

# AGENDA/KAUPAPA



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MEMBERSHIP: Her Worship the Mayor Rehette Stoltz (Chair), Colin Alder, Larry Foster, Rawinia Parata, Aubrey Ria, Josh Wharehinga, Independent Commissioners Alan Matheson and Sarah Stevenson and six Iwi appointees (yet to be nominated)

## TAIRAWHITI RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW/AROTAKENGA MAHERE WHAKAHAERE RAWA TAI AO O TE TAIRĀWHITI Committee

DATE: Wednesday 30 April 2025

TIME: 9:00AM

AT: Te Ruma Kaunihera (Council Meeting Room), Awarua, Fitzherbert Street, Gisborne

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# Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan

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<b>Reports to:</b>	Council
<b>Chairperson:</b>	Mayor Rehette Stoltz (or nominee)
<b>Membership:</b>	Mayor Rehette Stoltz (or nominee), Deputy Mayor Josh Wharehinga, Cr Colin Alder, Cr Larry Foster, Cr Rawinia Parata, Cr Aubrey Ria, two independent commissioners and up to six iwi appointees
<b>Quorum:</b>	Half of the members when the number is even and a majority when the membership is uneven
<b>Meeting frequency:</b>	Quarterly or as required in order to achieve the TRMP review work programme.

## Purpose

- A committee to support the Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan (TRMP) review process.
- To promote the sustainable management of Tairāwhiti's natural and physical resources by overseeing the review and development of plans, changes and variations as required under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA).
- To apply a Te Tiriti articles-based approach to governance direction when undertaking the future planning and decision making on how Tairāwhiti's, natural and physical resources are managed within the Tairāwhiti under the RMA.

## Terms of Reference

- Provide governance oversight and guidance on policy directions presented by staff ahead of whole of Council recommendations.
- Approve for recommendation to Council:
  - draft catchment plans and regional freshwater planning provisions for notification prepared under the RMA and the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020 (NPS-FWM)
  - draft Regional Policy Statement provisions for notification
  - draft urban growth and development provisions for notification to achieve the purpose of the RMA and to give effect to the National Policy Statement for Urban Development
  - draft and proposed regional and district plan provisions and changes
  - plan evaluation reports supporting proposed changes to the TRMP
  - hearing committees or hearings panels, composed of accredited persons, to hear and decide upon submissions on proposed regional plans, proposed variations and proposed plan changes (such hearing committees or panels may include members of the committee and/or other persons chosen for their particular skills, attributes or knowledge that will assist the hearing committee or panel). This includes the ability to approve draft versions for consultation and make recommendations to Council following consultation.

- Ensure that legislative obligations for plan making, including pre-consultation engagement and giving effect to national directions relating to the TRMP review are considered and complied with.
- Make recommendations to Council to approve or change a proposed policy statement or plan under Schedule 1 of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA).

## **Power to Act**

- To make all decisions necessary to fulfil the role and scope of the Committee subject to the limitations imposed.
- To establish working parties as required.
- To appoint non-voting members (such as tangata whenua representatives) to assist the Committee.

## **Delegations**

- The Council delegates all the functions and powers of the Council that are capable of delegation under the Resource Management Act 1991 to the Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan Review Committee which are necessary for it to carry out the specific responsibilities listed above relating to the review and development of regional plans, changes, and variations.

## **Power to Recommend**

- To Council and/or any Council committee as it deems appropriate through a report on an agenda to the appropriate meeting of Council or committee.

## **Review of Terms of Reference**

- A review of the Committee's Terms of Reference will be undertaken:
  - When an iwi appointee joins the committee.
  - When the Proposed Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan becomes operative.
  - At any time at the Council's discretion.

### 3.1. Confirmation of non-confidential Minutes 13 March 2025

# MINUTES

## Draft & Unconfirmed



P O Box 747, Gisborne, Ph 867 2049 Fax 867 8076  
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## MINUTES of the TAIRAWHITI RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW/AROTAKENGA MAHERE WHAKAHAERE RAWA TAI AO O TE TAIRĀWHITI Committee

Held in Te Ruma Kaunihera (Council Meeting Room), Awarua, Fitzherbert Street, Gisborne on Thursday 13 March 2025 at 9:00AM.

### PRESENT:

Her Worship the Mayor Rehette Stoltz, Colin Alder, Andy Cranston, Larry Foster, Debbie Gregory, Ani Pahuru-Huriwai, Rawinia Parata, Aubrey Ria, Tony Robinson, Rob Telfer, Daniel Thompson, Rhonda Tibble, Nick Tupara, Josh Wharehinga, Independent Commissioners Alan Matheson and Sarah Stevenson

### IN ATTENDANCE:

Director Lifelines Tim Barry, Director Liveable Communities Michele Frey, Director Sustainable Futures Jo Noble, Cr Andy Cranston, Acting Democracy & Support Services Manager Teremoana Kingi and Committee Secretary Sally Ryan.

The meeting commenced with a karakia.

**Secretarial Note:** Items were heard out of the order described in the agenda. For ease of reference the Minutes have been recorded in agenda order.

### 1. Apologies

There were no apologies.

### 2. Declarations of Interest

Cr Alder declared an interest in Report **25-49** Freshwater Programme Update as a member to the Te Arai Catchment Group.



### **3. Confirmation of non-confidential Minutes**

#### **3.1. Confirmation of non-confidential Minutes 18 December 2024**

MOVED by Cr Wharehinga, seconded by Cr Foster

That the Minutes of 18 December 2024 be accepted.

**CARRIED**

#### **3.2. Confirmation of Confidential Minutes 18 December 2024**

MOVED by Cr Wharehinga, seconded by Cr Foster

That the Minutes of 18 December 2024 be accepted.

**CARRIED**

#### **3.3. Action Register**

Noted.

#### **3.4. Governance Work Plan**

Noted.

### **4. Leave of Absence**

There were no leaves of absence.

### **5. Acknowledgements and Tributes**

There were no acknowledgments or tributes.

### **6. Public Input and Petitions**

There was no public input or petitions.

### **7. Extraordinary Business**

There was no extraordinary business.

### **8. Notices of Motion**

There were no notices of motion.

### **9. Adjourned Business**

There was no adjourned business.

## **10. Reports of the Chief Executive and Staff for DECISION**

### **10.1. 25-42 Draft Urban Plan Change**

Director Sustainable Futures, Jo Noble and Principal Policy Planner, Shane McGhie, took the report as read with additional points including:

- The Draft Urban Plan Change material is being updated following the Urban Plan Change Workshop and further engagement with tangata whenua and the community. Updates will be presented at the Extraordinary Council meeting on 9 April 2025.
- To manage the workload within the set timeframes, not all requested changes have been made. However, the team will work to respond to each request individually.

- Gisborne District Council (Council) is developing its own Medium Density Residential Zone Rules rather than adopting the national standards, which will apply only to Tier 1 and 2 Councils.
- Some Future of Severely Affected Land (FOSAL) Category 3 properties that are owned or are in the process of being acquired by the Council will be included in the new general residential zone. Council plans to introduce a rule that prohibits habitable buildings on these properties, serving as a temporary measure until a full review of all hazards can be conducted.
- The heritage protection zone currently exists as a separate zone in the existing plan. The intention is to integrate it into the proposed plan by introducing an overlay for those specific properties, rather than going through a schedule one process, as this would not result in any effective changes. This overlay would apply the same rules across properties in the general residential zone that are affected.
- Council is considering implementing a Trip Generation Rule. This rule will identify activities that would create a threshold for the number of trips per day on a specific road. If this threshold is met, an integrated traffic assessment will be done to determine if a carpark is required.
- Questions of clarification included:
- The draft urban plan change is the first of several plan changes Council intends to develop. Currently, Council's priority is to address the housing shortage in the urban areas of Tairāwhiti.
- A second plan change is in progress, focusing on how the Council will manage other areas in the region. This plan change still requires discussions related to infrastructure and ongoing stormwater planning. Additionally, Central Government will be making cabinet decisions on second dwellings, which could impact the Council's plans in this area.
- Council is collaborating with four major iwi in the region to establish agreements aimed at building capacity and capability. Significant progress has been made with Te Aitanga a Mahaki around regional policies and planning. Discussions are ongoing with Ngāti Porou and Ngāti Oneone regarding engagement with the Urban Master Plan for Kaiti.
- Principal Mātauranga Maori Project Advisor Katerina Maka is taking the lead on Tangata Whenua engagement. Request for further support to be had in this space to fasten the pace of engagement.
- The practice Council have adopted, is to approach and be guided by iwi. The main challenge in the engagement space is that the nominated points of contact have to relay information back to their constituents and groupings, which is not a straightforward process. This often puts pressure on staff's ability to carry out tasks in a well-organized and coherent manner.
- Council aims to enhance its approach by collectively addressing plans like the Coastal Adaptation Plan and Kaiti Master Plan to ensure ongoing mutual understanding and support, helping to fill any gaps that could cause tensions in the Council's relationship with iwi and tangata whenua.

- Staff noted that despite efforts to seek tangata whenua direction, there has often been a lack of interest which calls for the need to look at current and future opportunities to avoid repeating the same discussions.
- Director Sustainable Futures Jo Noble added that because we are in a time of housing shortage, it has necessitated progress. Although there has been past engagement and feedback from iwi, it has not been specific to the current work.
- Staff noted that by law, the Council is required to send draft documents to iwi along with other relevant documents.
- Her worship the mayor acknowledged the challenging past three years and the extensive work done, despite reaching out to iwi. She recognized Gene's leadership in this space and noted that iwi is also dealing with other government matters and highlighted that in comparison to iwi, Council has resources and staff to work on these issues. She acknowledged the difficulties faced by both sides and emphasized the importance of support and collaboration, reiterating Council's commitment to improving their approach, despite legal obligations to complete certain work.
- Staff confirmed that there is an allocated budget for iwi, hāpu, and Māori participation in the TRMP process, of which some has already been utilised. Council is currently reassessing the allocation of these resources, as iwi are seeking to engage in matters beyond the TRMP project and will need to determine how best to support these broader areas of interest moving forward.
- The standards for the medium density residential zone are significantly different from those of the general residential zone. Medium density zones aim to allow more affordable and efficient use and development of land.
- Three story buildings will be limited to the medium density residential zones and in the Kaiti area this has been reduced significantly to the main roads (i.e.: Rutene Road, Wainui Road).
- The TRMP committee's role is to make recommendations to the Council. The draft, along with Section 32 and the ground report, is sent to Iwi for advice. This advice is then returned to the Council, who amends the plan based on Iwi input. Council has no authority to make changes to the plan outside of Iwi advice.
- Concerns were expressed that the Council might face challenges regarding the content and process once it is open for submissions, potentially leading to additional work and the need to revisit discussions. It was recommended that the Council delay submitting the proposed plan change until the provisions of Section 32 are fully drafted.
- Staff noted that point 4a in Section 32 is still a work in progress and, ideally, should be further along at this stage. The draft plan change has been sent to iwi, but it does not include Section 32. What is required, however, is for the Council to amend Section 32 to summarize the advice received.

- This will return to the committee before any notification takes place. On the 19th, Council will approve the release of the draft urban plan change and will circulate the relevant section prior to the draft plan change being presented to Council. After Council approval, the complete draft plan change will be brought back to the TRMP committee for further feedback.
- It was recommended to conduct a final review to remove unnecessary wording and consolidate provisions, especially objectives. The importance of clear and unambiguous wording was emphasized, given the regulatory implications of these provisions.

**Secretarial Note:** The meeting adjourned at 10:05am for morning tea and reconvened at 10:20am.

MOVED by Cr Stoltz, seconded by Cr Wharehinga

That the Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan Review/Arotakenga Mahere Whakahaere Rawa Taiao o Te Tairāwhiti:

1. Provides feedback on the preferred methods and options for housing intensification and methods for enabling affordable housing for Māori, and for provisions of the proposed Commercial and Special Purpose zones.
2. Notes that further amendments will be made to the draft Plan Change before it is presented to Council to reflect feedback received during the workshop, at this meeting, and from iwi technicians.
3. Recommends that Council/Te Kaunihera:
  - a. Confirms the content of the draft Plan Change (including any amendments).
  - b. Sends the Draft Plan Change to Iwi Authorities as required by Clause 4A, 1<sup>st</sup> Schedule Resource Management Act 1991.

**CARRIED**

## 10.2. 25-52 Progress of Kaiti Masterplan

Senior Policy Planner Viveshen Murugan took the report as read, noting that staff are looking at an engagement opportunity at the Kaiti Hub this weekend to provide more opportunity to specialise this work with the community.

Questions of clarifications included:

- Staff were acknowledged the significant effort put into the Kaiti Masterplan and expressed gratitude to staff for their commitment in bringing the document forward.
- The Kaiti Masterplan is still a work in progress and the attachments in the report act a guiding point to help staff progress toward development of the draft, which will be taken out for community consultation. Council still needs to consider additional constraints to create a more comprehensive plan.
- Council is working closely with Kainga Ora in an attempt to reach a collective view on what development looks like. The current plan does not align with what people want to do in terms of building styles which is why staff are seeking advice to update it.

- On Tuesday, 11 March 2025, a meeting was held at Te Poho o Rawiri, where iwi presented their vision for the future of Kaiti. This plan has been developed over the past 10 years, with extensive engagement from hapū and the community. Their ideas are well-formed, making it crucial to prioritize the integration of key elements of their vision into the Kaiti Masterplan.

MOVED by Cr Wharehinga, seconded by Cr Ria

That the Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan Review/Arotakenga Mahere Whakahaere Rawa Taiao o Te Tairāwhiti:

1. Provides feedback on the high-level opportunities.

**CARRIED**

## **11. Reports of the Chief Executive and Staff for INFORMATION**

### **11.1. 25-46 Regional Freshwater Plan - Activities in Beds of Rivers and Lakes**

Incite Associate Resource Management Consultant, Adele Dawson, spoke to the report and answered questions of clarification including:

- The current TRMP focuses on enabling activities that support communities in their daily lives while minimizing negative impacts on the environment. However, the latest national policy statement (NPS) on freshwater management shifts this focus by prioritizing the health and wellbeing of water bodies.
- Secondary to this is the provision of essential water supplies and supporting communities to thrive. The national framework that guided the TRMP initially prioritized enabling communities, but the most recent national direction has placed water at the forefront.
- In stream values are the values that rely on the health of the water itself.
- Gravel extraction often takes place near infrastructure for ease of access by operators. In flood management, it is frequently tied to bridge maintenance and protecting structural integrity. While gravel extraction is sometimes solely for flood management, it is more commonly driven by commercial use, serving a dual purpose.

MOVED by Cr Parata, seconded by Cr Ria that the recommendation be amended as follows:

That the Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan Review/Arotakenga Mahere Whakahaere Rawa Taiao o Te Tairāwhiti:

1. Accepts the report and provides feedback on the contents of Attachment 1 (in particular the answers to the questions in the blue boxes).

**CARRIED**

### **11.2. 25-10 Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan Review - Progress Update**

Director Sustainable Futures Jo Nobel answered questions of clarification including:

- As the new TRMP is developed, the Council must carefully consider the priorities and trade-offs involved in decision-making. These factors will be outlined in the Section 32 report, which evaluates the overall costs and benefits of the plan change.

- The Poipoia consultancy report is considered technical advice rather than a summary of engagement. Poipoia Limited acknowledged that they did not consult with iwi in the development of their report.
- The journey with Poipoia was worked through with the iwi technical trial members at the time and Council responded to a request they made to us to have an overview of our current catchment plan where the alignment was with the NPS and Te Mana o Te Wai.
- Staff noted that the tangata whenua chapter of the TRMP is being developed in-house to ensure it authentically reflects the region. The goal is for it to genuinely represent the unity and cultural identity of Tairāwhiti. The chapter is not intended to be a catch-all for all matters related to tangata whenua and staff are working closely with treaty partners to ensure it is specific to Tairāwhiti.
- The authority of the TRMP under the Resource Management Act is defined by various activity classes, ranging from permitted to prohibited. Permitted activities are allowed if they comply with the plan's standards and conditions. Prohibited activities are not allowed under any circumstances. Controlled activities require resource consent, which must be granted, but the control is limited to specific matters outlined in the plan that the consent planner considers when setting conditions.
- When surf breaks of national significance were incorporated into the coastal policy statement, the work was carried out at a national level. However, Gisborne, in collaboration with Bay of Plenty, conducted further research to identify surf breaks of regional significance. Bay of Plenty has since updated their Coastal Plan to include these regional surf breaks. Gisborne has not yet updated the coastal sections of the plan, but this will be addressed in phase two of the review.

MOVED by Cr Foster, seconded by Cr Stoltz

That the Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan Review/Arotakenga Mahere Whakahaere Rawa Taiao o Te Tairāwhiti Committee:

1. Notes the contents of this report.

**CARRIED**

### **11.3. 25-49 Freshwater Programme Update**

Principal policy advisor Janic Slupski took the report as read with additional points including:

- The freshwater programme is starting to wind down the technical work, with the evidence base now in place to begin informing policy development. Engagement is currently midway through, and the focus is shifting towards the policy response for our regional freshwater plan. This presents a great opportunity to align and share the work Council is doing, offering insights into what the policy will look like from a regional freshwater and catchment plan perspective, and how it will come together as a comprehensive package.
- This will steer conversations towards a consolidated freshwater package by the end of the year, with the regional freshwater plan as the focus. The Riverbeds and Lakes section will be the starting point for Council.

- While Council has started to look at the regional freshwater plan from a four-section perspective, as it moves forward it will need to be reframed so its consistent with the national planning standards. The next steps are to socialise what the four sections look like and begin to translate them into a new framework that is consistent with those planning standards.
- Staff are now introducing broader concepts related to these four sections and beginning to develop action plans to bring to the table.

Questions of clarification included:

- The TRMP helps protect communities from natural hazards, like flooding, through the use of hazard overlays. Hazard overlays are rules that identify areas at risk and guide how Council manages those risks. A significant investment has been made in the Waipaoa flood control scheme to protect the community from flooding.
- The TRMP includes provisions that manage flood control activities, ensuring that these activities do not negatively affect the river's natural values. In essence, the TRMP serves as a tool that allows the community to be protected from flood risks while making sure that flood management activities are carried out in a way that balances safety with environmental conservation.
- The TRMP is a tool that helps determine the balance between activities that may impact various values, such as environmental, cultural, social, and economic aspects. The plan allows for consideration of how much emphasis to place on protection versus other values.
- In the catchment planning work, Council recognizes the impact of 150 years of settlement and land clearance. Acknowledging the need to reassess the catchment, the Council aims to address all relevant issues and determine the appropriate balance. A regulatory framework is being developed to manage these factors and achieve outcomes that benefit the community as a whole.
- The current TRMP enables activities while avoiding effects, which is inverse with the hierarchy of obligations set out under Te Mana o Te Wai and the National Policy Statement (NPS) for Freshwater Management. This creates a challenge for Council, as the community is familiar with the existing framework, while the national framework—which may change—sets different priorities.
- Each catchment group is made up of representatives with strong ties to their areas, offering significant contribution into the work being done. The consistency that staff are drawing on for each advisory group is the national objectives framework. Representatives contribute their personal experience, helping to identify challenges, key priorities, the current state of the environment, and the goals that need to be achieved.
- In each catchment, Council proactively engages with iwi, hāpu, and the community as needed or when they express interest. For catchment planning, Council begins with a community hui to introduce the advisory group, and then returns to the community for further engagement and feedback.

- The goal is to complete freshwater planning by the end of the year and present the full package in December. It is essential for the forum to communicate all the work being done, simplifying technical aspects for better understanding. After the elections, there will be opportunities to engage on key topics, such as discharges and sediment, with the aim to notify the plan by mid-2026.

MOVED by Cr Ria, seconded by Cr Stoltz

That the Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan Review/Arotakenga Mahere Whakahaere Rawa Taiao o Te Tairāwhiti:

1. Notes the contents of this report.

**CARRIED**

## **12. Close of Meeting**

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 11:51am.

Rehette Stoltz

**MAYOR**



### 3.2. Governance Work Plan

2025 Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan						Meeting Dates					
HUB	Activity	Name of agenda item	Purpose	Report type	Owner	13-Mar	30-Apr	29-May	25-Jun	21-Aug	4-Dec
Sustainable Futures	Strategic Planning	25-89 Regional Policy Statement Early Engagement Summary		information	Helen Marr						
Sustainable Futures	Strategic Planning	25-88 Forestry Update		Decision (D)	Ariel Yann le Chew						
Sustainable Futures	Strategic Planning	25-93 Activities in beds of rivers and lakes - policy options	Workshop Report	information	Ariel Yann le Chew						
Sustainable Futures	Strategy and Science	Freshwater Workshop - activities in beds of rivers and lakes	Workshop to deep dive into issues and options regarding the freshwater topic, activities in beds of rivers and lakes.	workshop	Janic Slupski						

## 10. Reports of the Chief Executive and Staff for DECISION



25-88

**Title:** 25-88 Forestry update  
**Section:** Sustainable Futures  
**Prepared by:** Ariel Yann le Chew - Policy Planner  
**Meeting Date:** Wednesday 30 April 2025

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Legal: Yes

Financial: Yes

Significance: **Medium**

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### **Report to TAIRAWHITI RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW/AROTAKENGA MAHERE WHAKAHAERE RAWA TAI AO O TE TAIRĀWHITI for decision**

#### **PURPOSE - TE TAKE**

The purpose of this report is to seek a decision on how to progress Gisborne District Council's (Council) Forestry Harvest and Earthworks plan change.

#### **SUMMARY - HE WHAKARĀPOPOTOTANGA**

This report provides an update on the forestry plan change programme. The programme has two workstreams. The first involves a plan change focused on better management of forestry harvest and related earthworks activities. The second focuses on land overlay mapping (of which Land Overlay 3B is a part) and the application of farm/forestry plans as the basis for identifying on-farm risks and mitigations. Staff currently refer to these plans as Sustainable Landuse Plans.

Staff have drafted proposed policies and rules for the first workstream. Some technical work remains to be completed to support the Section 32 evaluation. Staff have begun to refine their thinking around the scope of the second workstream.

The Government has proposed changes to the National Environmental Standards for Commercial Forestry (NES-CF) that will ultimately determine whether Council is able to introduce more stringent provisions related to forestry activities. Council is still waiting on clarity regarding those changes. In the absence of certainty, staff seek direction in terms of how to progress this programme. Three options have been considered:

- Option 1 – Don't wait. Progress the Forestry Harvest and Earthworks plan change (assuming an exemption is granted)
- Option 2 – Wait for further direction from MPI and the Government around changes to the NES-CF. Progress the Forestry Harvest and Earthworks plan change separately

- Option 3 – Wait for further direction from MPI and the Government around changes to the NES-CF. Combine workstreams. Bring the forestry harvest plan change, land overlay, and farm/forestry plan work together.

The decisions or matters in this report are considered to be of **Medium** significance in accordance with the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS - NGĀ TŪTOHUNGA**

**That the Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan Review/Arotakenga Mahere Whakahaere Rawa Taiao o Te Tairāwhiti:**

- 1. Notes the contents of this report.**
- 2. Approves combining workstreams in the forestry plan change programme to ensure work on resilient landuse continues while Council waits for further clarity in respect of changes to the NES-CF.**

*Authorised by:*

**Joanna Noble - Director Sustainable Futures**

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**Keywords:** Forestry plan change programme, TRMP, Land Overlay 3B mapping, Forestry, Forestry Harvest Plan Change, TRMP provisions

## BACKGROUND - HE WHAKAMĀRAMA

### Dealing with the effects of historic land clearance and early responses to erosion

1. Council has been developing a regulatory response to managing forestry activities in Tairāwhiti (**reports 24-31, 24-179**) following ex-tropical cyclones Hale and Gabrielle in early 2023. While these major events crystalised the need to address forestry activities in our region, the effects of forestry harvest have been seen and felt by our communities for the last ten years. However, the roots of this problem however stretch back generations. An overview of our region's land use challenges is outlined in **Attachment 1**. Key points of that narrative are:
  - Our region carries a high natural susceptibility to erosion. Young, erosion-prone geology, rolling to steep hill country and exposure to regular heavy rainfall events combine to create a high level of risk for rural land use in c.
  - Post-European land clearance significantly elevated that susceptibility.
  - Soil conservation efforts started early and paved the way for mass planting of *Pinus radiata* to address soil erosion. Cyclone Bola (1988) was a key catalyst for widespread forestry planting.
  - We are now dealing with a 'wall of wood' as post-Bola plantings mature and are harvested. Widespread forestry harvest since 2010 has exposed large areas of hill country to erosion risk (particularly on steeper, more slip-prone land). Multiple slash and erosion impacts have occurred across the region, during regular heavy rainfall. The damaging effects of slash have provided a reminder of how vulnerable our landscape is to erosion.
2. The impacts of cyclone Gabrielle reinforce the long struggle to deal with the scale of risk inherent to the East Coast. While the damage and cost of recovery has been huge, there is an opportunity for our communities to take stock, plan for and deliver a more resilient future. That involves making changes to the way we manage risk, including a shift in the regulatory settings that provide the backstop and support for managing adverse environmental effects.

### Post-Hale and Gabrielle policy work

3. An overview of activities following cyclones Hale and Gabrielle is outlined in **report 24-179**. Key points are as follows.
  - An Issues and Options report was developed immediately following cyclone Hale. A workshop with Councillors was held on 8 June 2023 where the issues and options were presented (**workshop 23-132**). Councillors indicated their interest in exploring all available options to better manage forestry activities. These included:
    - additional regulatory measures for afforestation, replanting and harvest on our riskiest land, and
    - more widespread measures within the Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan (TRMP) that aim to address adverse effects of sediment and woody debris from forestry harvest on waterbodies and the coast.

- In January 2023 local advocacy group Mana Taiao Tairāwhiti organised a petition to Council and central government calling for an independent inquiry into the unsustainable land use in Tairāwhiti (see **report 23-24**). The petition was signed by over 10,000 people, and after cyclone Gabrielle, the Government initiated the Ministerial Inquiry into Land Use (MILU) in Tairāwhiti and Wairoa.
- The Ministerial Inquiry into Land Use (MILU) report 'Outrage to Optimism' was published in May 2023. The report is uncompromising in its position on forestry practices and the generation of woody debris and sediment. The report also recognises the need for TRMP provisions to be urgently reviewed.
- Ministerial appointees Michael Campbell and Rachel Reese worked with Council teams to understand the roles and responsibilities of each team in recovery and future-proofing efforts. The appointees also had multiple engagements with the forestry sector, iwi, and community representatives. Both roles concluded at the end of June 2024 (see [report 24-31](#)).

### Programme plan

4. After engagement with elected representatives and the forestry sector in 2023, a programme plan was developed for this forestry plan change, which identified two workstreams reflecting the recommendations of the earlier Issues and Options report. More information on each of the workstreams was provided in [Report 24-31](#).
5. The **first workstream** seeks to amend the Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan (TRMP) to better manage forestry harvest and related earthworks activities, with a focus on achieving improved soil and water outcomes. Key aspects include:
  - a. Enhanced Regulation of Forestry Activities: Setting out clearer expectations on what is required and increasing the level of scrutiny of resource consent applications in line with the level of risk.
  - b. Improved Forestry Harvest Planning: Requiring Detailed Harvest plans that incorporate best practices for managing site and activity specific risks and minimising the environmental impact on freshwater systems.
6. The **second workstream** focuses on land overlay mapping and review of wider provisions in the TRMP. This includes:
  - a. Identifying land across Tairāwhiti best suited for transitioning to permanent vegetation cover. This land is currently referred to as "Land Overlay 3B" (LO3B), which recognises that it is an extension of Council's existing land overlay framework.
  - b. Review of Council's entire Land Overlay Framework – taking advantage of more recent modelling relating to landslide susceptibility and gully erosion. The review would incorporate the LO3B layer.
  - c. Exploring the potential of Sustainable Landuse Plans<sup>1</sup> as a practical means to implement LO3B and other on-site measures identified to manage land instability and achieve outcomes set within freshwater catchment plans.
7. In October 2024, Government amended the Resource Management Act to restrict notification of any freshwater planning instruments before 31 December 2025.

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<sup>1</sup> Our suggested wording for a farm planning framework that can be applied across different rural landuses

## The big picture – a pathway to resilient landuse in Tairāwhiti

8. The effects of woody debris mobilisation and mass erosion on the receiving environment have catalysed a rethink about how we deal with these risks in this region. In a Sustainable Tairāwhiti workshop held in January (**report 25-13**), staff outlined a plan for the future that involved several interconnecting pieces of a bigger puzzle (refer to Figure 1 below).

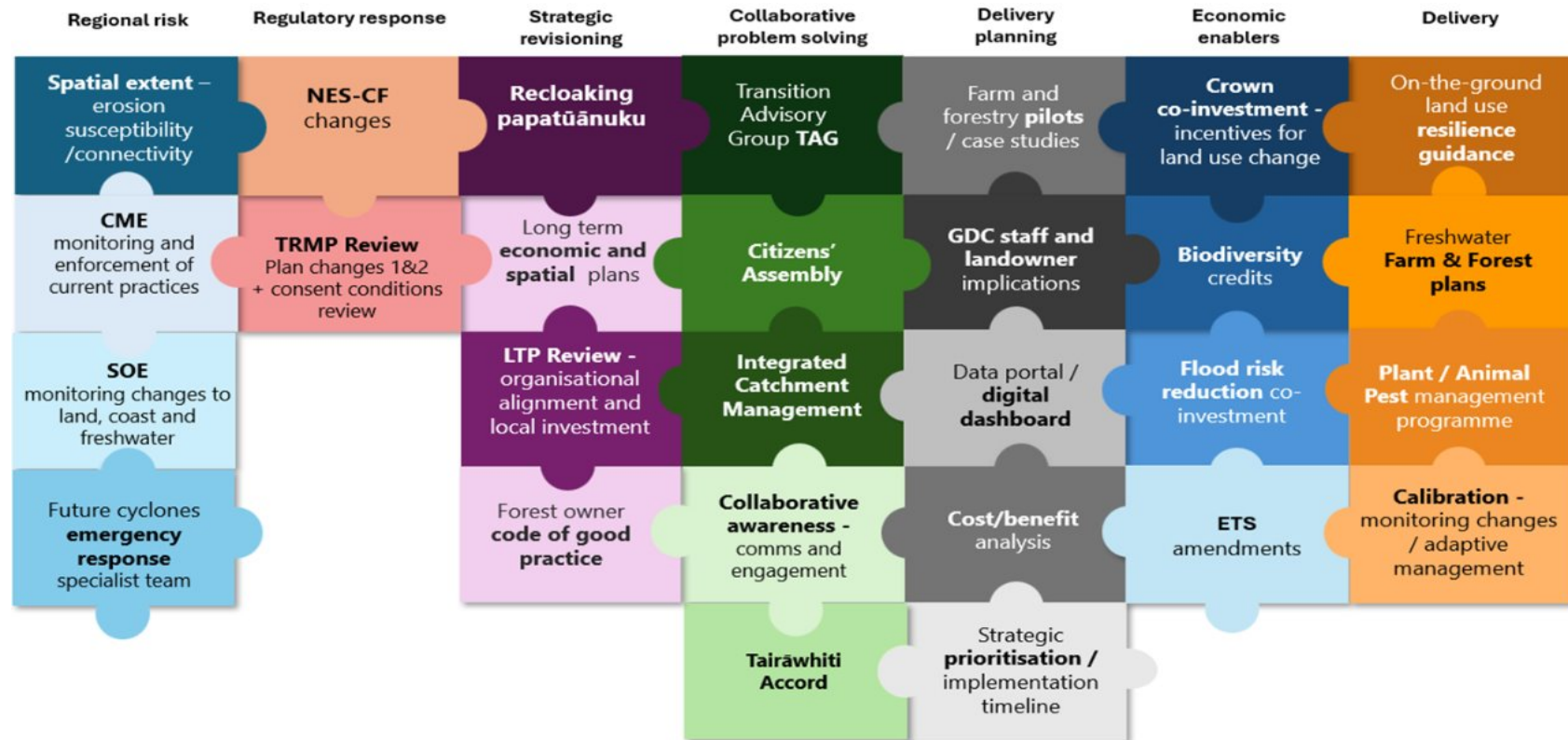


Figure 1: strategic moves to achieving regional landuse transformation

9. The Forestry Plan Change programme is one of several pieces that must be explored in sequence to achieve our communities' aspirations for improved outcomes for both the environment and the economy. It is recognised that both regulatory and non-regulatory responses are critical to achieving those outcomes. In terms of setting a pathway towards those outcomes, we see four broad phases:

*Table 1: Pathway to achieving region-wide environmental and economic transformation*

<b>Phase 1: Reduce residual risk</b>	
<b>Goal</b>	Deal with remaining land instability, discharges and flooding risk as a result of unsustainable land use practices.
<b>Key moves</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better alignment with primary industries</li> <li>• Use contractors to remove woody debris from high-risk locations within catchments</li> <li>• Develop spatial planning to understand the size, location, and resourcing requirements of the woody debris issue to reduce discharges</li> <li>• Maintain a strong and appropriate CME response to unlawful discharges</li> <li>• Ongoing flood risk and mitigation work/investment</li> <li>• Provide support for catchment communities to position themselves to lead landuse transition.</li> </ul>
<b>Phase 2: Update regulatory framework</b>	
<b>Goal</b>	Recalibrate TRMP to ensure environmental bottom lines protect and enhance the environment and communities.
<b>Key moves</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mountains to Sea and Te Mana o te Wai concepts drive our approach to land management</li> <li>• Catchment plans set the visions, values and environmental outcomes to be achieved through sustainable landuse</li> <li>• Review land overlay framework to update the spatial identification of risk</li> <li>• Develop a Sustainable Landuse Plan framework to promote best practice sustainable land management and ensure erosion and land stability risks are identified and mitigated and the farm/forest level.</li> </ul>

Phase 3: Delivery planning	
<b>Goal</b>	Develop a clear, simple and incentivised pathway for our communities to undertake systematic landscape change.
<b>Key moves</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use catchments as the delivery vehicle for landscape change, focusing on providing for agreed freshwater values and outcomes</li> <li>• Sustainable Landuse Plans – collaborative discussion at site, undertake risk assessment, discuss mitigations for the identified risks, agree and sign off on appropriate mitigations</li> <li>• Aggregate property-scale info into digital catchment model</li> <li>• Model effects of mitigations on erosion, sediment loading, biodiversity, flooding etc</li> <li>• Develop catchment implementation strategy with alignment across Council teams</li> <li>• Seek community, political and funding support for targeted catchment-based improvements</li> <li>• Use pilot projects to test the proposed delivery pathway, review and adjust via adaptive management to use as templates for other catchments</li> <li>• Support Research &amp; Development to explore new technologies, land uses and economic opportunities</li> </ul>
Phase 4: Delivery	
<b>Goal</b>	Implement the appropriate actions to achieve the targeted and agreed outcomes for land and freshwater at a catchment level.
<b>Key moves</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure funding to enable and incentivise environmental protection and enhancement</li> <li>• Provide advice and support is provided to catchment and community groups to ensure there is alignment, priorities are being addressed, and with the right mitigations</li> <li>• Deliver catchment-wide actions</li> <li>• Ongoing monitoring to evaluate the effectiveness of delivery, outputs, and outcome(s)</li> <li>• Maintain an active CME presence in working with the primary industries</li> </ul>

10. Staff consider this proposed pathway a preliminary step to developing a resilient landuse programme plan that can bring all elements into focus, with a view to moving coherently towards delivery across multiple fronts.

## PROGRAMME UPDATE

### Workstream one – Forestry Harvest and Earthworks Plan change proposal

11. The targeted Forestry Harvest and Earthworks plan change proposal focuses on activities that carry the highest risk of mobilising sediment and slash. The proposal would introduce more stringent provisions than the National Environmental Standards for Commercial Forestry (NES-CF). The NES-CF currently allows for greater stringency in certain situations.
12. Regulation 6(1)(a) of the NES-CF states that a rule in a plan may be more stringent than the NES-CF regulations if the rule gives effect to an objective developed to give effect to the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management.



13. The proposal will be a proposed change to regional freshwater provisions of the TRMP. There is a direct connection between the management of harvest and related activities and effects on the receiving freshwater environment.
14. Staff have been working on policies and rules that would sit within the Discharges section (C6.2) and Activities in the Beds of Rivers and Lakes section (C6.3).
15. For the Discharges section, the recommended policy direction seeks to:
  - a. recognise the inherent erosion susceptibility of land in Tairāwhiti and the associated risks to freshwater
  - b. implement good forestry harvest management practices
  - c. avoid or minimise discharges of sediment and woody debris
  - d. reduce future effects by encouraging retirement, increasing setbacks and creating more diverse age classes within forests
  - e. manage adverse effects on orange and red Erosion Susceptibility Class (ESC) by requiring resource consent for all harvesting and earthworks activities
  - f. ensure that activities are managed in accordance with harvest plans that set out how the site-specific risks will be dealt with.
16. For the Activities in the Beds of Rivers and Lakes section, the recommended policy direction seeks to:
  - a. Allow for both temporary cable haulers over waterways and slash catchers – provided adverse effects can be avoided or mitigated.
17. A Section 32 evaluation of the proposal is underway and will be finalised once the remaining supporting technical work is completed.

### Supporting technical work

18. Supporting this policy is evidence that demonstrates there is a real need for additional regulation in Tairāwhiti. Council commissioned additional technical work to ensure a solid evidence base for our case for change.
19. **NIWA sediment source analysis.** Following Cyclone Gabrielle, the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA<sup>2</sup>) was contracted to collect soil samples from potential erosion sources in the Ūawa catchment. Using isotopic analysis, NIWA can determine the sources of this sediment – whether it came from the riverbanks, pine forestry or farmland. NIWA is currently undertaking the analysis. This will help Council understand the relative proportions of soil loss from different land uses (including forestry) in the Ūawa catchment.

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<sup>2</sup> The National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research

20. **Economic analysis.** Understanding the costs and benefits of the plan change proposal and of the forestry sector in the region is an important part of this programme. To do this comprehensively, staff have undertaken two kinds of economic analysis:
  - a. A quadruple bottom line (QBL) analysis of the forestry sector in Tairāwhiti that looks at economic as well as social, cultural and environmental wellbeing. This work allows all four values to be assessed on a like-for-like basis and creates a fuller picture of effects (positive and negative) the forestry sector presents to this region.
  - b. An economic analysis of the plan change options. This analysis considers the economic costs of the plan change compared to the benefits.
21. Timeframes for delivery of the NIWA analysis have been delayed<sup>3</sup> which has had an unfortunate knock on effect on completion of the plan change proposal. We expect some preliminary results toward the end of April, with reporting due in June.
22. Once the NIWA data is available, we can also finalise the economic modelling (which is largely complete).

#### Workstream two – mapping and farm/forestry planning

23. The second workstream includes the review of Council's land overlay framework and exploring introducing Sustainable Landuse plans to identify risks (such as erosion) and ways to mitigate them.
24. **Land Overlay Framework.** Our exploration of land across the region for transition to permanent vegetation started with the completion of Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research's landslide Susceptibility and Morphometric Model (completed in March 2024)<sup>4</sup>. From that model we identified land that was both susceptible to shallow landsliding and had a high probability of connecting to waterways. This spatial layer is the basis for what is known as 'Land Overlay 3B.' Since working with the Transition Advisory Group (TAG)<sup>5</sup> we've simplified the name to "Transition Land".
25. While TAG is working on how transition might work outside the regulatory framework, we are beginning to work on how this layer might look and function in the TRMP.
26. The starting point will be to review the current land overlay framework. Our intention is to update this framework so that:
  - a. it takes advantage of the more detailed susceptibility and morphometric model,
  - b. is able to incorporate the transition land as a layer, and
  - c. is applies a consistent approach to erosion susceptibility identification and management across the region.
27. This refreshed spatial framework will support landuse optimisation by first directing inappropriate land uses away from areas that carry a high risk of erosion. Other overlays may flag levels of risk that will need to be managed according to that risk.

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<sup>3</sup> The laboratory undertaking the analysis lost its lab technician and has taken several months to find a replacement.

<sup>4</sup> The layer maps the spatial probability of landslides into the streams and rivers in our region, using a LiDAR-derived Digital Elevation Model (DEM). LO3B will be based on this work along with gully information recently updated by MPI and Dr Mike Marden (see **Report 24-179**).

<sup>5</sup> Established to enable local expertise to inform options to transition LO3B land from existing land uses to permanent vegetation. The TAG was outlined in a Council workshop on 30 January this year (report 25-13).

28. **Farm planning.** Some councils rely on farm plans (or other similar names) to help landowners identify, manage and reduce the impacts of their activities on soils and the receiving environment. As a part of this workstream, we will be exploring farm/forestry planning to identify and manage erosion and other effects on the receiving environment.
29. Council has historically and continues to recognise the importance of working with rural landowners to identify on-farm risks (particularly land instability) and mitigations. For example, in the aftermath of cyclone Bola, the Sustainable Hill Country programme was established to increase protection to what was then identified as the region's most highly erodible land (Land Overlay 3A). Under this programme, landowners were required to submit works (farm) plans, with MPI funding supporting treatment works on LO3A land. Plantation forestry was a major component of grant approvals for treatments.
30. Farm Environmental Plans (FEPs) were introduced to the TRMP in 2015 with the notification of Council's Regional Freshwater Plan. This tool was intended to promote good management practices for dealing with diffuse discharges from intensive farming, annual cropping and vegetable growing practices. Farmers engaged in these activities were required to submit an FEP to the Council by 1 May 2021.
31. More recently, in 2022, Council was selected as one of three regional pilots to test the Freshwater Farm Plan (FWFP) system. The pilots aimed to test the system end-to-end and ensure successful implementation of the farm planning regulations<sup>6</sup>. Council withdrew from the pilot to support recovery efforts following Cyclone Gabrielle.
32. Council's freshwater planning mahi (engagement and research) has highlighted the importance of an all-of-catchment approach to achieving freshwater outcomes. This means all landowners have a part to play in identifying risks and mitigations, and to ensure slash, sediment, nutrient and pathogen issues are dealt with comprehensively. The second workstream focuses on how Council might create a framework that achieves this goal in a fair and a pragmatic way.

## **DISCUSSION and OPTIONS - WHAKAWHITINGA KŌRERO me ngā KŌWHIRINGA**

### **Legislative uncertainty.**

33. The Forestry Harvest and Earthworks plan change faces uncertainty whether Council has a clear pathway to public notification. Staff are seeking direction from the Committee on how they wish to proceed.

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<sup>6</sup> The Government has since paused the rollout of freshwater farm plans to make the system more cost-effective and practical for farmers. However, these plans are still seen as a key tool for managing freshwater risks.

### **Proposed amendments to the National Environmental Standards for Commercial Forestry (NES-CF).**

34. In September 2024 Government signalled its intention to update the NES-CF. Specifically, to modify regulation 6(1)(a), which indicates a rule in a plan may be more stringent than the NES-CF regulations if the rule gives effect to an objective developed to give effect to the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management.
35. What 'modify' means is unclear, but it appears likely that a local authority's ability to introduce more stringent or lenient rules within their districts/regions will be significantly reduced. This reflects the Government's intent to maintain a nationally consistent set of regulations for the forestry sector.
36. Since the Government's announcement last year, staff have been communicating with MPI officials to gain clarity on the matter. We understood that a package of amendments to national direction, of which the NES-CF is a component, would be released for consultation in early 2025. This has not occurred and the possible release for consultation timeframe is late April or May.
37. Government is cautious about providing councils with the ability to introduce more stringent provisions than the NES-CF. There is a concern that if this ability is used widely, it may compromise the intent of the standards to provide national consistency.
38. While Tairāwhiti has a legitimate case for more bespoke regulations, it is important to have a solid evidence base to support the plan change, and good engagement.

### **Restricting notification of freshwater planning instruments.**

39. The Resource Management (Freshwater and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2024 introduced a provision that restricts regional councils from notifying any freshwater planning instruments before the sooner of the following dates:
  - a. the date on which a new NPS-FM that replaces the current NPS-FM takes effect
  - b. 31 December 2025.
40. Exemptions are possible to allow for circumstances where freshwater plans must progress during the restriction period. The Minister for the Environment can exempt a freshwater planning instrument under a range of circumstances or for any reason they deem appropriate.
41. Council staff outlined this restriction at a Sustainable Tairāwhiti meeting on 27 November (**report 24-319**). Councillors supported the recommendation to seek exemptions to the restriction for the forestry plan change mahi.

## Options

42. Three options have been considered:

43. **Option 1 – Don't wait. Progress the Forestry Harvest and Earthworks plan change.** The NES-CF has yet to be amended and currently still allows councils to introduce rules that are more stringent (where they give effect to an objective that gives effect to the NPS-FM). This option would involve using the existing NES-CF allowance for greater stringency to progress the plan change. Relevant steps:
- Inform MPI officials, the Minister for Forestry and the Minister for the Environment of our intention to progress in light of uncertainties and delays in changes to the NES-CF.
  - Write to the Minister for the Environment to initiate the exemption process. Wait for an indicative decision.
  - If the decision is favourable, undertake pre-notification engagement with the forestry sector, Iwi and Māori landowners (Tairāwhiti Whenua Collective). Opportunities for reviewing and discussing the plan change proposal.
  - Finalise research and complete the plan change proposal. Report to Council for decision to publicly notify.
  - Formal application to the Minister for exemption to notify a freshwater planning instrument before December 2025.

Table 2: **Option 1 – Don't wait. Progress the Forestry Harvest and Earthworks plan change**

Option 1 – Don't wait. Progress the Forestry Harvest and Earthworks plan change			
Benefits		Costs	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Making use of NES-CF provisions while applicable.</li> <li>Minimises delays.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This option has costs if Council no longer has a pathway to notifying its plan change. Costs would include technical work, engagement and policy development. It would also include a significant ramping up of costs associated with Council's compliance, monitoring and enforcement (CME) function.</li> </ul>	
Risks			
<p>This option has significant risks.</p> <p>Significant uncertainty around Ministerial expectations. Local authorities don't know if amendments are imminent or will be delayed further. The forestry sector could use this period of uncertainty to push back on Council's intention to engage or they may hold off on engagement, citing the need for more legislative certainty. Continuing could negatively affect how a decision is made on exemption to the freshwater planning process.</p> <p>It is possible that, despite very clear direction from the Ministerial Inquiry into Land Use (MILU) report, the Government decides to close off or significantly constrain Council's ability to introduce more stringent rules than the NES-CF.</p> <p>If this occurs, Council will have undertaken technical work, engagement and policy development without a final outcome. While this work supports other parts of the TRMP, this would be an inefficient use of Council resources.</p>			

44. **Option 2 – Wait for further direction from MPI and the Government around changes to the NES-CF. Progress the Forestry Harvest and Earthworks plan change separately.** With uncertainty around changes to the NES-CF, it is critical that Council continues dialogue with MPI and ministers to seek further direction on the matter. That means waiting for more direction. In the meantime, Council would continue to use its recently created consent conditions for forestry activities<sup>7</sup> as an interim tool for guiding sustainable outcomes for forestry activities. If the Government creates a pathway for councils to create more stringent provisions than the NES-CF, staff will progress its plan change as intended.
45. Relevant steps:
- a. Continue to liaise with MPI staff regarding timing of amendments to the NES-CF.
46. If Council has a pathway to proceed, the following steps apply.
- a. Write to the Minister for the Environment to initiate the exemption process. Wait for an indicative decision.
  - b. If the decision is favourable, undertake pre-notification engagement with the forestry sector, Iwi and Māori landowners (Tairāwhiti Whenua Collective). Opportunities for reviewing and discussing the plan change proposal.
  - c. Finalise research and complete the plan change proposal. Report to Council for decision to publicly notify.
  - d. Formal application to the Minister for exemption to notify a freshwater planning instrument before December 2025.

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<sup>7</sup> Over the last year, Council's consenting team has worked with Eastland Wood Council to develop standard consent conditions for forestry resource consent applications. These conditions represent Council's interim position and will facilitate case by case decision making on forestry resource consent applications on an ad hoc basis, whilst we work toward a more integrated and holistic approach through our forestry plan change programme.

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Table 3: **Option 2 – Wait for further direction, progress the Forestry Harvest and Earthworks plan change separately.**

Option 2 – Wait for further direction, progress the Forestry Harvest and Earthworks plan change separately	
Benefits	Costs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government direction provides more certainty.</li> <li>Better alignment with ministerial expectations reduces risk of push-back from the forestry sector.</li> </ul>	<p>This option has some costs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased costs associated with managing two separate workstreams and plan change processes. This includes legal and other consultant fees associated with post-notification submissions and hearings.</li> <li>Further delays expected. Cabinet approval of phase 2 scope is expected in May. Following Cabinet approval, the bill is expected to be introduced to Parliament for final decision in <b>late 2025</b>, with the aim of enacting it by <b>mid-2026<sup>8</sup></b></li> <li>Council would therefore have the certainty it needs to publicly notify after Government's decision in late 2025.</li> </ul>
Risks	
<p>This option has some risks.</p> <p>With the wider RMA reform activity happening, work on the NES-CF may be waiting on alignment with other key pieces of work on phase 2 reform. This includes changes to the NPS-FM, which may influence this plan change or how we develop the wider freshwater planning package. What this means is the risk that delays could be longer than expected, depending on how ambitious the replacement legislation is.</p>	

47. **Option 3 – Wait for further direction from MPI and the Government around changes to the NES-CF. Combine workstreams. Bring the forestry harvest plan change, land overlay and farm/forestry plan work together.** Given recent delays, the Forestry Harvest and Earthworks plan change has moved closer to the intended timings for the second plan change. Given their synergies, it is worth considering bringing the intended two plan changes together with a view to notifying them as a single plan change package. As freshwater planning instruments, there is also value in aligning them to the rest of the freshwater planning work and notification timeframes. That means working towards having a broad package of work ready by the end of 2025. This would ensure we have the best integration possible across the Regional Policy Statement and regional freshwater provisions. As with option 2, Council would continue to use its recently updated standard consent conditions for forestry activities as an interim tool for guiding sustainable outcomes for forestry activities under the current planning tools available.

<sup>8</sup> [Targeted-RMA-Amendments-to-Unlock-Development-and-Drive-a-More-Efficient-and-Effective-System.pdf](#)

48. Relevant steps:

- a. Progress work alongside the freshwater workstream. Work towards draft provisions by early-mid 2026.
- b. Socialise draft package with Councillors mid-2026.
- c. Pre-notification engagement from mid-2026.
- d. Council decision to approve notification of freshwater and combined forestry package late 2026.

Table 4: **Option 3 – Combine workstreams**

<b>Option 3 – Combine workstreams (preferred option)</b>	
<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Costs</b>
<p>This option has the most benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forestry stakeholders can see the whole picture. Possibly less likely to oppose if the whole package is presented.</li> <li>• This is more likely to be supported by Government ministers as it would be a stronger case for an exemption under NES-CF.</li> <li>• Provides time to see what happens in the legislative space and adapt. Public notification would occur in 2026 so no exemption from the freshwater planning process would be required.</li> <li>• Allows better integration across workstreams and the freshwater programme.</li> <li>• Allows time to wrap research and complete and integrate council's plan change proposal</li> </ul>	<p>This option has some costs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A longer delay to the first plan change than Option 2. Possibly 6-12 months, depending on timing of new legislation.</li> <li>• Ongoing lack of local policy direction and certainty for Council's consent team.</li> </ul>
<b>Risks</b>	
<p>This option carries some risks.</p> <p>There is a risk that amendments to the NES-CF prevent Council from introducing more stringent provisions.</p> <p>Public perception issue that Council is not working fast enough to properly regulate the forestry sector.</p> <p>Changes to the NPS-FM might create further delays.</p>	

**Recommendation – option 3 provides a balance between pace and certainty.**

49. In dealing with the effects of forestry activities in Tairāwhiti, Council must consider how to move decisively as well as strategically in an uncertain, complex and highly contested terrain. It must demonstrate that it is maintaining pace in its regulatory function while working with its communities in a non-regulatory capacity to deliver real change on the ground.



50. Staff suggest the third option provides a reasonable balance between Council maintaining pace in its policy development while buying time to see how amendments to the NES-CF shape up. To this end, staff consider the bigger picture provides a strong rationale for justifying this approach.

## **ASSESSMENT of SIGNIFICANCE - AROTAKENGA o NGĀ HIRANGA**

Consideration of consistency with and impact on the Regional Land Transport Plan and its implementation

**Overall Process:** Low Significance

**This Report:** Low Significance

Impacts on Council's delivery of its Financial Strategy and Long Term Plan

**Overall Process:** Low Significance

**This Report:** Low Significance

Inconsistency with Council's current strategy and policy

**Overall Process:** Low Significance

**This Report:** Low Significance

The effects on all or a large part of the Gisborne district

**Overall Process:** High Significance

**This Report:** Low Significance

The effects on individuals or specific communities

**Overall Process:** High Significance

**This Report:** Low Significance

The level or history of public interest in the matter or issue

**Overall Process:** High Significance

**This Report:** Low Significance

51. The decisions or matters in this report are considered to be of Medium significance in accordance with Council's Significance and Engagement Policy.

## **TREATY COMPASS ANALYSIS**

### **Kāwanatanga**

52. Council has supported extending the scope of an existing Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Te Aitanga a Hauiti (through the Hauiti Mana Kaitieki Collective) to cover freshwater and forestry planning within the Ūawa catchment. The MoU would continue to provide a framework for cooperation in the development and implementation of initiatives aimed at the sustainable management of freshwater within the Ūawa Catchment area.

53. The development of relationships through partnership arrangements allows Council to empower and value Te Ao Māori in within the regulatory context. It allows Council and mana whenua to work together to address landuse issues that they face and move us towards shared decision making about the future of landuse in the region.

### **Rangatiratanga**

54. The development of an improved regulatory response to forestry activities will ultimately support tangata whenua aspirations for achieving better environmental outcomes. Ensuring sediment and slash does not mobilise into waterways will improve the health of our freshwater and coastal receiving environments. Working with mana whenua to achieve these outcomes enables council to support aspirations for environmental restoration.

### **Oritetanga**

55. Engaging at a catchment level allows us to address historical landuse decisions that have affected mana whenua directly.
56. Māori comprise more than half the population of our region. There are 228,000 ha of whenua Māori in Tairāwhiti, which are predominantly in Land Use Classification (LUC) 6, 7 and 8. According to StatsNZ (2018), the capital investment in forestry on Māori farms and lands in Tairāwhiti has increased by about 46%.
57. The complexity of land use decision-making for Māori was imposed by Te Ture Whenua Māori Act 1993. This Act is not well understood and imposes significant barriers to Māori trying to use their land for economic benefit. As well as imposing considerable bureaucracy, achieving the levels of support to be able to raise capital may create a slower process that can result in sub-optimal access to capital to enable business plans to be prepared and executed.
58. Catchment-based korero enables staff to capture and support mana whenua perspectives on these challenges and find ways to remove barriers.

### **Whakapono**

59. An important part of our forestry planning work is to enable the application of tangata whenua customs and practices to how we deliver changes to land use management. At the catchment level, we aspire to draw local expertise and mātauranga to inform a locally specific response to land use issues. We explored this opportunity through the Ūawa Catchment working group.

## **TANGATA WHENUA/MĀORI ENGAGEMENT - TŪTAKITANGA TANGATA WHENUA**

60. Council staff have been collaborating with representatives of Te Aitanga a Hauiti through the Ūawa Catchment working group.
61. Additionally, Council staff have met with representatives of the Tairāwhiti Whenua Collective (a group representing Māori landowner interests in Tairāwhiti) to discuss wider landuse including LO3B and Catchment Forestry Plans.
62. Staff will look to socialise the first plan change with iwi prior to notification.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT - TŪTAKITANGA HAPORI

63. **Eastland Wood Council.** Council staff met with Eastland Wood Council (EWC) several times during 2023 and 2024. Those meetings focused on the first plan change relating to forestry harvest and implications of Land Overlay 3B<sup>9</sup> (LO3B). The idea of additional regulation has been met with resistance but there has been some support for the LO3B concept.
64. Additional workshops between Council's regional consents and compliance staff and the Eastland Wood Council have been positive. The intended outcome is the development of resource consent conditions that can be applied to support environmental outcomes and promote slash reduction. An outline of that work was provided in [report 24-31](#)). This work has since been completed and the new conditions are now able to support the consenting process.
65. **Ūawa Catchment Working Group.** Council held a community meeting in Ūawa on 14 March 2024 to kick off conversations on sustainable land use and the need for future planning with residents of the Ūawa Catchment<sup>10</sup>. Following this meeting, Council staff established an Ūawa Catchment Working Group. The Group consists of members from the community and nominated representatives from Te Aitanga a Hauiti. More information can be found on [Council's website](#).
66. The purpose of the group is to gather the knowledge and local expertise of the people most familiar with the catchment area. Importantly the forum brings land use and freshwater together to create an integrated catchment management planning approach.
67. The group met at over nine hui between July 2024 to February 2025 to discuss both freshwater and forestry. The work has culminated in a draft catchment plan that staff will report on at the May TRMP Committee meeting.
68. Information relating to the forestry plan change is currently posted on Council's Ūawa Catchment webpage (<https://www.gdc.govt.nz/environment/rivers,-water-and-wetlands/our-rivers/catchment-plans/uawa>). Staff are developing an additional webpage to provide further information on the forestry plan change programme.
69. Stakeholder engagement will continue to be an important component of the wider forestry plan change programme. Staff will continue to liaise closely with representatives of the Ministry for Primary Industries to ensure they maintain oversight of the forestry programme and are able to contribute to the process. The farming sector has a high level of interest in forestry and LO3B and we will look to socialise our proposal with representatives from this sector prior to notification.

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<sup>9</sup> Land Overlay 3B represents land across the region where there is a high likelihood of sediment and debris entering waterways. This area has formed the basis of ongoing conversations about transition to permanent vegetation.

<sup>10</sup> [Hui Kicks Off Pilot For More Sustainable Ūawa Catchment | Scoop News](#)

## **CLIMATE CHANGE – Impacts / Implications - NGĀ REREKĒTANGA ĀHUARANGI – ngā whakaaweawe / ngā ritenga**

70. Climate change projections for the Tairāwhiti and Hawkes Bay regions show that with time and greenhouse gas concentrations<sup>11</sup>:
- Projected temperature changes will increase, with the range depending on greenhouse gas concentrations.
  - Annual average minimum temperatures are expected to increase, coupled with a decrease in the average number of frost days.
  - Annual average heatwave days are expected to increase, particularly for eastern and coastal areas.
  - Annual average rainfall is expected to decrease overall, with spring projected to experience the greatest decrease, while winter rainfall is expected to increase on the western side of the mountain ranges.
  - Extreme, rare rainfall events are expected to become more severe, with short duration events having the largest increase (compared to long duration events).
  - Annual maximum 1-day rainfall totals are projected to increase under high greenhouse gas concentration, with large increase for northern Tairāwhiti.
  - Annual maximum 5-day rainfall totals are projected to decrease for several inland and eastern parts of Tairāwhiti.
  - Drought potential is projected to increase, with eastern Tairāwhiti projected to experience some of the largest increases in Potential Evapotranspiration Deficit.
  - Sea levels are projected to rise, and the probability of current high-water marks being exceeded will increase.
71. Overall, climate change projections for Tairāwhiti, and the impacts of those changes present a mixed bag for forestry. While there may be an increase in tree growth and productivity, there will also be some vulnerabilities for the industry related to reducing water availability, fire risk, erosion and flooding, and pests.
72. Of particular concern for this plan change is the increasing prevalence of erosion and flooding hazards, and how the risks associated with these hazards may be exacerbated by forestry.

## **CONSIDERATIONS - HEI WHAKAARO**

### **Financial/Budget**

73. The Forestry Plan Change is funded through the [2024 – 2027 Three Year Plan](#) as part of the TRMP Review Programme budget.

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<sup>11</sup> [2020.11 2052-GSDC161-Climate-change-projections-and-impacts-for-Tairāwhiti-and-Hawkes-Bay.pdf](#)

## Legal

74. No legal implications have been considered for this report. However, any plan change must be prepared and approved in accordance with Schedule 1 of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA).

## POLICY and PLANNING IMPLICATIONS - KAUPAPA HERE me ngā RITENGA WHAKAMAHERE

75. The National Environmental Standards for Plantation Forestry (NES-PF)<sup>12</sup> came into effect on 1 May 2018 and were an important driver for forestry activity (and effects) in our region. These are a single set of nationally consistent regulations under the RMA that apply to foresters throughout New Zealand, creating more certainty and improving efficiency. Most forestry activities are permitted by the NES-PF (now NES-CF) so long as foresters meet specific conditions to prevent significant adverse environmental effects.
76. Reviewing the current regulatory framework for land use activities and developing LO3B align with the Strategic Framework for the 2024-2027 Three Year Plan (see Report 23-314). Of relevance are:
- **We will prioritise resilient waters** – includes flood control and drainage, clean and clear waters, water security, while also recognising the relationship between catchment planning, TRMP, and addressing wood debris with urgency.
  - **We will enable effective regulatory functions.**
77. The land use planning review and the recovery programme also align with the longer-term community outcomes identified in the Tairāwhiti 2050. In particular:
- Outcome 2: Resilient communities.
  - Outcome 5: We take sustainability seriously.
  - Outcome 6: We celebrate our heritage.
  - Outcome 7: A diverse economy.
  - Outcome 8: Delivering for and with Māori

## RISKS - NGĀ TŪRARU

78. **National policy direction** – Council staff expect that there will be a shift towards enabling development and less emphasis on the environment under the current coalition government.
79. However, the full details of the coalition government reforms are not yet revealed. Staff consider this a low risk as Council is expected to progress this work as part of the response to the Outrage to Optimism report, however this risk level may change depending on future direction of government reforms.

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<sup>12</sup> In November 2023, the NES-PF was updated and renamed the National Environmental Standards for Commercial Forestry (NES-CF).

### NEXT STEPS - NGĀ MAHI E WHAI AKE

Date	Action/Milestone	Comments
30.04.2025	Decision on how to progress the forestry plan change mahi	Staff will adapt its programme based on Committee directions at this meeting.
Mid 2025	Update on RM reforms, including changes to NES-CF	If changes to the NES-CF is included in the next suite of changes
Late 2025	Update report on forestry/resilient landuse programme	

### ATTACHMENTS - NGĀ TĀPIRITANGA

1. Attachment 1 - Historic and contemporary context to status of forestry activities in Tairāwhiti [25-88.1 - 16 pages]

## Attachment 1: Historic and contemporary context to status of forestry activities in Te Tairāwhiti

### Our region carries a high natural susceptibility to erosion.

1. Tairāwhiti is well known for its soft rock soil erosion – on a scale and severity greater than any other part of New Zealand. Twenty-five per cent of the North Island's most severely eroding land is found in Gisborne. This presents a big challenge for sustainable land use and protection of our waterways.
2. Tairāwhiti's geology is young, being a product of relatively high uplift from two converging tectonic plates situated off the East Coast. The north and west are dominated by the older Cretaceous rocks, including fractured argillite, greywacke and basalt, while the east and south are dominated by the younger Tertiary rocks, including mudstone and limestone.<sup>1</sup> These are often associated with soft, highly erodible soils. Our steep hill country and easterly exposure to regular heavy rainfall exacerbates the erosion risk.

### Land clearance exposed our region to widespread erosion

3. During the 1880s to 1920s, European settlers cleared much of the existing indigenous forest to make way for pastoral farming.
4. The loss of vegetative cover triggered widespread erosion across Tairāwhiti. Notable erosion was recorded in 1895, with erosion also seen during region wide floods in the winters of 1915 to 1918. Gully erosion was having a noticeable effect on river channel aggradation and a change in bedload character from boulders to silt by the late 1920s was observed.

### Early soil conservation efforts 1940s - 1987

5. Generations since have struggled to deal with the matter. Early soil conservation efforts included:
  - a nationally led soil conservation programme beginning in the 1940s with the gazettal of the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941.
  - planting by the NZ Forest Service beginning in 1961 at Mangatu Forest. By 1972, over 8,100 ha was in forest, with more than half of this being radiata pine. The Mangatu planting was completed in 1978.
  - the East Coast Project in the late 1960s, run by the New Zealand Forest Service. The Project acquired land and planted dual purpose forests, being those that would protect land and provide timber for harvest and sale. The project was stopped in 1987 with 36,100 ha planted<sup>2</sup>. A government review of the East Coast Project in 1987 concluded that the planting had clearly helped to control erosion and maintain productivity.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gundry, S. (2012) A Splendid Isolation Gisborne: East Coast 1950-2012

<sup>2</sup> The East Coast Project was intended to be implemented over a 50 yr period, resulting in the afforestation of 100,000-140,000 ha.

<sup>3</sup> <https://pce.parliament.nz/media/tkiefuy5/sustainable-management-and-the-east-coast-forestry-project-dec-1994-small.pdf>

- the Protection/Production Forestry Encouragement Grants Scheme, operating from 1971 to 1985. This scheme was made available to farmers and small companies and was responsible for 5,328 ha of forestry planting.
  - an additional scheme was introduced in 1981 to cover costs associated with land where planting was necessary for soil protection purposes. This latter scheme enabled an additional 1809 ha to be planted.
6. The New Zealand Forest Service (now Te Uru Rakau) was corporatised in 1987, with cutting rights for many government established forests sold to private companies.

### Cyclone Bola – a key driver for forestry planting

7. Cyclone Bola in 1988 was a major event in our region's more recent history and emphasised just how vulnerable our hill country and flats are.
8. The event caused widespread damage from erosion and flooding, with extensive scarring in the hills, and valley floors blanketed in silt.<sup>4</sup> Severe erosion occurred in the Mata, Ihungia and Hikuwai catchment areas, with both surface slipping and gully erosion. Rivers across the region suffered bank erosion, scour and slumping, with the Uawa River depositing silt up to 2 m deep at Tolaga Bay.<sup>5</sup>
9. Government relief payments following Cyclone Bola totalled \$111 million (\$249 million at 2022 value<sup>6</sup>). Damage to forests was estimated at \$8.6 million (\$19.3 million at 2022 value<sup>7</sup>), covering erosion and flooding damage to forests, and damage to bridges, fences roads and tracks.<sup>8</sup>
10. Cyclone Bola demonstrated the success of early afforestation, with limited erosion on forested land with trees more than eight years old, and similar results where pole planting or soil conservation works had been carried out.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.fao.org/4/y2795e/y2795e06.htm>

<sup>5</sup> <https://pce.parliament.nz/media/lr2n4g4x/inquiry-into-flood-mitigation-measures-following-cyclone-bola-december-1988-small.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.in2013dollars.com/new-zealand/inflation/1988?amount=111>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.in2013dollars.com/new-zealand/inflation/1988?amount=111>

<sup>8</sup> <https://pce.parliament.nz/media/lr2n4g4x/inquiry-into-flood-mitigation-measures-following-cyclone-bola-december-1988-small.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> Gundry, S. (2012) A Splendid Isolation Gisborne: East Coast 1950-2012





Figure 1: Widespread slips and slumps, Waipaoa Catchment, following Cyclone Bola.

### Reforestation: 1990s - present

11. Central Government initiatives provided the impetus to change the land use on several of the worst affected properties to forestry. This included:

- the East Coast Conservation Forestry Scheme, announced in 1988. The scheme targeted eroding areas in the headwaters of the Poverty Bay Flats and Tolaga Bay catchments. The scheme resulted in the planting of 13,674 ha over five years.
- the East Coast Forestry Project, established in 1992. Its aim was to promote large-scale commercial forestry as a means of controlling soil erosion, providing employment and regional development and to recognize environmental needs on individual properties. The project goal was to facilitate planting on 200,000 ha of moderately to severely eroding land over 28 years.

The East Coast Forestry Project subsidised private planting of forestry on severely eroding and erodible land, with a focus on the north of the region. Reversion grants were introduced in 2000, enabling the assisted natural regeneration of forest.

By 1994, 15,400 ha of planting had been undertaken, increasing to 35,552 by 2011.<sup>10, 11</sup>

12. By 2020 the Gisborne District had about 160,000 hectares of commercial forestry.

### Emissions Trading Scheme as incentive for forestry planting

<sup>10</sup> <https://pce.parliament.nz/media/tkjefuy5/sustainable-management-and-the-east-coast-forestry-project-dec-1994-small.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/3729/direct>

13. The ETS was created through the Climate Change Response Act 2002. It is a key tool in the government's climate change response toolbox.
14. Plantation forestry is subject to the ETS.
  - Emission units are not able to be earned from pre-1990 forest but may have to be paid for if pre-1990 forest is deforested and not replanted or replaced.
  - Post-1989 forest is able to earn emission units. If post-1989 forest is deforested and not replaced, or the land is removed from the ETS, units will have to be paid for. Since 2023, post-1989 forest has been further separated into standard forestry and permanent forestry.
15. The ETS effectively incentivises the planting of forestry, given new forestry is able to earn emission units (subject to being replanting following harvesting). To some extent, this enables the use of forestry to offset emissions emitted by other sectors, rather than other sectors having to reduce emissions.
16. Since 2018, there has been a considerable uptick in afforestation nationally,<sup>12</sup> which coincides with the introduction of the NESPF and changes to the ETS which further improved the scheme as it applies to forestry participants.<sup>13</sup>

### Contemporary setting

17. By 2020 the Gisborne District had about 160,000 hectares of commercial forestry.
18. As of 1 April 2023, figures showed that more than 45,000 ha (28%) of forestry was in the 26–30-year-old age class, suggesting this area will be harvested in the short term. By comparison, in the next age class (21–25 years), there is 28,000 ha (17%) of forestry<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/55996-2023-NEFD-Report>, Figure 11

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/36549-Improving-the-Emissions-Trading-Scheme-for-forestry-participants-Final-decisions-required-for-drafting-the-amendment-Bill-Cabinet-Paper>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/55996-2023-NEFD-Report>

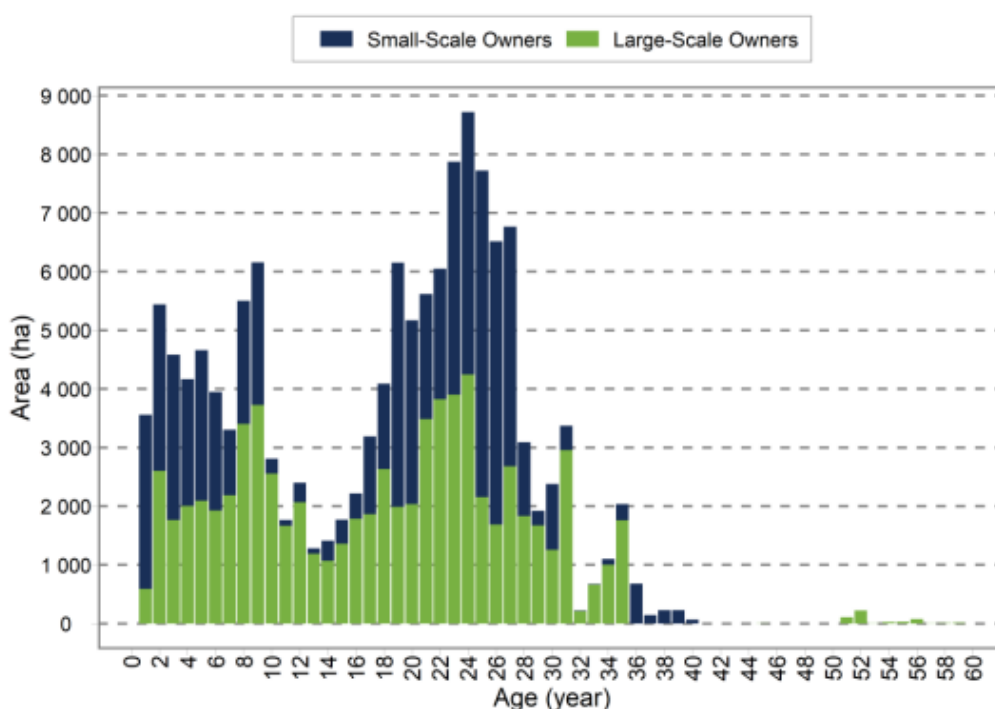


Figure 2: East Coast Modelled Age-class Distribution for All Species (Ministry for Primary Industries 2021)

19. These figures suggest a significant area and volume of harvest will be occurring in the short term. Wood availability from the East Coast wood supply region is expected to continue to increase in the next couple of years to a maximum of 4.5 million m<sup>3</sup> per annum. This increase is required to complete the harvesting at an average rotation age of around 31 years for the areas planted post Cyclone Bola<sup>15</sup>

**Recent forestry harvest has re-exposed the massive erosion problem and compounded it with the additional problem of slash mobilisation.**

20. Approximately 25% of Tairāwhiti's forestry estate is located on what are considered the most "risky" land classes. Research and experience shows that avoidance of adverse effects when this land is harvested with current methods is difficult and increasingly not possible. While planting of some of this land was a deliberate strategy, planning for the management of effects following harvest was not well considered.
21. While a detailed analysis of storm frequency has not been undertaken, it does appear that the size of large storms, and their frequency has been increasing in recent years, coinciding with the increase in forestry harvest that began around 2010.
22. While Tairāwhiti has always been at risk from ex tropical cyclones, particularly in La Nina years, in the last 10 years there have been at least 12 events that have triggered significant debris flow/forestry slash incidents, many of these from storms other than ex tropical cyclones.

<sup>15</sup> Ministry for Primary Industries. (2021). Wood availability forecast: East Coast 2021. Retrieved from <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/47662-Wood-Availability-Forecast-East-Coast-2021>

23. Table 1 below itemises the most significant recent events. A clear pattern is evident following forestry harvest. The events in the early 2010s were predominantly located at Tolaga Bay (harvest of the Waiau sub-catchment) and the Wharerata. Perhaps because fewer people were affected these were not extensively investigated by the Council, with forestry companies mainly working with locals on the clean up. Over time however the damage has become more evidently widespread, and since Cyclone Cook in April 2017 the Council has undertaken significant investigation as to the sources of the material and the causes of the landsliding.
24. While the winter 2018 events resulted in multiple prosecutions of forestry companies, it was recognised that while there was significant non-compliance – this was only part of the problem. For example almost the entire Mangatokerau Catchment (of which forestry makes up 81% of the landuse) was harvested over a 3 year period – an area of 4500 ha. Landsliding and debris flow were evident right across the harvested catchment. While poor compliance made matters worse, the combination of steep lands, clearfell forestry, and severe weather meant that widespread land failure was inevitable.

*Table 1: effects of forestry harvest activities following storm events since 2012*

<p><b>Date:</b> 20 March 2012.</p> <p><b>Event:</b> Wharerata – Whareongaonga Forest</p> <p><b>Effects:</b> Destroyed part of the railway line; State Highway 2 Culverts damaged; Forestry slash impacts on Maraetaha River</p> <div data-bbox="236 1153 1174 1480">  </div>
<p><b>Date:</b> Easter 2014</p> <p><b>Event:</b> Wharerata – Whareongaonga Forest</p> <p><b>Effects:</b> Forestry slash impacts Maraetaha River; Blockage of Maraetaha River bridge</p>



**Date:** Easter 2014

**Event:** Waimata Catchment – Mangarara and Whakaroa Forests

**Effects:** Forestry slash impacts Waimatā River, Waikanae Beach;  
Impacts on farmland in Waimatā River headwaters;  
Significant sedimentation event Turanganui Estuary



**Date:** 23 May 2015

**Event:** Wharerata - South

**Effects:** Forestry slash at all SH2 bridges Maraetaha River;  
Orongo Beach covered in slash;  
Impacts on Maraetaha River, Kopuawhara Stream, Nuhaka River;  
Kopuawhara and Nuhaka Flood Control Scheme blocked by slash and flooding occurred;  
Coastal impacts widespread as slash moved north depositing at Kaiti Beach, Wainui and Makorori and presenting a danger to coastal shipping for several months.







Date: September 2015

Event: Waimatā Catchment – Wakaroa Forest

Effects: Waimatā River impacts, Mangataikehu Stream affected.

Downstream farmland fences destroyed, riparian sediment loaded and large amounts of slash deposits;

Waikanae Beach covered in slash;

Significant slash around Gladstone Road Bridge Gisborne City;

Significant sedimentation event Turanganui Estuary



Date: 12th April 2017

Event: Ex Cyclone Cook<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Cave, M., Davies, N. and Langford, J. (2017) Cyclone Cook Slash Investigation. Report for Gisborne District Council, October 2017.



Date: 3-4 June 2018

Event: Queens Birthday Storm<sup>17</sup>

Effects: Mangatokerau overwhelmed by slash, evacuations, houses and buildings destroyed by slash;

Wigan Bridge undermined;

Tolaga Bay beach and farmland covered in slash and sediment;

Massive sedimentation of Tolaga Bay and woody debris across the bay bottom.




Date: 11-12 June 2018

Event: Second June Storm

Effects: Waimatā River extensive slash damage;

<sup>17</sup> Cave, M. (2022a) Downstream impacts of sediment and woody debris inundation in the Mangaheia sub-catchment Uawa Catchment during the Queens Birthday Storm 2018. Report for Gisborne District Council. September 2022

Cave, M. (2022b) Estimates of log volumes on Tolaga, Kaiaua and Anaura Beaches. Report for Gisborne District Council. September 2022

<p>Waimatā Valley Road culvert blocked, damage to road; Mangataikehu Stream affected. Downstream farmland fences destroyed, farmland covered in slash and sediment loaded and large amounts of slash deposits;</p> <p>Waihora River extensive slash damage; Mangapoike River extensive slash damage;</p> <p>Waikanae Beach slash; Significant slash around Gladstone Road Bridge Gisborne City;</p> <p>Significant sedimentation event Turanganui Estuary;</p> <p>Waiapu Mouth/Tikapa Beach affected by slash.</p>
<p>Date: June and July 2020</p> <p>Event: Winter storms</p> <p>Effects: Tolaga Bay, Tokomaru Bay and Waipiro Bay Beaches covered by slash</p> <p>Waiapu Mouth/Tikapa Beach affected by slash</p> 
<p>Date: 21 May 2021</p> <p>Event: Storm surge</p> <p>Effects: Uawa – Tolaga Bay remobilisation of material and substantial deposition across Tolaga Bay Beach and Uawa River Mouth</p>
<p>Date: January 2023</p> <p>Event: Ex Cyclone Hale</p> <p>Effects: Mangatokerau overwhelmed by slash, evacuations, buildings destroyed by slash</p> <p>Waimatā River extensive slash damage;</p> <p>Mangataikehu Stream affected. Downstream farmland fences destroyed, farmland covered in slash and sediment loaded and large amounts of slash deposits;</p> <p>Waikanae Beach slash</p> <p>Significant slash around Gladstone Road Bridge Gisborne City</p> <p>Significant sedimentation event Turanganui Estuary</p> <p>Waiapu Ngutuawa significantly affected</p> <p>Tikapa Beach</p>
<p>Date: February 2023</p>



Event: Ex Cyclone Gabrielle

Effects: Region-wide significant devastation. A step change in land damage from the previous events – older trees (12-15 years) have also failed on steep slopes.

Numerous rivers including the Mangatokerau, Mangaheia and Hikuwai at Tolaga Bay overwhelmed by slash, evacuations, buildings destroyed by slash. Massive slash metres high on Tolaga Bay beach and on beaches further north (extent of damage not yet known as these areas have not been able to be surveyed as they are cut off).

Waimatā River extensive slash damage, damage to Waimatā Valley Road and Riverside Roads and widespread damage to farms in the catchment – loss of fences, flood gates, farm buildings. Massive sediment losses from forests into upper catchment farms. Failure of older trees on steeplands.

Massive deposits of slash across Poverty Bay beaches – Waikanae to Te Wherowhero.

Significant slash around Gladstone Road Bridge Gisborne City

Te Arai River extensive slash damage. Loss of Gisborne water supply – while land failure has been the main cause, forestry slash has hindered repair efforts.

Multiple bridges destroyed by slash including the Hikuwai and Wigan Bridges cutting off the East Coast from Gisborne.



Date: February – March 2023

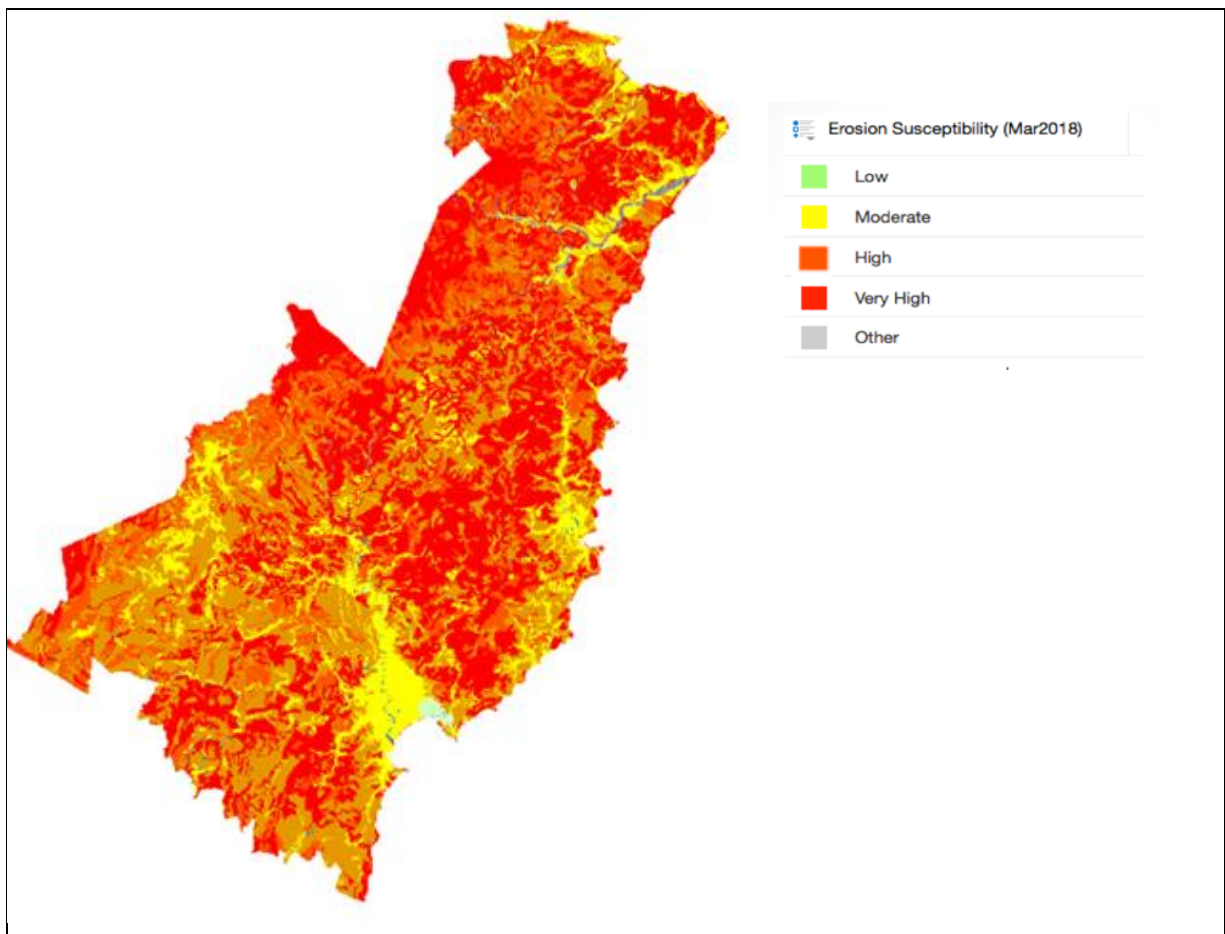
Event: Continued heavy rain events

Effects: Impacts of Cyclone Gabrielle exacerbated. Difficulty in clean up compounded by the huge volumes of forestry wastes and also whole tree failures.

**The National Environmental Standards for Commercial Forestry 2017 (NES-CF) does not adequately manage the high risk of sediment and slash mobilisation arising from forestry harvest activities in Tairāwhiti.**

25. The NES-CF came into effect on 3 November 2023, replacing the National Environmental Standards for Plantation Forestry 2017.
26. **National standardisation of forestry activities.** The NES-CF provides nationally consistent regulations to manage the effects of forestry. It seeks to maintain or improve the environmental outcomes associated with commercial forestry activities and increase the efficiency and certainty of managing commercial forestry activities.
27. As a standardised approach for managing forestry activities across New Zealand, the NES-CF limits the opportunities for local government to create more stringent provisions. Rules in a plan can be more stringent when:
  - they give effect to an objective developed to give effect to the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management,
  - they give effect to any of policies 11, 13, 15, and 22 of the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010, or
  - provides for the protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes, and significant natural areas.
28. The NES-CF covers eight core commercial forestry activities that have potential environmental effects:
  - afforestation
  - pruning and thinning to waste
  - earthworks
  - river crossings
  - forestry quarrying
  - harvesting
  - mechanical land preparation
  - replanting.
29. The NES-CF has different levels of regulation depending on the Erosion Susceptibility Classification (ESC). There are four classifications:
  - Green (essentially flat land)
  - Yellow (moderate erosion susceptibility)
  - Orange (high erosion susceptibility)
  - Red (very high erosion susceptibility).
30. These classifications have been based on a national level assessment of erosion risk, at a 1:50,000 scale. 38.5% of the district is classified as Red (very high) and 15.24% of the district is classified as Orange (high). Figure 1 below shows the extent of the different ESC across Tairāwhiti.
31. Analysis of the Land Class Database (LCDB) shows that 68% of the region's forestry estate sits within the orange and red classes.

Figure 3: Map Showing Erosion Susceptibility Classification for Tairāwhiti in the NES – CF



32. We do not believe this standardised approach, by itself, is adequately calibrated to the extreme erosion vulnerabilities and extent of forestry on high-risk land within the Gisborne Region.
33. **Harvesting consents.** In relation to harvesting plantation forests, the NES-CF permits (subject to Regulations 64 to 69), harvesting in all green, yellow or orange Erosion Susceptibility Class (ESC) zones. Harvesting greater than 2ha of red ESC zone land that is not Land Use Capability (LUC) Class 8e is a controlled activity, therefore consent must be granted. The NES-CF has sought to improve sediment and slash management by:
- Requiring slash at landings to be managed to avoid the collapse of slash piles or the ground beneath a slash pile; and
  - Introducing a requirement to remove slash that is sound wood over specified dimensions and a maximum residual slash limit of 15m<sup>3</sup> per hectare.
34. In Tairāwhiti, the requirements for managing slash have triggered additional consents in the Orange ESC class as foresters cannot comply with these limits. While this provides the opportunity for additional scrutiny of harvesting risks for these forests, it is difficult to determine appropriate mitigation requirements as the TRMP does not include any policy direction. Additionally, these consents are classified as a controlled activity. This sets up a

conflict between the obligation for Council to grant consent under the controlled activity status<sup>18</sup> and the level of risk associated with the harvest activity.

35. Harvesting activities are required to prepare a harvest plan in accordance with Schedule 6 of the NES-CF which requires these plans to include:
  - Person and property details
  - When and how the harvesting is to take place, type of harvesting method, hauler system, duration, intensity and proposed staging
  - Risks of sediment and woody debris being mobilised downstream to public roads, infrastructure, properties, freshwater receiving environments and drinking water supplies
  - Practices that will be used to avoid, remedy or mitigate erosion and sedimentation risks
  - Practices that will be used to avoid, remedy or mitigate risks relating to slash, procedures for avoiding instability of slash and the ground under slash piles at landings, keeping slash away from high risk areas, managing slash in the vicinity of waterways, ensuring slash is not mobilised in heavy rainfall (5% AEP or greater) and contingency measures for such movement, including slash removal and use of slash traps.
  - Management practices for maintenance and monitoring.
36. For permitted harvesting, the NES-CF only provides for councils to receive harvest plans on written request. This means that there is no opportunity to review, influence or reject harvest plans if the practices proposed are not adequate to achieve the NES-CF requirements. Additionally, the harvest plan regulation and schedule in the NES-CF do not require good or best management practices are adopted. The direction is to "identify the environmental risks associated with the earthworks and provide operational responses to those risks that avoid, remedy, or mitigate the adverse effects of the activity on the environment"<sup>19</sup>.
37. This approach creates a greater obligation on monitoring these permitted activities to determine, retrospectively, if activities are being carried out in a manner that achieves the NES-CF regulations. The experience of compliance monitoring and enforcement officers in Tairāwhiti is that in many cases, the harvest practices do not achieve the NES-CF requirements, or that it is difficult to determine compliance. Significant non-compliance is still occurring with harvest activities, despite the culminating effects of ex-tropical cyclone Gabrielle.
38. A further limitation of the NES-CF which is particularly significant for managing sediment and slash mobilisation is the consideration of cumulative effects. The cumulative effects of clearfell harvesting large areas of catchments, leaving debris across slopes and undertaking a range of activities that can increase erosion risk are not well considered in the NES-CF. In fact, the term "cumulative" is only referred to twice in the NES-F, in relation to vegetation clearance of indigenous vegetation and river crossings.<sup>20</sup> While this may not necessarily preclude cumulative effects being addressed through the broader matters of

<sup>18</sup> A controlled activity requires a resource consent before it can be carried out but Council must grant consent for it. Council can impose conditions on the consent, but only for those matters over which it has reserved control in the relevant plan or over which control is reserved in national environmental standards.

<sup>19</sup> NES-CF Regulation 66(2)(a)

<sup>20</sup> NES-CF Regulation 93(3)(b) and Regulation 48(2)(c)

control or discretion that dictate the assessment of consents, the lack of direct acknowledgement creates a level of uncertainty and potential for dispute.<sup>21</sup>

### The Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan is limited in its ability to create significant changes to forestry practices

39. The issues with the NES-CF are compounded by the limitations of the TRMP. There are rules in place regarding cable hauling over rivers and streams and vegetation clearance in riparian management areas, but in practice these consents are routinely granted, and the existence of the rules has not resulted in significant changes in forestry practice.
40. The TRMP does not include any specific policy direction regarding forestry practices to support the processing of consents triggered under the NES-CF or the TRMP. The objectives for the freshwater policies and rules sit within Section B6 and are therefore both Regional Policy Statement (RPS) and Regional Plan objectives. These objectives are broad in nature and while still relevant for assessing forestry related consents, they provide limited specific direction on outcomes to be achieved. Equally, the policies that relate to cable hauling in or over the beds of rivers and streams and harvesting within riparian management areas do not set out clear expectations on how these activities will be managed. Table 1 below summarises the key rules specifically targeted at forestry that are more stringent than the NES – PF. These are all included in the TRMP on the basis that they are required to give effect to the NPSFM 2014.

Table 2: TRMP rules focussed on managing impacts of forestry on freshwater

TRMP Rule	Activity Status
Cable hauling across a stream that disturbs the bed	Restricted discretionary
Clearance of plantation forest within the riparian management area of a waterbody	Controlled – all waterbodies, except Restricted Discretionary – for aquatic ecosystem waterbodies and outstanding waterbodies
Land and vegetation disturbance as a result of cable hauling across a waterbody	Restricted discretionary
Planting of second rotation plantation forestry species within a Riparian Management Area	Restricted discretionary – all waterbodies, except Discretionary – for outstanding waterbodies
Vegetation clearance or afforestation with plantation forest within 10m of a	Discretionary

<sup>21</sup> Regulation 70(4) allows for consideration of “measures to address effects of harvesting on water quality, vegetation in the riparian zone, wetlands and the coastal marine area” and “measures to minimise soil erosion during and after harvesting”.

protected watercourse	
Planting of second rotation plantation forestry within the Riparian Management Area of an outstanding waterbody	Non-complying

41. Overall, we consider the policy framework between the NES-CF and TRMP is not fit for purpose to manage the unique landscape vulnerabilities and intensity of forestry land use in Tairāwhiti to protect freshwater receiving environments.

## 11. Reports of the Chief Executive and Staff for INFORMATION



25-89

**Title:** 25-89 Regional Policy Statement Early Engagement Summary  
**Section:** Strategic Planning  
**Prepared by:** Kelsey Goldsmith - Policy Planner  
**Meeting Date:** Wednesday 30 April 2025

Legal: No

Financial: No

Significance: **Low**

### **Report to TAIRAWHITI RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW/AROTAKENGA MAHERE WHAKAHAERE RAWA TAI AO O TE TAIRĀWHITI Committee for information**

#### **PURPOSE - TE TAKE**

The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the feedback received through early engagement on the draft direction of the Regional Policy Statement (RPS). The feedback generally supports the direction we're heading in, and we will continue refining the RPS based on what people told us.

#### **SUMMARY – HE WHAKARĀPOPOTOTANGA**

Phase One of the review of the Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan (TRMP) includes the Regional Policy Statement, freshwater planning provisions, sustainable land use (forestry), and urban development. This report provides an update on the review of the Regional Policy Statement (RPS). The RPS is a statutory requirement for Gisborne District Council (Council) as a unitary authority under section 30 of the Resource Management Act 1991, identifying the region's significant resource management issues, and setting out objectives, policies, and methods to achieve integrated management of natural and physical resources.

This work began in 2021 with the identification of regionally significant issues, which focuses on environmental protection, sustainable economic development, community resilience and growth and development [[Report 21-216](#)]. We analysed these issues further through a series of issues and options reports in 2022 to identify policy gaps, research requirements and potential solutions to these issues. We re-assessed the issues following Cyclone Gabrielle in 2023 to see if changes were required.



Since 2021, Council has collaborated with iwi partners to identify high-level issues and engage directly through mechanisms such as the Iwi Technical Trial and recent wānanga with Te Aitanga-a-Māhaki. Discussions are ongoing regarding the most appropriate overarching policy framework. The ki uta ki tai (mountains to sea) approach continues to be integrated across the plan at this point. Te Aitanga-a-Māhaki are concerned whether this is the most appropriate policy approach for the region and would prefer a framework that focuses on the health and wellbeing of the environment as a whole - Te Oranga o Te Taiao. The Māori Partnerships and RPS teams continue to progress direct engagement with tangata whenua on this matter.

The delay in formal notification from June 2025 to February 2026 [[Report 24-319](#)] allowed for further opportunity to explore meaningful engagement with tangata whenua and the wider community. In December 2024, Council approved early informal engagement on the draft RPS policy direction [[Report 24-345](#)]. This engagement, undertaken in February–March 2025, sought community and stakeholder feedback on seven key questions aligned with the four overarching themes of the RPS: resilient communities, te taiao, growth and development, and a prosperous Tairāwhiti. Public feedback was received through the Participate platform, in-person drop-in sessions, and targeted outreach to iwi authorities and key stakeholders.

A total of 66 survey responses were received from the public, with the majority expressing support for the proposed direction, particularly the environment-first approach, nature-based solutions, revegetation initiatives, and support for small-scale, community-owned infrastructure. Feedback from key stakeholders (including the New Zealand Defence Force, Eastland Generation, Fulton Hogan, Eastland Port, DOC, and the fuel companies) confirmed general support, alongside constructive recommendations for clarifying definitions and balancing competing objectives.

Feedback will inform refinement of the draft RPS chapters ahead of presentation to the Committee in May 2025, with the intent of completing the RPS in 2025 for notification in February 2026. No changes are proposed to the overarching policy direction at this stage, but further engagement and internal testing will continue to ensure the RPS is robust, locally relevant, and nationally compliant.

The decisions or matters in this report are considered to be of **Low** significance in accordance with the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy.

## RECOMMENDATIONS - NGĀ TŪTOHUNGA

**That the Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan Review/Arotakenga Mahere Whakahaere Rawa Taiao o Te Tairāwhiti Committee:**

### **1. Notes the contents of this report.**

*Authorised by:*

**Joanna Noble - Director Sustainable Futures**

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**Keywords:** RPS, Regional Policy Statement, Draft RPS, Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan, TRMP, national direction, tangata whenua, direction, engagement, community, feedback, regionally significant issues

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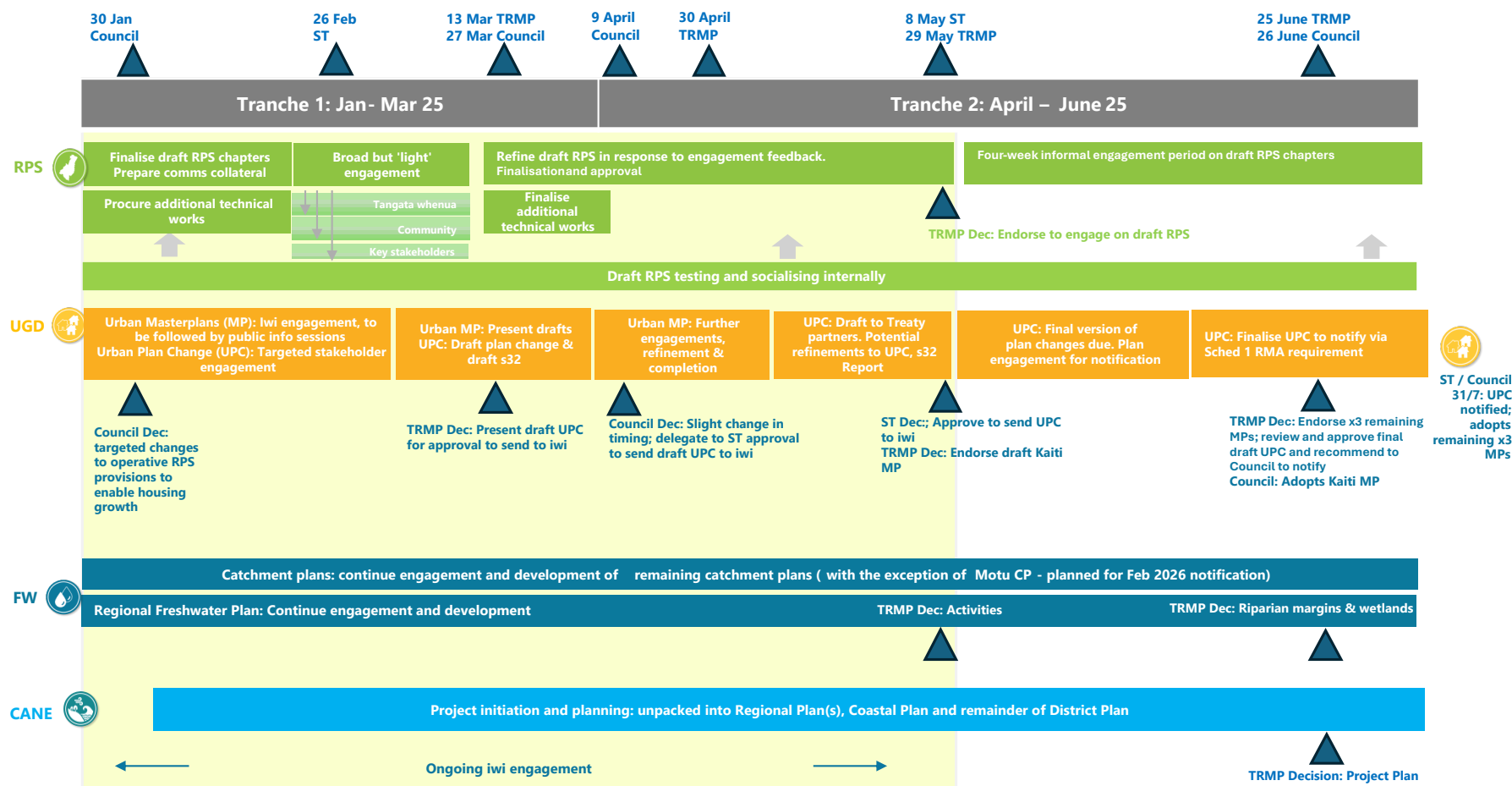
## **BACKGROUND - HE WHAKAMĀRAMA**

1. The Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan (TRMP) review is being reviewed in two phases. Phase one includes a review of the Regional Policy Statement (RPS), alongside the Freshwater, Sustainable Land Use, and Urban Growth and Development workstreams.
2. As a unitary authority, Gisborne District Council is required to prepare a RPS under section 30 of the Resource Management Act (RMA) 1991. The purpose of a RPS is to give an overview of the significant resource management issues for the region, followed by objectives, policies and methods to achieve integrated management of the natural and physical resources of the region.
3. The operative RPS does not give effect to the requirements under current national direction, best practice that has developed over time or to the current significant resource management issues across the region. The operative RPS is nearly 30 years old, and the provisions no longer meet the needs of the community.
4. The draft RPS aims to bridge the gaps in the operative RPS by giving effect to national direction and having provisions that respond to present significant resource management issues for Tairāwhiti, and any potential issues that may arise in the future.

5. The decision was made at the Sustainable Tairāwhiti meeting on 27 November 2024 to delay the notification of the RPS until February 2026 [Report 24-319]. This means that RPS will need to be completed this year, and a draft will be brought to the Committee in May 2025. The amended timeline is as follows:

## Overview of high-level tranche planning 2025:

### Tranche 2 (Jan to Mar) & Tranche 3 (Apr– Jun)



## Determining Issues of Regional Significance

6. In 2021, we identified Regionally Significant Issues [[Report 21-216](#)]. These issues were reviewed after Cyclone Gabrielle and are grouped under four themes:
  - Resilient communities: Climate change and natural hazards.
  - Te Taiao: Degraded environment and loss of connection.
  - Growth and development: Providing for growth.
  - Prosperous Tairāwhiti: Improving the economic and social wellbeing of Tairāwhiti.

## Tangata whenua engagement to date

7. In 2021, Councillors and iwi partners worked together to identify high-level 'Significant Resource Management Issues' using previous submissions from tangata whenua to assist with understanding iwi, hapū and whānau aspirations, values and concerns.
8. In 2022, the Iwi Technical Trial (ITT) was set up to provide iwi authorities with an opportunity to have direct involvement in the development of the draft RPS with representatives from Ngāti Porou, Ngāi Tāmanuhiri, Te Aitanga-a-Māhaki and Rongowhakaata.
9. Ngā Hapū o Ngāti Porou Takutai Kaitiaki Trusts approached Council in 2024, stating they are looking to develop their Environmental Covenant under the Ngā Rohe Moana o Ngā Hapū o Ngāti Porou Act 2019. The Environmental Covenant will require Council to undertake certain actions and considerations when developing the provisions in the TRMP review. The Trust is also exercising their right to engage with Council directly on resource management matters.

## Incorporation of ki uta ki tai into the RPS

10. At the 13 June 2024 Committee meeting, the Committee decided to use Ki Uta Ki Tai (from mountains to sea) as the overarching policy framework for the RPS [[Report 24-166](#)]. Ki Uta Ki Tai means everything in the environment is connected – that land, freshwater, ecosystems and the coastal environment have a relationship with each other that cannot be separated.
11. Further research was provided to the 3 September 2024 Committee meeting [[Report 24-245](#)] on how Ki Uta Ki Tai could be reflected in the TRMP.

## Approval for informal engagement

12. At the Committee meeting on 18 December 2024, the Committee approved the draft RPS policy direction and decided to engage with the public and stakeholders on that policy direction. This took place over a four-week period in February/March 2025 with the goal of getting a 'sense check' from our community on the issues, goals and strategic direction of the draft RPS [[Report 24-345](#)].
13. This engagement coincided with engagement for the Urban Plan Change and Masterplans to allow for integration and to assist the public with understanding of the TRMP.

## Purpose and objectives of the engagement

14. The purpose of early engagement was to test the response of the community and key stakeholders to the high-level direction of key RPS policy directions before completing the draft RPS.

15. The objective of the early RPS engagement was to:

- Develop community and stakeholder understanding and trust through communicating the proposed direction and identifying preferences
- Keep the public informed on the TRMP review
- Gather public input on drafting policy direction for the RPS
- Create positive relationships with iwi, stakeholders and the community.

#### **Questions we sought feedback on**

16. The questions we sought feedback on were based on the four overarching themes from the regionally significant issues. The questions were:

1. Do you agree with managing natural hazards by limiting hazard-sensitive activities?
2. Do you support using nature-based solutions instead of hard engineering to reduce natural hazards?
3. Protecting the environment should be the primary goal when making decisions about cultural, social, and economic wellbeing.
4. Do you support prioritising revegetation in dunes, wetlands, erodible land, and riparian margins to improve resilience and biodiversity?
5. Do you support encouraging small-scale infrastructure, like local energy and water systems, to improve community resilience?
6. Do you agree with retaining Gisborne City's compact urban form to reduce costs and environmental impact?
7. Do you agree that low-impact activities, like tourism and restoration, should be allowed in outstanding landscapes and native forests?

17. There were four main groups we wanted to engage with:

- The general public
- Iwi authorities
- Key stakeholders
- Internal Council stakeholders.

18. An overview of the methods used for each group and a summary of their feedback is set out below.

#### **General public**

19. A Participate page and survey was used for engagement with the general public, which was live for a four-week period across February and March. The page included a high-level background information document (**Attachment 1**) to provide context for the seven questions asked.

20. During this period, there were three drop-in sessions held in the CBD, Elgin and Kaiti to provide the community with an opportunity to speak to experts face-to-face and provide in-person feedback.

### **Raising awareness of the engagement**

21. Various channels were used to raise awareness of the opportunity to provide feedback, including:
- Gisborne District Council website - Participate page
  - Radio announcement
  - Media release
  - Facebook posts
  - Newspaper notice
  - Write-up in 'Gizzy Local'
  - Face-to-face with business owners in Elgin, Kaiti and the City Centre
22. 66 responses were received, which were mostly in support of the direction of the draft RPS. Most comments received supported an environment-first approach to managing our resources, calls for better risk management related to natural hazards, and support for diverse and sustainable local economies including renewable energy and tourism.

### **Iwi authorities**

23. An invitation has been sent to iwi groups to seek engagement on the development of the RPS. Responses have been received, and the Māori Partnerships team are supporting those groups to recommence engagement on the draft RPS.
24. The RPS team engaged directly with representatives from Te Aitanga-a-Māhaki in a 3-day wānanga on the RPS chapters. The feedback received will be incorporated into the draft chapters.
25. During this wānanga, Te Aitanga-a-Māhaki shaped the narrative of what Ki Uta Ki Tai means to them and how this can be reflected in the draft RPS. Concerns were raised around whether this approach is the best fit for the region, and they indicated that they would prefer a Te Oranga o Te Taiao approach. This is an ongoing discussion with Te Aitanga-a-Māhaki and will need to be discussed with other iwi. If there is strong support for a change in approach, the RPS team will bring options to the Committee for direction.

### **Key external stakeholders**

26. Stakeholders were emailed asking if they would like to provide feedback on the direction of the draft RPS and sent a link to the Participate page.
27. Six key stakeholders provided feedback. Overall, all six stakeholders generally agree with the direction of the draft RPS, although several offer important caveats, suggestions or points of clarification to ensure their interests are accommodated.
28. We expect to receive detailed submissions from external stakeholders when the draft is made public for feedback.

### **New Zealand Defence Force**

29. Supportive of the RPS direction but emphasises the need for a consistent definition of "temporary activities" across the TRMP and recognition of the benefits of infrastructure in the RPS, including avoiding adverse effects on infrastructure and existing activities.

### **Eastland Generation (EGEN)**

30. Generally supportive but would like a clearer definition of renewable energy generation. The feedback also requests stronger alignment with the NPS-ET (National Policy Statement on Electricity Transmission) and NPS-REG (National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Generation) and a balanced approach to natural hazard management that avoids constraining energy infrastructure unnecessarily.

### **Fulton Hogan**

31. Supportive in principle but indicated concerns with a need for recognition of aggregate and extractive industries. Fulton Hogan requested clarity around what is considered 'low impact' or 'appropriate' development in sensitive areas. They also wanted the RPS to emphasise infrastructure resilience and sustainable access to resource.

### **Eastland Port**

32. Supportive of the general direction, and key feedback wanted ports and coastal infrastructure recognised as essential and suggested further consideration of nature-based solutions in compatibility with port operations.

### **Department of Conservation (DOC)**

33. Supports the direction with well-considered ecological caveats but advised careful consideration of "low-impact" activities in sensitive environments.

### **Fuel Companies (BP, Mobil, Z Energy)**

34. Supportive of taking a risk-based approach to minimise the impacts of natural hazards.

### **Internal Council stakeholders**

35. Internal channels of communication included:
- Naumai post
  - CE blog
  - 10@10
36. The RPS team engaged internally with Council teams with detailed discussions on each RPS chapter. The feedback received will be reflected in the draft RPS.

## **DISCUSSION and OPTIONS - WHAKAWHITINGA KŌRERO me ngā KŌWHIRINGA**

### **Summary of community feedback**

37. In total, 66 contributions were received through the Participate page (**Attachment 2**). There was some variation across answers, but overall, most of the responses were in support of the policy direction.
38. The summary of results is shown in **Attachment 2 – RPS Engagement Results**, and the specific feedback comments relating to particular questions is shown in **Attachment 3 – RPS Engagement Written Comments**.
39. The feedback on the RPS from the drop-in sessions was minimal, and most of the conversations with the public were centred around what the RPS is and how it relates to the wider TRMP.

40. A breakdown of the responses is shown below:

Table 1: Overview of responses

Question	Number of responses agreeing or disagreeing (or not sure/impartial).		
	Agree	Disagree	Not sure/impartial
Question 1: Do you agree with managing natural hazards by limiting hazard-sensitive activities?	41 (62%)	15 (23%)	10 (15%)
Question 2: Do you support using nature-based solutions instead of hard engineering to reduce natural hazards?	39 (59%)	11 (17%)	16 (24%)
Question 3: Protecting the environment should be the primary goal when making decisions about cultural, social, and economic wellbeing?	46 (70%)	9 (14%)	11 (17%)
Question 4: Do you support prioritising revegetation in dunes, wetlands, erodible land, and riparian margins to improve resilience and biodiversity?	60 (91%)	1 (1.5%)	5 (7.5%)
Question 5: Do you support encouraging small-scale infrastructure, like local energy and water systems, to improve community resilience?	55 (83%)	2 (3%)	9 (14%)
Question 6: Do you agree with retaining Gisborne City's compact urban form to reduce costs and environmental impact?	38 (58%)	12 (18%)	16 (24%)
Question 7: Do you agree that low-impact activities, like tourism and restoration, should be allowed in outstanding landscapes and native forests?	51 (77%)	7 (11%)	8 (12%)

41. The key themes and/or issues relating to each question are highlighted below.

**Question 1: Do you agree with managing natural hazards by limiting hazard-sensitive activities?**

Responses
<p><b>Agree: 62%</b></p> <p><b>Disagree: 23%</b></p> <p><b>Not sure/impartial: 15%</b></p>

42. Those who agreed, focused on increasing community resilience by avoiding development in hazard-prone areas and reducing risk to people and property.

43. Participants who disagreed believed people should be allowed to have the choice to develop where they choose with appropriate adaptation measures in place, and that in certain cases the hazard needs to be removed entirely, not just limited.
44. People who were unsure needed more information, and some people thought that this should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

**Question 2: Do you support using nature-based solutions instead of hard engineering to reduce natural hazards?**

Responses
Agree: 59%
Disagree: 17%
Not sure/impartial: 24%

45. Those who agreed with this question made comments around long-term and more effective protection against natural hazards, but it should be considered on a case-by-case basis rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.
46. People who disagreed believed both nature-based solutions and hard-infrastructure should be considered, and that hard structures are more cost-effective and provide a quicker fix in comparison to nature-based solutions.
47. Those who were unsure needed more information before making a decision, and that protection measures should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

**Question 3: Protecting the environment should be primary goal when making decisions about cultural, social, and economic wellbeing.**

Responses
Agree: 70%
Disagree: 14%
Not sure/impartial: 17%

48. People who agreed commented that a healthy environment will lead to a healthy economy and healthy community, and that people cannot survive without our environment.
49. Those who disagreed made comments relating to balancing the protection of the environment with cultural, social and economic wellbeing, and that in some cases the economy or people should be prioritised.
50. Participants who were impartial also preferred balancing economic, social and environmental factors when making decisions.

**Question 4: Do you support prioritising revegetation in dunes, wetlands, erodible land, and riparian margins to improve resilience and biodiversity?**

Responses
Agree: 91%
Disagree: 1.5%
Not sure/impartial: 7.5%



51. People who agreed commented that they preferred planting native species rather than exotic species, that we need to ensure there is ongoing maintenance of planted areas, and that the community should be involved in revegetation projects.
52. There was only one comment from a participant who disagreed, who said that rate payers should not have to front the costs of these projects.

**Question 5: Do you support encouraging small-scale infrastructure, like local energy and water systems, to improve community resilience?**

Responses
Agree: 83%
Disagree: 3%
Not sure/impartial: 14%

53. People who agreed commented about improving community resilience, retaining ownership of these assets with Tairāwhiti ratepayers, and the economic benefit associated with employment opportunities.
54. People who disagreed with this statement commented that this is no longer a current issue for the region.
55. Those who were unsure needed further information to make an informed decision and were unsure about the affordability of these types of projects, and the quality of the work that would be produced.

**Question 6: Do you agree with retaining Gisborne City's compact urban form to reduce costs and environmental impact?**

Responses
Agree: 58%
Disagree: 18%
Not sure/impartial: 24%

56. People who agreed with this statement commented about reducing sprawl, preserving productive land, and avoiding expanding development into hazard-prone areas.
57. Participants who disagreed with this statement made comments about opening up land for housing development to reduce house prices, allowing businesses to grow and expand, and that there needs to be a mix of housing options available.
58. Those who were unsure mentioned needing additional information to make an informed decision, and that costs may not necessarily be reduced.

**Question 7: Do you agree that low-impact activities, like tourism and restoration, should be allowed in outstanding landscapes and native forests?**

Responses
Agree: 77%
Disagree: 11%
Not sure/impartial: 12%

59. Key themes from participants who agreed with this statement are centred around ensuring these activities are appropriately managed with conservation requirements in place, and that these types of activities positively contribute to our region's economy.
60. Key themes from participants who disagreed with this statement are centred around protecting these areas from human impacts and not using them for economic gain, and whether Māori landowners will be involved in the decision-making process.
61. Those who were unsure made comments around how this will be managed and how much impact these activities will have on the landscapes.

#### **Confirmation of direction**

62. Based on the feedback received from the community, there is no change in the overarching direction of the RPS. However, the RPS team will continue to refine the draft chapters based on the feedback received.

#### **Additional information**

63. The RPS team continues to have ongoing internal testing of the direction and draft provisions with Council teams.

### **ASSESSMENT of SIGNIFICANCE - AROTAKENGA o NGĀ HIRANGA**

Consideration of consistency with and impact on the Regional Land Transport Plan and its implementation

**Overall Process:** **Low** Significance

**This Report:** **Low** Significance

Impacts on Council's delivery of its Financial Strategy and Long Term Plan

**Overall Process:** **Low** Significance

**This Report:** **Low** Significance

Inconsistency with Council's current strategy and policy

**Overall Process:** **Low** Significance

**This Report:** **Low** Significance

The effects on all or a large part of the Gisborne district

**Overall Process:** **Medium** Significance

**This Report:** **Low** Significance

The effects on individuals or specific communities

**Overall Process:** **Medium** Significance

**This Report:** **Low** Significance

The level or history of public interest in the matter or issue

**Overall Process:** **High** Significance

**This Report:** **Low** Significance

64. The decisions or matters in this report are considered to be of **Low** significance in accordance with Council's Significance and Engagement Policy. This report summarises the feedback from the community and key stakeholders and confirms the high-level policy direction. There will be further opportunity for the community and stakeholders to provide feedback on the draft RPS to gauge if Council has the policy setting right.

## **TREATY COMPASS ANALYSIS**

### **Kāwanatanga**

65. An open invitation with iwi to be involved in TRMP governance decisions still stands. The intention is to engage with iwi and hapū when making decisions on the TRMP to ensure the plan is in line with their views. Capacity and time constraints have been identified as barriers to iwi and hapū being able to engage in governance decisions.
66. Discussions with iwi and hapū are ongoing as to how they wish to be involved in the RPS process and to what extent. A co-drafting approach would ensure co-design of a plan that meets the needs of iwi and hapū, however, capacity is the major barrier to this approach. If co-drafting is not feasible, then the intention is to identify key chapters iwi and hapū may wish to provide feedback on.
67. Te Aitanga-a-Māhaki have indicated to Council staff that their preferred method of involvement is co-drafting with regular contact with the Council staff. Conversations with Rongowhakaata Iwi Trust, Ngāi Tāmanuhiri, Te Runanganui o Ngāti Porou and other iwi are ongoing around their capacity and level of involvement in the RPS.

### **Rangatiratanga**

68. Past feedback and submissions from iwi, hapū, tangata whenua and Māori landowners on other Council projects have been utilised to draft the RPS. The advice received through the iwi technicians has also been valuable in informing the draft provisions to date.
69. The agreed framework for the TRMP is Ki Uta Ki Tai, which acknowledges the interconnectedness of the environment. This has been tested with Te Aitanga-a-Māhaki, who stated they would prefer a framework that focuses on the health and wellbeing of the environment as a whole (Te Oranga o Te Taiao) but acknowledge the decision by the Committee was to use ki uta ki tai. This is yet to be tested with other iwi or hapū.

### **Oritetanga**

70. The minimum requirement under the RMA is to consult with iwi authorities when preparing the draft plan provisions. Council has determined that this would be insufficient in meeting the needs of our treaty partners. The preferred approach to engagement is to co-draft and/or review the draft RPS provisions in partnership with tangata whenua. Part of the TRMP budget is available to support iwi and hapū engagement and to assist in removing potential barriers to participation. Working in partnership with tangata whenua will open the door for addressing historical impacts and inequity across resource management in Tairāwhiti.
71. Several technical reports have been prepared as part of the development of the TRMP, which are shared with iwi and hapū. Information sharing means all parties are well informed and supports a good working relationship.

## **Whakapono**

72. Staff are seeking views from our treaty partners on how the TRMP should manage the environment as part of the drafting of the RPS chapters. Te Aitanga-a-Māhaki has provided their view on this and prefer an approach that prioritises the health and well-being of the environment. Council is continuing to progress engagement with other iwi to understand their preference.
73. The RPS provisions must recognise and provide for tangata whenua values, customs, faiths and the relationship of Māori with the natural environment. This can only be achieved by working directly alongside tangata whenua and should not be determined by Council.
74. Partnership with tangata whenua will provide Council with the opportunity to incorporate mātauranga Māori and tikanga into the RPS, if they wish to do so.

## **TANGATA WHENUA/MĀORI ENGAGEMENT - TŪTAKITANGA TANGATA WHENUA**

75. The RPS team and the Māori Partnership team continue to work closely together to facilitate meaningful engagement with our partners. The RPS team have met with representatives from Te Aitanga-a-Māhaki in a wānanga setting to discuss initial feedback on the RPS chapters.
76. Engagement with Te Aitanga-a-Māhaki and other iwi will continue to ensure ongoing participation throughout the drafting process. Further information on the outcomes and progress of this engagement will be part of the May report.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT - TŪTAKITANGA HAPORI**

77. This report outlines the early community engagement that took place for the RPS. There will be further community engagement on the draft RPS in mid-2025.

## **CLIMATE CHANGE – Impacts / Implications - NGĀ REREKĒTANGA ĀHUARANGI – ngā whakaaweawe / ngā ritenga**

78. There are no climate change implications arising from this report.

## **CONSIDERATIONS - HEI WHAKAARO**

### **Financial/Budget**

79. There are no financial implications arising from this report. Budgets have already been agreed through the Three-Year Plan to support the TRMP review.

### **Legal**

80. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

## POLICY and PLANNING IMPLICATIONS - KAUPAPA HERE me ngā RITENGA WHAKAMAHERE

81. The information in this report is consistent with current Council strategies and policies, including Te Tiriti Compass and Tairāwhiti Piritahi Policy.
82. The policy approach in the draft RPS will assist the Council in responding to the challenges and aspirations outlined in Tairāwhiti 2050. These outcomes are also the outcomes in the Three Year Plan.
83. The RMA, through the TRMP considers the cultural, environmental, social and economic wellbeing of the region.
84. The LGA, through the Three Year Plan, also considers the cultural, environmental, social and economic wellbeing of the region.

## RISKS - NGĀ TŪRARU

### Potential change in overarching RPS approach

85. **Risk** - The TRMP Committee endorsed using Ki Uta Ki Tai as the overarching approach to drafting the Plan; however, this approach has not yet been endorsed by our Treaty Partners. Following engagement with Te Aitanga-a-Māhaki, they have suggested a preference for a 'Te Oranga o te Taiao' approach. A decision will need to be made on whether to switch approaches, particularly with further iwi engagement pending.
86. **Impact:** A change in approach would require TRMP Committee approval, and it will be important to assess how many iwi support the new recommended approach. A change in approach could take considerable time to process and could impact timeframes. A 'Te Oranga o te Taiao' approach could lead to a completely new, region-specific approach to the RPS.
87. **Mitigation:** The RPS Workstream lead to work with the Sponsor and Māori Partnerships to determine the next steps and report back to the Committee seeking direction as needed.

### National direction changes

88. **Risk** - Ministerial communications indicate that Central Government will be consulting on a suite of changes to National Policy Statements and National Environmental Standards, with new national direction expected mid to late 2025. The final changes remain uncertain at this stage.
89. **Impact** – This could lead to potential significant policy direction changes that could impact the final draft RPS or proposed RPS. New national direction in the final stages of the RPS could lead to misalignment. Changes to reporting timelines and policy direction workshops may be necessary from June onwards, which would be during the pre-election period.
90. **Mitigation** – Given the uncertainty of the changes, no immediate mitigation is possible. The RPS team will continue to monitor developments and adjust the RPS process as required once new national direction is confirmed.

## Relationship risk

91. **Risk** - Tight timeframes may not allow sufficient time for meaningful engagement with our partners before wider community feedback is sought in mid-2025.
92. **Impact** – A values-based-only engagement approach could result in tangata whenua first encountering interpretations of their values in the draft provisions, potentially leading to misunderstandings and a perception that our partner's input is not valued or that they are not listened to. If our partners feel unheard, this could strain relationships, reduce trust and affect partnerships.
93. **Mitigation** – ideally, additional provisions-based engagement would take place before publishing draft provisions, however, if this is not possible, engagement will continue until the end of 2025, when drafting needs to be completed for adoption as a proposed RPS plan change. Reassurance that any feedback from our iwi partners is valued, and that the process is ongoing and there will be another opportunity to provide input during the mid-2025 engagement on the proposed RPS.

## NEXT STEPS - NGĀ MAHI E WHAI AKE

Date	Action/Milestone	Comments
29 May 2025	Report for Committee to consider the release of the draft RPS for community engagement and Clause 3 and 4A feedback from iwi authorities.	
June/July 2025	Community engagement on the draft RPS	
April - October	Continue refining chapters alongside discussion with tangata whenua and feedback from the public and other key stakeholders. Drafting of section 32 report content.	
October-December 2025	Finalise draft RPS for legal review and complete the final version for Council to consider for adoption as a proposed RPS for notification.	
February 2026	Decision on whether to notify the draft RPS	

## ATTACHMENTS - NGĀ TĀPIRITANGA

1. Attachment 1 - RPS Engagement Summary [25-89.1 - 6 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - RPS Engagement Results [25-89.2 - 15 pages]
3. Attachment 3 - RPS Engagement Written Comments [25-89.3 - 12 pages]





Te Kaunihera o Te Tairāwhiti  
**GISBORNE**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

# Regional Policy Statement

## Te kaupapa tauāki ā-rohe

# Engagement Summary

Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan Review - Part B



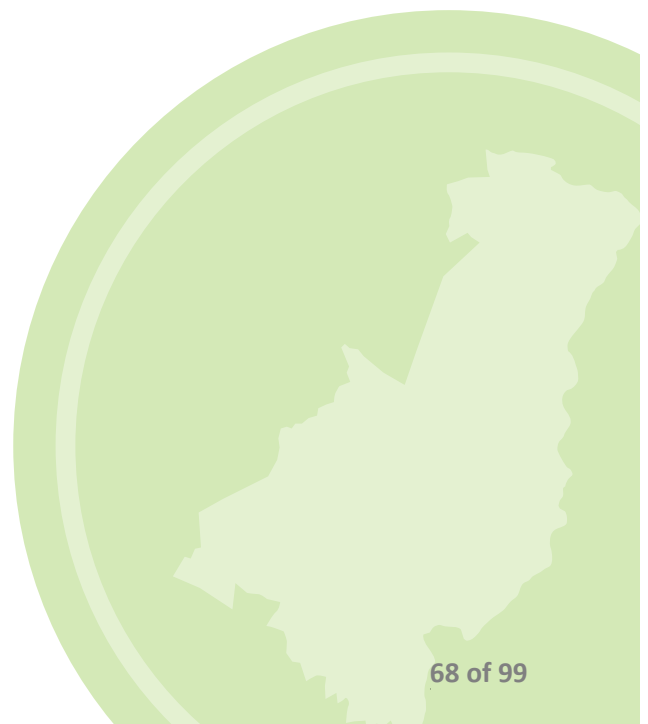


Work with us to:

**SET COMMON GOALS**  
for our natural and physical resources

**IDENTIFY THE CHALLENGES**  
stopping us achieving these goals

**FIND SOLUTIONS**  
to these issues





# INTRODUCTION

The Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan, or TRMP, guides how we manage our natural resources.

We're reviewing the TRMP as our current plan is outdated. It no longer meets legislative outcomes, our community's needs or our obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

- As the single combined plan is so large we're updating sections as a series of plan changes.

A major plan change is the update of our Regional Policy Statement (RPS).

## What the RPS is all about

The RPS is at the centre of the TRMP.

It sets the vision that the policies and rules will implement. The rules sit below in the regional and district plan provisions which make up the remainder of the TRMP.

Together they all make up the single combined Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan.

## Shared themes

Using community input from the Tairāwhiti 2050 Spatial Plan, we've listed the common themes we heard from tangata whenua and the community about the natural and physical resources of Te Tairāwhiti.

We're learning from the past to plan for the future.

Reflecting what matters to us in the RPS means we can manage our resources better for future generations.

We're shaping rules and policies to help us improve:

- housing choices and access to work, schools, parks and shops.
- the places and things we love
- our rivers, streams and wetlands
- space and support for businesses that bring jobs to Te Tairāwhiti
- land and water use, to help our region thrive
- planning for Climate Change, floods and other natural hazards.

## We need your help

We've drafted some goals that link to questions.

We'd love to get your feedback.



# Goal 1: Strengthening our resilient communities

## The challenge

Tairāwhiti is exposed to multiple natural hazards that climate change will make worse.

## Our proposed approach

We are working with our treaty partners to take a risk-based approach to minimise hazards. A risk-based approach means identifying hazard-prone areas and limiting activities sensitive to hazards (like homes, schools, and hospitals).

We're using nature based solutions where we can to make Te Tairāwhiti safe. Nature-based solutions use natural processes, like dunes, wetlands, and vegetation, instead of hard infrastructure, like rock walls, to reduce natural hazards and climate risks.

## Questions 1 & 2

Do you agree with managing natural hazards by limiting hazard-sensitive activities?

Do you support using nature-based solutions instead of hard engineering to reduce natural hazards?

# Goal 2: Fostering connection to te taiao

## The challenge

Our land, water and biodiversity are under increasing pressure from human impacts and a naturally vulnerable geology.

## Our proposed approach

Working and partnering with Māori and our communities to identify the places we love. When we are making decisions about our cultural, social and economic wellbeing, the wellbeing of our environment should be prioritised.

Restoring indigenous vegetation can improve biodiversity, reduce erosion, and protect against storm surges and sea level rise.

## Questions 3 & 4

Should the wellbeing of the environment always come first when making decisions about cultural, social, and economic wellbeing?

Do you support prioritising revegetation in dunes, wetlands, erodible land, and riparian margins to improve resilience and biodiversity?



## Goal 3: Well planned urban growth and development

### The challenge

We have a housing crisis.

### Our proposed approach

Future thinking and planning that supports well functioning and compact city and offers a choice of housing. Cutting emissions and cost through connection routes and encouraging safe, sustainable transport alternatives.

### Questions 5 & 6

Do you support encouraging small-scale infrastructure, like local energy and water systems, to improve community resilience?

Do you agree with retaining Gisborne City's compact urban form to reduce costs and environmental impact?

## Goal 4: Promoting a fair and diverse economy

### The challenge

Economic hardship and reliance on just a few industries.

### Our proposed approach

We're unlocking land potential, ensuring fair water allocation and access to renewable energy while improving infrastructure to support local businesses.

### Question 7

Do you agree that low-impact activities, like tourism and restoration, should be allowed in outstanding landscapes and native forests?

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## Have your say now!

Got more questions? Email us at [trmp@gdc.govt.nz](mailto:trmp@gdc.govt.nz)





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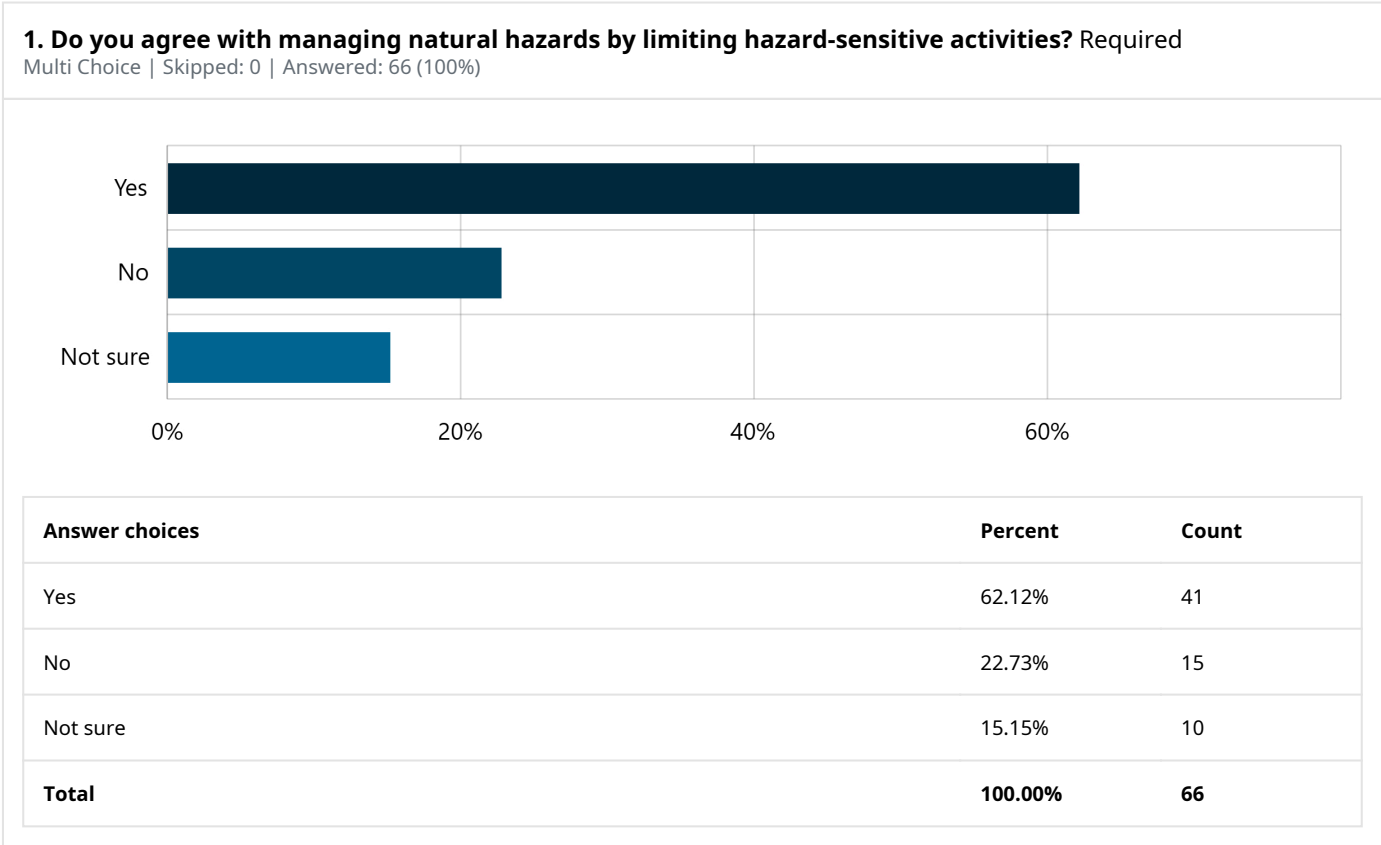
Closed

Untitled  
Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan review

63  
Contributors

66  
Contributions

Contribution Summary

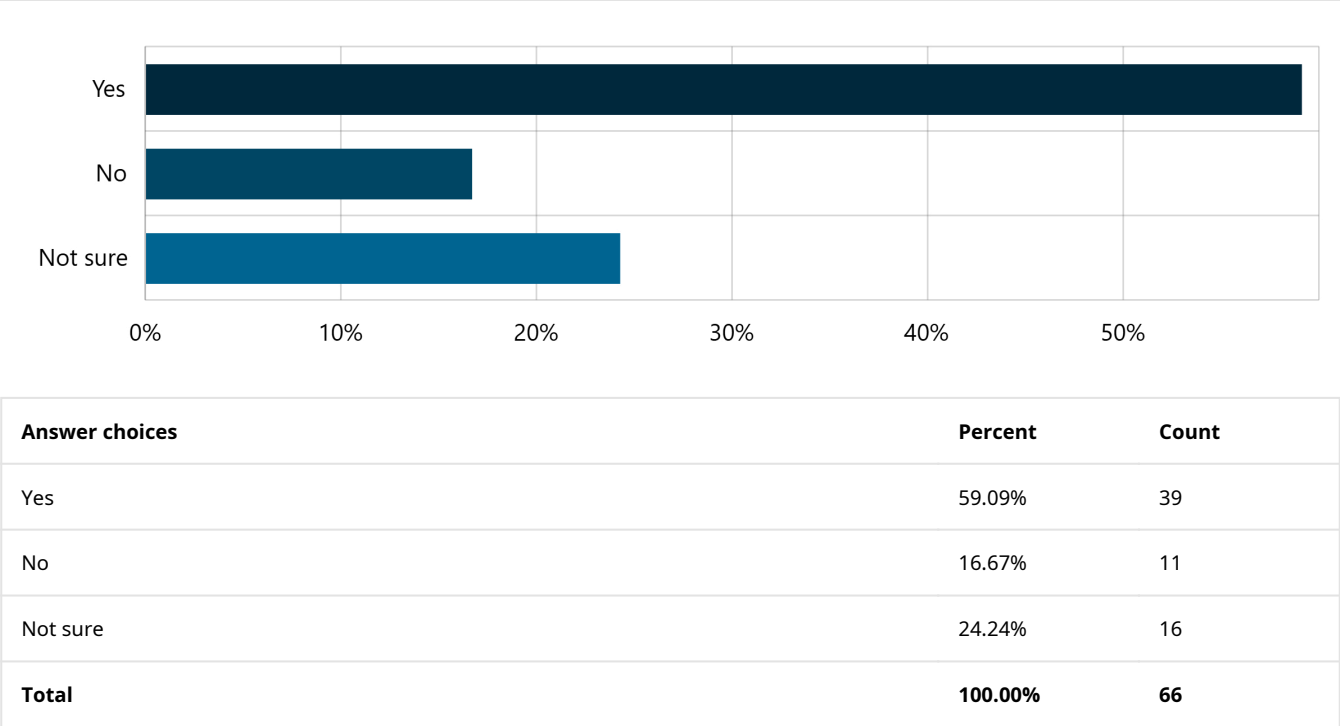


<b>2. Feel free to tell us more about your reasoning</b> Short Text   Skipped: 49   Answered: 17 (25.8%)
<b>Sentiment</b>  No sentiment data
<b>Tags</b>  No tag data
<b>Featured Contributions</b>  No featured contributions

3. Do you support using nature-based solutions instead of hard engineering to reduce natural hazards?

Required

Multi Choice | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 66 (100%)

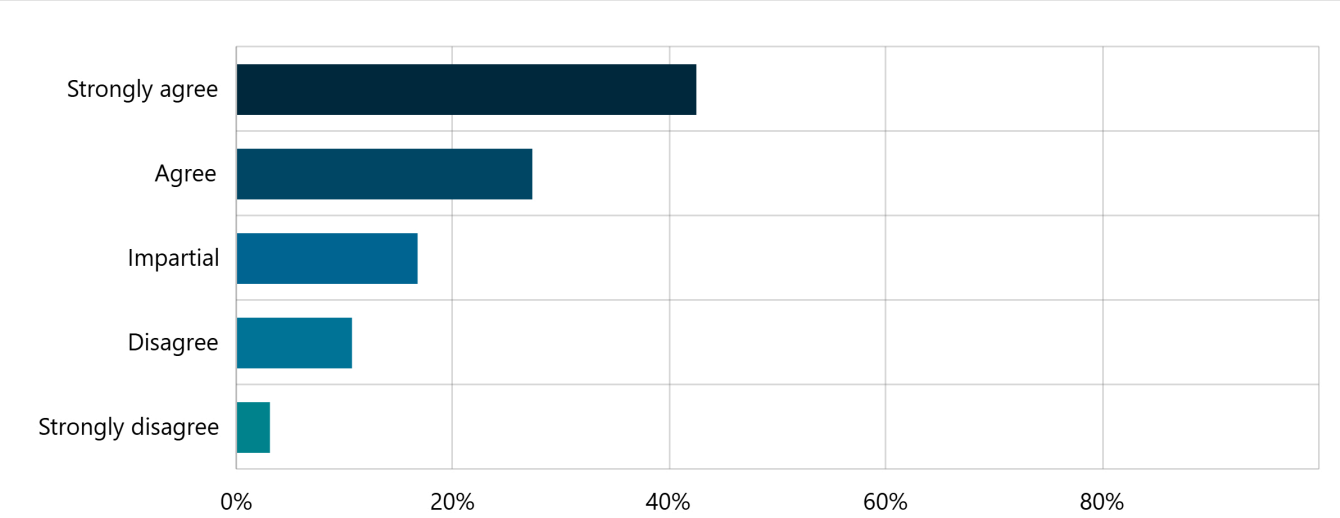


<b>4. Tell us more</b> Short Text   Skipped: 40   Answered: 26 (39.4%)
<b>Sentiment</b>  No sentiment data
<b>Tags</b>  No tag data
<b>Featured Contributions</b>  No featured contributions



5. Protecting the environment should be primary goal when making decisions about cultural, social, and economic wellbeing? Required

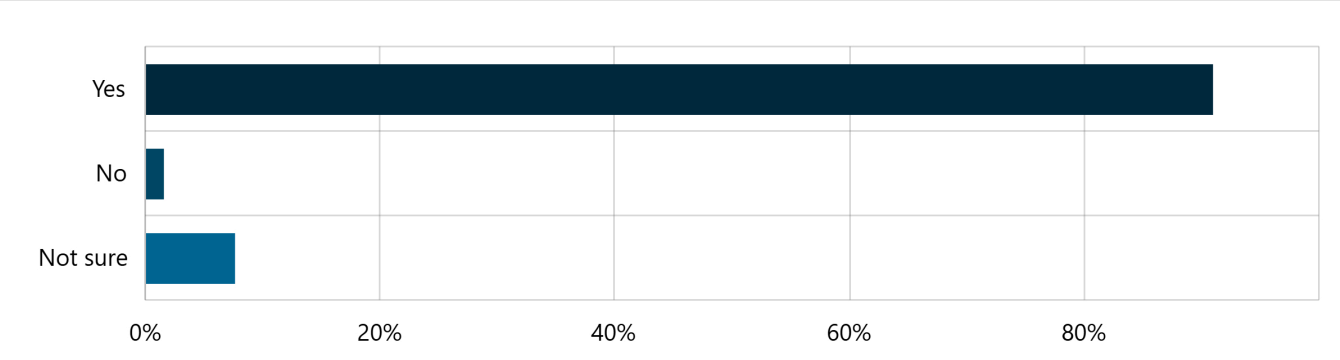
Select Box | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 66 (100%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Strongly agree	42.42%	28
Agree	27.27%	18
Impartial	16.67%	11
Disagree	10.61%	7
Strongly disagree	3.03%	2
Total	100.00%	66

<b>6. If you have time, we'd love to hear more about your answer</b> Short Text   Skipped: 38   Answered: 28 (42.4%)
<b>Sentiment</b>  No sentiment data
<b>Tags</b>  No tag data
<b>Featured Contributions</b>  No featured contributions

7. Do you support prioritising revegetation in dunes, wetlands, erodible land, and riparian margins to improve resilience and biodiversity? Required  
Select Box | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 66 (100%)

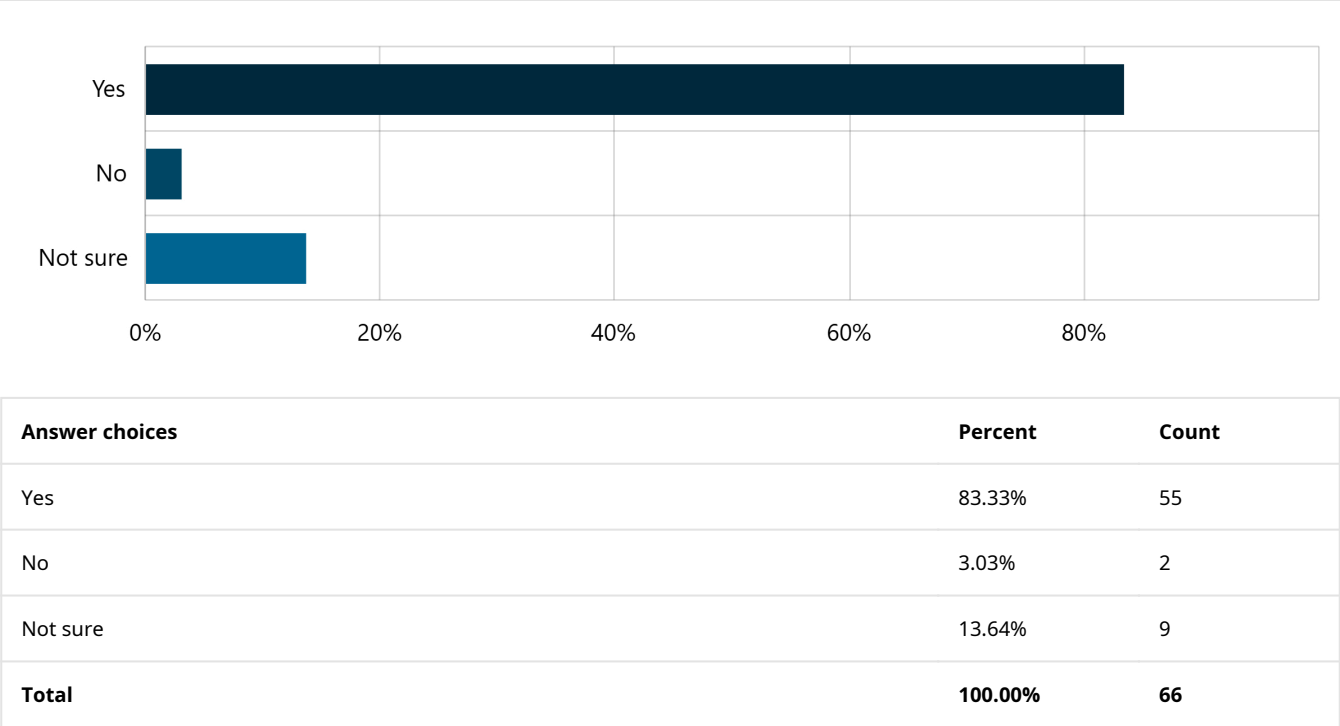


Answer choices	Percent	Count
Yes	90.91%	60
No	1.52%	1
Not sure	7.58%	5
Total	100.00%	66

<b>8. We'd love to hear more</b> Short Text   Skipped: 45   Answered: 21 (31.8%)
<b>Sentiment</b>  No sentiment data
<b>Tags</b>  No tag data
<b>Featured Contributions</b>  No featured contributions

9. Do you support encouraging small-scale infrastructure, like local energy and water systems, to improve community resilience? Required

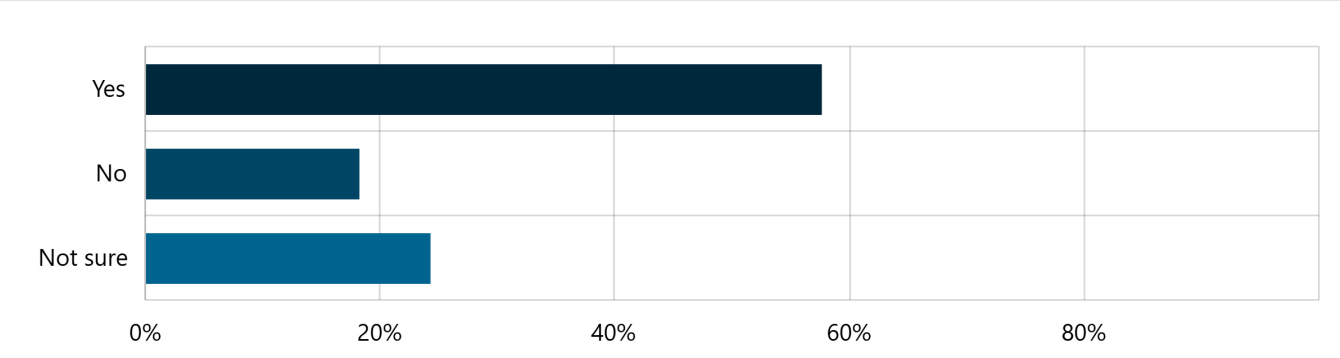
Select Box | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 66 (100%)



<b>10. Could you share a bit more about your thoughts?</b> Short Text   Skipped: 35   Answered: 31 (47%)
<b>Sentiment</b>  No sentiment data
<b>Tags</b>  No tag data
<b>Featured Contributions</b>  No featured contributions

11. Do you agree with retaining Gisborne City’s compact urban form to reduce costs and environmental impact? Required

Select Box | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 66 (100%)

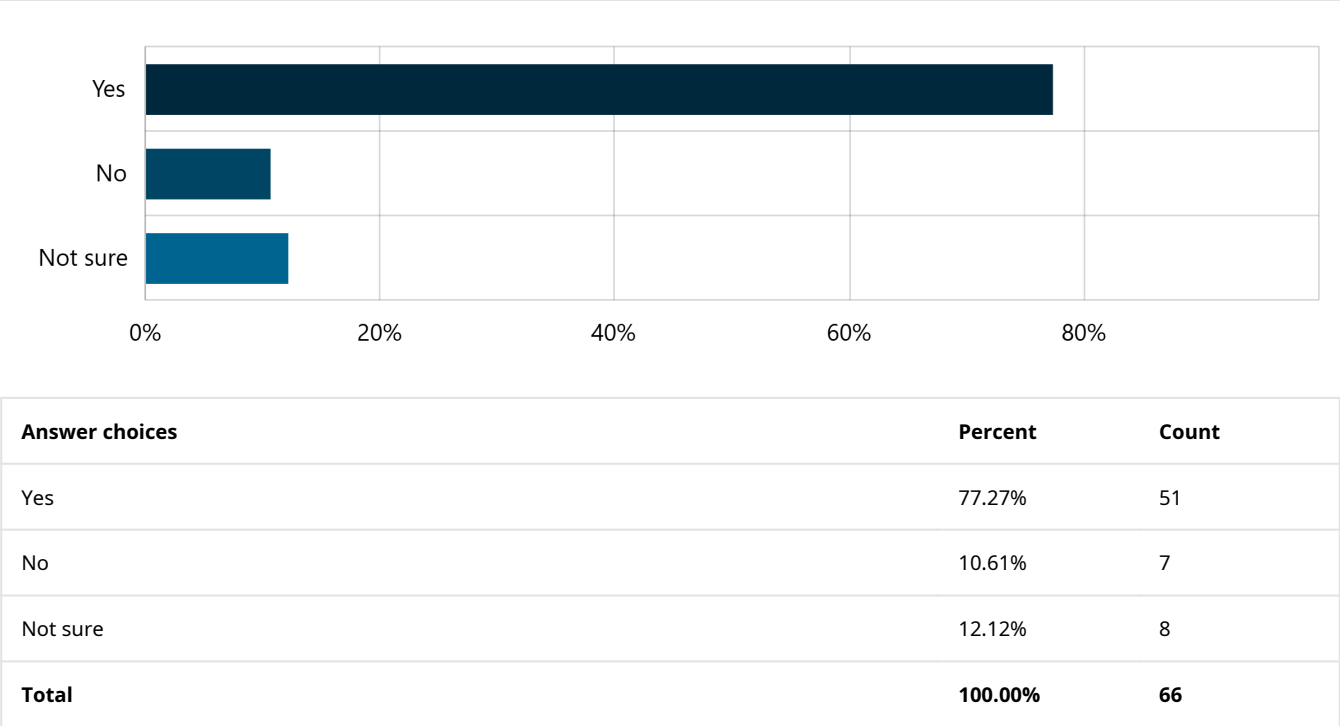


Answer choices	Percent	Count
Yes	57.58%	38
No	18.18%	12
Not sure	24.24%	16
Total	100.00%	66

<b>12. Share more here</b> Short Text   Skipped: 45   Answered: 21 (31.8%)
<b>Sentiment</b>  No sentiment data
<b>Tags</b>  No tag data
<b>Featured Contributions</b>  No featured contributions



13. Do you agree that low-impact activities, like tourism and restoration, should be allowed in outstanding landscapes and native forests? Required  
Select Box | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 66 (100%)



<b>14. We'd love to know more if you'd like to share</b> Short Text   Skipped: 40   Answered: 26 (39.4%)
<b>Sentiment</b>  No sentiment data
<b>Tags</b>  No tag data
<b>Featured Contributions</b>  No featured contributions

<b>15. If you have time, we'd love to hear more about your answers</b> Required Long Text   Skipped: 51   Answered: 15 (22.7%)
<b>Sentiment</b>  No sentiment data
<b>Tags</b>  No tag data
<b>Featured Contributions</b>  No featured contributions

## RPS Participate Page Feedback – Additional comments for reasoning

### Q1: Do you agree with managing natural hazards by limiting hazard-sensitive activities?

Yes	No	Not Sure	Comment
			Please see 'additional information'
			See Eastland Port Ltd feedback letter emailed to trmp@gdc.govt.nz 28/02/2025
			I agree this measure is necessary as long as it realistic for most circumstances.
			Require more information about what this looks like and the impact it will have on economic activities to the region like forestry and farming
			Reducing risk to people and property, such as by avoiding development or intensification in high-risk environments is essential
			Shut down forestry industry in our region, rebuild our economy in its absence.
			This would depend on the benefit of these hazard-sensitive activities
			To limit our impact on natural resources and people.
			Yes, makes sense not to build in flood prone land
			A hazard to you may not be seen by others as a hazard to others. .
			Personal choice and personal responsibility and natural consequences is a cheaper and considerably more effective.
			Limiting activities is not always the solution, some activities need to increase to remove the hazards in the future. For example harvesting plantation forests should increase then larger setbacks should be increased removing or significantly reducing fut...
			No. Makes more sense to be prepared in oppose to avoidance.
			It depends. There are models that enable development in areas of natural beauty that can be beneficial to the "life" of the community. We need more of that to attract economy
			Yes and no. If consent is sought for an activity that has the potential to cause harm then a condition of consent should be the applicant have insurance or a bank bond to protect Council from picking up the tab. For example. The 1% rate increase for flood
			This is a very broad statement. In many cases there are management techniques to reduce risk without the need to limit activities.
			Because you're administrating a problem, not isolating it

## Q2: Do you support using nature-based solutions instead of hard engineering to reduce natural hazards?

Yes	No	Not Sure	Comment
			There's way too much maladaptation going on already in Tairāwhiti.
			Please see 'additional information'
			See Eastland Port Ltd feedback letter emailed to trmp@gdc.govt.nz 28/02/2025
			I think there is a place for both. Options are need on a case by case basis. One size does not necessarily fit all.
			Again, not enough detail, sometimes hard engineering is required to foster longer term solutions financially
			Nature-based solutions need to be prioritised for providing natural hazard mitigation. This is consistent with the National Adaptation Plan and the NPS-FM concept of Te Mana o te Wai
			Only where it's possible
			Nature already knows what to do to heal.
			Nature will strengthen over time. Man made will weaken over time.ie retaining walls vs tree planting
			I believe both nature based and engineering solutions have their place. We need to be cognitive of cost, effect and longevity of each solution type applicable to specific problems. I don't believe one solution will suit all problems
			Accepting the negative impact of pine in our environment for starter. Erosion.
			But the land has been stripped of trees for farming and we don't get the provision of NZ meat
			Like the rock resentments rather than gambion baskets on the sides of the moana and the road.
			Absolutely. For long term management natural solutions should be the only solution.
			Needs to be a case by case consideration. Nature based solutions may take too long when a quicker fix is needed.
			Plant native trees. Remove wildling pines when they are small, hence cheaper to remove, spread funding for contractors across shorter periods not yearly payments and AUDIT THEM
			As a community we need to encourage both and ensure it's straight forward to complete
			Like burning off the slash - instead of spending \$\$\$\$ on machinery to constantly clear our beaches and riverbanks.
			Depends on situation
			These are likely cheaper and longer lasting. Although there maybe some retreat of infrastructure this will benefit everyone in the long term. One area I think this text needs to add a focus on is wildfires with forestry taking up much of the east coast.
			For established residences, the use of rocks to build walls should be permitted to save residential housing otherwise those people will be left homeless contributing to the current problem. This can be done in a sensitive way that doesn't necessarily env...
			Nature papatuanuku reigns supreme. Hard engineering is a waste of resources
			Engineering is far more advanced and cost effective than

			natural solutions
			We need to work with the environment and recon use it's lints
			Both have their place. Hard engineered solutions may be required where nature-based solutions are not fast enough, nor feasible. For example, riparian planting sounds like a good idea but in many cases will not reach full canopy prior to a flood.
			Retreat will save tax payer money in the long run. Additionally hard engineering is costly and not necessarily going to work. In a coastal context hard engineering can lead to significant loss of amenity for beach environment (scouring) or visual degraded

### Q3: Protecting the environment should be primary goal when making decisions about cultural, social, and economic wellbeing.

\*Note the results from this question are displayed as "Agree" "Disagree" and "Not sure/impartial" in the report.

Strongly agree	Agree	Impartial	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Comments
					Te Taiao has a right to exist in and of itself. Humans have f****d it up, we should be minimising our impact or f*** of ourselves.
					Please see 'additional information'
					See Eastland Port Ltd feedback letter emailed to trmp@gdc.govt.nz 28/02/2025
					Tairawhiti is quite unique and this needs to be fostered.
					It is one of the goals but must be taken in balance with all other goals.
					Recognition of ecosystems as natural defences / in-situ nature-based solutions is critical. For example, development needs to be avoided in wetlands as those wetlands buffer flood flows for areas downstream
					Economy and environment are both important to consider in the overall wellbeing of the community
					Nz and Tairawhiti are known for our beautiful surrounds and nature, draw income from our beauty
					Simply put we are products of our surroundings.
					I believe that te taiao should be a factor of decision making, although not always the primary factor
					The council won't listen to what tangata whenua believe is right

					Cultural, social, and economic wellbeing have heavy dependencies on a protected environment.
					If we look after te taiao we look after everything else.
					While the environment is important, this should not be the primary goal. Economic wellbeing is important. If we are able to increase housing and businesses, we'll see more rates and money available for better implementation of cultural, social and environm...
					This can lead to wokeness
					Fix the roads first.
					The protection of our environment is of utmost importance but it needs to be managed cost effectively and it needs to be checked to ensure we are getting what we have paid for, passionate and local people should be prioritised as people who care work hard
					We need to ensure a range of aspects environment needs to be a consideration but not always the highest
					The earth can survive without us, we can't survive without it.
					We need to take care of waste water number 1.. it's ruining our tai ao water ways and kaimoana. Waste water at any level of purity is a danger to all water users, we need a new facility to cope with heavy weather events that put pressure on existing facil...
					Do not let it impede lateral thinking. Creative minds can protect and build. Invest the money to do this right
					NZ is building its economy and a leading component is tourism . Clean Green should be an objective that trumps but doesn't exclude economic well being
					We should always protect mother nature, who supports us, within reason
					Protecting the people and community should be number 1.
					Without a healthy environment we have no community

					The statement is very extreme. By saying primary goal it could lead to thoughts that there shouldn't be any land or sea based activity, therefore not support an economy. Balance is needed in all decisions.
					Economic viability should be a big consideration
					We live in a dynamic environment (geologically speaking) keeping that in context is important as policy may focus too narrowly on certain activity that may not be significant in a wider environmental context.

**Q4: Do you support prioritising revegetation in dunes, wetlands, erodible land, and riparian margins to improve resilience and biodiversity?**

Yes	No	Not sure	Comments
			As above.
			Please see 'additional information'
			I have mixed feeling on this. Seen areas planted out but not maintained. Along the Waimata riverbank of Stafford Street is a perfect example of allot of planting occurring but now just gone to noxious weeds. Rules need to be realistic and achievable.
			All within reason and factoring a balance with the economic needs of our region. Also at what cost? This as a sole priority is a massive expense in terms of the back end side for the 'doing'
			In this current economic climate, rate payers can't afford more cots landed on us.
			It is critical to recognise that these areas are active in slowing the pace of climate change and lowering the risk of extreme weather events, as many of these ecosystems actively sequester carbon and therefore slow the pace of climate change
			Sort out the rubbish dumping at the beaches. It's freaking gross. We love walking our dog thru the end of the made mile and it becomes a disgusting experience as he rolls thru dead animal remains and rotting grass silage. Not to mention the burnt out cars
			Get schools and daycares involved. Plant the seed in the kids to look after their environment!
			Yes, along with removing pine trees from the district.
			Give the original land back to the awa, the taiao.
			By planting locally grown natives we can ensure the right plants are going to survive, thrive and support the land they are planted into
			It is the only way we will have a future
			Fix our roads first
			Need to reverberate with less woody species to support the freshwater environment without creating a hazard
			Common sense.



			By future proofing land most risk from the water ways will not only benefit people but will improve biodiversity by keeping water where it should be and land where it should be.
			But prioritise over what? Kicking people out of their homes or not allowing protection of their homes? I don't agree with that
			I've taken part in these projects. Looking at the regrowth of Kaiti hill is a quick example of the benefits
			It's proven to be more effective than bigger stop banks
			Yes, but prioritising it over what? And must be done in a way that will work with the land-use and stand the test of time. i.e. wetlands to be deer fenced, dunes to be protected from vehicle access, irregular flooded riparian margins.
			Needs to be carefully targeted to upper catchments first.

**Q5: Do you support encouraging small-scale infrastructure, like local energy and water systems, to improve community resilience?**

Yes	No	Not sure	Comments
			Distributed energy, water and communication systems are a no-brainer post-Gabrielle.
			Please see 'additional information'
			From a public personal level, self-sufficient energies such as solar power, water tanks etc. will take the pressure off existing systems. Council to be less involved with home energies & focus on supporting business energies & support public in dire need
			Off the grid and self-sufficiency is important. We have more and more clients wanting this for developments. It should not be compulsory to have utility connection to power for instance. It is also expensive and other option are sufficient.
			But do away with fluoridating the water. We don't want neurotoxins in our water, and it's another cost on rate payers that seems can't be answered as to how much it costs us.
			Planning and proactively implement nature-based solutions, making room for rivers, water sensitive design, urban-greening, and ecological corridors all improve community resilience
			Upgrade the sewage system!! How medieval is it for us to open the sewage valves into the rivers and ocean? Paru hua's we are. We definitely want renewable energy - how cute would it be to be able to have night time strolls lit by solar footpath lights?
			Resilience is a big key factor for our region as shown in the latest events
			If it is owned by the rate payers
			The size of our community requires a number of small scale units, this would reduce risk during times of natural hazards and could potentially create a backup in the event of one unit breaking down or being out of commission.
			Bring back water tanks on all residential properties. Utilizing water more in our day to day lives will build our community resilience.
			Why is the council not encouraging our homes to be solar powered, and allowing town homes to have water tanks?
			we're fragile when it comes to infrastructure so making smaller

			communities more resilient is a good thing.
			It depends on the feasibility of approach and whether it is affordable.
			Unsure what this means.
			We are an isolated community who is regularly cut off one way or another at any point of the year. More self-reliance locally would be beneficial.
			New builds should all have water tanks, composting toilets, solar/passive design
			Cyclone Gabrielle showed us how vulnerable we really are with our age water system. The mains water pipe that burst in Makaraka same thing
			Try putting this in more understandable language
			Fix our roads first.
			People should be encouraged to collect their own water, and council could supply slim water tanks at bulk cost to ratepayers
			Should use wood and other local energy sources as much as possible
			Brings in more jobs as well.
			Needs need to be made to secure clean drinkable water
			water supply at the very best is poor quality. We aim for the very lowest standard to be just above the mark. Locals know where the faults lay
			this needs further clarification. What do you mean by local energy and water systems? Give examples please
			It's too late. And one Central outfit would attract more permanent and long-term employees. With modern communications distance is not the problem it was last century
			Local assets are what makes us less dependent on globalism
			Means we are dependent on single solution, and we are less vulnerable as a region
			Recent history has shown the cities vulnerability to power and water outages. Tairāwhiti is a large area and coastal townships would benefit hugely from localised sources.
			Current initiatives like the airport solar farm have been poorly executed. Great ideas but project led by people unqualified to do so

**Q6: Do you agree with retaining Gisborne City's compact urban form to reduce costs and environmental impact?**

Yes	No	Not sure	Comments
			Sprawl has killed so many cities. Gisborne needs to grow up, not out.
			Please see 'additional information'
			Building on old infrastructure will take us back to the status quo. Develop Rural Residential & not Rural Productive to free up urban housing & create new infrastructure which can include robust self sufficiencies. Then tweak urban infrastructure.
			I think there is scope for areas to extend the urban area out in certain areas. Not enough time to go into specifics now but should be able to be considered on a case by case basis.

			Unsure about reduce cost, but yes to reduce environmental impact
			Our town is growing. Embrace it - before it becomes a ghost town.
			There needs to be a healthy mix of compact, medium density and low density development to create balance
			What retail does Gisborne have? Its a joke, the city cant even positively support one of our schools who is located in the old BNZ bank. GDC is a joke
			Our central city should be more compact, it is too spread out.
			Compact design is good, but must be effective and productive. GDC should be aggressive in allow multistorey development for housing in the CBD
			Fix our roads first.
			Less vape shops clogging up the place 🚬
			More land needs to be opened up for housing. House prices are high and local government is not forcing high rise damaged buildings into residential apartments
			Allow business to grow giving people more options and opportunities
			The city is blessed by being protected from many natural hazards (apart from tsunamis). It makes economic sense to focus the work on the city and keep the country for productive use.
			this needs clearer explanation of what this means. It was not clear in the reading provided.
			Of course productive agricultural land and reserves must be preserved. Imagine having Auckland sprawl
			We need to work with in the current boundaries sprawling city is not justified
			Urban sprawl is a risk to our high value land with high employment potential. Being a primary producing region, we need to protect the economic foundation of the city.
			Keeping Gisborne small will only force rates up over time
			Dense an compact with lots of green spaces in between, will build future efficiency and amenity for the city, even though the current 1/4 section generation may not value it future generations will.

**Q7: Do you agree that low-impact activities, like tourism and restoration, should be allowed in outstanding landscapes and native forests?**

Yes	No	Not sure	Comments
			See above.
			Please see 'additional information'
			If it's controlled
			100% it should be. Providing it is appropriate and managed.
			Human interaction in these areas causes decline
			Depending on its scale, tourism can be a high-impact activity which should only be allowed if those impacts can be adequately mitigated to ensure our natural taonga is safeguarded

			Grey's bush needs to be bigger - people like having descent bush walks that are not 45mins drives away (eastland). Plus you want playgrounds and possibly a cafe out there too. We moved from south Auckland and want to be active outdoors.
			As long as iwi agree, and we can preserve our native flora and fauna
			Give the whenua back to Māori, all non tangata whenua should have to pay rent to have any shop, stall and or anything to original land owners, when tangata whenua are taken care of and hold wealth everyone else will benefit
			Where the environments are protected
			If it's an outstanding landscape, it won't need restoration? Or if it does, yes please!
			Yes, with conservation requirements to adhere to.
			Anything that moves our reliance on forestry should be supported,
			First our roads first.
			If it's not hurting, it's helping.
			Tourism and restoration activities should be allowed if low impact
			Leave nature alone - too many times we've proved we don't know how to clean up after ourselves.
			If there's the ability to make access for locals free but charge tourists
			This is sustainable economic growth which should be allowed.
			We should always preserve native landscape for further biodiversity, protect our treasures as they are and not for a cashflow
			Absolutely. We need to capitalise on our resources to attract tourism and lifestyle seekers to move here.
			NO TO TE ARA TIPUNA TRAIL. NO TOURISTS ON EAST COAST MAORI LAND
			Tourism is not low impact. It must be managed
			It gives locals more to do and brings in tourism and money to the local economy
			If it is well managed and little or no impact
			Best way to protect something is to monetise it

### Q8: Additional comments

- See EGEN submission
- Eastland Port appreciates the opportunity to be involved in the review of the TRMP. As part of that process, Eastland Port seeks to ensure the TRMP is drafted in a way that appropriately recognises and provides for as well as protects the Port, which is a critical lifeline utility and regionally significant

infrastructure, and plays an integral role in the social, economic, cultural and environmental wellbeing of the Tairāwhiti region.

- Look to a more resilient future for following generations by investing in new resources & infrastructure then fix the old as can afford
- Descent playgrounds in Elgin, especially on Abbott Street and Centennial. Basketball hoops and stuff like that! Stop allowing diaries to be placed on intersecting roads, the parking is hazardous for vehicles and pedestrians!
- More seats and tables in parks.
- A compact, efficient CBD that has multiple housing options and unlocking development is important for the future of our region. Capital and customers are available to help us develop and grow, but biggest challenge is making it easier for businesses to grow.
- Fix our roads please.
- Gisborne should be developing up, not out. As a recent arrival, I was disappointed to not be able to find a place to live in the centre of town. Working to have more mixed zoning opportunities, like 3-5 levels of apartments above ground level commercial space. This will allow growth without urban sprawl, and reduce car dependence making Gisborne easier to get around and saving money on road maintenance.
- Use commonsense, If it's good we want it, if it's expensive we don't want it unless it's good, simple.
- We need to support transition of the natural environment, with nature based and engineered solutions. We need to make more land available for housing and create high density housing in the city. Converting old high rises earthquake buildings into residential apartments should be a high priority to reinvigorate the city
- Don't forget - those making these decisions will not be around to deal with any aftermath. It'll be our children, and their children. I'll say it again - The earth can survive without us, but we cannot survive without the earth.
- The first step is to address the horribly unsightly venues we all see when driving the various routes from the airport. These eyesores are an embarrassment and first impressions count. Secondly, work on the city center. Support the stores to engage in making the frontage look beautiful and cohesive. Get rid of vape stores. Support cafes to have frontage eating. Get rid of the street and make it a mall. This is so important in attracting people with money to want to come and live here and spend. Without that, the whole plan will fail. You need to attract investors!!! Honestly, I will not bring visitors to the city centre in its current state. How can cruise ships justify these excursions into the centre? Revitalize the wharf area. Get rid of the junk yards that are visible to the public. Before building "affordable" housing, you need to attract permanent investment (people with money who want to come live here) and investors looking for business opportunities. This needs a different model of thinking. People with money will not move here if the schools are not reputable. If the hospital cannot provide expanded services that are otherwise needing people to travel outside the region, they will not come- especially retired people who are more concerned about access to GPs and specialists. The farmers market could be moved to a more conducive pretty environment that attracts families to spend a few hours. In fact, being the breadbasket of NZ, why do we not have a centralised market open 5 days a week where growers and other purveyors can sell? Most of us do not mind "seconds" Why not provide that opportunity? Youth need to be engaged- disgusting to see how they throw trash on the ground. People need to be house and street proud-start a competition to do this. It worked in Ireland. Revisit the requirements for using beautiful historical buildings and make it

easier to get back into them. There can be a lot done now if the creative minds encouraged council to invest in this.

- Too many people complain about making use of the local resources that we have, we are here to live, and we should use them, within reason (while looking after them)
- As somebody that knows little about resource management and policy but still wants to have a say, it would be nice to see some alternative actions to the proposed actions listed in the document. I just think everyone could be more informed and possibly more vocal if they see they have options rather than having to propose a new solution if we disagree or are unsure with what's been outlined in the TRMP. Also I think more information regarding costs would be relevant but I dk tho 🤔
- Please please please consult with local industry specialists. For too long now GDC has been neglecting to seek proper consultation and has only half executed civil projects.

#### Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan - Regional Policy Statement

Goal 1: Strengthening our resilient communities

Question one.

Yes, I wholeheartedly agree that Hazardous sites that negatively impact the general public's Health, Safety and wellbeing are in need of immediate attention.

I'm hoping this submission will be a chance to air my grievances towards how we have been compromised by our local Council planning interpretations, and to bring about pragmatic change for the good of all who are currently exposed.

The angle I'm addressing is in regard to the Fire Risk management only. A removable Hazard.

And exactly how G.D.Cs staff have not to any degree factored in the Hazardous elements when permitting a Commercial Forestry operation on Rural Residential land bordering established homes in a new subdivision, in our instance a mere thirty metres from our bedroom. And for this reason only, people here in Tairāwhiti need to be aware of all the possible outcomes they didn't & could expect when investing in their future and wellbeing in Tairāwhiti.

We are one of a number of compromised land owners suffering due to the developers not honouring their promotional material, this is totally unacceptable in this day and age. This local Council would have been very aware of all the rules and regulations attached to such a major undertaking/investment. Councils have a duty of care and we question where was the normal due diligence and very importantly the safety aspects attributed to these hazardous projects. Not one of the contiguous neighbours were consulted with, prior to consent being granted to fell native bush to allow exotic afforestation. The normal course of rule, (not so in this instance), would have allowed any adversely affected parties the chance to submit objections.

The outcome for this relatively new subdivision having to reside next to a commercial pine forest left for carbon credits by absentee landowners. All contained within this Rural Residential subdivision, which goes against all policy for this Future Urban Zone.

Important to note that prior to consent being granted we convened a meeting with senior staff at G.D.C to vehemently object to any such proposals that opposed the District Plans Objectives and Principles. Notwithstanding all the heavily promoted inducements marketed by the Developers. Council staff would have been very aware as this passed through Council to gain consent for the subdivision. We are to this day, twelve years on still very perplexed by the rationale of these individuals, as we suffer from:

1. Property Values not keeping pace with its counterparts.
2. The inability to sell at a fair market price

### 3. Residing in a Hazard zone.

We still await credible evidence that would support such a shift away from the District Plan.

We feel it's never too late to right these wrongs. eg. The Earthquake Standards brought about change to Health & Safety.

The current Curtilage system of 30 X 50 metres is no longer fit for purpose. Apart from afforestation not being permitted in the Future Urban Zones, A new revised setback of 100 metres would better serve many who live in or near afforestation permitted zones, who are increasingly nervous over the summer periods, especially being in high wind zones, north facing and elevated.

FENZ has serious concerns for our well being as never before, with climate change, has fire become a real and present danger. I'm convinced that FENZ is the only qualified organisation in this era equipped with the expertise and knowledge to combat the fire elements raised in this submission. No longer are councils in a position to make proficient knowledge based assessments around fire mitigation.

Should this be an avenue that Council are not willing to investigate under the Review of the Tairāwhiti Resource Management Plan, then I would very much like to see an avenue established for the public who are vulnerable, like ourselves, to have their issues aired in a Hearing with an independent Judge or Commissioner to thoroughly investigate all angles from all parties. Aligning with the Land Use Inquiry Outcomes. Which may even lead to Peer review.

Councils currently trade heavily upon the fact, taking them to court is beyond the normal person's pocket as it can involve sums leading into six figures. Councils will of course counter with a K.C and team.

My biggest concern is not allowing for this hazard in Policy Planning for the Future Urban Zone and therefore not marrying up with FENZ and so we end up staying with the status quo where strengthening our resilient communities is stalled and no-one once again has the tools to make change where it is seriously required.

I thank you all.

B Eddy  
On behalf of the Gaddums Hill Neighbourhood