



# THE REGIONAL POLICY STATEMENT

SUMMARY DOCUMENT

TE TAUĀKĪ KAUPAPAHERE  
Ā-ROHE





## What is the Regional Policy Statement?

The Regional Policy Statement (RPS) is a long term planning tool. It connects people across diverse communities, supports sustainable regional development and sets the overall regional direction for the integrated management and protection of the Waikato's natural and physical resources.

## How does it work?

The RPS identifies the significant resource management issues of the region and sets out the objectives, policies and methods to address these issues. Through close collaboration between regional, city and district councils, as well as iwi, the RPS aims to ensure the way we use our resources does not tip the balance and compromise the ability of future generations to provide for their own needs.

## What is the significance of the RPS?

The RPS provides the overall framework to ensure the people who choose to live, work, learn and play in the Waikato prosper – socially, culturally and economically.

## What is the history of the RPS?

The RPS is required under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA). The first Waikato RPS became operative in 2000, and a review in the late 2000s led to the 2010 Proposed Waikato Regional Policy Statement. Following hearings and appeals, the second generation Waikato RPS became operative on 20 May 2016.

## How will we measure success?

Progress towards achieving the objectives of the RPS will be monitored and there will be a 10 year review as required by the RMA. Waikato Regional Council will work collaboratively with stakeholders to make sure monitoring and the 10 year review is comprehensive and constructive.

## Where is the RPS already working?

Many of the key projects arising from the RPS are already underway. Examples include the local indigenous biodiversity strategy, various funding incentives, Healthy Rivers: Plan for Change/Wai Ora: He Rautaki Whakapaipai and the Clean Heat Retrofit programme, to name a few.



## INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT

### TE WHAKAHAERE KŌMITIMITI

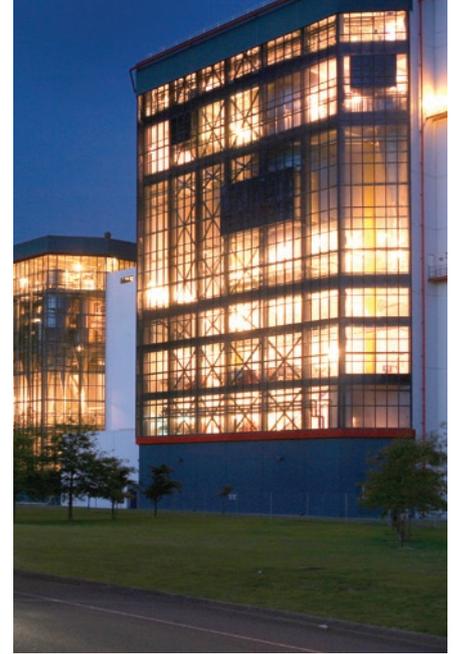
- Recognises the need to take an integrated approach to resource management, the interconnected nature of natural and physical resources and the need to work with others on complex issues.
- Promotes a collaborative and holistic approach to resource management that looks beyond organisational or administrative boundaries.
- Acknowledges and provides for the relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral land, water, sites, wāhi tapu and other taonga.
- Takes into consideration the important role of regionally significant industry and primary production in the economic, social and cultural wellbeing of people and communities.



## AIR

### TE HAU TAKIWĀ

- Sets out how unacceptable risks to human health and ecosystems can be minimised, with high priority placed on achieving compliance with national environmental standards.
- Directs Waikato Regional Council, territorial authorities, tangata whenua and other stakeholders to identify potential gaps in how air quality issues are addressed and prioritise future actions for improving air quality.
- Promotes decreased emissions per capita, particularly from domestic wood fires and the transport sector.
- Endorses controlling discharges through tools such as the regional plan.
- Promotes management of discharges to maintain and improve amenity levels, recognising that some areas will have different amenity levels to others.



## BUILT ENVIRONMENT

### NGĀ WĀHI KA WHAKAWHANAKEHIA

- Requires that subdivision, use and development of the built environment occurs in an integrated and coordinated way that is sustainable, affordable and planned.
- Requires that land use development does not undermine existing investment in infrastructure such as municipal water supply bodies, transport corridors and electricity transmission lines – and vice versa.
- Supports collaboration between councils, agencies and territorial authorities.
- Recognises the historical, cultural and social importance of marae and papakāinga and provides for their ongoing use and development as part of the built environment.
- Acknowledges the agreed settlement pattern identified in various growth strategies such as Future Proof (a combined growth strategy for Hamilton city, Waikato and Waipā districts).
- Requires that development in the coastal environment occurs in a way that protects natural character, outstanding features, public access, indigenous biodiversity, natural physical processes, amenity and the natural hazard mitigation functions of the coastal marine area.



## COASTAL MARINE AREA

### TE TAKUTAI MOANA

- Acknowledges that effective decision making for the coastal marine area needs to be underpinned by scientific information.
- Places particular emphasis on effectively managing marine water quality and providing for the integrated management of land and sea.
- Helps to allocate space to activities in a way that resolves conflicting uses and provides for ecosystem functioning as well as people's social, economic and cultural aspirations.
- Details how a science based monitoring system will be developed to ensure existing water quality is understood and monitored. The Waikato Regional Coastal Plan review will develop a policy framework to ensure water quality is maintained or enhanced where it is currently degraded.



## FRESH WATER BODIES

### NGĀ HUINGA WAIMĀORI

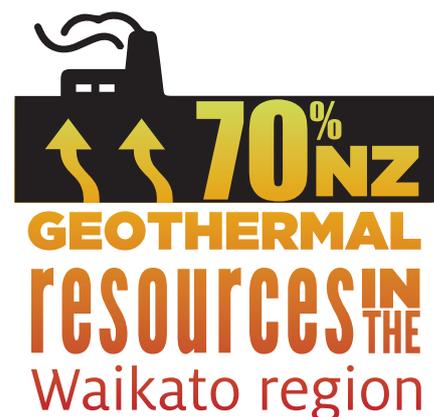
- Seeks to maintain and enhance the values of fresh water bodies in the region, manage the allocation and use of fresh water and manage lakes, riparian areas and wetlands to promote water quality, biodiversity, cultural values and public access.
- Recognises Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato – the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River as the primary direction setting document for the Waikato River.
- Acknowledges the special relationship that tangata whenua have with water resources.
- Enables water use within allocation limits, but recognises that water should not be taken or used to the extent that it compromises the life supporting capacity of fresh water.
- Promotes a catchment based approach to water quality interventions to ensure the integrated management of water resources.
- Encourages research and information gathering to assist in decision making around fresh water quality, aquatic life and ecosystems, and to monitor progress against identified values.



## GEO THERMAL

### NGĀ NGĀWHĀ

- Manages the region's geothermal resource by classifying it into a series of five system types for varying levels of use, development or protection.
- Recognises and provides for the ahi kā (mana whenua) relationship of tangata whenua and their role as kaitiaki. The Waikato Regional Council will work with tangata whenua to identify the characteristics of the regional geothermal resource that are significant to them.
- Promotes efficient use of the geothermal resource and allows for controlled use so as to provide for the energy needs of current and future generations.
- Necessitates that research be gathered over time to help people better understand the effects of development and use of geothermal systems.





## HERITAGE

### NGĀ TAONGA TUKU IHO

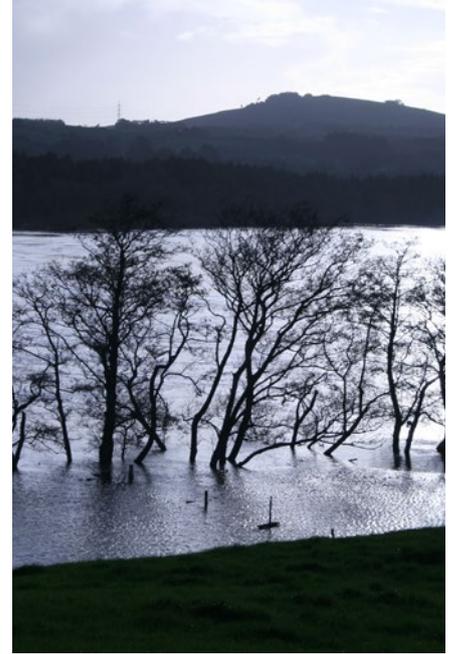
- Focuses on improving knowledge about historic and cultural heritage at a regional scale and achieving consistent and collaborative management of these.
- Supports the Regional Heritage Forum. This forum allows Waikato Regional Council, representatives of territorial authorities, tangata whenua, Heritage New Zealand and other stakeholders (including landowner representatives) to develop and assess options to best manage historic and cultural heritage.
- Directs Waikato Regional Council to encourage tangata whenua to identify those areas, places, landscapes and resources of significance, and to explore opportunities to recognise or reflect the kōrero (stories), names, events, whakataukāki (proverbs) and beliefs associated with them.



## INDIGENOUS BIODIVERSITY

### TE KANORAU KOIORA TAKETAKE

- Signals a marked change in the approach to biodiversity management, recognising that we need to achieve ecological protection and restoration goals as well as realising economic, social and cultural benefits, if we are to be successful.
- Demonstrates a new approach to cooperatively managing indigenous biodiversity at a regional scale through various programmes, funds and projects.
- Promotes positive indigenous biodiversity outcomes in order to maintain or enhance the full range of functional ecosystems.
- Recognises a move towards a strategic, proactive and coordinated biodiversity management approach with landowners, mana whenua and other agencies.



## NATURAL HAZARDS

### NGĀ PŪMATE Ā-TAIAO

- Promotes a regionally consistent approach to managing natural hazard risks through district and regional plans.
- Advocates for collaboration between organisations and the sharing of information. A Regional Natural Hazards Forum has been established to promote organisational integration and information sharing across jurisdictional and plan boundaries.
- Takes a risk based approach to the management of natural hazards.
- Requires that local authorities consider the potential effects of high impact, low probability natural hazard events and plan ahead.

## under threat

THERE ARE CURRENTLY  
**223** SPECIES OF NATIVE  
PLANTS AND ANIMALS  
THREATENED WITH EXTINCTION

Extensive clearance of vegetation and drainage of wetlands has reduced the extent of habitats by **75%** overall, with some ecosystems below **5%** of their original extent.

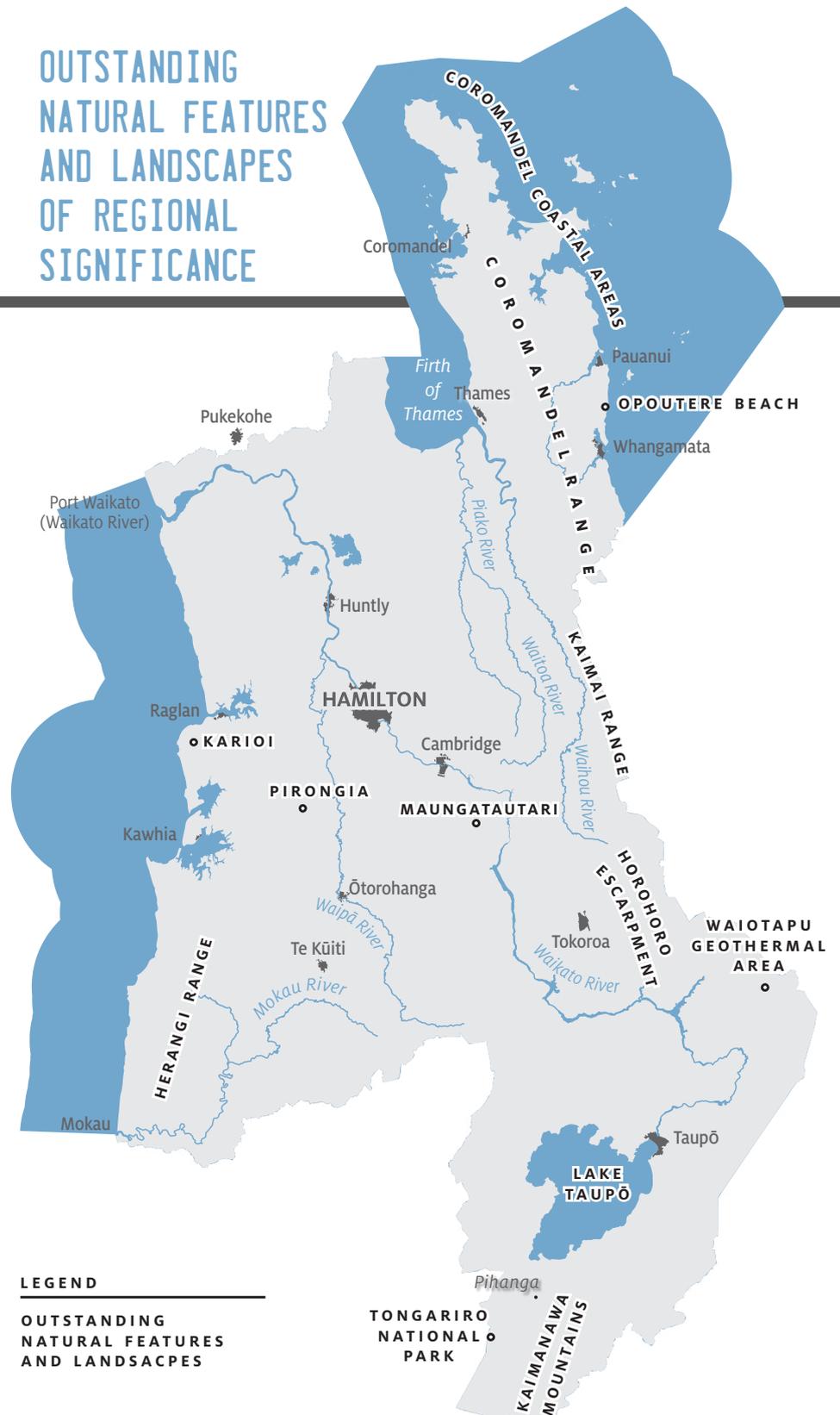


## LANDSCAPES

### NGĀ PAPA WHENUA

- Provides a consistent approach to landscape management across the region.
- Identifies 13 regionally Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes (ONFL) and encourages territorial authorities to undertake district wide assessments of their areas.
- Requires that activities in the coastal environment, wetlands, lakes, rivers and their margins are appropriate in relation to the level of natural character, which should be enhanced or restored where possible.
- Requires that maintenance and enhancement of public access to water bodies and their margins takes place.
- Necessitates that areas of amenity value are identified and the values of amenity areas are maintained and enhanced.

## OUTSTANDING NATURAL FEATURES AND LANDSCAPES OF REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

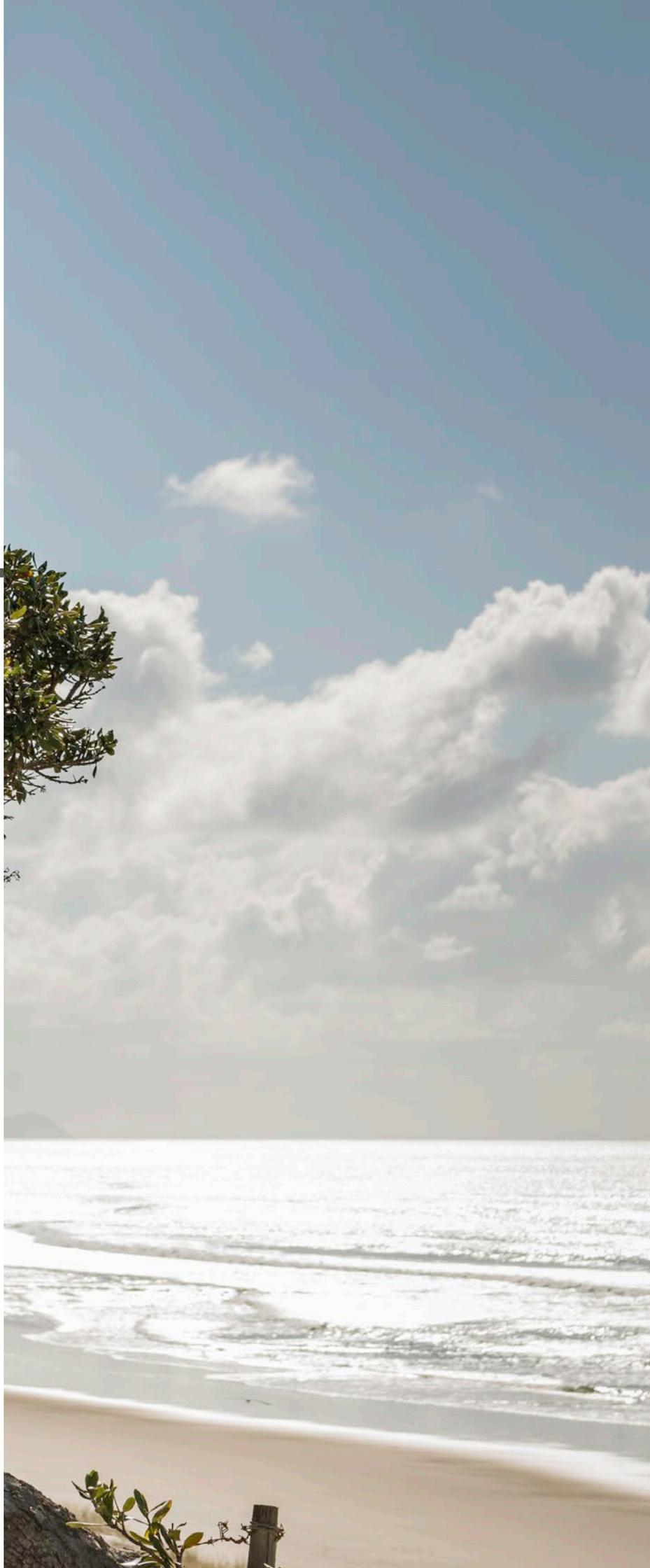




## SOILS

### NGĀ ONEONE

- Focuses on maintaining and enhancing the life supporting capacity of the soil resource, retaining high class soils, managing peat soils and contaminated land and minimising soil contaminants.
- Encourages a range of methods including preparing and administering soil conservation and catchment management programmes in order to reduce erosion risk.
- Advocates for research into the risks from and effects of erosion and soil degradation to educate and advise land managers. Also for information on high class soils to be available to territorial authorities and other interested parties.
- Seeks collaboration between councils, primary industry, landowners and tangata whenua, and promotes good soil management to ensure soil quality is maintained or enhanced.



**HE TAIAO MAURIORA**

HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

**HE ŌHANGA PAKARI**

STRONG ECONOMY

**HE HAPORI HIHIRI**

VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

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**REGIONAL COUNCIL**  
*Te Kaunihera ā Rohe o Waikato*