

WAIKATO REGIONAL FRESHWATER DISCUSSION

Matapaki wai māori
ki Waikato



WISE WORDS ON WATER

In March the first Sustainable Waikato: issues and actions forum organised by Waikato Regional Council set the scene for the release of our *Let's Talk Water | Me Korero E Tatou Mo Te Wai paper*.

It signalled the start of our conversation with stakeholders and the public on possible actions for the best use and management of Waikato's fresh water into the future.

Water quality and allocation over the next 50-100 years will remain a top issue for the region, and together we need to think creatively about long term use.

In an opening address to the forum, Sir Tumu Te Heuheu, the paramount chief of Ngāti Tūwharetoa, said initiating such sustainability discussions was vital to attain "authentic and credible long term management of our natural and human environment, especially the water resource".

He said "water is a vital and fundamental necessity in our lives", adding that "for iwi water is a taonga of the highest importance".

Land and water forum chairman Alastair Bisley outlined collaborative arrangements occurring nationally on freshwater management, saying the times were changing on how things were done. "I am optimistic that the tanker is turning. The tanker is us all."

That was a view supported by Kate Alcock from the Sustainable Business Council, who said businesses want to quantify how much water they use so they are able to better manage it.

Rounding out the water discussion was Waikato-Tainui chief executive Parekawhia McLean, who said every individual in New Zealand has an influence on how we manage water, and we need to collectively take action.



DOWNLOAD a copy of *Let's Talk Water | Me Korero E Tatou Mo Te Wai* at letstalkwater.nz.

WHAT WE NEED TO FOCUS ON

- 1. The growing demand for water:** Freshwater management is critical to meeting our regional aspirations and for us to contribute to the national economy. Unless we change our management approach, new industries needing water may find it difficult to establish in the Waikato.
- 2. More tools for better results:** We need to find better ways to protect our waterways, allocate what is available and do it more quickly, simply and cost-effectively.
- 3. Connecting water quantity and quality:** We need to leave enough in our waterways to keep the ecosystem healthy, as well as meet water quality standards and dilute pollutants. Unless we are enabled to more actively influence the way land is used, water quality will continue to decline.
- 4. A strong voice in the national conversation:** This is not just an issue for our region. The issues and opportunities identified are not only applicable to our region and will provide a strong platform when talking to the Government.
- 5. The right research:** New, integrated research would help communities, iwi, local government, industry and others achieve what is important to them as they use water, make regulation and take action.
- 6. Iwi rights and interests:** Iwi acknowledge that there are existing rights for current consent holders. They simply seek to enhance their relationship with water, and provide for some recognition of their rights and interests:

CONTRIBUTE TO THE DISCUSSION

WHAKATAKOTOHIA MAI ŌU WHAKAARO

We want to ensure a full range of voices, views and informed opinions are heard. That's because any decisions we make now will guide our future for many years to come.

We're now meeting with iwi Māori, industry, local government and other stakeholders in the region to continue the conversation. If you're interested in joining the conversation and meeting with us, please call freephone 0800 800 401.

We'll be presenting an issues and opportunities paper to the council at the end of June 2016.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

- Q1** Are these the big issues that we need to tackle?
- Q2** How could best use be made of the water resource?
- Q3** What would you need to use water more efficiently?
- Q4** Do you think our assumptions about future water use and demand are correct?
- Q5** Are there other assumptions and issues that we need to be aware of that will influence water use over the next 30-50 years?
- Q6** What legislative changes do you think would help get the best use of water?
- Q7** What information do you need to help better understand water use and management?

HERE'S HOW

-  Provide feedback via the website www.letstalkwater.nz
-  Email letstalkwater@waikatoregion.govt.nz
-  Write to Let's Talk Water, Waikato Regional Council, Private Bag 3038, Waikato Mail Centre, Hamilton 3240
-  Talk to us. Call freephone 0800 800 401.

TIMEFRAME

- MARCH 2016** Beginning Let's Talk Water conversation
- MARCH/APRIL 2016** Engagement with regional community
- MAY 2016** Consideration of feedback and stakeholder perspectives
- JUNE 2016** Waikato freshwater issues and opportunities paper finalised