

What happened at the workshop on 24 March 2011:

1. Actions that had taken place between Meetings were reported on
2. The draft Action Plan was reviewed
3. An update of the progress with the mediated model and information about a new project for a Common Asset Trust were presented

Actions undertaken between meetings

The Environment Group met and came up with 15 actions. These were merged with iwi/hapū actions where there was a cross-over. There was no specific meeting of the Land use group though Federated Farmers are taking the lead on some actions. The Mayors' group met and Council staff were delegated the task to provide information on what is currently done or proposed to improve water quality. All Councils have sent something back except for Manawatu District Council. The Industry group did not meet, but Affco, (who were initially missed out) DB, and Fonterra have sent through some actions. Silverfern Farms still have actions to come. The Science meeting took place and the minutes are available.

Review of the Draft Action Plan

Timelines

Lack of timelines was seen as an issue for the Action Plan. Some workshop participants regarded timelines as essential to determine whether or not the Action Plan was achieving its purpose. Others felt that providing timelines was pointless and would destroy trust as the workshop group was not able to ensure timelines were met. The Operative Water Quality Plan produced by Horizons Regional Council in 1998 is a good example of this occurring.

Iwi Working Relationships

Desire was expressed by iwi to strengthen relationships with both regional and territorial local government.

Iwi are keen to work with HRC on flood protection plans. This has been done successfully in the Hawke's Bay Region. Tangata whenua see themselves as hosts and want to protect property as well as river ecosystems. Cuts in the Manawatu River and the use of willows are also issues of concern. Iwi would also like to ensure waahi tapu sites are not damaged by protection schemes.

Iwi boundaries

Iwi are divided between those who want iwi/hapū named specifically against actions in the Action Plan and those wanting it left generically as iwi/hapū.

Catchment Care Groups (CCG)

It was decided to merge the idea of a Customary, Conservation, and Recreation Fisheries Management Group (CCMCG) into the proposed Catchment Care Group. It was accepted that landowners need to be involved since any group without them is not likely to succeed.

As Federated Farmers members are volunteers with limited resources, setting up Catchment Care Groups for all the sub-catchments would be too ambitious. Instead it is proposed to set up a pilot CCG in the Tararua area as this has been identified as having the greatest need. The exact location would be determined by where the most impact would be achieved and the degree of community willingness. Once up and running the organisation of the CCG would be handed to locals. All landowners, forestry and community/iwi/hapū groups would be invited to participate. WEKA and other existing groups are a good place to start.

Lessons from the pilot CCG and information on funding sources could be used elsewhere. A parallel urban catchment care group could be established by iwi/hapū/others. One iwi would like to take the whanau ora approach and just get going due to concern about the mauri of the river. There is scope for several groups to be leaders. An example was cited of a small stream near Hastings where rehabilitation had been done in strips of 800m each. Strip 1 was the regional council, strip 2 and 3 community led, strip 4 and 5 iwi/hapū led. Progress each year was based on affordability.

Whether or not the Action Plan should include an action for evaluating the pilot scheme, who should lead this and how to take the CCG further was discussed. The preferred process is to get started at grass root or flax root level and then see if it is possible to tap into HRC processes and funding. Issues remain around funding and priorities. HRC might not be able to fund, but is willing to provide advice. It is better if groups bring projects to HRC than the other way round. The community needs to be organised first, otherwise it is a struggle.

Resource Consents

Some existing consents have expired and are still operating. Feilding's discharge consent expired 2 years ago. There are others that have been expired for up to 10 years. While this is legal provided the discharger applied for a new consent before the old ones expired it was felt that those who complied with consent requirements should be recognised.

The compliance goal was intentionally included in the Action Plan as there appears to be a general attitude 'close enough is good enough'. Unfairness becomes an issue when industry and farmers get prosecuted for breaches when TLAs do not.

Tighter review conditions were considered. Other regions in New Zealand used 'shall' be reviewed rather than 'may' be reviewed more regularly. Every month, 30 – 40 consents come up with the opportunity for review. Reviews are very strict and limited in scope. When consents can be 10 years overdue many workshop participants felt that it would be good to have compulsory reviews.

Economic Indicators

An action around exploring economic indicators for regional prosperity was requested because of the link between the economy and environmental expenditure. The contrasting view expressed was the environment underpins the economy so whether it is growing or not is irrelevant. The objective is to protect the river and environment.

Earthworks

PNCC have a new earthwork bylaw. All of the workshop groups should promote the need for good earthwork practices. If this is re-enforced it will have more impact. This can be done

through our relationships, ratepayer notices, etc. An approach will be made to Sheep and Beef NZ to endorse this action as it is mainly in the hill country where the greatest problem is.

Expert Groups

In the Wairarapa, Greater Wellington have been successful in bringing different expertise together to look at improving the quality of discharges. It has been found that consent applications are much better when this is done. There are already some groups in the HRC region e.g. Shannon and Palmerston North Wastewater group. While it was accepted these groups work well, whether their formation was a HRC or TLA responsibility was unclear. HRC are willing to provide expertise.