

## **Part A**

### **Introduction and background**



# 1. Introduction

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## 1.1 TITLE

This document is known as the Regional Policy Statement for Taranaki.

## 1.2 PURPOSE

The *Regional Policy Statement for Taranaki* ('the Regional Policy Statement' or 'Statement') is a statement of policy for the Taranaki region (as constituted under the Local Government (Taranaki Region) Reorganisation Order 1989). Its purpose is to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources in the Taranaki region by:

- providing an overview of the resource management issues of the Taranaki region
- identifying policies and methods to achieve integrated management of the natural and physical resources of the whole region.

## 1.3 OPERATIVE DATE AND REVIEW

This Regional Policy Statement is the second regional policy statement to be prepared by the Taranaki Regional Council and became operative on 1 January 2010. The Regional Policy Statement will be fully reviewed not later than 10 years from the date this Statement became operative. A five-year interim review will be undertaken of the results of monitoring the efficiency and effectiveness of the policies and methods in the Regional Policy Statement.

## 1.4 SCOPE AND EFFECT

The Taranaki Regional Council in accordance with section 62 of the Resource Management Act has prepared the Regional Policy Statement. As one of the requirements of the Act, the Regional Policy Statement provides an overview of the resource management issues of the region, and identifies policies and methods to achieve integrated management of the natural and physical resources of the whole region.

The Regional Policy Statement takes account of all those issues relating to resources such as land, water and air that are of importance to the region, and puts in place policies and methods to achieve integrated management of those resources. This integrated management recognises that decisions on any particular resource (e.g. land) may have effects on other resources (e.g. water) and coordinates the decisions of resource management agencies such as regional councils and local territorial authorities.

The Regional Policy Statement has an important role in setting the overall direction for the management of

natural and physical resources and the environment of Taranaki.

Although the Regional Policy Statement does not contain rules to regulate activities, the Taranaki Regional Council and the territorial authorities of the region are required **to give effect to** the Regional Policy Statement when preparing or changing regional or district plans (which may contain such rules). In addition, the Taranaki Regional Council and territorial authorities are required to “...**have regard to**” relevant policies and objectives in the Regional Policy Statement when considering an application for a resource consent (section 104(1) of the Act).

## 1.5 STRUCTURE

The Regional Policy Statement for Taranaki is divided into four parts.

**Part A** contains an **introduction** and provides **background information** on the Regional Policy Statement.

Section 1 contains an introduction to the Regional Policy Statement, including its purpose, operative date, scope and structure.

Section 2 presents an overview of Taranaki's history, environment, people and economy. This provides an important context for understanding the issues and associated objectives, policies and methods contained in this document.

Section 3 presents an overview of the Resource Management Act, other relevant legislation, and the planning framework relevant to the implementation of objectives, policies and methods in the Regional Policy Statement.

**Part B** contains the **significant resource management issues** relating to the Taranaki region. In relation to each issue, objectives, policies, methods of implementation and environmental results anticipated are identified. To assist the reader in locating all relevant policies, related policies (e.g. where an activity has effects on other resources) identified in other sections of the Regional Policy Statement are **cross-referenced**.

Section 4 contains issues, objectives, policies and methods addressing the use and development of resources.

Section 5 contains issues, objectives, policies and methods addressing land and soil – these issues

relate to soil erosion, soil health and the management of hazardous substances and contaminated sites.

Section 6 contains issues, objectives, policies and methods addressing fresh water – these issues relate to the sustainable allocation of surface water, surface water quality, groundwater quality and allocation, wetlands, drainage, the use of river and lake beds and public access to and along rivers and streams.

Section 7 contains issues, objectives, policies and methods addressing air – these issues relate to air quality and greenhouse gases.

Section 8 contains issues, objectives, policies and methods addressing the coast – these issues relate to coastal water quality, natural character and public access to and along the coast.

Section 9 contains issues, objectives, policies and methods addressing indigenous biodiversity – these address terrestrial, fresh water, and marine habitats.

Section 10 contains issues, objectives, policies and methods addressing natural features and landscapes, historic heritage and amenity values.

Section 11 contains issues, objectives, policies and methods addressing natural hazards management.

Section 12 contains issues, objectives, policies and methods addressing waste management.

Section 13 contains issues, objectives, policies and methods addressing minerals.

Section 14 contains issues, objectives, policies and methods addressing energy.

Section 15 contains issues, objectives, policies and methods addressing the built environment – these issues relate to sustainable urban development and providing for regionally significant infrastructure.

**Part C** sets out the **resource management issues of significance to iwi authorities**. Section 16.1 contains issues, objectives, policies and methods to take into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi. Section 16.2 contains issues, objectives, policies and methods to recognise kaitiakitanga. Section 16.3 contains issues, objectives, policies and methods recognising and providing for the relationship of Māori with ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu and other taonga. Section 16.4 contains issues, objectives, policies and methods to recognise cultural and spiritual values of tangata whenua in resource management processes.

**Part D** sets out **administrative procedures** relating to the implementation of the Regional Policy Statement. They include the processes that the Taranaki Regional Council will use to promote integrated management and deal with issues that cross local authority boundaries, and the procedures to monitor the effectiveness of the Regional Policy Statement and for reviewing the Regional Policy Statement.

To assist readers in using the Regional Policy Statement, a **glossary** has been prepared and is located at the back of this document. Additional information of relevance to the Regional Policy Statement is also contained in the Appendices.

## 2. The Taranaki region – the people, the place

### 2.1 LOCATION

The Taranaki region lies on the west coast of the North Island of New Zealand. The boundaries of the region, as prescribed by the Local Government Reorganisation Order 1989, conform to those of water catchments, extending from the Mohakatino catchment in the north to the Waitotara catchment in the south and inland to the boundary of, but not including, the Whanganui catchment. The boundary of the Taranaki region extends 12 nautical miles (approximately 22 kilometres) offshore to include the waters of the territorial sea. There are three districts within the region: the New Plymouth, Stratford and South Taranaki districts (Figure 1).

The land area of the Taranaki region comprises 723,610 ha, which is approximately 3% of New Zealand's total land area.



**Figure 1** The Taranaki region: location and local government boundaries

### 2.2 HISTORY

The human occupation of Taranaki dates back to at least 800 AD, when settlement by ancestors of the present Māori people is thought to have begun. Significant populations settled in coastal areas between Urenui and Waitara. Eight iwi are currently recognised. These are Ngāti Tama, Ngāti Mutunga, Te Atiawa, Ngāti Maru, Taranaki, Ngā Ruahine, Ngāti Ruanui and Ngāa Rauru (Figure 2).

European settlers began arriving from the early 1840s. In 1841, the New Zealand Company purchased a large block of land in what was to become New Plymouth. Settlement was initially concentrated near the coast. At



**Figure 2** Iwi boundaries in the Taranaki region

that time, much of the Taranaki landscape was covered by wetlands and native bush.

Increasing European settlement pressures led to disputes over land ownership and eventually to the 'Taranaki wars' of the 1860s. In response to Māori 'rebellion' against the Crown, the government confiscated large tracts of land under the terms of the New Zealand Settlements Act 1863.

From the 1870s, after the initial hostilities had ceased, settlement increased rapidly and began to encroach inland. Coastal areas were easily converted to grazing land by clearing the light cover of tutu, flax, toetoe and fern. Indigenous forest cover further inland was also cleared and under ideal physical and climatic conditions, dairying became the dominant land use. Surplus dairy products were initially used for local bartering but with the development of refrigerated shipping and new export markets in the 1880s, milk began to be collected from farms and processed in bulk at creameries and factories scattered throughout the region. By the end of the nineteenth century, Taranaki was developing into a highly productive agricultural province.

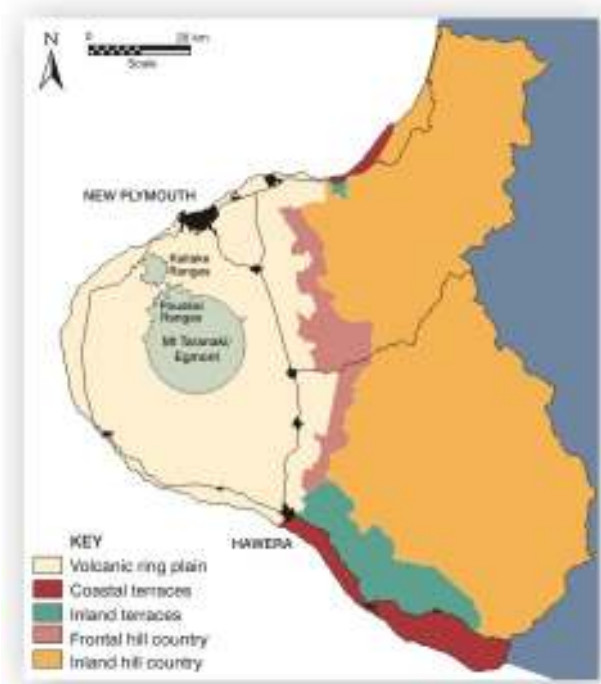
Agriculture, particularly dairying, and to a lesser extent, sheep and beef farming, was extended and intensified during the first half of the twentieth century, and continues to dominate the local economy. However, in the second half of the twentieth century, oil and gas exploration and development became increasingly important. Taranaki remains New Zealand's only

commercially producing oil and gas area and an area of continuing exploration activity.

## 2.3 LANDFORMS AND SOILS

The Taranaki region consists of four distinctive landforms (Figure 3), each of which requires a different type of environmental management:

- the volcanic landscape and ring plain centred on Mount Taranaki
- the dissected Taranaki hill country
- the coastal and inland marine terraces of north and south Taranaki
- the coastal and marine environment.



**Figure 3** Taranaki landforms

### 2.3.1 THE VOLCANIC RING PLAIN

Although Mount Taranaki dominates the landscape, it is only the most recent of a number of andesitic volcanoes that have developed in western Taranaki over the last two million years. The Pouakai and Kaitake ranges are the remnants of former volcanoes. While the Pouakai and Kaitake volcanic centres are now extinct, Mount Taranaki is still considered (in geological terms) to be active, even though it has not erupted in the last 250 years.

Over the last 50,000 years, the cone of Mount Taranaki has collapsed intermittently causing very large and mobile debris avalanches and lahars (mudflows) to sweep down the mountain. As each volcanic cone was built up by successive eruptions, natural erosion has stripped away the volcanic debris and redistributed it in a 'ring' around the volcano base creating the Taranaki ring plain.

The soils of the ring plain are mostly deep, free-draining, fertile volcanic ash soils known as yellow-brown loams.

These soils support intensive pastoral farming, particularly dairying, which is most intensive on the flatter land in south Taranaki.

### 2.3.2 HILL COUNTRY

The Taranaki hill country lies east of the ring plain. The inland terraces and frontal hill country are of strongly rolling topography and largely retain the volcanic ash soils, while the inland hill country is steeper and more deeply dissected. The underlying strata of the hill country are not volcanic but consist of older sedimentary rocks – mudstones, siltstones and sandstones known locally as papa.

The soils of the inland hill country are mostly steep land soils comprised of shallow soils that have developed on steep, relatively unstable slopes. The composition and depth of soils are extremely variable, and often erosion has prevented the development of mature soil. While the hill country is more prone to erosion, it can support both pastoral farming and commercial forestry when managed in accordance with the physical limitations of the land.

### 2.3.3 COASTAL TERRACES

Coastal terraces raised by tectonic activity extend along the north and south Taranaki coast. In the far north only a narrow strip of coastal plain is preserved, but between Waitara and Lepperton in the north and from Hawera south, the terraces extend up to 20 kilometres inland. Along the coastline, cliffs ranging from three to 60 metres in height have been formed from high energy wave action.

The volcanic deposits on the old terrace surfaces are deep and, because they are further from the volcanic centre, are fine-textured. The soils of these areas are classic volcanic loams and are among the most versatile and productive in the region.

Sand accumulation is concentrated in the coastal sand country near river mouths, particularly along the southern coastline, where dunefields extend inland for several kilometres. Only 2.1% of the Taranaki region is classified as coastal sand country. Because of their weak structure, these soils are particularly susceptible to wind erosion if the vegetation cover is disturbed.

### 2.3.4 COASTAL ENVIRONMENT

The Taranaki region is exposed to the west, and as a consequence, high energy wave and wind conditions dominate the coastal environment. There are few areas of sheltered water beyond the estuaries, such as those of the Tongaporutu, Waitara and Patea rivers, and the confines of Port Taranaki.

Almost the entire Taranaki coastline is subject to varying degrees of erosion from waves and wind. This has resulted in a predominantly cliffed coastline, with the western coast characterised by boulder cliffs and

offshore reefs derived from erosion of lahar and other volcanic material. In north and south Taranaki, erosion of marine sediments has resulted in a coastline of almost continuous papa cliffs and the famous black sand beaches.

## 2.4 RIVERS AND STREAMS

Taranaki has 217 parent catchments and 530 named rivers and streams. The three largest rivers in Taranaki are the Waitotara, Waitara and Patea rivers. Figure 4 shows the main rivers and streams in the Taranaki region.



**Figure 4** The main rivers and streams of Taranaki

Over 300 rivers and streams flow from the flanks of Mount Taranaki in a distinctive radial pattern. These streams are characterised by short narrow catchments of steep gradient. Stream channels are typically well incised into the volcanic ash and debris flow material of the ring plain. Egmont National Park acts as a huge reservoir, supplying a steady flow of water to the ring plain streams, even during prolonged dry periods.

In marked contrast to the near perfect radial drainage of the ring plain, the hill country displays a 'dendritic' pattern of drainage. The rivers of the hill country have short tributaries contained by narrow valleys. In general, these rivers carry high sediment loads as a result of hill country erosion.

Taranaki rivers and streams, particularly on the ring plain, are extensively used by the community for agriculture, industry and community water supplies and for a wide range of recreational and aesthetic purposes.

## 2.5 CLIMATE

Taranaki's climate is determined by its westerly position, its mid latitude location, and its topography. Taranaki lies in the path of weather systems moving east over the Tasman Sea. The region's climate is generally sunny, windy, with moderate temperatures, and regular rainfall throughout the year.

Rainfall varies markedly throughout the region, ranging from less than 1,400 mm in the coastal areas to in excess of 8,000 mm at the summit of Mount Taranaki. Rainfall also increases with elevation in the Taranaki hill country.

Taranaki is windy but wind strengths vary greatly because of the range in topographical features, which influence exposure.

## 2.6 THE TARANAKI COMMUNITY

Final counts from the 2006 Census show the population of Taranaki at 104,127 an increase of 1.2% from the 2001 Census. In the previous Census period (1996-2001) the population of the region decreased by 3.5%. Taranaki accounts for 2.6% of New Zealand's population<sup>1</sup>.

Population changes have varied also within the region. The most notable feature has been the continued concentration of population in the New Plymouth District, which in 2006 accounted for 66% of the region's total population. The general trend has been for a decrease in the population of smaller rural

towns, and increased concentration of population in north Taranaki. This is the result of several factors including reduced employment opportunities in rural areas and small towns through farm amalgamations, closure of dairy processing factories and reduced employment in servicing and other industries, combined with land diversification, lifestyle and retirement opportunities in north Taranaki.

Fifteen per cent of the population indicated they were of Māori descent in the last Census.

<sup>1</sup> Statistics New Zealand: 'Census of Population and Dwellings: 2006'

## 2.7 THE TARANAKI ECONOMY

A notable feature of the Taranaki region is its reliance on the region's natural and physical resources for its economic and social wellbeing. The climate and soils of the region are suited to high producing pastures, which accounts for 57% (414,000 hectares) of the region. Approximately 40% of the region (over 290,000 hectares) is in indigenous forest and shrubland – mostly within the Egmont National Park and areas of the inland hill country. Approximately 20% of the region is within the public conservation estate and set aside for nature heritage conservation. Areas such as the Egmont National Park play a significant role in the region's economy. However, farming and other land based activities continue to play a prominent role in employment.

### 2.7.1 AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

Around 57% of Taranaki's land area is now in pastoral farming and 1.3% is covered by planted forest. Over 16% of Taranaki's labour force is employed in agriculture, forestry and fishing compared with 8.3% nationally.

Dairying dominates farming in Taranaki, particularly on the ring plain. There are approximately 1900 dairy farms in Taranaki – 16% of all dairy farms in New Zealand – with more than 490,000 dairy cows producing approximately 12% of New Zealand's total milk solids. Milk processing is now concentrated at one site – Fonterra Whareroa Dairies Ltd, near Hawera. At peak production, this facility processes over 14 million litres of milk per day, sourced from throughout the lower North Island. Other major agricultural processing sites are based at Kapuni (Fonterra Kapuni) and Eltham (Mainland Product Limited and New Zealand Limited – Enzyme Division). In addition to direct farm income from milk production, the added value resulting from the processing of milk, whey, and cheese manufacturing is a significant contributor to employment.

Sheep and beef farming, concentrated in the hill country, have an important role in the regional economy. There are approximately 1,150 sheep and beef farms in Taranaki (including lifestyle blocks) stocking approximately 817,000 sheep and 123,000 beef cattle. The largest meat processing works are located at Eltham (Riverlands), Hawera (Silver Fern Farms Limited, Hawera) and Waitotara (Silver Fern Farms Limited, Waitotara).

Exotic forest plantations continue to expand. The region has a suitable climate, good forestry sites and a well-established roading system and port. There has been an increase in exotic forestry plantings – from 9,700 ha in 1990 to an estimated 28,000 ha in 2002 – although low log prices in more recent times have slowed down that rate of increase.

### 2.7.2 PIG AND POULTRY FARMING

There are some 21 piggeries in Taranaki and 48 poultry farms – mostly concentrated in north Taranaki.

Taranaki has a significant and growing poultry industry. Taranaki is the major poultry meat producing region in New Zealand involving all aspects of the industry from breeding and growing to production and distribution. Operations are concentrated in north Taranaki with a major processing facility at Bell Block.

### 2.7.3 HORTICULTURE AND CROPPING

Horticulture and cropping are not significant land uses in Taranaki. Taranaki is self-sufficient in most crops. The crops grown include flowers and asparagus. Maize cropping (a supplementary feed stock for dairy cattle) has expanded significantly. Small local growers produce apples, tamarillos, kiwifruit, feijoas, berryfruits, some citrus fruits, strawberries and tomatoes for the local market and export.

### 2.7.4 OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY

Taranaki is of strategic importance to New Zealand – the Taranaki basin is currently New Zealand's only hydrocarbon producing area. The Kapuni and offshore Maui fields make up the major part of New Zealand's natural gas resources. Other smaller fields produce crude oil or gas or both gas and condensate. In 2004 gas and oil production from Taranaki contributed to 23% of New Zealand's total primary energy supply. Gas contributed 160.5 PJ (20.7%), and net indigenous oil contributed 17.5 PJ (2.3%) of New Zealand's total primary energy supply of 777 PJ (source: MED Energy Data File Jan 2006). Development of the large offshore Kupe field discovered in 1986, commenced in the first half of 2007.

The oil and gas industry is a significant employer in the Taranaki region. Developments such as the Pohokura oil and gas field are driving demand for labour and services and this is expected to continue as the industry transitions through a growth phase.

Exploration interest in Taranaki remains high. Since 1997 there have been a number of significant finds – the Mangahewa field in 1997, the Maari offshore field in 1998, the Rimu onshore field in 1999, the Pohokura offshore gas field in 2000, the Kauri field onshore in 2001, and the offshore Tui, Amokura and Pateke fields were discovered in 2003 and 2004. By world standards however, Taranaki remains under explored and the fields are comparatively small.

The presence of oil and gas in the region has given rise to new industries involved in the processing, distribution, use and export of hydrocarbons. Production stations or gas treatment plants are located at Oaonui, Kapuni, Waihapa, Rimu, Kaimiro and the McKee oil and gas fields. The Pohokura production station is presently under construction. A methanol plant is located at the Waitara Valley, a UF resin plant at Waitara, an ammonia-

urea plant is located at Kapuni, and large gas-fired power stations at Stratford, New Plymouth, and Whareroa.

Port Taranaki plays an important role in the distribution network and it is of strategic importance to the importing and exporting activities for the oil and gas industry and the servicing of this industry.

### **2.7.5 MANUFACTURING AND CONSTRUCTION**

Taranaki has a relatively small but distinctive manufacturing base. The region has developed a national and international reputation for its expertise in food processing, particularly of dairy products and speciality dough production. Furthermore, the special servicing needs of the dairy and petrochemical sectors (and to a lesser extent the meat, energy, industrial, chemical and timber processing sectors) have contributed to the development of both heavy and light engineering industries. Manufacturing provides approximately 16% of the region's employment opportunities.

### **2.7.6 TOURISM**

Tourism is playing an increasingly important role in the Taranaki economy with approximately 540,000 total guest nights spent in the Taranaki region by domestic and international visitors in 2005. Some 15% of total guest nights spent in the region were from international visitors. The region's mountain, forests, gardens and parks are attracting increasing numbers of visitors interested in rural based and outdoor recreational activities

### **2.7.7 INFRASTRUCTURE**

A vital part of the Taranaki economy is its physical infrastructure. The region's road and rail network, Port Taranaki, New Plymouth Airport, power generation facilities, oil and gas pipelines, transmission lines and sewerage and water treatment and reticulation systems provide essential services to the regional community and to the regional and national economies and should be given appropriate recognition in regional and district plans.

Taranaki is generally well connected and serviced from a roading infrastructural perspective relative to its size and population. However, there are roading and transport infrastructure issues that require ongoing attention if Taranaki is to meet its current and anticipated growth and development needs. Some of these issues concern route security and reliability (particularly in relation to State Highway 3 north and south and State Highway 43), network efficiency and capacity (for example in relation to our rural roads and urban New Plymouth) and safety issues such as passing opportunities, road and bridge widths etc.

### **2.7.8 AGGREGATE EXTRACTION**

There are presently 27 quarries located within the Taranaki Region. These quarries are vital to the region as they provide the base material for infrastructure and construction necessary to ensure the social, cultural and economic well being of the people of the region. In addition, these quarries are also a significant employer within the region.



## 3. Statutory and planning framework

### 3.1 INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT

The Resource Management Act promotes integrated management of resources and the environment. Integrated management is an active process of managing the use, development and protection of natural and physical resources as a whole and involves a consideration of:

- (a) the effects of the use of one natural resource on **other natural and physical resources** or on other parts of the environment recognising that such effects may occur across space and time
- (b) the need for cooperation and coordination in relation to the statutory roles and responsibilities of **other agencies** in respect of the management of natural and physical resources or other management responsibilities that could affect those resources
- (c) the effect of **other statutory documents** prepared by the Taranaki Regional Council and others with functions and responsibilities under the Act that address issues relating to the management of natural and physical resources
- (d) the social and economic objectives and interests of the community, recognising that natural and physical resources cannot be managed without having regard to **social, economic and cultural factors**.

The Taranaki Regional Council intends to promote an integrated approach to the use, development and protection of the natural and physical resources of the Taranaki region through the methods contained in this Regional Policy Statement. The issues, objectives, policies and methods addressed in this Statement relate to 26 resource management issues of regional significance. However, as noted in the following subsections, there are connections with other statutory authorities and documents that address various parts of the environment or relate to activities that may affect or impinge on environmental outcomes. The procedures for ensuring that integrated management continues to be addressed when implementing this Statement are set out in section 17.1 of Part D of this Statement.

### 3.2 THE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT

The Resource Management Act is the principal statute for the management of natural and physical resources. The Act establishes an integrated framework for the management of land, air, water and the control of discharges into the environment, and provides for national, regional and local territorial levels of responsibility.

### 3.2.1 PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES

Section 5 [the purpose] of the Resource Management Act and sections 6, 7 and 8 (the 'principles') establish the overall framework and direction for resource management in Taranaki.

The Resource Management Act has a single purpose, set out in section 5(1) of that Act, which is "...to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources."

Section 5(2) of the Resource Management Act defines sustainable management as "... managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources in a way, or at a rate, which enables people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural wellbeing and for their health and safety while –

- (a) *sustaining the potential of natural and physical resources (excluding minerals) to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations; and*
- (b) *safeguarding the life-supporting capacity of air, water, soil and ecosystems; and*
- (c) *avoiding, remedying, or mitigating any adverse effects of activities on the environment."*

In addition to the purpose of the Resource Management Act, all persons exercising functions and powers under the Act are required to recognise and provide for, have particular regard to, and take into account certain 'principles' listed in sections 6, 7 and 8 of the Act:

**"6. Matters of national importance** – *In achieving the purpose of this Act, all persons exercising functions and powers under it, in relation to managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources, shall recognise and provide for the following matters of national importance:*

- (a) *the preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment (including the coastal marine area), wetlands, and lakes and rivers and their margins, and the protection of them from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development;*
- (b) *the protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development.*
- (c) *the protection of areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna;*
- (d) *the maintenance and enhancement of public access to and along the coastal marine area, lakes, and rivers;*

- (e) *the relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu, and other taonga;*
- (f) *the protection of historic heritage from inappropriate subdivision, use and development; and*
- (g) *the protection of recognised customary activities.*

**7. Other matters** – *In achieving the purpose of this Act, all persons exercising functions and powers under it, in relation to managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources, shall have particular regard to-*

- (a) *kaitiakitanga;*
- (aa) *the ethic of stewardship;*
- (b) *the efficient use and development of natural and physical resources;*
- (ba) *the efficiency of the end use of energy;*
- (c) *the maintenance and enhancement of amenity values;*
- (d) *intrinsic values of ecosystems;*
- (e) *[Repealed];*
- (f) *maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the environment;*
- (g) *any finite characteristics of natural and physical resources;*
- (h) *the protection of the habitat of trout and salmon;*
- (i) *the effects of climate change;*
- (j) *the benefits to be derived from the use and development of renewable energy.*

**8. Treaty of Waitangi** – *In achieving the purpose of this Act, all persons exercising functions and powers under it, in relation to managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources, shall take into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi (Te tiriti o Waitangi)."*

### 3.2.2 FUNCTIONS AND POWERS

To give effect to the purpose and principles of the Resource Management Act, central government, regional councils and territorial authorities have specific functions, powers and duties.

Regional councils and territorial authorities have been given primary responsibilities for the management of natural and physical resources within their areas, subject to the requirements of central government as exercised through the instruments available under the Resource Management Act (section 3.2.3 below) or through other legislation (section 3.3 below).

Under section 30 of the Resource Management Act, the Taranaki Regional Council is responsible for the control of water, air, land (for the purposes of soil conservation, water management, natural hazards avoidance and mitigation and hazardous substances management), the investigation of land for the purposes of identifying and monitoring contaminated land, control of the coastal marine area (in conjunction with the Minister of Conservation), control of the discharge of contaminants into the environment, the control of river and lake beds, the establishment and implementation of objectives, policies and methods for indigenous biodiversity, and the strategic integration of infrastructure with land use through objectives, policies and methods.

Under section 31 of the Resource Management Act, the three territorial authorities are responsible, in relation to their district, for the preparation of objectives and policies for integrated management of the effects of land use, control of the effects of land use including responsibility for the avoidance and mitigation of natural hazards and hazardous substances management, the prevention, mitigation of the adverse effects of the use of contaminated land, indigenous biodiversity, noise control and control of activities on the surface of water in rivers and lakes.

Under section 30(1)(a) of the Resource Management Act, the Taranaki Regional Council is further responsible for preparing objectives, policies and methods to achieve integrated management of the natural and physical resources of the region and for preparing objectives and policies in relation to any actual or potential effects of the use, development, or protection of land which are of regional significance. To give effect to this responsibility the Council has prepared this Regional Policy Statement.

### 3.2.3 POLICIES, PLANS AND OTHER INSTRUMENTS

The Resource Management Act provides for a hierarchy of policies, plans and other statutory instruments to enable central and local government to carry out their functions. Figure 5 outlines the policy hierarchy under the Act, including the main statutory instruments.

At the national level, the main statutory instruments include:

- **National environmental standards:** Regulations made by Order in Council on the recommendation of the Minister for the Environment, to prescribe technical standards relating to the use, development and protection of natural and physical resources.

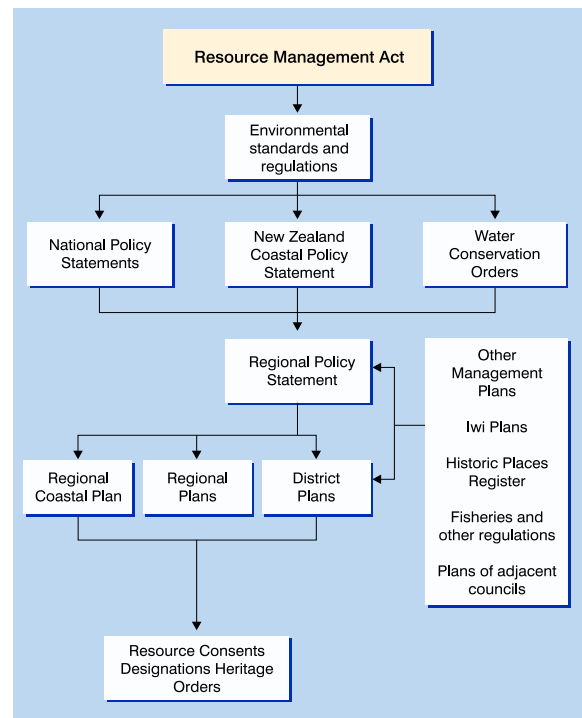
- **National policy statements:** Issued on the recommendation of the Minister for the Environment, they state policy on matters of national significance relevant to achieving the purpose of the Act.
- **New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement:** Prepared and issued on the recommendation of the Minister of Conservation, it states policies for achieving the purpose of the Act in relation to the coastal environment of New Zealand.
- **Water conservation orders:** Issued on the recommendation of the Minister for the Environment and made by Order in Council to recognise and sustain outstanding amenity or intrinsic values associated with a waterbody that warrants protection.
- **Regulations:** Made by Order in Council to provide for the matters specified in section 360 of the Act.

At the regional or district level, the main statutory instruments include:

- **Regional policy statements:** Prepared by regional councils to achieve the purpose of the Act by providing an overview of the resource management issues of the region and policies and methods to achieve integrated management (see section 3.4 below).
- **Regional coastal plans:** Prepared by regional councils to achieve the purpose of the Act in relation to the coastal marine area of the region. Regional coastal plans may contain rules to control activities and effects.
- **Regional plans:** Prepared by regional councils to assist them in carrying out their functions under the Act. Regional plans are optional and may contain rules to control activities and effects.
- **District plans:** Prepared by district councils to assist them in carrying out their functions under the Act. District plans may contain rules to control activities and effects.
- **Resource consents:** Required either from regional councils or territorial authorities (or both) to carry out activities that would otherwise contravene the restrictions in the Act on the use and development of natural and physical resources.

Regional policy statements cannot include rules. Nevertheless, they are important and 'sit' high up in the hierarchy of policy instruments under the Resource Management Act – regional policy statements follow after national policy statements but before regional and district plans. Regional and district plans must give effect to the Regional Policy Statement. In addition, under section 104(1) of the

Resource Management Act, a consent authority considering a resource consent must have regard to any relevant regional policy statement.



**Figure 5** Hierarchy of planning instruments under the Resource Management Act

### 3.3 OTHER STATUTES

The Taranaki Regional Council and the region's three territorial authorities may take action under other statutes to give effect to objectives and policies contained in the Regional Policy Statement. These include:

- **Local Government Act 2002 and Local Government Act 1974** (where it remains in force): Establishes functions, powers and procedures for local government.
- **Biosecurity Act 1993:** Provides for the exclusion, eradication and effective management of pests and unwanted organisms.
- **Public Works Act 1981:** Provides for acquisition and use of land for public works.
- **Building Act 2004:** Provides for the regulation of building work, the establishment of a licensing regime for building practitioners, and the setting of performance standards for buildings.
- **Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002:** Establishes national, regional and local functions and responsibilities in relation to civil defence emergencies including the preparation of regional and district civil defence plans and to provide for restoration and rehabilitation.

- **Reserves Act 1977:** Establishes powers and responsibilities relating to the acquisition, classification and management of reserves for recreational, historic, scenic, nature, scientific or other purposes.
- **Health Act 1956:** Provides for the protection, promotion and conservation of public health, including public health matters relating to water supply, sanitary works, buildings and offensive trades. The Act provides wide powers to local authorities particularly territorial authorities, to control nuisances as defined in the Act.
- **Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996:** Provides for the protection of the environment, and the health and safety of people and communities, by preventing or managing the adverse effects of hazardous substances and new organisms. This Act, amongst other things, regulates the handling, labelling, storage and use of hazardous substances.
- **Forest and Rural Fires Act 1977:** Provides for the safeguarding of life and property related to fire in forests and rural areas. Territorial authorities promote and carry out fire control measures as fire authorities.
- **Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941:** Provides powers for regional councils as catchment boards to promote soil conservation, the prevention and mitigation of soil erosion, the prevention of damage by floods and the use of land in a manner that will help achieve these purposes.
- **Land Drainage Act 1908:** Provides for the establishment of drainage districts and boards and for powers of local authorities in relation to cleaning, repairing and maintaining watercourses and drains. Powers are provided to order the removal of obstructions from watercourses or drains where an obstruction is likely to cause damage to property.
- **Land Transport Management Act 2003:** The purpose of the Act is to contribute to achieving an affordable, integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable land transport system. The Act provides for the preparation of regional land transport programmes by regional councils and national land transport programmes by the New Zealand Transport Agency and for the preparation of regional and national land transport strategies.
- **Maritime Transport Act 1994:** Provides for international, national, regional and site-specific planning and responses to protect the marine environment from marine oil spills.

Many other Acts are relevant to the achievement of integrated resource management in Taranaki. These include the following:

- **Conservation Act 1987:** Promotes the conservation of natural and historic resources and establishes the Department of Conservation. The Act provides for the acquisition and management of conservation areas, protected areas and stewardship areas.
- **National Parks Act 1980:** Provides for the administration and management of national parks by the New Zealand Conservation Authority and conservation boards and for the maintenance of national parks in their natural state and the preservation of indigenous plants and animals within national parks.
- **Forests Act 1949:** Covers the promotion of sustainable forest management of indigenous forest land. The Act controls the harvesting of indigenous forests for timber production and the export of indigenous forest produce.
- **Foreshore and Seabed Act 2004:** Provides for the protection by the Crown of the public foreshore and seabed on behalf of all the people of New Zealand, including the protection of the association of whanau, hapu, and iwi with areas of the public foreshore and seabed.
- **Wildlife Act 1953:** Provides for the protection of all native mammals, most native birds, reptiles and amphibians, and some terrestrial invertebrates.
- **Wild Animal Control Act 1977:** Deals with the control of harmful species of introduced wild animals and the regulation of commercial and recreational hunters.
- **Historic Places Act 1993:** Establishes the Historic Places Trust and promotes the identification, protection, preservation and conservation of the historic and cultural heritage of New Zealand.
- **Marine Reserves Act 1971:** Provides for the establishment and management of areas of the sea and foreshore as marine reserves for the purpose of preserving them in their natural state as the habitat of marine life for scientific study.
- **Fisheries Act 1983:** Provides for the conservation and management of fisheries and fisheries resources in New Zealand's territorial sea and exclusive economic zone.
- **Queen Elizabeth II National Trust Act 1977:** Establishes the Queen Elizabeth II National Trust to provide, preserve, protect or enhance land or water with aesthetic, cultural, recreational, scenic, scientific or social interest or value.

- **Energy Efficiency and Conservation Act 2001:** Establishes the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority to promote energy efficiency, energy conservation and renewable energy within the context of a sustainable energy future.
- **New Zealand Walkways Act 1990:** Provides for the establishment of walking tracks over public and private land for recreation and enjoyment.
- **Treaty settlement legislation:** The Ngati Ruanui Claims Settlement Act 2003, the Ngati Tama Claims Settlement Act 2003, the Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi Claims Settlement Act 2005 and the Ngati Mutunga Claims Settlement Act 2006 have been passed to settle historic Treaty of Waitangi claims. These statutes contain statutory acknowledgements for areas of particular cultural, spiritual, historical and traditional association to those iwi. The settlement legislation requires information on statutory acknowledgements to be included in the Regional Policy Statement. The Crown is also processing Treaty of Waitangi settlements with other Taranaki iwi.

Where appropriate, the Regional Policy Statement makes reference to actions that may be undertaken under other legislation to achieve the purpose of either the Resource Management Act or this Regional Policy Statement.

### 3.4 THE REGIONAL POLICY STATEMENT FOR TARANAKI

#### 3.4.1 PURPOSE AND CONTENT

The Resource Management Act requires each regional council to have in place, a regional policy statement for its region.

The purpose of a regional policy statement, as prescribed in section 59 of the Resource Management Act, is “...to achieve the purpose of the Act by providing an overview of the resource management issues of the region and policies and methods to achieve integrated management of the natural and physical resources of the whole region”.

The Resource Management Act also sets out what regional policy statements must include. Under section 62 of the Act, a regional policy statement must state:

- (a) the significant resource management issues for the region
- (b) the resource management issues of significance to:
  - (i) iwi authorities in the region; and

- (ii) the board of a foreshore and seabed reserve, to the extent that those issues relate to that reserve;
- (c) the objectives sought to be achieved by the statement;
- (d) the policies for those issues and objectives and an explanation of those policies;
- (e) the methods (excluding rules) used, or to be used, to implement the policies;
- (f) the principal reasons for adopting the objectives, policies, and methods of implementation set out in the statement;
- (g) the environmental results anticipated from implementation of those policies and methods;
- (h) the processes to be used to deal with issues that cross local authority boundaries, and issues between territorial authorities or between regions;
- (i) the local authority responsible in the whole or any part of the region for specifying the objectives, policies, and methods for the control of the use of land—
  - (i) to avoid or mitigate natural hazards or any group of hazards; and
  - (ii) to prevent or mitigate the adverse effects of the storage, use, disposal, or transportation of hazardous substances; and
  - (iii) to maintain indigenous biological diversity;
- (j) the procedures used to monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of the policies or methods contained in the statement; and
- (k) any other information required for the purpose of the regional council's functions, powers, and duties under this Act.

The Regional Policy Statement (and regional and district plans) must also include information on statutory acknowledgements contained in Treaty of Waitangi settlement acts.

#### 3.4.2 METHODS OF IMPLEMENTATION

For each of the issues identified in Parts B and C (sections 4 to 16) of the Regional Policy Statement, a range of methods of implementation of the objectives and policies has been adopted having regard to their efficiency and effectiveness. The main types of methods are categorised under the following nine headings:

- advocacy – persuading others to act
- facilitation – bringing various parties together to carry out an activity or address an issue
- education and communication – providing information, advice or training
- voluntary agreements – reaching agreements with various parties to address an issue or supporting

agreements developed by those parties themselves (eg, industry codes of practice or accords)

- financial incentives – making a financial contribution to influence behaviour
- service provider – carrying out a programme using the Council’s own resources
- regulation – developing and enforcing regional or district rules
- monitoring – gathering information and reporting on the results of monitoring
- research – applied research to address any gaps in information.

### 3.4.3 EFFECT OF THE REGIONAL POLICY STATEMENT

The Regional Policy Statement is a statement of policy for the Taranaki region (as constituted under the Local Government (Taranaki Region) Reorganisation Order 1989). The local authorities comprising the Taranaki region are:

- the Taranaki Regional Council
- the territorial authorities of New Plymouth District Council, South Taranaki District Council and the Stratford District Council excluding the part of the Stratford District not within the Taranaki region.

Regional and district policies and plans prepared by these authorities are **to give effect to** the Regional Policy Statement.

In addition, the Taranaki Regional Council and territorial authorities are required to “...**have regard to**” relevant policies and objectives in the Regional Policy Statement when considering an application for a resource consent (section 104(1) of the Resource Management Act).

Many of the objectives and policies and associated methods of implementation contained in the Regional Policy Statement confirm existing policies and methods. These have been reviewed, formalised and focused to give effect to the purpose of the Regional Policy Statement and the Resource Management Act.

## 3.5 OTHER STATUTORY DOCUMENTS

There are a range of other statutory documents prepared by the Taranaki Regional Council, the region’s territorial authorities and other organisations that play an important role in promoting the integrated and sustainable management of Taranaki’s natural and physical resources.

### 3.5.1 REGIONAL PLANS

Since the adoption of the first Regional Policy Statement in 1994, regional and district plans have

been prepared and management programmes implemented. The Taranaki Regional Council has prepared four regional plans under the Act. These plans are the *Regional Air Quality Plan for Taranaki* (1997); the *Regional Coastal Plan for Taranaki* (1997); *Regional Fresh Water Plan for Taranaki* (2001) and the *Regional Soil Plan for Taranaki* (2001). These plans assist in the integrated and sustainable management of the region’s natural and physical resources by applying a range of policies and methods to address the issues identified in the plans. They also contain rules that mean that resource consents may be required for activities that affect the resources covered by those particular plans. Rules in the plans may also permit activities with no or only minor environmental effects subject to conditions that aim to prevent or minimise adverse environmental effects.

A summary of the main relevant provisions of each of the regional plans is outlined below:

- **Regional Air Quality Plan for Taranaki:** This Plan contains provisions that address the discharge of contaminants to air, including discharges to air from industrial and trade premises and discharges to air of agrichemicals and of contaminants arising from the burning of vegetation on production land and forested land. In addition to rules, the Plan also contains good management practice guidelines for intensive pig or poultry farming, agrichemical spraying and the burning of vegetation.
- **Regional Coastal Plan for Taranaki:** This Plan applies to the coastal marine area, which extends from mean high water springs out to 12 nautical miles. The Plan identifies four management areas for the coastal marine area in Taranaki: Area A [Areas of outstanding coastal value], Area B [Estuaries], Area C [Open coast] and Area D [Port Taranaki]. Within these areas the Plan contains rules that address the adverse effects of structures, discharges, the disturbance of or deposits to the foreshore and seabed and reclamations. General rules also apply to all areas.
- **Regional Fresh Water Plan for Taranaki:** This Plan contains provisions that address activities involving the use of water. The Plan addresses the taking and use of water, point and diffuse source discharges to land and water, the use of river and lake beds, the construction of bores and wells, land drainage and the protection of wetlands. Rules have been included in the Plan to protect regionally significant wetlands and water levels and flows in rivers with high natural values. The Plan contains good management practice guidelines on the treatment and disposal of

agriculture effluent, the spraying of agrichemicals and the construction of groundwater bores and wells.

- **Regional Soil Plan for Taranaki:** This Plan contains provisions that address activities impacting on soil conservation. The Plan addresses accelerated erosion and soil health. The use of land is generally permitted under section 9(3) of the Act unless that use contravenes a rule in a plan. Rules in the Plan permit vegetation clearance on erosion prone land, subject to conditions that aim to minimise adverse environmental effects associated with the clearance of vegetation.

### 3.5.2 DISTRICT PLANS

The New Plymouth, South Taranaki and Stratford district councils are required by the Resource Management Act to prepare a district plan for their respective district. All three territorial authorities have an operative district plan for their district, these being:

- **The New Plymouth District Plan (2005)**
- **The Stratford District Plan (1997)**
- **The South Taranaki District Plan (2005).**

These district plans contain provisions controlling the effects of use, development or protection of land, including subdivision in that district. They will be reviewed and changed over time.

### 3.5.3 LONG-TERM COUNCIL COMMUNITY PLAN AND ANNUAL PLANS

Under the Local Government Act 2002, the Taranaki Regional Council has prepared its *2009/2019 Long Term Council Community Plan*, which sets out the Council's strategic directions and programmes for the next decade. The Plan provides a description of the significant activities that the Council plans to carry out over the next 10 years, the objectives of those activities and their costs.

The Long-term Council Community Plan also identifies seven broad community outcomes for the region. These are:

- **Connected Taranaki** – a region that delivers accessible and integrated infrastructure, transport and communications systems, which meet the needs of residents, business and visitors.
- **Prosperous Taranaki** – a region that boasts a sustainable, resilient and innovative economy that prospers within the natural and social environments.
- **Secure and healthy Taranaki** – a region that provides a safe, healthy and friendly place to live, work or visit.

- **Skilled Taranaki** – a region that values and supports learning so that all people can play a full and active role in its social, cultural and economic life.
- **Sustainable Taranaki** – a region that appreciates its natural environment and its physical and human resources in planning, delivery and protection.
- **Together Taranaki** – a region that is caring and inclusive, works together, and enables people to have a strong and distinctive sense of identity.
- **Vibrant Taranaki** – a region that provides high quality and diverse cultural and recreational experiences, and encourages independence and creativity.

Through its activities in the Long-term Council Community Plan and in annual plans, the Taranaki Regional Council identifies how it will contribute towards achieving these community outcomes. Progress towards achieving these outcomes is reported on every three years. The outcomes and the indicators used to measure progress towards their achievement were identified following a joint regional and district council process.

The region's three territorial authorities – the New Plymouth, Stratford and South Taranaki district councils – are also required to prepare long-term council community plans and annual plans, which set out the significant activities that they will undertake to achieve the community outcomes.

### 3.5.4 OTHER PLANS AND STRATEGIES

Many other plans and strategies prepared by local and central government agencies and other organisations can contribute to the objectives and policies in the Regional Policy Statement. These include pest management strategies, regional marine oil spill response plan, regional and district waste management strategies and plans, reserve management plans, conservation management strategies and plans, the Egmont National Park Management Plan, civil defence emergency management plans, the New Plymouth Coastal Strategy, land transport programmes and asset management plans.

The Taranaki Regional Council must prepare a Regional Land Transport Strategy (RLTS) for the region, under the Land Transport Management Act 2003. The RLTS (incorporating the Council's Regional Passenger Transport Plan) details the region's intentions for land transport and guides development of the land transport system. Its purpose is to contribute to the aim of achieving an affordable,

integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable land transport system. The integration of transport and land use and other issues addressed in the RPS is important in promoting the sustainable management of resources and the RLTS is a key document in contributing to this.