incentivise the right outcomes and state that further detail and work on the vision statements are required.

Middle Waikato

In regard to the draft long-term vision for Middle Waikato, Mercury commented that further work was needed from high level objectives, policies, rules and methods to understand implications of policy on Mercury assets and operations.

General feedback

Mercury supports the acknowledgment of effects from the development and operation of theWaikato Hydro control scheme (WHS).

- Sediment as an attribute which is an ongoing concern and an operational problem for Mercury in its hydro operations. The hydro reservoirs are not the source of contaminants, but they attenuate some contaminants in water (especially microbial pathogens through an increase in light (UV) treatment compared to an unmodified river system). Algal production over summer can be a problem in the hydro reservoirs and research shows that reducing phosphorus relative to nitrogen can limit algal growth, as can reducing the overall concentration of nutrients in the river.
- Flow management and lake levels may form part of mitigation to ensuring water quality outcomes are improved over time. However, flow and attenuation mitigation is of limited benefit and cannot always be relied upon for example dilution during drought, as the river will likely be in a natural low flow state. For this reason Mercury supports the reduction of nitrogen, phosphorus, sediment and microbial pathogens entering the Waikato River from land use activities. Wider effects and all NPS-FW attributes need to be further understood, but is generally supported the implementation of the full suite of environmental attributes as managed limited in the next iteration of the Freshwater Plan.

- The creation of the Waikato Hydro scheme forever changed the landscape, which has had an effect on the surrounding environment. Mercury accepts effects from activities must be remedied or mitigated. The natural regeneration of the natural environment around the modified landscape now presents as benefits on ecosystem services such as fisheries, edge wetlands and lake margins which are sustained by the reservoirs, and numerous recreational activities such as fishing, boating, and international rowing.
- Adaptation to Effects from Climate Change and role of Critical Infrastructure. Adaptation to climate change is essential if Mercury is to deliver a broad suite of environmental, social and cultural outcomes for the community. Mercury is currently working to understand the impacts of climate change on the management of the WHS and regulatory processes.
- Mercury as a lifeline utility operator also has other obligations relating to the safe and efficient operation of the WHSWHS, which is also critical infrastructure. Flow management has implications for safe outcomes for people, communities. The safe passage of water is primarily contextualised with regard to risk to people and public safety, however extreme events also are catastrophic for the environment and ecosystems that rely on resilience. There could be an opportunity to work with river communities to ensure safer outcomes and better connections with the Awa moving forward.
- With climate change it is anticipated longer more intense droughts as well as more frequent high flow events. Adaptation to climate change require anticipation of mitigation within regulatory frameworks. Drought will bring into focus both water scarcity and water quality issues for all water users and communities, this includes drinking water for communities. Mercury is keen to work with water users to ensure a more flexible approach to water allocation policy to ensure access to water can be maintained and is also resilient to climate change. Existing water allocation policy is overly complex, and generally uses naturalised data for the basis of decision making. This takes the focus off the operation of the WHS and attenuation of flow. The reality is, the storage and attenuation of water stored in Lake Taupō is a benefit which can be used for the wider community and needs to be integrated into policy solutions. This is a shift from previous regulatory processes relating to water allocation.
- It is anticipated the effects from climate change will result in more frequent and larger high flow events (floods). Further analysis of hydraulic modelling/data is needed to understand reliability on passage of flood systems and high flow management planning to mitigate such events. Potential remedies could require significant upgrades to existing dam structures located over the riverbed, as well as changes to policy controls currently within our resource consent relating to flow management of the hydro system. Greater flexibility to controls relating to flow management would provide ability to provide for greater ability to adapt to climate volatility, as well as work towards additional benefits to the community.
- Constraining essential upgrades to critical infrastructure could have serious consequences to health and safety of communities and dependent critical infrastructure customers such as water supply, as well as adverse potential adverse effects on the environment if the effects from climate change, such as high flow events are not safely managed from an operational perspective.

9.3 Energy sector survey feedback

Two participants indicated that they represented the ‘Energy’ sector. Of those two, one respondent also selected the ‘Forestry’ option.

Te Mana o te Wai

Respondents were presented with the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai and asked to provide their thoughts on the wording. One individual gave some broad feedback. The participant expressed agreement with the objective(s) but stated that they "*would like to see an objective explicitly relating to water body erosion, and stability of the land surrounding our waterways".* It was suggested that while this topic may be implicitly referred to in one or two of the objectives drafted, this topic needs to be bought into focus.

Long-term vision

Participants were asked which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on for the topic of long-term visions. For each area, they were given a draft objective outlining the long-term vision and then given the opportunity to leave their feedback about the wording of the vision. No feedback was received for the Coromandel, Hauraki or West Coast FMUs.

Taupō

The respondent who was interested in this FMU expressed agreement with the objectives outlined in the draft long-term vision, but also noted that "*water is intrinsically linked to the land that it sits on, and is surrounded by, and to focus only on the water, and not the land that contains it seems unsystematic and sub optimal".* When asked if they thought the given timeframes for the Taupō vision are ambitious and reasonable, the participant indicated they were 'Unsure.' It was believed that the timeframe would depend on resourcing to achieve the objectives.

Lower Waikato

The participant who was interested in this FMU did not provide any feedback on the wording of the long-term vision. They did, however, indicate that they were 'Unsure' whether the given timeframes were ambitious and reasonable. It was explained that their lack of research into the topic made them uncertain about the timeframes.

Environmental outcomes

Participants were asked which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on for the topic of environmental outcomes. For each area, they were presented with a list of possible outcomes. When they clicked on an outcome, the draft objective was shown and they were provided with the opportunity to leave comments. No feedback was received for Coromandel, Hauraki or West Coast FMUs.

Taupō

Ecosystem Health

It was suggested that there should be an explicit clause focusing on the removal of invasive species; for example, catfish in Taupō.

Hydro-electric power generation

It was acknowledged that hydro-electric power generation is of national importance, however, there was the view that it should not degrade the environment it operates in and that independent operations should cease if efforts are not made to limit erosions caused by high lake levels.

Waikato-Waipā

Hydro-electric power generation

It was stated that this outcome *"should reflect the current and future climate benefits of renewable energy for generation, cooling and storage through hydro, pumped hydro, floating solar and energy storage technologies required to combat climate change".*

Target states

Participants were provided with some examples of potential principles that could be applied when setting target attribute states and were then asked to give their feedback on potential principles. No responses were given. When asked how they might explain these principles to farmers or other primary sector representatives, one participant stated that *"we all need incentives to do the right thing. Environmental objectives give the ecosystem a voice, so it can be heard, and not be punished by poor management practices by us".*

Activities and actions

Respondents were asked which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on for the topic of activities and actions. For each area, they were given a high-level summary of the state of freshwater within that FMU and were then questioned on their thoughts regarding the freshwater within that same area. No feedback was received for the Coromandel, Hauraki, West Coast and Waikato-Waipā FMUs.

Taupō

One participant stated that they were very concerned with the delays in nitrogen moving through the water table and, as the cause of this problem, must place limits on nitrogen at a catchment basis. Participants were then asked what the Freshwater Policy Review should focus on to help accelerate positive change. One responded with *"setting limits on nitrogen, establishing clear incentives to do the right thing, and enforcing the rules adequately so our lake and surrounding waterways do not continue to decline in quality".*

How costs should be borne

Respondents were asked what they would like to say in principle at this stage about how the costs should be borne. The participant suggested that a good way to spread the burden of cost across the community would be to implement a mixture of 'causer pays' and 'beneficiary pays' models.

Limits and rules

Participants were asked which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on for the topic of potential limits and rules. For each area, they were presented with some examples of limits and rules to manage activities to improve freshwater within that FMU. They were then asked what specific rules and limits they think would help manage freshwater better. No feedback was received for the Coromandel, Hauraki, West Coast and Waikato-Waipā FMUs.

Taupō

One respondent suggested that there should be limits on livestock numbers within the catchment to prevent a significant increase in dairy farming and to help keep nitrogen levels to a baseline standard.

General feedback

No general feedback was received when respondents were given the opportunity to provide any additional feedback regarding freshwater management within the different FMUs and/or the whole Waikato region.

9.4 Fuel companies

Three fuel companies provided feedback in a written submission.

General feedback

The fuel companies indicated that they have an interest in several key issues which are relevant to their assets and operations across the Waikato region.

The fuel companies noted that they sometimes encounter groundwater during excavations to install or remove underground petroleum storage systems and associated infrastructure. They noted that these excavations are not ‘‘bores’ in the normal sense of the word’ and recommended that Waikato Regional Council manage bores based on the definition provided in the National Planning Standards.

The fuel companies also noted that temporary dewatering (involving both the take and discharge of groundwater) is sometimes necessary to enable the installation and replacement of underground petroleum storage systems and the installation of underground pipelines and foundations. This occurs relatively infrequently and only for the period of time necessary to excavate below the water table, complete the tank pit base preparation, install the tank, and backfill the excavation. The fuel companies noted that temporary dewatering is crucial for their operations and that, because the groundwater that is typically encountered is shallow and likely to be hydrologically connected to nearby surface waters, the subsequent discharges have limited potential for adverse affects. They recommend that temporary dewatering be treated as a permitted activity, though noted that the method and location of the discharge is relevant and additional controls may be appropriate in specified locations.

In relation to stormwater discharges, the fuel companies recommended regulating discharges from fuel industry sites through a permitted activity rule with appropriate standards informed by the Environmental Guidelines for Water Discharges from Petroleum Industry Sites in New Zealand. They also noted that they desire a pathway ‘that enables discharges from reticulated networks to be consented by regional councils, subject to permission from the network operator to use its infrastructure’.

In relation to contaminated land, the fuel companies noted that any regional provisions ‘should relate to regional council functions, being the investigation of land for the purposes of identifying and monitoring contaminated land’. They noted that they consider that investigations and assessments of potentially contaminated land should be enabled as a permitted activity. They also emphasised that any regional provisions should not duplicate the existing National Environmental Standard for Assessing and Managing Contaminants in Soil to Protect Human Health and should be justified by a robust s32 analysis. They stated that they consider the existing National Standard to provide ‘appropriate land use controls in relation to land disturbance and changes of use in relation to contaminants in soils’.

The fuel companies recommended that passive discharges from the breakdown or movement of residual contaminants be treated as permitted or controlled activities.

10 Ngā kōrero whakahoki a ngā kaunihera/hunga whaipānga | Results – Territorial Authorities sector/ stakeholder engagement

10.1 Territorial Authorities

Fourteen people attended the facilitated session for territorial authorities with representatives from Bay of Plenty Regional Council, Hamilton City Council, Hauraki District Council, South Waikato District Council, Thames Coromandel District Council, Waikato District Council, Waipā District Council, Watercare/Waikato and Stantec. A regional councillor was also in attendance.

Te Mana o te Wai

Feedback was received regarding the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai. There was overall feedback that the content was too 'wordy' and that the clauses should follow the order of the hierarchy of obligations. Other comments included *"doesn't give enough mana to wai", "specific mention of 'climate change'. Risks and adaptation are missing", "surface water catchment and groundwater catchments are not necessarily the same"* and *"given that the order of priorities in NPS-FM-2020 is important; it seems strange that 1(i), (ii), (iii) discuss health and people".* For clause 1 there were queries about the definitions of 'restored', 'freshwater', and 'resilience' and a suggestion to have a glossary of terms/definitions *"as some terms [could] be interpreted differently".* Suggested rewording for clause (1) included *"The health, resilience and wellbeing of freshwater resources is sustained for present and future generations to give effect to Te Mana o te Wai".* A comment for clause (1) was to remove the word 'resources'. There were also suggestions to add the words 'limits and controls' to clause (1.3) regarding the effects of human activities. There were a number of comments for the following clause *'there is sufficient water available to provide for the health and well-being of waterbodies, and provided that is achieved, water may be available for human use, provided it is allocated and used efficiently'*. There was a view that this clause consists of two ideas that are in contradiction with each other, queries on how wellbeing would be measured and a few comments that instead of 'water may be available...' this be changed to 'water is available...'. Planning detention/retention was mentioned and that it *"does not go far enough for retention".* Other comments included *"talks about availability of water then it has caveats when water takes exist", "sufficient and health and wellbeing will need to be clearly defined"* and "*how does this provide for existing activities for human use "i.e., drinking water supply" where a body of water may be degraded but outside of the water users control (i.e., farming, other industrial discharges)".* There were a few comments for the following clause, '*water quality and quantity targets are established and respected, to reflect the cultural, spiritual and ecological values of freshwater as understood by tangata whenua and the community'*. The main theme for feedback on this clause was about the targets and the process for setting targets, who sets targets and how would these be set. There was also a suggestion to remove the final eight words. In respect of the clause regarding '*tangata whenua are enabled to participate in policy formulation...'* there were views to add 'community' to the clause and a view that it was okay as is.

Long-term visions

Upper Waikato

Feedback on the draft long-term vision for Upper Waikato was provided including having similar visions and dates as neighbouring FMUs, a query as to why the same vision in Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato - the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River wasn't being used, a comment about *"eco development - how to ensure it can continue to provide growth, etc without degrading social direction",* consideration of demographics and deprivation and the differences between Upper Waikato and Taupō, and *"reduction in water takes for recreation vs returning water courses to 100 years ago - very difficult to achieve with a growing population unless we are going to be significantly changing source of freshwater".*

Middle Waikato

Feedback on the draft long-term vision for Middle Waikato was provided including having a connection to and between each FMU, a suggested timeframe of 2054 for all clauses, must be measurable, having a benchmark for 'restored', what it is now and the goal, achievable aspirations as being questionable and equitable transition, *"everything needs to be achievable so not one particular generation pays the cost. Blanket timing is too broad".* There was support for clause (a) regarding Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato - the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River and achieving the vision in 80 years. For clause (b) there was a comment that 10 years was too ambitious and that there would be a lag in seeing any improvements. The end of clause (c) *'...in a way that[…]'* was viewed as unnecessary and should be removed. For clause (d) regarding fisheries and freshwater habitats that are rehabilitated and restored and protected, there was a query about catchments that receive stormwater and whether this was achievable. There was a query regarding the end of clause (e) *'...cultural practices and relationships are retained*'. For clause (f) '*land use opportunities have been recognised and taken within ecosystem health target attribute states',* there was a comment that this creates limits and another query, *"is this putting the onus of water quality outcomes on Territorial Authorities"?* For clause (g) *'rivers are swimmable and the bottom of rivers are visible*', the comment included *"conflicts with "growth" driven catchments, especially considering increased [stormwater], more erosion, drive for less 'hard infrastructure'".* For clause (h) regarding urban areas and communities the comment was that this *"relates to urban but can also relate to non-urban. Often an omitting link between what happens on land and what is happening in water. Strong linkage between land use and water quality".*

Lower Waikato

Feedback on the draft long-term vision for Lower Waikato was provided including a query about the different timeframes of clauses, a query for clause (g) *"waterways are safe? […] weed free and pest free […] with no decline",* and feedback on clause (h) *"reduction in water takes (swimming and drinking water) vs population growth".*

Waipā

Feedback on the draft long-term vision for Waipā was provided including a comment about needing to link FMUs and a query for clause (e) ancestral lands and being unsure about the reference to birthing.

Hauraki

General feedback on the draft long-term vision for Hauraki was provided including alignment with neighbouring FMUs and having similar visions and dates, *"overlaps between Hauraki and Coromandel FMUs and District boundaries. Means two District Plans are applicable. The visions for both FMUs need to talk to each other", "HCDC and TCDC will be impacted by each other's objectives which differ", "Hauraki and BoP - a timeframe for the Hauraki/BoP region in its entirety rather than a number of timeframes for the set. Timeframes will need to be set*

when the TAs know of science outcomes and matauranga in order to solve problems - what does success look like and by when"? Other feedback on the draft long-term vision for Hauraki viewed some clauses as *"open-ended, some are very specific. Who determines all the specifics? Words like 'appropriate areas' used which are open to interpretation".*

There was also a suggestion for clauses (a) - (d) to have a timeframe of 2054. Specific feedback was given regarding grammatical and punctuation corrections for clauses (b), (c) and (d). For clause (b) *"the community collectively takes action, and sustainable land management […]",* for clause (c*) "freshwater is holistically managed in a way that recognises that health of the people relies on the health of the environment...",* and for clause (d) *"freshwater provides for a range of values and uses, including drinking, swimming, mahinga kai and other traditional and customary practices".*

Environmental outcomes and target states

A range of feedback regarding the draft environmental outcomes was provided. Overall feedback regarding the draft environmental outcomes included the suggestion to add municipal supply, consideration of resilience to hazards and extreme events, comment that there were a lot of outcomes that were difficult to measure, the suggestion for environmental outcomes to be region-specific and that *"overall conflicts between environmental outcomes need to be addressed".* For clause (a) Ecosystem health there was comment for *"ecosystem health and drinking water alignment of water security strategy",* a query on how wellbeing would be measured and whether this should be removed while another queried use of the term mauri instead of wellbeing. There was also mention of flooding to allow for fish lifecycles in respect of ecosystem health. For (a) Ecosystem health (1) Water quality feedback included consideration of discharges and geothermal reinjection. For (a) Ecosystem health (3) Habitat there were suggestions to remove trout and salmon, and in regard to significant vegetation a query about terrestrial as well. For (a) Ecosystem health (4) Aquatic life, there was comment that not all microbes are desired (i.e. E-coli) and a couple of suggestions to reword the statement regarding biota to *"…abundance and diversity of indigenous biota…"* or *"…the abundance and diversity of desirable biota…"*. Feedback also suggested that maybe there was a double-up between (a) Ecosystem health and (f) Drinking water supply. For clause (b) Human contact regarding the quantity and quality of fresh water supports people to safely connect with freshwater, there was a query *"all of the time or some of the time"?* For clause (c) Threatened species, feedback included concern with pest animal and plant species and controlling pests such as golden clams and koi carp and mention of threatened introduced species such as dung beetles. For clause (e) Natural form and character, there were queries as to whether this encompassed flooding and flood plains stating that *"character: does not allow for flood plains/stop banks - these are required for resilience"*. For clause (f) Drinking water supply, there was feedback to consider the *"future of water security needs",* queries whether this referred to municipal supply or private supply, whether this required *"water supply, to be drinkable at sources or appropriate for supply for treatment",* and a definition of *"what is water quality for drinking water".* There were comments that clause (f) Drinking water supply and clause (g) Animal drinking water were maybe a double-up and another comment that *"this means we may need 2 different consents and therefore 2 different supplies".* For clause (g) there was a query regarding 'palatable' for animal drinking water.

For clause (i) Transport and Tauranga waka, there was comment that this was location specific including access from land, gradient, flow, depth, silt, sediment, draught and that for rivers *"silt will affect river use for watercraft".* Transport could include *"tourist - jet boating – white water rafting - ferries up rivers".* For clause (j) Fishing, there was a query whether *"trout spawning should be taking precedence over regionally significant trout",* whether this was FMU or part FMU specific and whether *"…suitable for human contact…"* meant all of the time or most of the time. For clause (k) Irrigation, cultivation and production of food and beverages,

there was comment as to whether this should be split out, and a query on *"where does reinjection to groundwater/aquifer fit into this".* For clause (l) Hydro-electric power generation, there was comment about the *"need to consider MBIE's guidance. MfE Emission Reduction Plan targets for decarbonisation and electrification of the energy sector",* mention of geothermal, and the following comment, *"to meet New Zealand's energy needs which are currently pushed to limit there needs to be the ability to further create dams/hydro to ensure electricity can be supplied. Dams management enormously impacts downstream"*. For clause (m) Commercial and industrial use, the following feedback was provided, *"wonder if there is benefit in more outcomes which enable urban activities, including urban outfalls - intake stocks - erosion protection streams, water intake is provided for".* For clause (m) there was also mention of *"Huntly thermal power – cooling water".*

Feedback on the potential principles for setting target attribute states for freshwater was provided. Feedback on potential principles included:

- *When restoring best to improve by focusing efforts instead of spreading across everything.*
- *Baselines - need way forward to make sure we have enough coverage.*
- *Bands are good but check reasonable for each area for 10 year goal.*
- *Scale needs to be defined. Needs a "road map" approach. Understand the 'long term target' contribution by making a percentage improvement in the short term.*
- *Targets to be developed in conjunction with key stakeholders including Network Utility Providers.*
- *Instead of baseline state, set specific goal for waterbody to reach at 10% increments. This gives a goal and not just making improvements with no "aim".*
- *Short term target: bullet point around 'closing the gap' is unclear. First bullet point is better.*
- *Long-term and short-term targets - all this needs to be costed and budgets agreed.*

Limits and rules

Feedback about the types of rules and limits shown included comment that these were mainly rural focussed rather than urban and that *"other land use and roading and stormwater treatment [were] not covered"* and mention that *"limits on water take could impact some communities who draw water from nearby streams"*.

Waikato-Waipā

Feedback about the types of rules and limits for Waikato-Waipā included comments about emerging contaminants such as microplastics and enabling regulation of contaminants, providing for hydro-electricity generation – existing and future, and consideration of urban activities and impacts (such as stormwater outfalls, treatment devices, maintenance upgrades) and not just focus on rural activities.

Hauraki

Feedback about the types of rules and limits for Hauraki that were shown included the comment that these were *"focussed on farming – economy or rural district"* and one other commented that, *"limits on water takes in Hauraki - linkages from Hauraki 1 and 2 into large supply in Hauraki - limiting water takes will have economic impacts. Equally so if talk begins about limit of land use and intensification, reduction of contaminants reduction of stock in waterways - fine in water quality perspective but the entire Hauraki district depends on agriculture. This will put pressure on the agricultural sector which will have a roll-on impact in the district and throughout New Zealand (GDP)".*

10.2 Hamilton City Council

Staff at Hamilton City Council (HCC) provided feedback in a written submission.

The key messages and recommendations that HCC staff shared included:

- Support for WRC's Freshwater Policy Review for the Waikato.
- Support in principle "*the objectives of restoring and protecting freshwater resources, managing land and water on a whole of catchment basis, water efficiency, establishing and meeting water quality and quantity targets to reflect freshwater values, and tangata whenua involvement in policy and decision-making processes".*
- Providing *"greater recognition to climate change risks and adaptation and associated mechanisms needed to respond to the impacts of climate change".*
- *"…that targets for measuring long term improvements should be based on scientific knowledge and backed by robust baselines. These long-term targets should consider practicability, achievability and consider what the community can afford".*

Te Mana o te Wai

HCC staff agreed in principle with the objectives of restoring and protecting freshwater resources, managing land and water on a whole of catchment basis, using water efficiently, establishing and meeting water quality and quantity targets to reflect freshwater values, and involving tangata whenua in policy and decision-making processes.

It was noted that more consideration should be given to climate change risks and adaptation by including a climate action objective. HCC staff said that they want the Freshwater Policy Review to support them to deliver Hamilton City Council's climate change strategy, which includes encouraging sustainable water use and the conservation and protection of the Waikato River.

In reference to clause (1), it was suggested that the existing degradation of the region's freshwater should be acknowledged and the need for improvement (on top of restoration) emphasised. It was also recommended that this clause be assessed on a broader catchment basis, noting that individual water bodies change over time. HCC staff noted that the use of the term 'resource' appears to run counter to Te Mana o te Wai by labelling water as an asset for human use - 'freshwater' was suggested as a more appropriate alternative. In reference to clause (1.1), it was suggested that the word 'ecosystems' be replaced with 'natural ecosystems'.

HCC staff said that clause (1.3) adequately emphasises human impacts, but noted that these impacts are not the sole determinant of the health and wellbeing of freshwater bodies and ecosystems.

In reference to clause (3), it was noted that it will be important to recognise urban growth and the infrastructure required to support it in order to set appropriate water quality and quantity targets. Staff expressed concern about having 'the goal posts shifted' after participating in the Healthy Rivers PC1 project.

HCC staff expressed their agreement with clause (4), noting that it would need to be effectively resourced to be realised.

Long-term vision

Middle Waikato

HCC staff provided a range of comments on the long-term vision for Middle Waikato. It was noted that the draft long-term visions generally align with Hamilton City Council's 'Nature in the City' programme.

HCC staff expressed concern about the proposed timeframe and said that the proposed date of 2074 is very ambitious and unreasonable. It was noted that Hamilton City Council will need to invest significantly just to meet existing water quality standards in the face of additional pressures from climate change and population growth. While the Council carries out long-term planning to implement water quality improvements, staff noted that expectations must acknowledge the need to provide for community wellbeing as a whole and ensure that 'a single generation is not burdened with the cost'. They emphasised that the implementation of best available technology and practice must be staged over time so that services do not become unaffordable and impact people's wellbeing.

HCC staff noted several water treatment challenges which can affect water quality, including seasonal climatic conditions and a higher degree of control in treating wastewater than stormwater.

HCC staff said that there are currently gaps in the baseline data for freshwater health and that it is difficult to measure changes without having a reliable baseline. They said that they would rely on Waikato Regional Council to develop robust baseline data to inform an achievable target. In particular, staff asked that Waikato Regional Council clearly define what is considered restored and protected.

It was suggested that clause (a) be reworded to read 'Freshwater management *gives effect* to Te Ture Whaimana o te Awa o Waikato', rather than 'Freshwater management *recognises* Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato'. In reference to clause (b), it was recommended that any percentage target be based on science and consider practicability, achievability and what the community can afford. It was noted that it is difficult to confirm a percentage improvement due to the number of different variables involved.

It was recommended that clause (d) acknowledge the difference between restoring habitats for native species and creating healthy habitats for trout. Staff emphasised that 'restoration' infers a goal of stopping degradation, but allowing an exotic species to thrive contributes to degradation.

It was noted that clause (e) should be amended, as it can currently be read as "Ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu, taonga and customary rights are protected from … cultural practices".

It was noted that the statement 'Land use opportunities have been recognised and taken' in clause (f) is unclear and that it would be difficult for a consent officer to determine whether land use opportunities had been 'recognised and taken' (especially when there are multiple uses for a property). Staff suggested that the objective be amended to read: "The effects of land use are within ecosystem health target attribute states".

In reference to clause (g), staff said that geological factors will influence whether the bottoms of freshwater bodies are visible and recommended that Waikato Regional Council investigate the achievability of this vision in the given timeframe. It was noted that the timeframe for clause (g) does not align with the timeframe that the community arrived at for swimmable rivers and kai gathering in Healthy Rivers PC1.

In reference to clause (h), staff noted that Hamilton City Council carries out long-term planning to implement water quality improvements but are expecting significant growth in coming decades. This will require significant expenditure just to meet existing water quality standards. Staff said that it is important to holistically consider the 'social, environmental, cultural and economic' wellbeing of the community when considering expectations around water quality improvement.

Environmental outcomes and target states

HCC staff provided the following feedback on the draft environmental outcomes for Waikato-Waipā.

HCC staff were supportive of the Ecosystem Health outcomes and noted that the outcomes in clause (c) are in alignment with Hamilton City Council's 'Nature in the City' programme. In reference to Ecosystem Health outcome b) i), staff said they were unsure what was meant by 'variability'. Staff also noted that more consideration should be given to climate change and adaptation.

HCC staff were supportive of the Human Contact outcome in principle, but noted that certain discharges cannot be controlled (e.g. climatic events overwhelming wastewater systems). They recommended further clarification of 'the interaction between water quality and quantity and safe connection to the awa'.

It was recommended that a definition be provided of the threatened species covered by the Threatened Species outcomes and whether they only pertain to underwater species. It was noted that Threatened Species outcomes ii) and iii) align with 'Nature in the City' and recommended considering the 'impacts of increases in biodiversity through reintroducing species on existing maintenance practices'. Staff questioned whether Threatened Species outcome i), which stipulates 'no human-induced loss of threatened species', would impede Hamilton City Council's ability to remove trees due to health and safety concerns.

It was noted that there are complexities in giving effect to Mahinga Kai outcomes, particularly in relation to accessing areas near point source discharges. Staff recommended that Mahinga Kai outcome i) be amended to distinguish between the physical and spiritual safety of the water.

HCC staff said that the Natural Form and Character outcome should consider how hydro generation affects river flows and characteristics, and the subsequent complexities of achieving this outcome. They also noted that the characteristics of freshwater bodies can change because of long-term natural cycles. Staff suggested the addition of another environmental outcome for Natural Form and Character which would provide for the restoration of highly modified water bodies in urban areas. They noted that the natural character of these water bodies has often been lost and restoration requires changes to the form of the freshwater body.

HCC staff asked for the Drinking Water Supply outcome to be clarified, noting that it is currently unclear whether the outcome requires water to be at a drinkable standard when taken or of an appropriate standard which can produce drinkable water. It was noted that the achievement of this outcome is dependent on the impacts of climate change and future growth and asked for Waikato Regional Council to incorporate climate change risks and action throughout the Freshwater Policy Review.

HCC staff supported both the Irrigation, Cultivation and Production of Food and Beverages outcome and the Commercial and Industrial Use outcome in principle. They noted, however, that maintaining and enhancing freshwater quality and quantity should be paramount when addressing these issues and that it is important to ensure sustainable use of water for these purposes.

Activities and actions

HCC staff recommended focusing on:

- Restricting the drainage of wetlands.
- Restricting stock from entering waterways.
- Creating native riparian habitat.
- Providing additional support to protect existing native habitat.
- Providing additional support for current restoration programmes, which can take place collaboratively between district councils.
- Supporting the collection of quality applicable data that will be used to measure success.

When asked how the costs arising from this review should be borne, staff suggested spreading costs 'across different avenues and stakeholders'. They indicated that costs should be shared equitably, including between business/industry and different levels of government. They suggested that this approach would also contribute to intergenerational cost savings.

Limits and rules

HCC staff recommended that the protection and enhancement of ecosystems and native species habitat should be factored in during development and after the land use change. HCC staff said that hydro generation should not come at the cost of other river users when it affects water quality. They said that three waters infrastructure should have the same status of significance and that all parties who rely on the river will need to carry out their activities sustainably.

General feedback

HCC staff were supportive of the intent of the Freshwater Policy Review and noted that it broadly aligns with activities and programmes led by Hamilton City Council, including the 'Nature in the City' programme.

HCC staff noted that the policy review focuses on existing discharges (such as those from farms, hydro dams, commercial activities and councils). They emphasised the importance of education on the impact of activities carried out by the public (eg. washing cars, incorrect disposal of rubbish, construction) and their link with water quality.

HCC staff recommended that WRC clarify whether exotic flora and fauna pests are referred to as invasive species. This will help distinguish them from other exotics that do not significantly harm the environment.

HCC staff asked that Waikato Regional Council collaborate with territorial authorities on matters relating to catchment management. They noted that the inclusion of experts from Hamilton City Council will ensure better catchment management outcomes and contribute to freshwater policy objectives.

11 Ngā kōrero whakahoki a ngā hinonga taiao/hunga whaipānga |Results – Environmental Non-Government Organisations (ENGOs) sector/ stakeholder engagement

11.1 Environmental Non-Government Organisations (ENGOs)

Six people attended the facilitated session for Environmental and non-governmental organisations with representatives from Fish and Game, Department of Conservation, and independent representatives from community groups such as BEnviro, and Whaingaroa Environment Centre/ Xtreme Zero Waste.

Te Mana o te Wai

Feedback was received regarding the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai.

- In response to clause (1)(ii) the ENGOs seek clarity of the intention of the word "system, suggesting that this phrase, and the word 'maybe' in clause 2 could be reworded.
- They noted that the cultural, social, and economic considerations in the objective are more akin to aspirations rather than an objective. The ENGOs seek clarity on how the hierarchy of obligations will be implemented including how the objective will be integrated in the freshwater plan planning process, site by site.
- Participants suggest new definitions for water quality and quantity targets in clause 3, and that it should include ecological values first, as the current drafting mixes subjective values.
- Participants stated that Tangata whenua in clause 4 is subjective, quantity and quality are objective yet they are opposites in one clause, could this be re-drafted?

Suggested amendments to the Te Mana o te Wai objective discussed includes the following:

2. There is sufficient water available to provide for the health and well-being of waterbodies, and provided that is achieved, water may be available for human use, provided it is allocated and used ~~efficiently~~ sustainably.

3. Water quality and quantity targets are established ~~and respected~~, to reflect the cultural, spiritual and ecological values of freshwater as understood by tangata whenua and the community.

4. Tangata whenua or mana whenua are enabled to lead or participate in policy formulation and decision-making processes relating to freshwater management.'

Long-term vision

Long-term visions were explained to participants in the meeting as to how they would want freshwater to be (use, live with, look like and so on). Participants noted that all visions need to have a who, what, when and how.

Fish & Game indicated they would not speak about items specifically but would speak generally. They noted that there are fundamental concepts that visions need to include which are:

- specificity, prescribed timeframes for specific outcomes, measure of success or failure of vision, how an objective is to be achieved and also need to have some level of ambition - e.g., lakes: setting targets for lakes in the entire NOF region is hardly ambitious.
- Values are needed but are to be prescriptive and timebound objectives for values and when these will be achieved by. There must not be generic statements included.
- Need reference points for how progress is achieved over time. Link back to monitoring provisions, are these being achieved according to plan for example a wetland tipping point should be addressed by a certain point and returned to a certain state.
- A natural framework can't be relied on as things have changed considerably by way of habitat.
- Objectives are not straightforward as some flora/fauna may not return in 10 years however in 20-30 years.
- Coromandel's FMU vision statement is quite lengthy due to non-specificity. Item (e-g) timeframes and deliverables is the only sub-clause with a specific timeframe.

Waikato - Waipā FMUs

Participants noted that all items have different timeframes for Waipā, Lower, Mid and Upper Waikato. They stated that a specific FMU and vision need to be set up for Waikare and Whangamarino. An immediate vision is that water quality and quantity in the Whangamarino wetland is managed in order to lead to reduced anoxic event outbreaks in Whangamarino, with a long-term vision that the ecosystem health of the Whangamarino wetland is restored.

Commenting on the size of the suggested FMUs, participants questioned how can appropriate visions across FMUs and lakes be set when lakes sit in different FMUs. They noted that there are different requirements in catchments/sub-catchments. The participants also commented on the many different values across waterbodies, making it difficult to narrow down specific targets. The participants expressed concern at how sub-catchments have their own specific targets and values, yet these can become unyielding with monitoring. Participants suggest identifying within each FMU the specific areas of significance and write up specific visions, objectives, measurements, etc. noting that that going down in scale requires greater specificity.

Participants state that accountability needs to be every two years, and set trajectory of improvement and targets to set that trajectory. They note that all must be measurable to show the achievement of the goal. They asked how will council determine achievement for outcomes such as healthy environments. They commented on the need for something to underpin to determine measurements. Ultimately, participants stated that visions do need to be relatively high level. They note that the goals and timeframes need to be achievable and this needs to be done by experts.

Upper Waikato

In reference to the clause (j) that refers to rubbish, participants asked what is meant by this term.

Lower Waikato

The participants noted the following for the long-term visions of the Lower Waikato:

- Whangamarino should have its own long-term vision given it is an IMPC RAMSAR site.
- Clause (a): Freshwater management "gives effect to" rather than 'recognises'. Align with what has to be done.

- Participants cautioned using the term “prosperous” in clause (b), noting that it is an emotive word.
- Participants queried where there are values, and that they should be addressed as standalone topics and should not be wrapped into visions, stating these are actually outcomes.
- In reference to “100 years ago” participants asked how do we know what this state was?

Visions and values are combined. There are values which are being addressed by Ngā Tira Mātauranga.

Waipā

Draft clause b) states that by 2044, the water quality, the mauri and integrity of all freshwater bodies, and their biodiversity is restored and protected for present and future generations by bringing the waterbodies back to as close as possible to their state 100 years ago. Participants note that information does not exist as far back as 100 years ago. Participants sought specific recognition of Waipā peat lakes. In addition, they queried the meaning of “site” in relation to ancestral land (clause (e)).

Hauraki

When discussing the long-term visions for the Hauraki FMU, participants stated there are some gaps in the existing long-term vision, including requiring riparian areas, reviewing flood schemes to a more sustainable land use, erosion control and managing stormwater networks.

Generally, participants considered the long-term visions were quite non-specific. They considered that FMU specific characteristics should be included, and special sites of national significance should be noted to have special requirements. For example, participants considered that there needs to be a specific long-term vision for Kopuatai - Firth of Thames, as this is an RAMSAR site. In addition, to achieve more specificity, setbacks should be included in the visions, using PC1 or national policy on setbacks from waterways. Long-term visions apply to different types of waterbodies with sandy/rocky bottoms. It is beneficial to classify stream types which need to be protected and enhanced. Rivers and streams are currently generic.

Some participants wanted certainty for understanding when the visions are achieved. One participant sought a reference point be included for how we are achieving this over time (gauging trajectory). Others noted that the long-term vision is achievable, but there is a level of ambition. In relation to clause (b) participants noted that it addresses two individual points not one (community take responsibility and separate sustainable land management?), and queried whether these are decisions to support ecosystem health.

For clause (c), participants sought to correct the tense used from recognised to recognises. For clause (e) there was confusion related to the reference to access, what is being provided for and whether it duplicates outcomes under (i). Amendments are required to make this clear.

Comments were made in relation to reverse obligations to restored and protected in clause (f). Participants noted there should be monitoring to underpin goal and data to measure the vision. Also, participants noted that unintended consequences need to be considered i.e., impact on WRC infrastructure.

When asked what state we should be restoring back to for clause (g), participants suggested “Natural state” as a placeholder. They queried whether we risk something else that could cause pain and suffering? In relation to the outcome set out in clause (g) (extent of natural wetlands is increased), participants noted that the implication is land use change. There needs

to be more specificity, and that ecosystem health needs to be included. In relation to reforestation, participants noted this should be afforestation of appropriate areas, which would then need guidance regarding where these areas are.

The participants also sought additional clauses as follows:

- Maintain hydrological baseline and incorporate stonewalling system as part of catchment and quantity and erosion control.
- Within 10 years Integrated Catchment Management team to review flood schemes in Hauraki to evaluate long-term sustainability with a view to shifting to more sustainable land use within 10 years.

Environmental outcomes

Participants noted the following regarding the draft environmental outcomes:

Ecosystem health:

- invasive species needs to be added into ecosystem health.

Water quality:

- Participants suggested that the outcome needs to include lakes and habitats and needs to include stronger recognition of urban stormwater
- Where an environment is degraded and needs to improve, participants asked if it is required to achieve natural state. They noted that degraded is subjective depending upon how it is viewed. If this is not included in the NOF table then this should be indicated.
- Remove 'surface water and groundwater quality is maintained or improved.'

Water quantity:

- Participants suggested that we should maintain full scope of hydrological profiles. Large storms can change the velocity and shape of river channels.
- In relation to reference to degraded, it was suggested this term is subjective
- Participants sought the addition of reference to high-risk stormwater sites e.g. "stores, mechanical workshops are required to not pollute but no real action is enforced to prevent such industries from polluting which impacts water quality of the city. Errant businesses are not being addressed - they are not being recognised. These sites may be consented but are discharging pollutants."

Add: a full stop at the end of "maintain" or "improve". Delete the balance of the sentence.

Habitat:

- In relation to the following statement: "There is an increase in the extent and quality of the FMUs wetlands", participants noted that "something" is not correct.
- Participants requested that lakes, streams and estuaries should be included in this outcome.

Add: bullet point titled climate change (to value?)

Threatened Species:

- this sentence is fragmented. Delete the words "reduced" and replace with "avoided".

Irrigation:

- Participants noted that this needs to follow the hierarchy of the NPS-FM and should only be a secondary value. Climate change might be placed here.
- Irrigation may be important for managing peat, carbon management.
- Can re-use be included, such as for stock. They also suggest adding in "collectives", "community groups"
- Participants queried whether water quantity can be guaranteed.
- **Add:** collectivisation of water reuse and more efficient forms of irrigation.

Drinking water supply:

- include municipal stormwater discharge as an outcome of its own.
- Include water harvesting.

In relation to all outcomes, participants noted that climate change and the interaction with all outcomes will have an effect. They also note that nothing explicit has been written regarding lakes in the region and outcomes. Identifying specific difficulties of lakes will determine best treatments to enable best outcomes.

Target attribute states – Limits and rules

Participants focused on Hauraki only when discussing target states and limits and rules. Regarding target states for Hauraki, the participants asked what the targets are for sub-catchments, as this will inform timeframes. The participants also asked how the people who want to change were being incentivised. They noted that limits and rules cannot be restrictive, and that they need to be enabling to promote good behaviour as restrictive rules and policies should be used to restrict poor behaviour. Participants wanted to incentivise land use change, with full cost benefit analysis in terms of diverting some funding to incentivise land use change for a better outcome rather than attempting to upgrade what is on farms, with poor behaviour still occurring (for example, "*regenerative farming [as] this type of farming on this type of land is not suitable therefore practices should be changed"*).

Participants discussed how wetland properties could be used for appropriate farming, such as growing certain fruit. They stated that council needs to be evaluating current schemes, using cost-benefit analysis and environmental costs. They asked "what is the cost of losing 4.5mm of peat year on year? What is the carbon cost on loss of soil?" They then discussed how over longer periods of time, council may be better off doing land acquisition, and then retiring land back to wetlands, rather than attempting to have farming continue. They also noted that there are biophysical constraints and therefore, appropriate land use/practice is needed in the right place. For example, they noted that Fonterra is already using freshwater accounting in their land use.

The ENGOs discussed incentivising land use. For example, restoring peatland to lower carbon emissions. They noted that a bio-diversity/accounting model may be a good system to use and questioned if this could be brought into the policy methods. This could look like using a bio-accounting model for land use. Participants felt that there needs to be more information about what success looks like and need to have a linkage to guidelines. They noted the need to have enabling policies. The participants commented on the need to have in depth discussions on more technical matters moving forward, and that there is limited time.

Participants commented that policy needs to be flexible to enable response to times of the day and should not be too prescriptive. They noted that monitoring should not occur everywhere and that numbers cannot be applied uniformly. They discussed the where and when of the locations of monitoring, and what sort of timeframes are acceptable for this process. Participants asked how to link targets to visions/methodology, lakes and wetlands. They also asked how will the issues through the expert conferencing be addressed through this process. Participants noted that a site is representative of all stretches of water between all sites, and questioned whether this was enough.

Participants asked whether there will be any technical caucusing, and how will this be inserted into the process. They asked how are we thinking about liveable environments, such as climate change, groundwater, stormwater, estuaries, in this process within the scope. The participants noted caution is needed on the data that has been collected on visions/values.

Fish & Game would like to have a workshop whereby Fish & Game's experts meet with WRC scientists and policy staff for discussions and to find ways forward.

General feedback

Concerns were raised regarding the PC1 process, resource management reforms, subdivisions, the current framework for the NOF, how policy will develop over time regarding targets/monitoring sites, sub-catchments for lakes or individual targets for lakes not FMUs. Participants would prefer to do more technical engagement if possible, rather than the Environment Court. DoC is keen to be involved up front, and then it will be easier to feed information into the process from DoC. Regarding scope in terms of peat, the participants ask what and how have we confined this? Participants state that they would like the opportunities to have their experts digest what the communities have said. The participants state that there is a need for lake specific targets and that delineation is not sufficient as current drafted. The participants generally would like to see the NOF process worked out. The participants wonder about having a caucusing session on lake FMUs as state that this needs to be addressed. They note this could help see how science is translated to policy. They note that expert caucusing on all freshwater matters and across the whole region should occur.

Participants expressed concern with disparate lakes with FMUs and the groupings (for example, southern and northern lakes within the same lake FMU). They expressed the need to ensure FMUs are delineated correctly. Participants also questioned if it is wise to have FMUs aligned with zone boundaries, and asked if there was another way that has Te Mana o te Wai at the core? Concern was also shared around the targets set and understanding how we get there. They questioned if this would be done within the current frameworks, or a change to frameworks.

The participants wondered if they are open to the conversation of data having the capacity to be used differently. They discussed the process of converting data to recommendations to respond to the NPS-FM. The participants asked if the FMU is the right frame or not and questioned if FMUs are representative. They do not want to wait for a Hearing to have this conversation. They also discussed whether the FMUs are representative of the matters to be resolved. The participants wanted to digitalise the information, and an aligned GIS system. The participants also noted whether sub-catchments were appropriate, and how do you set up the policy to align with this. Participants also questioned how to set up a vision across various values and set targets. They expressed the importance for a values and outcomes focus for internationally significant features.

Participants asked the difference between wāhi tapu and wai tapu, what is meant and where is it appropriate.

They note that values need to be addressed as standalone, rather than within visions. They also felt it would be beneficial to map out how the objectives will be measured. Other feedback is provided in full below:

- *Incentivise land use i.e., restoring peatland to lower carbon emissions. Perverse commercial outcomes need to be careful where all mortgages re Hauraki claims are on 6- month revolving credit because no one will refinance farmers - need to give people an opportunity to re-transition. Use the SAFFI model.*
- *Evaluation of current flood schemes. Proper CBA over 50 years.*
- *Things around where and when, avoiding averaging or historic monitoring time i.e, summer/winter times of the day.*
- *How PC1 hearing panel dealt with through this process - how will this be addressed? F&G response.*
- *Timeframes when sorted - capacity in teams to respond.*

11.2 Advisory Committee for the Regional Environment (ACRE)

Six members attended the ACRE meeting where the committee received a presentation on the Freshwater Policy Review followed by a questions and answer session. Committee members discussed a range of topics for example regarding the formation of the citizen reference group process (CRGs), and representation of those individuals across various FMUs in the region. One member queried the differences between establishing environmental bottom lines, how to achieve the outcomes across both the NPS-FM and PC1 processes, having regard to Treaty settlement processes and promotion of the survey within our own council networks in the region.

11.3 Auckland/Waikato Fish and Game (AWFG)

Staff at AWFG provided feedback in a written submission.

Long-term visions

AWFG consider that basing visions for each FMU area from Tangata Whenua and community perspectives alone will lead to visions that fail to meet the fundamental requirements of the NPS-FM, while lacking specificity about what the visions will achieve (i.e., visions which are measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound).

AWFG considers currently drafted long-term visions, as set out as 'Objectives' in the online survey lack specificity about what they will achieve (e.g: where, what, when and who) and do not provide clear outcomes with set timeframes and they need to be more prescriptive.

AWFG state that questions put forward in the online survey are considered to be leading and general. F

In their feedback AWFG state that it is not their intention to provide feedback on each long-term vision, rather they have provided some comments on specific clauses from the long-term vision for each FMU, as examples of works or does not why (and why).

They provide examples of long-term visions which are significant to anglers and hunters within the Waikato region, including:

- *'The Waikato Delta supports abundant and diverse bird populations by 2034 and is restored to its natural state within 80 years.'*
- *'The ecosystem health of Lake Arapuni is protected, with an abundant population of trout and indigenous fish species by 2034 and restored to its natural state within 80 years.'*
- *'Lake Waikare supports abundant and diverse bird populations by 2034 and is restored to its natural state within 80 years.'*
- *'The ecosystem health of the Whangamarino wetland is protected to avoid the anoxic events that lead to fish and bird deaths within ten years, and water quantity and quality issues are addressed to achieve a healthy wetland state by 2044.'*

Coromandel long-term vision whilst the objective sets a timeframe, the objective itself is not measurable based on the generalised and subjective use of words such as "contribute to", "healthier waterways".

Proposed alternative is below:

'By 2054, freshwater is clean, safe for drinking and contact recreation, swimmable, supports sustainable food harvest, and water supply is secure, for all species and for future generation.'

This objective is considered an improvement on the previous ones as “safe for drinking” and “swimmable” are both measurable targets based on national bottom lines.

Within the Lake Taupō FMU vision statement while the objective sets a date for achievement it is too subjective with no measure on how to identify whether the listed “associations” are achieved.

Within the Hauraki FMU long-term vision statement this objective is not measurable due to the subjective words “holistically managed” - there is no way to measure that outcome and whether freshwater has been holistically managed.

Proposed alternative in the Hauraki vision statement includes the following:
‘By 2054, freshwater is suitable and accessible to provide for a range of values and uses, including drinking, swimming, mahinga kai and other traditional and customary practices.’

Alternative wording within the Hauraki long-term vision sets achievable targets by referring to swimming and drinking standards.

Within the West Coast FMU long-term vision statement the objective is predicated on the term “if necessary” however there is nothing provided to establish what is or isn’t necessary making the objective unmeasurable.

Proposed alternative within the West Coast long-term vision statement includes the following:
‘Clean drinking water has been maintained, waterways are safe for human contact in 10 years and water quality restored for safe swim and gathering kai in 80 years.

This is an improvement on the other long-term vision objectives by providing measurable targets within a timeframe (e.g., waterways safe for human contact in 10 years) however, it could be word improved to make those objectives more certain for example by specifying which waterways exactly or does it apply to all which might not be achievable.

The term “*holistically managed*” within the Upper Waikato vision statement is subjective and as such not measurable.

AWFG state the Waikato/Waipā long-term vision objective is stating what is already a legal requirement.

AWFG seek clarity on the lower Waikato long-term vision how will it be measured and whether this objective can be achieved.

General feedback

AWFG strongly recommends that perspectives from Tangata Whenua and the community are considered by a team of experts working alongside a team of policy planning professional. This will ensure all NPS-FM requirements are met and the freshwater policy review is fully implemented. In particular it is recommended that the panel of experts from a range of sectors for the Environment Court assisted mediation on PC1 are utilised in this process.

11.4 Environmental Non-Government Organisations (ENGOs) sector survey feedback

A total of seven participants indicated that they represented ‘Environmental NGOs’.

Te Mana o te Wai

Respondents were presented with the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai and asked to provide their thoughts on the wording. Six individuals gave feedback that was a mixture of references to specific (sub)clauses and more general thoughts about the draft objective.

In reference to clause (1), one respondent stated that while they support the notion of restoring and protecting the health and resilience of freshwater resources, they would like this to be more clearly defined. For that same clause, support was expressed for the protection of present and future generations' connections to water. It was also noted that relationships which have been broken due to the impact of colonisation and land confiscation and loss, should also be restored. There was comment that it was important that WRC works with both tangata whenua and communities. Similarly, in terms of the overarching clause (1), another respondent explained that while it is important to sustain connections, connections need to be restored in many places before they can be sustained and that the objective should reflect this. The following was provided as an example of possible wording: *"the health, resilience and wellbeing of the Waikato Region's freshwater resources is restored and protected, people understand their relationship and connection to freshwater on the basis of reciprocity and respect, and land and water are managed on a whole of catchment basis, to give effect to Te Mana o te Wai..."*.

In reference to clause (1.1), it was queried that the term 'sufficient' in respect to water quality and quantity be defined. For that same (sub)clause, it was noted that the description potentially conflates human health and ecosystem health – but, under Te Mana o te Wai, ecosystem health must come first. The participant also stated that the clause simplifies ecosystem health by suggesting it only relies on water quality and quantity – but habitat and other components are important. A suggested rewording was *"1.1 That healthy freshwater ecosystems, supported by sufficient quality and quantity of water and habitat, as well as functional species interactions, are essential to the health and well-being of people"*.

Clause (1.2) was perceived as 'okay' but potentially risks reinforcing the expectation that the health of the water will never be disconnected from economics and should explicitly state that, under Te Mana o te Wai, economic interests and returns are the lowest priority. In reference to the clause regarding 'water quality and quantity', it was suggested that the word 'protect' would be better than the word 'reflect'. An example of suggested wording was *"water quality and quantity targets are established and respected, to protect the ecological, cultural, and spiritual values of freshwater as understood by tangata whenua and the community"*. It was also noted that the term 'water quality and quantity' is limiting and fails to take into account other components of ecosystem health and recommended that additional aspects of ecosystem health be included to reflect this.

The way the clause '*tangata whenua are enabled to participate…'* was worded was viewed as limited in its empowerment for tangata whenua. It was suggested that the objective state that tangata whenua will be both enabled and given an active role in the decision-making process. The following example of possible phrasing was given, *"tangata whenua will be enabled and given an active role in policy formulation and decision-making processes relating to freshwater management"*. In terms of more general feedback, one participant stated that the 'management ideals' should only be focused on what cannot be done to/with water, rather than what can. With regards to freshwater management, another respondent explained that it is important that both land and water are managed on a 'whole catchment basis'- and that this may also contribute towards a healthy moana (sea).

Another individual commented on the need to consider the likely consequences of climate change and increasingly frequent weather events. It was stated that flood plains should not be

built on, that native planting around streams will help absorb increased flow, and wetland retention and restoration is needed to diffuse the effects of heavy rains.

One participant believed that, overall, the objective is potentially weak in describing the 'how' of giving effect to Te Mana o te Wai. It was felt that the objective needs to be *"more directive and clear about 'how', as per direction in [the] NPS-FM 3.2(3)".*

Long-term vision

Participants were asked which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on for the topic of long-term visions. For each area, they were given a draft objective outlining the long-term vision and then given the opportunity to leave their feedback about the wording of the vision.

Taupō

When asked what they thought of the wording of this objective, one respondent stated that they agreed with the objective while the other indicated that, in reference to clause (c), mana whenua Māori interests in each rohe (area) should be prioritised. When asked if they thought the given timeframes for the Taupō vision are reasonable and ambitious, one respondent said 'Yes', another selected 'No', and a third said they were 'Unsure.' The participant who felt the timeframes were appropriate explained that work has been on-going for a long time within Taupō. In comparison, the person who chose 'No' explained that they *"would hope to see greater action and a more ambitious timeframe",* The uncertain participant did not explain their choice.

Upper Waikato

Three participants provided feedback on the Upper Waikato long-term vision. One respondent described the objectives as being *'aspirational'*. Another believed that clause (d) should be removed from the objective as clause (a) sufficiently covered this topic. The third participant commented that clause (a) should be rephrased to "*gives effect to*" Te Ture Whaimana.

When asked if they thought the given timeframes for the vision are ambitious and reasonable, two participants selected the 'No' option while two others indicated that they were 'Unsure'. One of the individuals who chose 'No' commented that they would like to see greater action and a more ambitious timeframe; and in a similar vein, the other stated *"2034 gives a 10-year period as the current target date of 2044 is too long. More actions are required sooner to achieve the vision, 20 years is too long".* One of the 'Unsure' respondents explained that while the timeline may be feasible, lag on groundwater flowing into streams and rivers is likely to show water quality degrading – and it is important for urban communities to understand this.

Middle Waikato

One participant provided feedback on the Middle Waikato long-term vision.. In reference to clause (a), it was stated that the objective should be rephrased to "*gives effect to*" Te Ture Whaimana. For clause (b), respondents were asked what state they think water quality should be returned to and the participant thought that this should be determined by mana whenua in consultation with WRC.

When asked if they thought the given timeframes for the vision are reasonable and ambitious, one respondent selected 'No' while another said they were 'Unsure'. The respondent who indicated 'No' stated that they *"would hope to see greater action and a more ambitious timeframe".* The uncertain participant did not explain their choice.

Lower Waikato

One participant provided feedback on the Lower Waikato long-term vision. In reference to clause (a), it was suggested that the phrase "*freshwater management gives effect to (not just*

recognising) the objectives of Te Ture Whaimana" be used instead. For clause (f), the participant wanted to know how the term 'natural wetland' is defined. It was stated that restoring wetlands may require retiring farmland and monitoring of artificial/constructed wetlands. There was emphasis on researching and documenting what wetlands have been lost in order to properly understand restoration of wetlands. The respondent believed that both clauses (a) and (f) should be achieved earlier than 2074. In reference to clause (g), there was comment that making waterways easier to access is not necessarily positive. For clause (b), participants were asked what state they think water quality should be returned to. The respondent believed that WRC and mana whenua should determine this.

When asked if they thought the given timeframes for the vision are ambitious and reasonable, one participant selected 'No' while another said they were 'Unsure'. The respondent who indicated 'No' stated that they *"would hope to see greater action and a more ambitious timeframe".* The uncertain participant did not explain their choice.

Waipā

One participant provided feedback on the Waipa long-term vision. In reference to clause (a), it was stated that the objective should be rephrased to "*gives effects to*" Te Ture Whaimana. For clause (b), respondents were asked what state they think water quality should be returned to. The participant thought that this should be determined by mana whenua in consultation with WRC.

When asked if they thought the given timeframes for the Waipā vision are reasonable and ambitious, one respondent selected 'No' while another said they were 'Unsure'. The respondent who disagreed with the timeframes stated that they "*would hope to see greater action and a more ambitious timeframe*". No feedback was provided by the participant who said they were uncertain.

West Coast

One participant provided feedback on the West Coast long-term vision. In reference to clause (d), there was comment that it was not ambitious enough to seek community involvement by 2050 – it was believed that this could be achieved now. Similarly, for clause (e), there was a comment that the timeframe of 80 years was not ambitious enough. When asked if they thought the given timeframes for the West Coast vision are ambitious and reasonable, one participant selected 'No' while another said they were 'Unsure'. The former expressed that they would "*would hope to see greater action and a more ambitious timeframe*", whereas the latter did not explain their choice.

Hauraki

One respondent gave their thoughts on the Hauraki long-term vision. In reference to clause (a), there was a query as to who determines 'where necessary'. There was comment that clause (i) needs to be worded more carefully as improved access could result in further degradation. With regards to clause (j), there was a query as to what the term 'appropriate' means and who determines what is 'appropriate.' For clause (g), participants were asked what state they think water quality should be returned to. Only one individual provided feedback. They believed that *"this should be determined by mana whenua in consultation with WRC".*

When asked if they thought the given timeframes for the Hauraki vision are ambitious and reasonable, one respondent indicated 'No' while the other was 'Unsure.' The individual who selected 'No' stated that they *"would hope to see greater action and a more ambitious timeframe".* The uncertain participant did not explain their choice.

Coromandel

For the Coromandel long-term vision, five respondents gave some feedback that discussed the objective in a more general sense and some that referenced specific clauses. One individual described the vision as 'great' and it was believed that the objectives outlined will significantly help in reversing the damage already done to freshwater. It was noted, however, that the term 'management' should not be emphasised; but instead, be socialised as, "…*a way of life enforced as normal from a young age*". Another respondent viewed the visions as being positive, but thought the wording was vague. For the Coromandel specifically, they emphasised the importance of coastal access for freshwater and control over invasive species, so they do not damage the waterways. It was recommended that WRC should adopt goals that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound; and should assess the visions against these criteria.

In terms of more specific feedback, clause (a) was viewed as vague and lacking ambition. It was felt that people should be contributing to healthy waterways now! There was support for clause (b). With regards to clause (e), a respondent asked that a definition (in terms of size) be provided for the term 'riparian strip.' It was suggested that clause (f) be expanded to include stock effluent and fertilisers since they also provide damaging elements that need to be eliminated or reduced. For the same clause, another participant commented that reducing sediment is not ambitious enough and that water quality needs to be improved rather than simply maintained. It was also queried what sediments would be reduced by or to what level. After reviewing clause (g), there was a query as to how much these variables were to be increased by.

When asked if they thought the given timeframes for the Coromandel vision are ambitious and reasonable, three participants selected 'Yes', one picked 'No', and one indicated that they were 'Unsure'. One of the respondents who agreed with the timeframes explained that they provide us with enough time for riparian planting to take hold and they account for unusual weather events. Another stated that they believed, with effort, the described timeline was possible. The third individual recognised that there is a lot of work that needs to be done and it is important to move quickly. The participant who did not believe that the timeframe was ambitious and reasonable stated that they *"would hope to see greater action and a more ambitious timeframe".*

Environmental outcomes

Participants were asked which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on for the topic of environmental outcomes. For each area, they were presented with a list of possible outcomes. When they clicked on an outcome, the draft objective was shown and they were provided with the opportunity to leave comments. No feedback was received for the Hauraki and West Coast FMUs.

Taupō

Ecosystem health

The respondent expressed agreement with the described outcome, but did acknowledge that clearer definitions of existing wetlands need to be created. There was the view that wetland creation and restoration will be limited by people's lack of knowledge about wetland creation.

Waikato-Waipā

Ecosystem health

One participant expressed agreement with the described outcome but did acknowledge that clearer definitions of existing wetlands need to be created. There was the view that wetland creation and restoration will be limited by people's lack of knowledge about wetland creation.

The other respondent suggested that (sub)clause (c) needs to reference other inhabitants of wetlands and waterways – for example, waterfowl.

Human contact
The respondent questioned what is meant by the phrase 'safely connect.'

Threatened species
The participant stated that this draft outcome was *"fine".*

Mahinga kai
It was recommended that the phrase 'mahinga kai' be replaced with 'food resources' and the term 'kai' be replaced with 'food.' The respondent suggested that subclause iii) be deleted as the content of subclause ii) and the phrase 'to the extent desired' "*is open to abuse*".

Natural form and character
The participant stated that this draft outcome was *"fine".*

Drinking water supply
The respondent stated that this draft outcome was *"fine".*

Animal drinking water
The following comment was made*, "fine, albeit I am unsure as to how you would ascertain the water being palatable other than by whether the animal consumed it. To this end, delete 'palatable' as indiscernible".*

Wai tapu
The respondent requested clarification on what the term 'wai tapu' means.

Transport and Tauranga waka
The respondent stated that this draft outcome was *"fine".*

Fishing
The participant stated that this draft outcome was *"fine".*

Irrigation, cultivation and production of food and beverages
A respondent made the following comment*, "according to Webster's Dictionary and the Oxford English Dictionary, water is a "beverage" because a "beverage" is any potable liquid. However, for commercial purposes, a "beverage" is a potable liquid consisting of water and some other ingredient(s)".*

Hydro-electric power generation
The current phrasing was viewed as too broad, and reference should be made to suitable water levels and flow needed to maintain hydro-electric power generation.

Commercial and industrial use
The participant stated that this draft outcome was *"fine".*

Coromandel

Ecosystem health
In reference to (sub)clauses (c) and (d), it was stated that – as non-native species – salmon and trout should not be protected. Similarly, another respondent stated *"trout are an extremely damaging invasive species and should not be managed except where eradication or stopping incursion is required".* The respondent added that improving the ecological health of waterways is the basis of ensuring all other outcomes are met.

Human contact
The participant expressed that this draft outcome was *"good".*

Threatened species
One respondent stated that this draft outcome was "*good*". The other participant believed that the outcome was "*idealistic*" as data is required to identify where populations of threatened species are – this is a significant undertaking in its own right but eDNA testing may help.

Natural form and character

One participant described this outcome as "*good but rather vague*". Another respondent agreed with the draft outcome and suggested to "*give waterways room to flood when they need to".*

Drinking water supply

The participant who reviewed this draft outcome stated that it was "*ideal*".

Fishing

The respondent commented that protecting trout will go against improving the quality of waterways in which they live.

'Commercial and Industrial Use' and 'Hydro-Electric Power Generation'

Participants were asked if they felt the above two outcomes applied to the Coromandel, why they felt that way, and where. One individual believed that as the population of the Coromandel increases and larger centers develop, it is likely that 'Commercial and Industrial Uses' will need to be included. The other participant simply stated "*no mining".*

Target attribute states

Participants were provided with some examples of potential principles that could be applied when setting target attribute states and were then asked to give their feedback on potential principles. Six respondents expressed their thoughts on the issue.

- One participant felt the phrase 'close the gap' was open-ended but likely to encourage people to begin the process of change.
- Another respondent expressed confusion about what the potential principles were and their purpose.
- It was suggested that attention should first be on improving the areas that are already quite good (lift them to the top quickly) before shifting the focus to areas that are in poorer states.
- One respondent stated that the principles adopted, need to be very site specific.
- Another participant stated that they support the following as indicators of water quality and target states across the Waikato region: safe for Mahinga Kai; safe for human contact; and increased and protected indigenous biodiversity. They expressed agreement with the exemplar principles that were provided for setting short and long-term targets.
- There was comment that the principles feel somewhat arbitrary; and while they may be potentially aspirational when applied to some areas, they might be inadequate in others. There was a note that Forest and Bird, Fish and Game and Choose Clean Water had produced practice notes on setting target attribute states and would soon be available on the 'Wai Good Policy' website. It was suggested that "*target attribute states should be set at a level that provides for those healthy thriving ecosystems*". There was comment that the short-term focus needs to be on tangible improvements towards the long-term targets. It was stated that meeting the bottom-lines will not protect the ecosystems nor will it provide for Te Mana o te Wai and that attributes outside of those listed in the NPS-FM should be incorporated.
- It was believed that the approach of moving all attributes up a band "*is not an ecologically sound way to set target states*" or to provide for Te Mana o te Wai.
- It was felt that change should be achieved within a generation and 20 to 30 years was viewed as an appropriate (maximum) timeframe to achieve a target where a waterbody is currently degraded.
- When setting target attribute states, it was stated that climate change should also be taken into consideration and that it was important to act quickly to improve water quality within the Waikato region and help create resilience to changes.

Respondents were then asked how they might explain these principles to farmers or other primary sector representatives. Six participants provided their thoughts.

- There was comment that it would be difficult, and that Freshwater Farm Plans will help but it may be hard to determine how much progress has been made since there will be lags for some measures and much of the mitigation work will occur in the last years of the short-term target.
- It was recommended to start with addressing the areas where water first enters the farm property and then move downstream.
- A respondent made the following comment, *"freshwater health, ecosystem resilience, allowing waterways room to flood when they need to, is the key to building healthy humans and helping to protect their [farm] land from the impacts of increased severe weather events".*
- There was comment that It was important to build relationships within the catchment as water quality is a collective effort. There was also mention that the *"cap and trade process in Taupō seems to have been an effective way of communicating and allocating requirements".*
- There was comment that 'justifying' water quality improvements shouldn't be required and that *"the most effective way to explain these issues is to build a narrative that people can connect to".* The respondent was *"supportive of initiatives that can be resourced to change land use and farmer culture to prevent pollution at the source (and therefore help "bring farmers along")".* There was a view to focus, in the long-term, on solutions for addressing problems at the source rather than attempting to 'clean up the mess'.

Activities and actions

Respondents were asked which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on for the topic of activities and actions. For each area, they were given a high-level summary of the state of freshwater within that FMU and were then questioned on their thoughts regarding the freshwater within that same area. No feedback was received for the Hauraki and West Coast FMUs.

Taupō

The respondent interested in this area agreed with the high-level summary of the state of Taupō. They explained that the lake catchment farmers they deal with are very engaged. When asked what the Freshwater Policy Review should focus on to help accelerate positive change, the respondent believed that the majority of the necessary work has already been done in the area and efforts should be focused elsewhere.

Coromandel

Three individuals expressed their opinion on the state of freshwater within One participant described Coromandel freshwater as *"generally good"* but sediment from industrial activities is placing pressures on those environments to self-clean. Another respondent stated that the Coromandel *"is a treasure that needs to be preserved and improved".* It was suggested that pine forestry be financially disincentivised and native revegetation be encouraged instead (with better carbon credits). The third participant believed that the Coromandel has "*unique freshwater ecology*" and, when trout is absent, there are "*some exceptional freshwater communities*". Pest animal and plant control were seen as essential in maintaining biodiversity across both land and waterways. Similar to another respondent, it was believed that pine plantations threatened certain waterways. When asked what the Freshwater Policy Review should focus on to help accelerate positive change, one participant recommended that slips could be managed by active revegetation and by encouraging or even mandating riparian planting. Another respondent emphasised the importance of land management, including pest

animal and plant control, reduction in pine plantations, and riparian planting for farmed areas. The third participant recommended to *"have a non-development/activity corridor adjacent to all-natural water courses".*

Waikato-Waipā

One participant explained *"currently it is challenging, farmers are doing good work but there is a lot of waiting to see what will be required or enforced through a final PC1 and FW-FP [Freshwater Farm Plans]. Having FW-FP go live in a month will get some traction in this area, as long as the process doesn't fall over - will require suitable RPs to become certifiers and auditors".* The other respondent believed that Waikato-Waipā rivers and streams possess both good and poor freshwater fish community diversity. They also commented that current contamination levels are impacting on food gathering, recreation, and the overall health of the awa. When asked what the Freshwater Policy Review should focus on to help accelerate positive change, the participant stated that, in terms of meeting national bottom lines, the greatest concern was high nutrient loads (including nitrogen, which is still increasing).

How costs should be borne

Respondents were asked what they would like to say in principle at this stage about how the costs should be borne. Seven individuals expressed their thoughts.

- One individual said they "*would like to see catchment environmental protection works carried out with support from rates".* It was also noted that mitigation work on private land, where private owners provide land for the good of the catchment should be recognised and rates removed from that land and funding supplied.
- Another believed that the funding needs to be provided by those who are vested with the responsibility of maintaining or deriving income from water as a resource.
- One participant suggested that "*the cost should be borne by the regional authority, but they should actively seek to pass on this cost where it is known how or who has created the negative impact on the natural environment".*
- A respondent proposed rates should be used to fund this project, and financial penalties administered to polluting industries as well as pine forestry and clear felling.
- There was comment that there is a collective benefit to be had from improving water quality and all should invest in the changes and that a lack of change will result in the costs of continued degradation to be borne by the public. Both the costs and benefits of water quality improvement should be considered – with the knowledge that the benefits often outweigh the costs but they are not often quantified.

Limits and rules

Participants were asked which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on for the topic of potential limits and rules. For each area, they were presented with some examples of limits and rules to manage activities to improve freshwater within that FMU. They were then asked what specific rules and limits they think would help manage freshwater better.

Taupō

One participant expressed agreement with the examples of potential rules and limits that WRC provided. The other individual proposed limits placed on the number of cows per hectare for various catchments, alongside limits on the use of nitrogen fertiliser. There was a view that farm environmental plans may be a useful tool, but they will not deliver results without regulation.

Waikato-Waipā

When asked what specific rules and limits they think will help manage freshwater better, three individuals provided their thoughts. One participant believed that *"Freshwater Farm Plans should provide the framework for freshwater management".* Another suggested examining areas within New Zealand that are already managing freshwater well and attempting to replicate their approach taken. The third individual proposed limits placed on the number of cows per hectare for various catchments, alongside limits on the use of nitrogen fertiliser. There was a view that farm environmental plans may be a useful tool, but they will not deliver results without regulation.

West Coast

The respondent proposed limits placed on the number of cows per hectare for various catchments, alongside limits on the use of nitrogen fertiliser. There was a view that farm environmental plans may be a useful tool, but they will not deliver results without regulation.

Hauraki

The respondent proposed limits placed on the number of cows per hectare for various catchments, alongside limits on the use of nitrogen fertiliser. There was a view that farm environmental plans may be a useful tool, but they will not deliver results without regulation.

Coromandel

Three respondents gave their feedback on this issue. One individual recommended the exclusion of stock from waterways and the placement of stockyards to mitigate runoff. Furthermore, stock drinking water could be taken from waterways and stored in tanks, controlled through rain gauges that restrict takes during non-rain periods. Another person suggested stock exclusion regulations and increasing regulations around riparian management. The third participant proposed limits placed on the number of cows per hectare for various catchments, alongside limits on the use of nitrogen fertiliser. There was a view that farm environmental plans may be a useful tool, but they will not deliver results without regulation.

General Feedback

Respondents were given the opportunity to provide any additional feedback regarding freshwater management within the different FMUs and/or the whole Waikato region. No feedback was received for the Hauraki, Taupō and West Coast FMUs.

Waikato-Waipā

This respondent stated that for the Whangamarino area, *"the water quality is a complete disgrace and for no apparent reason, the water levels have been kept too high in 2023, which will devastate the wetland and its future".*

Coromandel

A respondent advised to get "*boots on the ground*" and if this is pushed into schools and businesses, the community will gain the traction required. There was comment that more pressure needs to be put on the industrial sector to manage and treat, where necessary, the trade-waste discharge and the stormwater coming off premises. It was suggested to penalise those who do not comply by choice, and testing and encouragement for compliance and good practice was important. The other participant stated that there are "*amazing examples*" of intact waterways. There was comment that regulations are required for the management of native forests to ensure they are protected and treasured and that invasive animal, plant, and freshwater species need to be managed or excluded to ensure waterways stay in good health.

Whole Waikato region

This participant emphasised that the NPS-FM requires that limits are placed on resources to achieve target attribute states. Their preference is for the use of input controls to improve water quality, *"point-source discharges (eg, from a factory) or input controls, such as stocking rate, have the benefit of being easier to measure [than output controls]" and "Land use controls are easy to measure and can have a big impact".* It was acknowledged that feedback and comments have been provided in the context of rural settings – but urban freshwater should not be forgotten, *"urban water bodies should not be sacrificed in the name of residential density and would be a highly valued public asset if they were restored to good health"*.

It was shared that for Forest and Bird, their focus is for ecosystems to:

- *be healthy and resilient;*
- *have a diversity of habitat;*
- *provide for species' food sources (e.g. macroinvertebrates);*
- *be readily accessible to the public, in appropriate places; and*
- *form part of a nature-based response to the impacts of climate change.*

There was a note that Forest and Bird, Fish and Game and Choose Clean Water had produced practice notes on setting limits on resource use to achieve target attribute states and would soon be available on the 'Wai Good Policy' website.

12 Ngā kōrero whakahoki a ērā atu rāngai/hunga whaipānga | Results – Other sector/stakeholder engagement

12.1 Future Proof

A facilitated session was held with seven Future Proof members.

Te Mana o te Wai

Attendees provided a range of feedback regarding the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai. There was comment that the three sub clauses for clause 1 'weakened' the main clause whereas another attendee thought that there should be a series of clauses for clause 1 as they thought it was too much to include as the main clause. There was a view that for clause 1 to retain the wording of 'future generations' and to have 'relationships' rather than 'connections'. There was also comment that mātauranga Māori was missing from clause 1. There was a query as to why 'economic' was included in the sub-clause for clause 1. For the clause regarding 'human use', it was suggested to add 'and other uses' and that water safety be included to aid in protection. It was suggested to differentiate between the clause regarding 'human use' and the clause regarding *'water quality and water quantity targets are established and respected…understood by tangata whenua and the community',* in reference to NPS-FM priorities. It was also thought that 'respected' was a 'soft word' and should be changed. One other attendee regarded 'human use' as too vague and instead suggested 'for the health needs of people'. In reference to the clause *'tangata whenua are enabled to participate…',* there was a view this clause be elevated higher than where it is.

Long-term vision

Upper Waikato

There was overall feedback that the visions shouldn't be long-term, and that they should be worked on now, also there was no mention of wetlands, and a suggestion that there should be consistency across FMUs noting there could be specific aspects to an FMU also and that all stormwater be treated prior to discharge. In regard to fisheries and freshwater habitats [clause (h)] it was suggested to add 'and protected' after restored and continue with the rest of the clause *'and where they are not degraded, they are protected*'.

Lower Waikato

It was thought the 2074 timeframe was too long and that work should start in the short term (2-5 years) and the long-term being ten years. There was also a view that long-term visions be aligned for the *"entire water body*". Another attendee commented that *"some points are achievable much sooner, however some items can be difficult to achieve if the timeframes are too tight".* It was also noted that some aspirations in the Waipā long-term vision were missing from the Lower Waikato long-term vision. For clause (a) referring to *'recognises Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato…'*, there was a suggestion to change 'recognises' to 'give effect to'. Another attendee referred to PC1 noting clauses would need to align with PC1. There was also the suggestion for all stormwater to be treated prior to discharge. For clause (d) regarding *'community and tangata whenua… responsibility for the restoration and protection of… freshwater'*, there was a query as to who would fund this and who would be responsible. There was also a query as to using the term '*waterways are safe'*, for clause (g), stating that inherently the waterways are dangerous, and if making them safe this will impact biodiversity unless meaning 'water quality safe' rather than 'physically safe'. There was a suggestion to note somewhere that *"catchments should be self-sufficient (e.g., Auckland puts pressure on the Waikato River). In long-term visions, catchments should sustain themselves rather than reaching into other catchments"* (reference was made to a Board of Enquiry report).

Waipā

In reference to clause (b) and restoring to 100 years ago, there was a query as to whether this incorporated climate change. For clause (g) regarding *'new natural inland wetlands are created'*, further definition was suggested. There was a comment to treat stormwater prior to discharging into any waterbody, a suggestion to cross-reference with Futureproof objectives and a query whether the *"selected date of 2044 aligned with Healthy Rivers and its restoration strategy".* It was noted to align timing with PC1.

Target attribute states

Feedback on target attribute states included the addition that all stormwater be treated prior to discharge, as well as "*all houses [required] to have rain tanks (which helps in times of drought and assists in flood prevention*)". There was a query about baseline states and what this was like across the Waikato and a query on how long the planning process was for the NPS-FM in comparison to PC1.

12.2 King Country River Care

King Country River Care (KCRC) provided feedback in a written submission.

Te Mana o te Wai

KCRC suggested that '*tangata whenua and the community*' be added to clauses (3 & 4). For clause (2), it was suggested that water use should be extended for reasons other than the health and well-being of waterbodies. It was noted that there will always be variability of flow

and reducing these variabilities should not come at the expense of people's relationships with freshwater (which is connected with their cultural, social and economic systems).

Long-term visions

West Coast

KCRC said that the long-term visions are not realistic when considering the ability of communities to achieve them and the associated financial costs. They also noted that the timeframes are too ambitious and do not recognise the time that it has taken for degradation to occur or future growth pressures. It was suggested that the visions should not be time-framed; rather, the implementation of actions should be time-framed and monitoring should be undertaken to ensure that the trend is in the right direction. It was recommended that, if the long-term visions need a timeframe, it should be 200+ years.

KCRC commented that clause (c) does not appear to be about water and noted that it should not apply to privately-owned land. It was noted that 'ancestral lands' is a broad term and suggested that it be removed or clarified. While protection for specific sites was understood, KCRC said that there should be a threshold for this level of protection. It was also suggested that 'adverse effects' should not include natural events, like flooding. In reference to clause (e), KCRC said that many rivers are just not suitable for 'safe swimming' – for example, they are soft bottom and have trees in them, so will never be suitable for swimming. In reference to clause (f), KCRC said that the Freshwater Policy Review should not allow the public to access private land to get to waterways, though they noted that this clause makes sense when a waterway is on public land and there is vegetation preventing access. It was noted that clause (g) is repetitive of clause (a). KCRC said that clauses (g) and (h) aim too high and are too open – in particular, they questioned the 'new and yet to be described management practice' for riparian margins in clause (h). KCRC recommended that clause (h) be deleted and said that it is too vague, especially the term 'waterways'. It was noted that the vision may be suitable for waterways on public land (excluding the 'King's chain'), but that any rules arising from this vision should not add to national stock exclusion rules.

Environmental outcomes and target states

KCRC noted that the draft environmental outcomes should not assume public access to waterways within privately-owned land and emphasised their opposition to such a change. They suggested that the draft environmental outcomes should clearly indicate this distinction. They also noted their concern about the inclusion of non-native species (trout and salmon) and said that the emphasis should be on enhancing and protecting native species. They questioned whether native species or trout would be prioritised in the draft environmental outcomes. It was suggested that water storage be considered in the draft environmental outcomes in order to utilise periods of excess flow. The following specific feedback was provided on the draft environmental outcomes:

Ecosystem health

- Severe droughts and flooding occur naturally and this should be recognised. Rules to try and avoid these situations are inappropriate.
- Wetlands fill up with silt naturally and this was happening before human contact.
- It is unclear what the words '*increase in the extent and quality of the FMUs wetlands*' mean and where will this apply. It was suggested that this be linked to stock exclusion slope map rules.

Mahinga kai

- While the draft environmental outcome currently reads '*customary practices are able to be exercised to the extent desired*', customary practices should only be allowable to the extent that water issues can still be resolved.

Natural form and character

- This clause is too vague and does not indicate how far from a waterway 'natural form' is intended to apply.
- 'Natural form' is already protected with other rules.

Drinking water supply

- This clause is unrealistic if government standards for drinking water are applied. It would make sense if it were intended to return water to a level where it can be subsequently treated for drinking.

Commercial and industrial use

- It should be acknowledged that waterways have natural 'ups and downs'.

Hydro-electric power generation

- There should be acknowledgement that hydro generation affects water quality in comparison to a natural flow state.
- The potential for more hydro generation on other waterways could be included in clauses (i) or (m).

In reference to target attribute states, KCRC said that a band approach is too simplistic and is not appropriate to apply across different types of waterways (eg. silt-bottomed rivers and hard-bottomed rivers). If a band system were to operate, they suggested it consider different types of waterways and, where a waterway has been put into a lower band, more information should be shared on why this is. They also noted that there is variation within waterways, so targets covering whole waterways may not be appropriate. It was noted that a '100% region-wide movement up bands' is not compatible with local community involvement. It was suggested that more publicly-accessible waterways be targeted as a priority. It was noted that there was mention that West Coast waterways have "lower levels of dissolved nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus) than other parts of the region" and that targets and rules for the FMU should recognise this. KCRC noted that an allowance may be necessary for a step back in one attribute to make gains in another.

Activities and actions

KCRC recommended that the Freshwater Policy Review focus on:

1. Practical implementation of the national rules.
2. Working more with local communities.
3. Allowing time for recent changes and actions by the community to have an effect.

It was suggested that WRC provide more educational opportunities to farmers and focus on supporting freshwater farm plans and actions for the next 5-10 years. It was noted that landowners need to be on board for positive change and that this needs to be done by working alongside farmers (rather than dictating to them) and investing in urban areas. KCRC recommended that WRC be more educationally-active in the West Coast, as WRC is perceived as 'meddling outsiders from somewhere in Hamilton'. It was suggested that a Te Kuiti office would help change this. It was also recommended that more information and stories from across the region could be shared, including what is working or not and what communities are striving for. KCRC noted that any actions following from the Freshwater Policy Review need to take into account the current challenges facing communities, including economic challenges and weather events. Concern was expressed about the potential costs of implementing actions that follow from the review and it was noted that farming businesses are facing significant economic pressures. KCRC said that work following from the review is a region-wide

responsibility, that the costs should be communicated to the community in advance of finalising rules, and that the entire community should pay for these via the Uniform Annual General Charge and General Rate setting processes. It was noted that charging within FMUs could create affordability issues due to population variances between the FMUs.

Limits and rules

It was suggested that national direction, freshwater farm plans and stock exclusion rules are sufficient and should be allowed time to have an impact. KCRC recommended that WRC not apply any additional rules.

General feedback

KCRC recommended that WRC focus on low-cost opportunities and the worst areas. It was noted that WRC has an important role to play in communicating with the community on the importance of certain matters. It was noted that the full implications of the visions (including costs) should be communicated before they are set, as this may affect how the community feel about them. KCRC consider that no additional rules or 'PC1 approach' are necessary for the West Coast FMU and that existing national rules are sufficient. It was noted that wider pressures are leading to positive farmer-led improvements in water quality – for example, milk and meat processors and banks are requiring higher environmental standards from their suppliers – and that these should be given time to work. KCRC questioned the use of the term 'restore' and how it will be interpreted, noting that there are too many people in the region to return to '1,000, 200, or even 100 years ago'. It was questioned whether the river banks of the Waikato River 'between The Narrows and Taupiri Mountain' will be restored. KCRC specifically noted that there should be a difference between a 'drain' and a 'modified waterway', 'to the extent that more are considered drains'. They said that there is confusion over how drains can be managed and commented that drains need to be maintained on farms in an easy, practical, and low-cost way.

12.3 Other sectors survey feedback

A total of 24 participants selected the 'Other (please specify') option. Of those 24, one respondent also chose the 'Horticulture' option. When they selected 'Other' participants were provided with a textbox to write down their sector. Individuals from a variety of different industries participated in the survey, including: recreation, hunting and fishing, arable, research, water services and bottling, ecology, education, IT, District Council, hapū, and health.

Te Mana o te Wai

Respondents were presented with the draft objective for Te Mana o te Wai and asked to provide their thoughts on the wording. The feedback provided by the 19 participants was a mixture of comments about the overall objective and thoughts on the specific (sub)clauses. Four individuals expressed their agreement with the entirety of the draft objective and the clauses it contains; and one person believed that the objective(s) looked realistic. Another stated while the draft objective is "*great in theory*", currently freshwater management differs greatly from this. Preference was expressed for "*a high-level statement of the minimum water quality that must be met and can be tracked in real time*." It was felt that the current objective focused too much on extractive use. One individual stated that the draft '*generally looks good*' but indicated that they would like there to be reference to the notion of protecting water quality not only for the human population, but also for the fish and other creatures that live within lakes and rivers. In a similar vein, one respondent expressed concerns with waterfowl dying in multiple locations (via botulism) and questioned whether sewage ponds are being managed properly. All the goals were described as "*very broad*" by one respondent and it was suggested that, to allow for accountability, more detail should be provided.

A respondent expressed their support for clause (1.2). For clause (1.3), however, there was comment that human activities are not the sole determinant of the health and wellbeing of freshwater ecosystems. Extreme weather events and long-term changes in climate were also identified as being influential. The participant suggested that 'influence' would be a more suitable term than 'determine' within clause (1.3). In reference to clauses (1) and (3), it was stated that river systems are cleaner now than they were 30 years ago since people are aware of the need to help the river heal itself. The example given was the Waipā river above the Mangapu confluence. With regards to the clause regarding sufficient water being available, it was stated "*this clause is ambiguous in that it does not differentiate between human use for health and human use for cultural, social or economic wellbeing. Clearly defining the priorities within the objective itself will give clarity for plan/policy statement readers*". For that same clause, there was comment that the term 'sufficient' is vague and unhelpful. It was recommended that the word 'abundant' would be more suitable. With regards to the clause '*tangata whenua are enabled to participate…'* it was stated that "*tangata whenua values and practices must underpin policy and inform decision-making*" and that "*tangata whenua should have a seat as of right. The decision of who that is must come back through a hapū process, not an iwi process*".

Long-term vision

Participants were asked which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on for the topic of long-term visions. For each area, they were given a draft objective outlining the long-term vision and then given the opportunity to leave their feedback about the wording of the vision.

Taupō

Five respondents gave their thoughts on the Taupo long-term vision. One participant said that they liked the wording of the vision while another stated that the long-term objectives are covered by the paragraphs presented. One respondent expressed concerns about high levels of water in Lake Taupō that has resulted in flooded foreshores and erosion particularly Tūrangi township which is now a flood zone. It was questioned what WRC was doing to persuade the power company to lower the lake level. One other respondent commented, *"Nui hoki te Kaupapa, tino wero mo nga tangata,, engari, KO te Tika Ana te Tiakitanga, MO Tangata katoa, ahakoa no hea…",* [it's a big task and a great challenge for the people, but guardianship is right, for everybody, no matter where they're from].

When asked if they thought the given timeframes for the Taupō vision were ambitious and reasonable, four participants said 'Yes', two said 'No', and one said they were 'Unsure.' One of the respondents who said 'Yes' believed that the given timeframes were appropriate. Another individual commented that since it has taken many years to pollute the river system, it will take many more for it to heal. Similarly, another participant stated that it will take time to implement the changes necessary to improve water quality in Taupō. Unless a plan is put into place, one respondent said, nothing will change. The respondents who said 'No' both had the view that we need to act sooner so that the change can come quicker. In comparison, the participant who indicated that they were 'Unsure' explained "*I am unsure because of how many plans have been on the table over the years and hapū values have been considered useful only for one particular purpose and that is to be seen that these plans are fulfilling your obligation to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Hapū values are always over-ridden by the iwi and/or big business*".

Upper Waikato

The respondent stated that they agreed with the vision. Two participants agreed that 'Yes', the given timeframes are both reasonable and ambitious. When asked to explain their choice, one explained that they felt 15 years was enough time to "*regenerate a biotope if properly engineered*", whereas the other emphasised the importance of beginning work now.

Middle Waikato

Six participants gave their thoughts on the Middle Waikato long-term vision. One respondent stated that the current system looks nothing like the vision described. Another individual commented that while the principles are agreeable, there is no mention of how strategies are going to be enforced. One participant described the draft objective as being "*good*," but did add that they thought trout should be protected. It was stated that *"trout are known to assist in the maintenance of high-water quality".* One other respondent indicated that they *"generally agree"* with the vision, but that it will need updating to align with the Te Ture Whaimana review.

Clarification was requested for clause (f). 2074 was seen as an achievable target, "*but this system is slower due to the hydro dams and the water flow*". The participant expressed that weeds are another problem that need to be addressed. In reference to clause (b), respondents were asked what state we should return water quality to. It was suggested that percentages be left out of the discussion and instead the standard should be *"safe for swimming".* In contrast, another participant felt that water needs to be much cleaner than it is now and that some kind of percentage values appear to be needed and "clean and clear" and "drinkable" were recommended as standards. Another proposed "*clean and clear with both natural and introduces species living in balance*". One person suggested "*to say 100% improvement of 2023 quality would not be unrealistic, especially in Arapuni."*

A participant commented that WRC should be informing the respondents, based on evidence, what stretch target is achievable rather than ones that are unrealistic. When asked if they perceived the given timeframes as being ambitious and reasonable, two participants said 'Yes', three said 'No', and three indicated that they were 'Unsure.' Of the respondents who said 'Yes', one expressed that they would like to see faster progress (but what we have is a good start) while the other stated that, if properly engineered, 15 years would be sufficient to regenerate a biotope. One of the participants who selected 'No' recommended that the timeframe should be 5 – 10 years. For those who were 'Unsure', one commented that many factors and players are involved whereas another essentially said that it will take as long as it needs to take. The third person believed that: clause (c) was too vague; clause (g) was a 'big ask' and should reconsider some parameters/exclusions around bottom visibility; and clause (h) would benefit from including requirements for on-site household water storage in urban areas.

Lower Waikato

Four respondents gave their thoughts on the Lower Waikato long-term vision. Two participants liked the draft objective and saw it as being appropriate. Another explained that while the draft objective "*generally looks good*", it should be acknowledged that we are improving water not only for humans, but also for the fish and creatures that live within the water. It was stated that "*poor farming practice and the runoff and associated discolouration of the Waikato waterways needs addressing*". Clause (e) was described as "*the sort of minimum metric that is required*." Clause (g) was viewed similarly noting that native biodiversity and the ability to swim in the water are key KPIs. In reference to clause (b), respondents were asked what state we should return water quality to. One participant said that the description provided – 'its attribute state 100 years ago' – was a good target. A different respondent, in contrast, stated that achieving the state of 100 years prior was not realistic since both demand and consumption of water have increased over the years and they are not going to reduce. Clause (g) was seen as more appropriate and the focus "*needs to be placed on ensuring water and environmental/ecosystem sustainability*". Another person emphasised the importance of native biodiversity and the ability to swim in the water as being the desirable state. Another respondent recommended that the water be returned to "*something that provides quality life and a positive environment*". One individual simply stated 'clean.'

When asked if they perceived the given timeframes as being ambitious and reasonable, one respondent said 'Yes', one said 'No', and three others said they were 'Unsure.' The person who said 'Yes' expressed that while the timeframes are reasonable, they thought the goals could be achieved sooner. Similarly, the individual who said 'No' explained that they felt this work could be completed within the next 10 – 15 years and needed to complete things as quickly as possible. One of the respondents who was 'Unsure' stated that different KPIs will require different timeframes. Another said timeframes will depend on funding and how quickly the banks of all the tributaries can be planted and protected. The final uncertain respondent commented that "*we don't have enough knowledge to see how this will affect agricultural sector*".

Waipā

Three participants gave their thoughts on the Waipa long-term vision. One respondent noted that, as dairy farmers have improved their practices, the Waipā has improved over the last 30 years. In comparison, another participant pointed out that the vision failed to mention the dairy industry as intensive agriculture. The third person described the vision as being "*generally ok*", except for clause (b). In reference to clause (b), respondents were asked what state we should return water quality to. One of the participants felt that *"100% better than 2023, is achievable, if the river banks can be maintained, the silting during flooding will be lessened and the water clarity will improve quicker after flooding".* Another stated that clause (b) was too aspirational and there is no water quality monitoring from 100 years ago to determine the target. Instead, they advised to pursue the goal of *"as close as possible to their natural state".* The respondent also suggested WRC should be using modelling to advise on a specific, achievable water quality target. Two different individuals believed that people should be able to safely drink the water.

West Coast

One participant gave their thoughts on the West Coast long-term vision. In reference to clause (f), there was concern that access to waterways may not help them keep clean; and while there was hope to achieve clause (h), there were concerns that it was too ambitious. This respondent was 'Unsure' if the given timeframes were ambitious and reasonable. They explained that they believe the goals set for 2050 are good but the timeframe for clause (h) is too ambitious – though they would like to see it happen.

Hauraki

No feedback was provided for the long-term vision for this FMU. In reference to clause (g), respondents were asked what state we should return water quality to, and the recommendation was "c*lean, clear water with good life in it*". When asked if they thought the given timeframes for the Hauraki vision were ambitious and reasonable, one said 'Yes' whereas the other said they were 'Unsure.' The participant who said 'Yes' explained that they viewed 31 years as being a sufficient timeframe if acted quickly. The individual who was 'Unsure' stated that they hoped the given timeframes were enough but were not sure.

Coromandel

Three respondents gave their thoughts on the Coromandel long-term vision. For general feedback, one participant stated that while the principles are easy to agree with, there is no mention of how strategies will be enforced. When looking specifically at clauses (e), (f), and (g), it was recommended that riparian strips – especially those relevant to commercial forestry – be actively monitored at planting and harvesting. It was suggested in regard to steepness of land contour and proximity to streams and rivers, riparian strips must be extended in width. In addition, there was comment that clause (f) should not limit itself to only headwaters – it was believed that "*the full length of all waterways should be protected from sediment encroachment*". Intensive farming was identified as the main cause of sediment loss.

When asked if they thought the given timeframes for the Coromandel vision were ambitious and reasonable, three respondents said 'Yes', while one said 'No.' One of the respondents who agreed with the timeframes believed that if trees/ground cover are planted now, they would be functioning in 11 years. Similarly, another participant who said 'Yes', commented that 15 years would be sufficient to regenerate a biotope, so long as it is properly engineered. Another participant stated that the urgency of the (freshwater) situation means these timeframes must be met. The individual who did not agree with the given timeframes stated a 'sooner' date was needed.

Environmental outcomes

Participants were asked which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on for the topic of environmental outcomes. For each area, they were presented with a list of possible outcomes. When they clicked on an outcome, the draft objective was shown and they were provided with the opportunity to leave comments.

Taupō

Ecosystem health

One of the respondents who reviewed this outcome stated that while they were not aware of any salmon in the Taupō area, catfish do need to be targets in South Lake Taupō. Excluding this, they felt that the wording of the outcome was inclusive. The other individual stated that they supported the objectives described.

Human contact

The individual who read this environmental outcome stated that people are 'naturally caring' and "*as such people will engage with a natural caring regard to water safety and ensure that they are treating a Natural Resource with deserved respect*".

Threatened species

It was suggested that research needs to be done to establish the koura population numbers to determine if they are decreasing.

Mahinga kai

The respondent believed that *"in keeping with respect for water, humanity will also be respectfully responsible for mahinga kai".*

Drinking water supply

The participant who reviewed this draft outcome stated that they agreed with the description *"as once treated will eventually join the water system again".*

Wai tapu

It was believed that *"this should be maintained and encouraged as a relationship".*

Fishing

One of the respondents who read this outcome stated that the status quo should be maintained. Another individual expressed that they believed more resources are required to increase the number of trout in the region. The third participant stated that the *"importance of trout fishing to the local economy is very under-rated and neglected".* This person felt that a government department such as DOC is not an appropriate manager for fisheries as politics interfere with their decisions.

Hydro-electric power generation

The participant who reviewed this outcome agreed that hydro-electric power generation should be maintained but also noted that there is still potential for more geothermal technology and solar power. It was also suggested that the storage lake needs to be studied to establish its ecological effects.

Waikato-Waipā

Ecosystem health

Two participants expressed that they "*agreed*" with the draft objectives, and another said that they "*seem ok*." One individual believed that these outcomes were "*great in theory*." Another person commented that hunting and fishing under license, as it is currently done, is working. One respondent questioned the inclusion of salmon in clause (c.iii). It was stated that this area is the most degraded and requires the most work.

Human contact

One respondent stated that they "*agree*" with the draft environmental outcomes. Another said that the described objectives were "*great*" but required more specificity. Another individual indicated their agreement and commented that people should have safe and drinkable water.

Threatened species

A participant simply said "*agree*" while another stated "*it is difficult not to agree in principle*". One individual stated that the section was of the proposed outcomes. One respondent believed that all (species) should be protected.

Natural form and character

For this outcome, a participant expressed their agreement but also requested that we define these characteristics and *"not just 'include' examples."*

Drinking water supply

One participant described the environmental outcome as "great". Another person stated that they would agree with the described outcome if it was sustainable. Similarly, one respondent stated they agreed but recommended the outcome be augmented "*with requirement for urban household level water storage (not for drinking but to reduce overall water take)*". One individual believed that water quantity is not a problem for the foreseeable future. They noted that the quality of drinking water in Otorohanga and Te Kuiti varies throughout the year but that is a council problem which they are currently working on.

Animal drinking water

The participant who reviewed this draft outcome believed that this goal is a long way away from the present state of water.

Wai tapu

It was stated that more work needs to be done to protect springs that are taonga (for example, Hangatiki).

Transport and Tauranga waka

The respondent who read this draft stated that while they agreed with the described outcome, they felt it should be added that the Waikato awa is also a transport route "*link in with the metro spatial plan, lift the 5-knot speed limit, and provide for limited concessions for rapid ferry services. Water wash and bank erosion won't be an issue if ferry services limited only to flat hulls or multi hulls".*

Fishing

One participant said they were all for the described outcome and another stated the draft outcome was "*admirable*". It was explained that fish numbers are presently low but this was due to food sources for them also being low. Another individual emphasised the importance of catch and release. One respondent thought that this issue was already under the management of Fish and Game. In reference to clause (i), a participant doubted, with the current water quality, if the fish are suitable for human consumption. With regards to clause (ii), they expressed complete agreement.

Irrigation, cultivation and food and beverage production

Two individuals indicated that they agreed with the draft environmental outcome but one cautioned that they will require a lot of resources to become a reality. Another participant stated that they support the outcome so long as it is sustainable.

Hydro-electric power generation

There were two respondents who agreed with the described outcome and another who believed that hydro-electric power generation was a good use of the resource. One participant

recommended that we change the description to '*maintained and protected for continued operation*.' They believed that this is "*critical national infrastructure and the dams should be considered national taonga in their own right*". There was one respondent who disagreed with the continued use of hydro-electric power generation.

Commercial and industrial uses

One participant cautioned that this draft outcome could conflict with previous principles on a practical level. Similarly, another individual stated that the outcome was 'good' but that "*commercial use of fresh water and generation of wastewater must not have adverse effect on the environment*". The third respondent recommended that the outcome be changed to *"commercial and industrial activities continue to be enabled by high quality water of sufficient quantity".*

West Coast

Ecosystem health

The respondent questioned what baselines WRC was working from and what historical level is the goal. While they acknowledged that it will be hard to define, it should be defined. This definition is necessary to hold WRC accountable for (not) reaching the goals. It was stated that the goals should be more precise.

Human contact

The participant who reviewed this draft environmental outcome agreed with the description given.

Threatened species

In reference to clause (i), it was questioned whether the phrase 'human-induced loss' includes pest mammals. There was a query about how this would be measured. Regarding clause (iv), clarification was sought on the definition of 'critical habitats', and *"many/most threatened fauna species are mobile and have large home ranges and are known to use 'improved pasture' as part of their foraging habitats. How would you manage this"?*

Natural form and character

It was stated that the goal of 'maintained at their natural form and character' will be difficult for habitats that are naturally mobile – with this in mind, it was queried how this goal would be achieved.

Hauraki

Ecosystem health

The draft environmental outcome was described as "*good*."

Human contact

One respondent commented that "w*ater is limited, it's not going to rain more just because there are more people*".

Threatened species

The participant who read this draft environmental outcome stated it was "*good*".

Drinking water supply

The respondent asked where extra water is supposed to come from.

Animal drinking water

The participant who read this draft outcome believed that animal drinking water should be the responsibility of (the) farmers (who own the animals).

Fishing

There was comment that while Fish and Game can influence fish numbers, the ultimate responsibility for this issue belongs to the council.

Irrigation, cultivation and production of food and beverages

The respondent who reviewed this environmental outcome stated that the increase in water take cannot continue if nothing extra is being added to the origin/source.

Hydro-electric power generation
The participant who selected this outcome was not aware that there was hydro-electric power generation in Hauraki at this point in time but suggested that "*maybe there should be some small local one put in*".

Coromandel

Ecosystem health
The draft environmental outcome was described as "*good*".

Human contact
One respondent commented that "w*ater is limited, it's not going to rain more just because there are more people*".

Threatened species
One participant said that the draft environmental outcome was "*good*". Another expressed their agreement with all four subclauses.

Drinking water supply
The respondent asked where extra water is supposed to come from.

Animal drinking water
The participant who read this draft outcome believed that animal drinking water should be the responsibility of (the) farmers (who own the animals).

Fishing
There was comment that while Fish and Game can influence fish numbers, the ultimate responsibility for this issue belongs to the council.

Irrigation, cultivation and production of food and beverages
The respondent who reviewed this environmental outcome stated that the increase in water take cannot continue if nothing extra is being added to the origin/source.

Target attribute states

Participants were provided with some examples of potential principles that could be applied when setting target attribute states and were then asked to give their feedback on potential principles. Eleven people provided their thoughts on the issue.

- It was felt that 10 to 20 years is achievable if councils act fast. 80 years was seen as "*pathetic*."
- Similarly, one participant said that all can do better than 80 years and the sooner action was taken, the better.
- Likewise, 80 years was viewed as being "*too long"* and improvements need to happen as quickly as possible.
- In contrast, another individual believed that 80 years is realistic, and 10 years is a good target for fencing and tree planting.
- One respondent felt that these goals should have been achieved years ago but *"we keep putting it off."*
- It was recommended to use *"drinking and aquatic life standards."*
- Another participant acknowledged that targets must be set, but they felt that '10% or 20% in 10 years' was not ambitious enough.
- It was questioned whether there are intermittent goals set within the long-term targets – so that the public can determine whether WRC is on 'the right track' towards 80-year goals.
- A respondent made the following comment, "*the long-term target of moving all attributes up a band is far too generic and assumes that a) all attributes are required to improve to meet outcomes and b) that all attributes are required to be improved by the same amount (and are starting from the same place). In reality, some attributes*

will require more significant improvements than others or be more challenging to achieve over a specified time horizon. The principle for setting long-term targets needs to be more nuanced to reflect the differences in current and aspirational target attribute states within each FMU".

- There was comment that this should be informed by WRC and mātauranga monitoring and forecast modelling.
- One participant stated that targets need to be *"realistic and achievable over realistic period of time".* In addition, they need to take into consideration the challenges and difficulties of commercial use of water as well as farming needs.

Respondents were then asked how they might explain these principles to farmers or other primary sector representatives. Fourteen individuals gave suggestions.

- One individual felt that this was farmers' responsibility, and they should have recognised that their actions over the past 50 years have been unsustainable and damaging.
- Another stated that it is in their long-term interests to address the issues that intensive farming practices and land-use changes have created for short-term financial gain.
- One suggested that their advice would be to keep animals away from waterways and plant crops next to rivers.
- A respondent stated that *"procrastination is not helpful".*
- One noted that they would emphasise long-term sustainability, which will be difficult to share with an industry that has experienced rapid expansion over the past 25 years.
- A respondent made the following comment, *"I appreciate there will be increased costs for farmers but they can't go on with the practices some of them are following. I often see cows getting very close to waterways and cow manure in or close to waterways. This has to stop. Fonterra have a responsibility to plough back a proportion of their profits to help the farmers. If we clean up NZ it will be better for everyone. For visitors from abroad who have a perception that we are clean (but are not currently) and for those of us who live here".*
- Another participant commented that farmers are not the only problem. They believed that water levels in lakes and wetlands need to be the main priority to provide more species with greater areas to live and feed. It was felt that there will still be issues with farmers unless there is huge change in legislation from the government.
- It was stressed that the health (of the water) usurps profit.
- One respondent recommended that they be provided with clear instructions and incentives to help in achieving these goals.
- Another individual claimed that these sectors have no interest in hapū values.
- A sufficient supply of clean water was viewed as a non-negotiable bottom-line. *"Clean water underpins your business and our lives".* Healthy and clean rivers are needed for healthy farms.
- It was believed that, in principle, all primary sector farmers are supportive.
- One individual emphasised the importance of awareness and education; and noted the need to be transparent on how targets are set and how things will be measured.
- One participant thought that giving an easy-to-understand example using the metrics described would help to put goals into context.

Activities and actions

Respondents were asked which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on for the topic of activities and actions. For each area, they were given a high-level summary of the state of freshwater within that FMU and were then questioned on their thoughts regarding freshwater within that same area.

Taupō

When asked for their thoughts on freshwater within Taupō, six respondents expressed their opinions. One individual believed that while farming issues have been addressed, those surrounding logging have not been. Another said that while they generally think the water quality is acceptable, there is room for improvement. In contrast, one person described the quality of freshwater within Taupō as being "*poor*". In particular, "*the amount of algae now growing in our streams, rivers and the Lake is totally unacceptable*". It was noted by another participant that introduced fish species are essential to the local economy. Another commented that the river deed was focused on the Waikato River and *"what was not considered was the health and wellbeing of the tributaries and how to look after them before they reached the River. The monitoring process of these streams should become a priority, so our water stays in the state of being of 'excellent'".* One participant expressed agreement with the WRC description but also noted that DOC are not suitable managers for fisheries.

When asked what the Freshwater Policy Review should focus on to accelerate positive change, six individuals provided recommendations. One respondent suggested focusing on good farming practices (for example, fencing off livestock access to rivers) and planting of exotic trees well away from rivers. Another individual recommended looking at trout habitat while another advised to stop all discharge into water catchments and waterways. It was suggested that the focus be on tributaries. One participant suggested "*fishing*" but did not provide any further detail. Another respondent suggested focusing on the areas of farm run-off and urban development.

Waikato-Waipā

Nine respondents gave their thoughts on the state of freshwater within the Waikato-Waipa FMU. One participant agreed with the description provided. Another individual noted that water quality in the region has declined over the past twenty years due to the dairy industry and the widespread use of pesticides and fertilisers by intensive agriculture. In terms of specific areas within the FMU, it was believed that water that comes from the Blue Springs is of a very (very) good quality. Another explained that *"the Waipā runs clear until the Mangapu enters it at Otorohanga, formulate a planting plan for the Mangapu. Arapuni has problems with water clarity from dairy run off and weeds that seems denser than the lakes above and below".* Similarly, one respondent noted that having any animals close to the water system is a problem. It was recommended to define the term 'pest fish.' The participant stated that catfish are a pest and should have their numbers reduced, but trout – despite being introduced – are a valuable resource, and should be protected. One respondent simply said "*trout habitat"* but did not provide any further detail.

When asked what the Freshwater Policy Review should focus on to accelerate positive change, a range of suggestions were provided by ten individuals. It was recommended to focus on water quality, trout habitats, sustainable practices, run-off, and soil in the water and how to clean this up. Another respondent suggested consideration of the impact of the logging industry and their accountability for slash. One participant said that farmers should plant crops next to waterways while another believed the need to provide alternatives for the dairy and agriculture industries. Similarly, one individual stated *"the poor farming practices and approach of riverside industries needs to be investigated. The nitrogen levels and other pollutants must be addressed. They are currently unsustainable for a modern supposedly 1st world country like NZ".* One individual felt that it was WRC's job to provide advice and focus on where the biggest gains can be made.

West Coast

The respondent who expressed interest in the West Coast FMU stated that they were *"sad that water quality is poor where easy and obvious measures can be taken to reduce the impacts*

on waterways e.g., fencing and planting". When asked what they thought to focus on to accelerate positive change for freshwater management, the participant suggested *"fencing and planting of a wide buffer around all waterways. Aid farmers to establish treatment wetlands for effluent management".*

Hauraki

The participant felt that WRC's description of the state of freshwater within Hauraki was "*accurate*" and stated that the fault lies with high intensity farming operations. In terms of what the Freshwater Policy Review should focus on to accelerate positive change within freshwater, it was stated that the irresponsible farmers should have to *"sort it out themselves".*

Coromandel

One individual agreed with the description provided – but stated that the issue was *"greed and stupidity".* They noted that the farmers near them manage their land poorly, over-stocking and stripping grass down to the dirt since there is nothing to hold it back, when it rains, all surface sediment washes off. The other respondent stated that: *"specifically - within the Wharekawa Catchment - the water quality is improving, but the impact of sedimentation during commercial forestry harvesting is of concern. Consistent flooding November 2022 and 2023, has also increased stream bank erosion of established riparian plantings by farmers and horticulturalists. Stream bank erosion is also a major adverse impact on sedimentation of the Wharekawa Harbour".*

Respondents were then asked what the Freshwater Policy Review should focus on to accelerate the positive change within freshwater. One stated the need to correct farming and industry practices where they impact the environment. The other recommended increasing and maintaining funding to horticulturalists and farmers for fence replacement following flooding events. There was also comment to enforce consent conditions for commercial forestry with regards to riparian management.

How costs should be borne

Respondents were asked what they would like to say in principle at this stage about how the costs should be borne.

- There was comment that high intensity farming operations should pay.
- Another commented that commercial users should be charged.
- A participant commented, *"I believe costs should be borne by industries that benefit from these water resources".*
- It was shared that all should bear the costs, that it should be government funded and taxes should be used to cover the costs.
- A respondent shared that*, "organisations such as Fonterra make massive profits from their actions. Organisations such as Fonterra and the offending industries and farmers causing problems must be expected to bear the costs. Essentially it is THEIR faults for the mess the waterways are in. They cannot expect to be able to carry on like this".*
- A respondent was unsure on who should bear the costs while another thought the costs should be borne by those who benefit economically.
- A respondent made the following comment, *"targeted rates for those who have a high impact on waterways. Taxes to help farmers implement some of the measures".*
- There were a couple of responses for regional and district councils to bear the cost.
- A respondent made the following comment, *"understanding that community aspirations will play a large part in the extent of activities and actions required within each FMU, the economic costs should be dispersed as much as possible within that community. Farmers with resource consents already have a large environmental compliance cost burden, which is set to increase with the requirements for FWFPs".*

- One individual recommended adopting two principles. Firstly, "*polluters pay from 1991 (RMA) on"*; and secondly, "*pre-1991, we all have to pay proportionally for the transgressions of past generations".*
- There was the view that as it involves the whole community, costs need to be shared by stakeholders and the government should develop financial schemes to assist small and medium businesses to sustain costs.
- A respondent made the following comment, *"a mixture of local authorities, regional council and the businesses and /or people directly contribute badly to these attributes/limits being out of control".*

Limits and rules

Four individuals provided feedback regarding rules to manage freshwater. Participants were asked which area(s) they would like to provide feedback on for potential limits and rules. For each area, they were presented with some examples of limits and rules to manage activities to improve freshwater within that FMU. They were then asked what specific rules and limits they think would help manage freshwater better.

Taupō

One respondent suggested focusing on good farming practices (for example, fencing off livestock access to rivers) and planting of exotic trees well away from rivers. While one participant thought the examples WRC provided "*sound good*", another expressed that they were unsure at this point in time, *"where do the marae sit in this plan. We have many rural marae that do not depend on town supply, so limits on water takes and flows would affect those marae. When does consultation take place with the hapū of those marae".*

Waikato-Waipā

Eight individuals provided feedback regarding rules to manage freshwater. Two participants felt the examples provided were sufficient. Another noted that it was WRC responsibility to determine these rules and limits. Two other respondents suggested careful monitoring of farming use of chemicals/hazardous materials and reduction of animal effluent, with one mentioning farm plan requirements. Another participant felt that water should only be taken from the Waikato as it is exiting out to the sea. It was questioned what kind of impact forestry was having on waterways when they engage in clear cutting.

West Coast

The participant recommended having rules around fencing and planting of riparian margins. To reduce sediment and effluent discharge into waterways, the installation of on-farm treatment wetlands should be encouraged. Furthermore, it was recommended to place limits on water takes, encourage on-site water storage and upgrade current waste-water treatment plants to manage loads.

Hauraki

The respondent stated that the examples provided covered the topic.

Coromandel

It was stated by one individual that there are too many rules/limits to cover, but the examples provided by WRC are a good start. Another participant recommended enforcement of harvesting consent conditions and extending the riparian zone with commercial activities and the waterways.

General feedback

Respondents were given the opportunity to provide any additional feedback regarding freshwater management within the different FMUs and/or the whole Waikato region.

Taupō

One individual suggested *"more consultation with the hapū of Ngāti Tūwharetoa".* Another noted that this is going to be a large project that will require multiple (high-level) organisations to manage.

Waikato-Waipā

It was felt that Hydro is responsible for problems within the Waikato river and should consequently pay to improve water quality. Another participant believed that "*things are improving*" and that dairy and industry are important earners for the country. The respondent also encouraged working with and educating people on the causes and effects. Another respondent felt that there was little enforcement of regulations upstream.

West Coast

No additional feedback was provided for this FMU.

Hauraki

The participant stressed the significance of WRC acting sooner rather than later.

Coromandel

The respondent emphasised the importance of WRC acting sooner rather than later.

Whole Waikato region

A respondent made the following comment, *"WRC is charged as co-kaitiaki with iwi for water management… WRC and WRA has the staff, science, resourcing, funding and legislative mandates to demonstrate regional co-leadership to establish regional bottom lines for water management…He waka eke noa - time for some long overdue regional ārahitanga (leadership) in our water space. Mahia noa (just do it). You've got this".*

13 Ngā kupu whakamārama | Glossary of terms

Māori term	English translation
Ahi kā (roa)	Home fires; those who are here preserving one's connection to the land. In this context those tangata whenua marae, hapū and iwi that have been in a region/rohe continuously, for a considerable time.
Ahi mātao	Cooling fires of occupation - a term used where the customary title to land may be lost through lack of occupation over two to three generations.
Ahi teretere	Flickering fire, unstable fire - a term used when members of a whānau have not returned to their tribal lands to 'keep the fires burning' for three or four generations and their rights have almost been extinguished
Ārahitanga	Leadership
Awa	River, stream, creek
Hapori	Community
Hapū	Sub-tribe
Heke kōrero	Dissemination of knowledge
Huhu	Longhorn beetle endemic to New Zealand
Ika	Fish
Īnanga	Common galaxias, juveniles are a component of the whitebait catch
Iwi	Tribe, nation, people, society
Kāeo	Freshwater mussels
Kākahi	Freshwater mussels
Kai	Eat, food, dine
Kaitiaki(tanga)	Guardian, caretaker, (guardianship)
Karakia	Incantation, prayer, chant
Kaumātua	Elders (plural), not gender specific
Kaupapa	Topic, policy, matter for discussion, plan
Kōiwi	Māori skeletal remains
Kōaro	Climbing galaxias, juveniles are a component of the whitebait catch
Kōkopu	Kokopu is a common name used for three species of fish of the genus Galaxias. They are found in the rivers, lakes and swamps of New Zealand, to which they are endemic.
Kōkōwai	Red ochre
Kōmitimiti	Joining
Kōrero	Speech, narrative, story, news, account, discussion, conversation
Koroua	Male elder
Kotahitanga	Unity, togetherness, solidarity, collective action
Kōura	Freshwater crayfish
Kuia	Female elder
Mahi	Work, perform, practice

Māori term	English translation
Mahinga kai	Food safe to harvest, customary resources available
Mana	Prestige, authority, control, power, influence, status, spiritual power, charisma - mana is a supernatural force in a person, place or object
Manaakitanga	Protect, take care of, support
Mana whakahaere	Governance, authority, jurisdiction, management, mandate, power
Mana whenua	Authority over land or territory
Maramataka	Māori lunar calendar
Marae	Sacred meeting place, courtyard in front of the wharenui (meeting house)
Mātaitai	Seafood
Matamata	Whitebait species
Matariki	Māori New Year and the Pleiades star cluster
Mātauranga	Māori knowledge. The body of knowledge originating from Māori ancestors, including the Māori world view and perspectives, Māori creativity and cultural practices
Maunga	Mountain
Mauri	Life principle, life force, vital essence, special nature. The essential quality and vitality of a being or entity
Moana	Sea, ocean
Moko(puna)	Grandchild(ren), descendant(s)
Morihana	Goldfish
Muka	Flax fibre
Pā tuna	Eel weirs
Patunga tapu	Sacrosanct
Paru	Dirty, muddy, soiled
Pepeha	Tribal saying, tribal motto, proverb
Piharau	Lamprey
Pōrohe	Common smelt (fish)
Puhi	Silver belly eel
Puna	To well up, spring of water
Pūrākau	Cosmogonic stories / ideology
Pure	Ceremony or ritual to remove tapu
Pūtea	Funds, finance
Rāhui	To put in place a temporary ritual prohibition, closed season, ban, reserve - traditionally a rāhui was placed on an area, resource or stretch of water as a conservation measure or as a means of social and political control for a variety of reasons which can be grouped into three main categories: pollution by tapu, conservation and politics
Rangatahi	Youth, younger generation

Māori term	English translation
Ranginui	The sky father
Raupō	Bulrush
Repo	Wetland(s)
Rohe	Area, territory
Tāhuhu kōrero	History
Taiao	Nature, environment
Takiwā	District, area, territory, vicinity, region
Tamariki	Children
Tangata whenua	People of the land, locals, host, resident, indigenous people - people born of the whenua, i.e. of the placenta and of the land where the people's ancestors have lived and where their placenta are buried
Taonga	Treasure, anything considered to be of value including socially or culturally valuable objects, resources. Property, goods, possession, effects, object
Taonga tuku iho	Treasure handed down, cultural property, heritage
Tapu	Sacredness
Tautuutu	Reciprocation
Te Kaupapa Kaitiaki	Taupō catchment plan
Te Mana o te Wai	Te Mana o te Wai is a concept that refers to the fundamental importance of water and recognises that protecting the health of freshwater protects the health and well-being of the wider environment. It protects the mauri of the wai. Te Mana o te Wai is about restoring and preserving the balance between the water, the wider environment, and the community. (NPS-FM 2020)
Te Ture Whaimana o te Awa o Waikato	Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River catchment
Tikanga	Correct procedure, custom, habit, lore, method, manner, rule, way, code, meaning, plan, practice, convention
Tinana	Physical wellbeing, physical body
Tohi	Blessing, baptism, dedication ceremony
Tohu	Sign, symbol
Tūāhu	Sacred place for ritual practices, consisting of an enclosure containing a mound (ahu) and marked by the erection of rods (toko) which were used for divination and other mystic rites
Tuna	Freshwater eel
Tūpāpaku	Deceased person's body
Tūpuna	Ancestor(s)
Urupā	Cemetery, burial place, graveyard
Wāhi tapu	Shrine, sanctuary, sacred area/place
Wai	Water

Māori term	English translation
Wai tapu	Sacred waters
Wai whakarite	Cleansing
Wairua	Spirit, soul
Wānanga	To meet and discuss, forum
Whakaaro	Thoughts, opinions, considerations
Whakanoa	Removal of tapu
Whakapapa	Genealogy, genealogical table, lineage, descent, ancestry
Whānau (whānui)	Extended family, family group, to be born
Whenua	Land
Wiwi	Knobby club-rush, A common rush of swampy areas

14 Āpitihanga | Appendices

Appendix 1: Community and rangatahi drop-in and/or meeting session details - 2023

Date	Time	Location	Number
Tue 30 May	10am-2pm	Tuakau Memorial Hall, Tuakau	3
Thu 1 June	10am-2pm	WRC Taupō Office, Taupō	8
Tue 6 June	10am-2pm	TCDC Whangamatā area office Whangamatā	3
Mon 12 June	10am-2pm	The Link, Hamilton	22
Mon 19 June	10am-2pm	Raglan Community House, Raglan	3
Fri 23 June	10am-2pm	The Plaza Theatre, Putāruru	4
Mon 26 June	10am-2pm	Matamata-Piako District Council, Matamata	10
Wed 28 June	12pm-3pm	Thames Memorial Civic Centre, Thames CANCELLED DUE TO WEATHER EVENT	0
Thu 29 June	10am-2pm	Coromandel Council Boardroom, Coromandel CANCELLED DUE TO WEATHER EVENT	0
Wed 5 July	10am-2pm	King Country Farmers, SPECIAL REQUEST SESSION, Les Munro Centre, Te Kuiti	6
Mon 10 July	6pm-8.30pm	Paeroa Dairy Farmers SPECIAL REQUEST SESSION, WRC Paeroa office meeting room, Paeroa	13
Tue 18 July	5.30pm-7pm	Matamata-Piako District Council, Matamata	0
Wed 19 July	10am-2pm	Thames on Kirkwood, Thames	2
Thurs 20 July	5.30pm-7pm	Suncourt Conference Centre, Taupō	5
Mon 24 July	5.30pm-7pm	Tuakau Memorial Hall , Tuakau	4
Tue 25 July	6.30pm-7.30pm	Online	15
Tue 25 July	5.30pm-7pm	Les Munro Centre, Te Kuiti	13
		Total	***111***

Rangatahi Voices - 2023

Date	Location	Number
10-11 March	Wintec, Hamilton	9
Sat 22 July	WRC Office, Hamilton	9
	Total	***18***

Appendix 2: Tangata whenua drop-in session details - 2023

Date	Time	Location	Number
Fri 2 June	10am-2pm	Thames War Memorial Civic Centre, Thames	2
Fri 9 June	10am-2pm	Te Awamarahi Marae, Tuakau	4
Mon 12 June	10am-2pm	Te Kokiri Centre (Whaingaroa Ki Te Whenua Trust), Raglan	4
Tue 13 June	10am-2pm	The Link, Hamilton	4
Tue 20 June	9.30am-1pm	Tongariro Hall, Tūrangi	3
Wed 21 June	10am-2pm	WRC office, Taupō	7
Thu 22 June	10am-2pm	Te Toke Marae, Reporoa	11
Wed 28 June	10am-2pm	Matamata-Piako District Council, Matamata	0
Tue 4 July	10am-2pm	Les Munro Centre, Te Kuiti	0
Wed 19 July	10am-2pm	The Plaza Theatre, Putāruru	2
Mon 24 July	6.30pm-7.30pm	Online	2
Tue 25 July	3.30pm-4.30pm	Online	3
		TOTAL	***42***

Appendix 3: Stakeholder/sector session details - 2023

Sector	Date	Time	Location	Number
Dairy	Mon 3 July	9.30am-2pm	The Link, Hamilton	11
Beef & Lamb	Thur 6 July	9.30am-2pm	The Link, Hamilton	7
Horticulture	Tue 11 July	9.30am-2pm	The Link, Hamilton	5
Forestry	Thur 13 July	9.30am-2pm	The Link, Hamilton	6
Energy	Tue 18 July	9.30am-11.30am	Online	11
Environmental NGOs	Fri 21 July	9.30am-2pm	The Link, Hamilton	6
ACRE	Wed 26 July	3.30pm-4pm	Online	6
Territorial Authorities	Tues 1 Aug	9.30am-2pm	WINTEC, Hamilton	14
Pukekohe Vegetable Growers Association	Wed 16 Aug	5pm-8pm	BNZ, Pukekohe	9
Future Proof	Mon 21 Aug	12pm-1.30pm	WRC Hamilton	7
Arable	Mon 21 Aug	11.30am-1pm	Online	7
			TOTAL	***89***

Appendix 4: Community and tangata whenua participant survey responses - 2023

Community and tangata whenua responses	
Entire survey	19
Te Mana o Te Wai	40
Long-term visions	23
Environmental outcomes and target states	9
Activities and actions	13
Potential limits and rules	10
Additional feedback	10
Total responses	**127**

(Participants could select more than one topic and therefore the number of responses maybe more than the actual number of participants)

Appendix 5: Sector/stakeholder participant survey responses - 2023

Sector responses	
Dairy	16
Beef and Lamb	13
Horticulture	5
Forestry	4
Energy	2
Environmental NGOs	7
Other	24
Total responses	**71**

(Sector participants could select more than one sector/industry to respond to and therefore the number of responses is more than the actual number of participants)

NOTE: These draft objectives for Te Mana o te Wai and long-term visions are not final, they were presented for feedback in this second round of engagement

Appendix 6: Te Mana o te Wai draft objective – Community and Tangata Whenua version

Te Mana o te Wai draft objective

1. *The health, resilience and wellbeing of the Waikato Region's freshwater resources is restored and protected, present and future generations' connections with freshwater are sustained, and land and water are managed on a whole of catchment basis, to give effect to Te Mana o te Wai, recognising:*
    - *1.1 That sufficient quality and quantity of freshwater is essential to the health and well-being of ecosystems and people;*
    - *1.2 That people's relationship with freshwater is inextricably connected with their cultural, social, and economic systems;*
    - *1.3 The effects of human activities determine the health and well-being of the Region's freshwater bodies and ecosystems.*
2. *Tangata whenua are enabled to participate in policy formulation and decision-making processes relating to freshwater management.*
3. *There is sufficient water available to provide for the health and well-being of waterbodies, and provided that is achieved, water may be available for human use, provided it is allocated and used efficiently.*
4. *Water quality and quantity targets are established and respected, to reflect the cultural, spiritual, and ecological values of freshwater as understood by tangata whenua and the community.*

Appendix 7: Te Mana o te Wai draft objective – Stakeholder/Sector version

Te Mana o te Wai draft objective – Sector version

1. *The health, resilience and wellbeing of the Waikato Region's freshwater resources is restored and protected, present and future generations' connections with freshwater are sustained, and land and water are managed on a whole of catchment basis, to give effect to Te Mana o te Wai, recognising:*
    - *1.1 That sufficient quality and quantity of freshwater is essential to the health and well-being of ecosystems and people;*
    - *1.2 That people's relationship with freshwater is inextricably connected with their cultural, social, and economic systems;*
    - *1.3 The effects of human activities determine the health and well-being of the Region's freshwater bodies and ecosystems.*
2. *There is sufficient water available to provide for the health and well-being of waterbodies, and provided that is achieved, water may be available for human use, provided it is allocated and used efficiently.*
3. *Water quality and quantity targets are established and respected, to reflect the cultural, spiritual, and ecological values of freshwater as understood by tangata whenua and the community.*
4. *Tangata whenua are enabled to participate in policy formulation and decision-making processes relating to freshwater management.*

Appendix 8: Draft objective Taupō long-term-vision

Draft Objective - Taupō long-term vision

a) *By 2034, the health, well-being and mauri of waterbodies is protected and restored where necessary, for present and future generations.*
b) *By 2034, freshwater is holistically managed in a way that recognises that the health of people relies on the health of the environment.*
c) *By 2034, freshwater management recognises Māori rights and interests in freshwater, creates an environment for sharing of traditional knowledge and practices and protects customary activities and principles - tikanga.*
d) *By 2034, the cultural, spiritual, educational, environmental and economic associations with freshwater are recognised.*
e) *By 2034, sustainable land and water management practices support the achievement of clause (a) and ensure no new aquatic pest species are introduced.*
f) *By 2034, water quality is maintained where good, and if degraded, improved for all freshwater attributes from the baseline state.*
g) *By 2034, freshwater supports natural flows and ecosystems and is available for traditional and customary uses.*
h) *By 2034, fisheries and freshwater habitat that are degraded are rehabilitated and restored, and where they are not degraded they are protected.*

Appendix 9: Draft objective Upper Waikato long-term-vision

Draft Objective – Upper Waikato long-term vision

a) *By 2044, freshwater management recognises Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato - the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River and Te Mana o Te Wai.*
b) *By 2044, the health, well-being, mauri and mana of waterbodies is protected and provides for a range of freshwater values including drinkable water for present and future generations.*
c) *By 2044, freshwater is holistically managed in a way that recognises the health of the people relies on the health of the environment.*
d) *By 2044, mana whenua are recognised as kaitiaki mō ngā wai - the guardians of Wai, customary practice and principles – tikanga are provided for and our mokopuna see the awa and wai as our tūpuna did.*
e) *By 2044, communities exercise stewardship for the water for present and future generations.*
f) *By 2044, sustainable land use and management supports ecosystem health and the achievement of clause a) and b) while also conserving and protecting the productive capacity of land.*
g) *By 2044, freshwater management supports an environment for sharing of traditional knowledge and practices with present and future generations.*
h) *By 2044, fisheries and freshwater habitats that are degraded are rehabilitated and restored, and where they are not degraded they are protected.*
i) *By 2044, water is allowed to be itself, in its common, ordinary or normal state, flowing naturally, and through our everyday lives.*
j) *By 2044, water quality and habitat is improved with established riparian areas and native plantings and rubbish is removed from waterways.*

Appendix 10: Draft objective Middle Waikato long-term-vision

Draft Objective – Middle Waikato long-term vision

a) *Freshwater management recognises Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato - the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River and achieved the Vision in 80 years.*
b) *% improvement [% informed by science] in all aspects of freshwater across the region in 10 years.*
c) *By 2074, the health, well-being and mauri of waterbodies is restored and protected for present and future generations in a way that enhances the environment.*
d) *By 2074, fisheries and freshwater habitats that are degraded are rehabilitated and restored, and where they are not degraded they are protected.*
e) *By 2074, ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu, taonga and customary rights are protected from adverse effects and inappropriate use and cultural practices and relationships are retained.*
f) *By 2074, land use opportunities have been recognised and taken within ecosystem health target attribute states.*
g) *By 2074, rivers are swimmable and the bottom of rivers are visible.*
h) *By 2074, the built form of urban areas contribute to improved water quality and urban communities value freshwater and manage it sustainably.*

Appendix 11: Draft objective Lower Waikato long-term-vision

Draft Objective – Lower Waikato long-term vision

a) *By 2074, freshwater management recognises Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato - the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River.*
b) *By 2074, freshwater is healthy, sustains abundant life and prosperous communities and the needs of present and future generations and improved back to [its attribute state 100 years ago].*
c) *By 2074, ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu, taonga and customary rights are protected from adverse effects and inappropriate use.*
d) *By 2074, the community and tangata whenua collectively takes responsibility for the restoration and protection of the health and wellbeing of the freshwater.*
e) *By 2074, biodiversity of flora and fauna, endemic species including porohe, īnanga and matamata (whitebait species) are protected.*
f) *By 2074, natural inland wetlands areas have been enhanced and increased; provides safe habitat for wetland birds to thrive; increased freshwater species, and access to mahinga kai.*
g) *Waterways are safe, easier to access, and provide for swimming and drinking water, weed and pest free and in 10 years there has been no decline in water quality.*
h) *Reduction in water takes and discharges of nutrients and contaminants to water in 10 years to provide for clause a) and b).*

Appendix 12: Draft objective Waipā long-term-vision

Draft Objective – Waipā long-term vision

a) *By 2044, the FMU is managed in accordance with Te Ture Whaimana o te Awa o Waikato – the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River.*
b) *By 2044, water quality, the mauri and integrity of all freshwater bodies, and their biodiversity is restored and protected for present and future generations by bringing the waterbodies back to as close as possible to their state [100 years ago].*
c) *By 2044, freshwater management reflects kotahitanga and mātauranga Māori knowledge and wisdom, customary practices and principles as well as the best available scientific information.*
d) *By 2044, fisheries and freshwater habitats that are degraded are rehabilitated and restored, and where they are not degraded they are protected.*
e) *By 2044, ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu, taonga and customary rights are protected from adverse effects and inappropriate use, and wai supports traditional practices, mahinga kai, birthing and education in order to sustain cultural, spiritual, and social and kaitiaki needs.*
f) *By 2044, the community and tangata whenua take collective responsibility to sustainably care for and nurture the mana and mauri of wai as a treasure.*
g) *By 2044, existing natural inland wetlands are enhanced and protected and new natural inland wetlands are created to improve indigenous biodiversity and water quality.*

Appendix 13: Draft objective West Coast long-term-vision

Draft Objective – West Coast long-term vision

a) *By 2050, the health, well-being and mauri of all waterbodies and their biodiversity is protected and if necessary, restored for present and future generations to sustain cultural, spiritual, social, economic and kaitiaki needs.*
b) *By 2050, fisheries and freshwater habitats that are degraded are rehabilitated and restored, and where they are not degraded, they are protected.*
c) *By 2050, ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu, taonga and customary rights are protected from adverse effects and inappropriate use.*
d) *By 2050, the community is involved in contributing to the sustainable needs of freshwater allowing freshwater to sustainably meet the needs of the community.*
e) *Clean drinking water has been maintained, waterways are safe for human contact in 10 years and water quality restored for safe swimming swim and gathering kai in 80 years.*
f) *Public access to waterways is improved.*
g) *Waterways are maintained, and the life sustaining ecosystems and habitat for freshwater flora and fauna have been safeguarded by 2050.*
h) *By 2034, waterways are clean, provide a safe habitat for all wetland birds free of predators and riparian margins are managed by removing pest species, fencing and replanting with native species to support a thriving environment.*

Appendix 14: Draft objective Hauraki long-term-vision

Draft Objective – Hauraki long-term vision

a) *By 2054, the health, well-being and mauri of waterbodies is protected and restored where necessary to provide for present and future generations and healthy ecosystems.*
b) *By 2054, the community collectively takes action and sustainable land management supports ecosystem health, freshwater values and the achievement of clauses a) and e).*
c) *By 2054, freshwater is holistically managed in a way that recognised that health of the people relies on the health of the environment.*
d) *By 2054, freshwater is suitable and accessible to provide for a range of values and uses, including drinking, swimming, mahinga kai and other traditional and customary practices.*
e) *By 2054, freshwater management supports space for all generations to interact with the awa together and ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu, taonga and customary rights are protected from adverse effects and inappropriate use.*
f) *By 2054, fisheries and freshwater habitats, riparian margins and natural inland wetlands that are degraded are rehabilitated and restored, and where they are not degraded they are protected.*
g) *Water quality is above any national bottom line, further degradation is avoided and gradual improvements made over the next 10 years with water quality returned to a [point in time or other state] in 50 years.*
h) *Extent of natural inland wetlands is increased, and natural inland wetland tuna populations are restored.*
i) *Public access to waterways is improved.*
j) *Riparian planting of waterways with appropriate types of vegetation is achieved by 2034 with re-forestation of appropriate areas within catchments by 2074.*

Appendix 15: Draft objective Coromandel long-term-vision

Draft Objective – Coromandel long-term vision

a) *By 2054, people contribute to the creation of healthier waterways as the health of water and our community are a reflection of each other and freshwater is the essence of life for all species.*
b) *By 2054, freshwater is clean, safe for drinking and contact recreation, swimmable, supports sustainable food harvest, and water supply is secure, for all species and for future generations.*
c) *By 2054, freshwater management supports healthy clean water for traditional and customary practices and space for all generations to interact with the awa together and to pass on to future generations.*
d) *By 2054, water quality is above any national bottom line and improved from the baseline state for all attributes.*
e) *By 2034, waterways have a riparian strip of native flora, contain corridors for native birds and insects and are aesthetically pleasing.*
f) *By 2034, sediment sources entering headwaters from upstream activities are reduced and water quality is maintained.*
g) *By 2034, the extent of natural inland wetlands and freshwater wetlands in the coastal environment have increased, and are abundant with native wetland flora and fauna species.*

Appendix 16: Environmental outcomes

Environmental outcomes

1. Ecosystem health

a) Water quality:

i) The health and wellbeing of freshwater waterbodies is restored and protected.

ii) Surface water and ground water quality is maintained or improved where it is degraded.

b) Water quantity:

i) River flows and variability is maintained to provide for ecosystem health and life supporting capacity of aquatic species.

ii) Lake levels are maintained to provide for ecosystem health.

iii) Ground water allocation is set to ensure sustainable yield, and does not adversely affect values for any hydraulically connected surface water body.

c) Habitat:

i) There is an increase in the extent and quality of the FMUs wetlands

ii) There is no loss in area or values of significant vegetation or habitat of indigenous fauna.

iii) The habitat of trout and salmon in the FMU are protected, insofar as this is consistent with the protection of indigenous species habitat

iv) Areas of trout fisheries and spawning habitat maintained and enhanced.

d) Aquatic life

i) There is improved ecological health and wellbeing of indigenous fresh water species and trout fisheries.

ii) The abundance and diversity of biota in the FMU including microbes, invertebrates, plants, fish and birds is maintained and enhanced where it is degraded.

2. Human contact:

i) The quantity and quality of fresh water in the FMU supports people to safely connect with freshwater.

3. Threatened species

i) There is no human-induced loss of threatened species or their natural range within the FMU.

ii) Fragmentation of threatened species ecosystems, habitats and areas is reduced.

iii) The area of restored or recreated threatened species biodiversity is increased, including areas under sustained pest control, or formal protection

iv) The FMU or part of an FMU that supports a population of threatened species has the critical habitats and conditions necessary to support the presence, abundance, survival, and recovery of the threatened species, and these are protected and improved.

4. Mahinga kai

i) Water is safe for taking kai.

ii) In waterbodies used for providing mahinga kai, the desired species are plentiful enough for long-term harvest and present across all life stages.

iii) In waterbodies valued for providing mahinga kai, customary resources are available for use, customary practices are able to be exercised to the extent desired, and tikanga and preferred methods are able to be practiced.

Environmental outcomes continued…

5. Natural form and character

i) The characteristics contributing to the natural form and character of freshwater bodies (including biological, visual and physical characteristics) are maintained.

6. Drinking water supply

i) Water quality and quantity is sufficient for water to be taken and used for drinking water supply.

7. Animal drinking water

i) Water quality and quantity meets the needs of farmed animals, including whether it is palatable and safe for consumption.

8. Wai tapu

i) Wai tapu, and its identified taonga, are recognised and protected to promote the cultural, spiritual and historic relationship Tangata whenua have with freshwater.

ii) Adverse effects on the relationship that tangata whenua have with their identified taonga, such as wai tapu, are avoided.

9. Transport and Tauranga waka

i) Sites to launch and land waka and other watercraft are maintained and provided for.

ii) There are suitable flows to enable the continued access and use of watercraft for transport purposes.

10. Fishing

i) In parts of the FMU valued for fishing, the numbers of fish are sufficient and suitable for human consumption, and water quality is suitable for human contact.

ii) Trout spawning protected, and number of trout increased.

11. Irrigation, cultivation and production of food and beverages

i) Water quality and quantity is suitable for irrigation needs, including supporting the cultivation of food crops, the production of food from farmed animals, non-food crops such as fibre and timber, pasture, sports fields and recreational areas

12. Hydro-electric power generation

i) Hydro-electric power generation is maintained.

13. Commercial and industrial use

i) Water quality and quantity can provide for commercial and industrial activities

Appendix 17: Target States - Draft principles for setting Target States for the Waikato region

Target States - Draft principles for setting Target States for the Waikato region

Note we are required to improve sites where water quality is below a national bottom line, and we are required to maintain sites that are good.

Overall principle

- *Maintain or improve for each attribute (as required in the NPS-FM).*

Long-term target

- *Move all attributes up a band (e.g. from D band to C band).*
- *Achieve this by [years]? For example, Plan Change 1 for Waikato Waipā has an 80-year timeframe.*

Short-term target – 10 years

- *Target could be a 10% improvement on baseline state (2017 state) OR*
- *Close the gap between baseline state and target by 20% of the difference.*

Appendix 18: State of environment for each FMU

State of environment - Taupō

Below is a high-level summary of the state of freshwater for Taupō.

Taupō streams and rivers have

- *Excellent water quality, including low levels of bacteria*
- *Fair stream ecosystems, with reasonably diverse invertebrate communities*
- *Naturally low native fish diversity and several introduced fish species.*

Some streams show delayed increases in nitrogen, as expected.

State of environment - Waikato-Waipā

Below is a high-level summary of the state of freshwater for Waikato-Waipā.

Waikato–Waipā streams and rivers have

- *Good freshwater fish community diversity in the lower reaches*
- *High levels of suspended sediment and dissolved nutrients*
- *Poor ecosystem health and poor recreational water quality*

Of greatest concern in terms of meeting national bottom lines are reducing levels of sediment, nutrients and faecal bacteria.

- *This is important because current contaminant levels are impacting on recreation, food gathering and the overall health of the awa.*
- *Pressures often associated with these issues in our waterways include agriculture, horticulture, erosion and urban activities.*

Waikato–Waipā lakes have

- *Poor water quality, with high nutrient levels and toxic algae in most lakes we monitor*
- *High levels of suspended sediment and dissolved nutrients*
- *Poor ecosystem health and poor recreational water quality.*

Of greatest concern in terms of meeting national bottom lines are high nutrient loads, including nitrogen which is increasing.

- *This is important because nutrients fuel algal blooms, including potentially toxic cyanobacteria. When blooms of algae collapse, oxygen drops, and fish kills can occur.*
- *Pressures associated with these issues in our lakes include agricultural intensification. High numbers of pest fish perpetuate problems in some lakes.*

State of environment - West Coast

Below is a high-level summary of the state of freshwater for the West Coast.

West Coast waterways have

- *Lower levels of dissolved nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus) than other parts of the region*
- *Fair freshwater fish communities*
- *Poor recreational water quality (high levels of faecal indicator bacteria).*

Of greatest concern in terms of meeting national bottom lines is safe swimming and ecosystem health.

- *Pressures often associated with these issues in our waterways include stock access to waterways, poor effluent management and clearing of native vegetation near waterways.*

State of environment - Hauraki

Below is a high-level summary of the state of freshwater for Hauraki.

Hauraki waterways have

- *Fair native fish community health in streams*
- *Poor recreational water quality (high levels of faecal indicator bacteria)*
- *Poor ecosystem health, especially in lowland waterways.*

Of greatest concern in terms of meeting national bottom lines are

- *Dissolved oxygen in lowland waterways and high nitrogen and phosphorus levels contributing to poor ecosystem health in streams and Firth of Thames*
- *Pressures often associated with these issues include low flows, intensive land use, and to a lesser extent, point sources from towns and industry.*

State of environment - Coromandel

Below is a high-level summary of the state of freshwater for the Coromandel.

Coromandel waterways have

- *Excellent water quality overall, with good water clarity at monitoring sites and low nutrient levels. Fish communities in streams are diverse.*
- *Fair stream invertebrate communities in places with more deposited sediment*
- *Poor water security, with declining rainfall in recent decades that reduces river flows.*

Of greatest concern in terms of meeting national bottom lines is deposited sediment in streams.

- *This is important because it can smother animals living on the stream bed.*
- *Pressures often associated with this issue in our waterways include erosion from areas of farmland and forestry logging on steep land.*

Appendix 19: Approach and potential limits and rules for each FMU

Approach to regulating freshwater - Potential limits and rules

Our regional plan review will be looking at all activities that may affect freshwater bodies, including (but not limited to):

- *Discharge of water and contaminants to land or water (including wastewater, stormwater, farm animal effluent, industrial discharges)*
- *Damming and diversion of water*
- *Efficient use of water*
- *Water flows and allocation*
- *Non-source point discharges*
- *Stock exclusion*
- *Works and structures in the beds of lakes and rivers*
- *Activities in and near wetlands*
- *Activities affecting outstanding waterbodies*

Potential limits and rules - Taupō

Below are some possible examples of limits and rules to manage activities to improve Taupō freshwater.

Existing provisions for Taupō are working well

- *The existing provisions for the Taupō area are well implemented and are showing to be an effective means to manage water quality in the area. These provisions will likely be retained in the new regional plan, with some updates as required to improve certainty and align with the new style of the plan.*

Exclusion of stock from waterways

- *National stock exclusion regulations will be applied as a minimum*

Limits on water takes and flows

- *Reduction in rain flow may require changes to how and when we take and move water from surface water bodies as we adapt to a changing climate, while also taking into account downstream needs and values.*
- *We will likely retain provisions that permit small scale off-stream damming to provide flexibility for when water is taken (water harvesting during high flows).*

Potential limits and rules - Waikato-Waipā

Below are some possible examples of limits and rules to manage activities to improve Waikato-Waipā freshwater.

PC1 is our starting point

- *The provisions in PC1 are a great starting point for managing the four contaminants (E.coli, nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment), however the targets will need to be reviewed in light of more stringent national bottom lines for nitrogen, and include additional attributes that reflect the four compulsory values plus other values in the Freshwater Management Units (FMUs).*

Farm plan requirements

- *Provisions will be clear about the requirements for farm plans (to avoid any duplication with the freshwater farm plans)*

Exclusion of stock from waterways

- *We need to ensure the stock exclusion provisions are fit for purpose, and don't unnecessarily duplicate the national stock exclusion regulations.*

Farm animal effluent

- *Provisions will need to ensure there is adequate storage, and improved management, of animal effluent, consistent with national industry guidelines*

Limits on water takes

- *Reduction in rain flow may require changes to how and when we take water from surface water bodies as we adapt to a changing climate. Any minimum flows, water allocations and lake levels will need to be set to give effect to the Vision and Strategy and Te Mana o te Wai.*

Providing for hydro-electricity generation

- *The rules, allocation flows and levels will need to ensure that the existing hydro-electric power generation capacity is maintained.*

Potential limits and rules - West Coast

Below are some possible examples of limits and rules to manage activities to improve West Coast freshwater.

Managing the loss of sediment to waterways

- *Need to limit further intensification to maintain water quality. PC1 provisions could be used as the base model for the Freshwater Management Unit (FMU), however as erosion and sediment loss is an issue for the West Coast FMU, additional controls will likely be required.*

Exclusion of stock from waterways

- *The national stock exclusion regulations will apply as a minimum, however increasing trends in E.coli in some areas indicate there may need to be additional controls in the West Coast FMU.*

Limits on water takes and providing for small off-stream water storage

- *Reduction in rain flow may require changes to how and when we take water from surface water bodies as we adapt to a changing climate*

Managing discharges from on-site wastewater, community wastewater and stormwater

- *Continue to manage discharges from existing wastewater and stormwater systems, requiring maintenance and upgrades to ensure environmental outcomes are achieved.*
- *New wastewater and stormwater systems to achieve current best practice.*

Potential limits and rules - Hauraki

Below are some possible examples of limits and rules to manage activities to improve Hauraki freshwater.

Limit further farming land use intensification and reduce concentration of contaminants

- *Degraded water quality in the Hauraki Freshwater Management Unit (FMU) means that there will need to be a reduction in the concentration in contaminants entering water – limits to further intensification, alongside actions to improve water quality where it is degraded. PC1 provisions could be used as the base model for the FMU with additional actions where needed to meet national bottom lines.*

Exclusion of stock from waterways

- *Stock exclusion regulations as a minimum, however increasing trends in E.coli in some areas indicate there may need to be additional controls in the Hauraki FMU.*

Limits on water takes and providing for small off-stream water storage

- *Reduction in rain flow and drier summers may require changes to how and when we take water from surface water bodies as we adapt to a changing climate.*

Managing discharges from on-site wastewater, community wastewater and stormwater

- *Continue to manage discharges from existing wastewater and stormwater systems, requiring maintenance and upgrades to ensure environmental outcomes are achieved.*
- *New wastewater and stormwater systems to achieve current best practice.*

Potential limits and rules - Coromandel

Below are some possible examples of limits and rules to manage activities to improve Coromandel freshwater.

Limit further farming land use intensification

- *Low agricultural land use cover in the Coromandel, but still need to limit further intensification to maintain water quality. PC1 provisions could be used as the base model for the Freshwater Management Unit (FMU).*

Exclusion of stock from waterways

- *Stock exclusion regulations as a minimum, however increasing trends in E.coli in some areas indicate there may need to be additional controls in the Coromandel FMU.*

Limits on water takes and providing for small off-stream water storage

- *Reduction in rain flow may require changes to how and when we take water from surface water bodies as we adapt to a changing climate.*

Managing discharges from on-site wastewater, community wastewater and stormwater

- *Continue to manage discharges from existing wastewater and stormwater systems, requiring maintenance and upgrades to ensure environmental outcomes are achieved.*
- *New wastewater and stormwater systems to achieve current best practice.*