

7 Living Heritage

7.1 Scope and Background

7.1.1 Scope

This chapter addresses three matters:

- (1) **Indigenous biological diversity** – The maintenance of indigenous biological diversity, the protection of areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna, and the division of responsibilities between the Regional Council and Territorial Authorities for managing indigenous biological diversity
- (2) **Landscapes and natural character** – The protection of outstanding landscapes and the management of the natural character of the coastal environment, wetlands, rivers, lakes and their margins
- (3) **Historic heritage** – The protection of historic places and archaeological sites.

7.1.2 Indigenous Biological Diversity

As discussed in Chapter 1, the decline of indigenous biological diversity (“biodiversity”) is one of the four most critical issues addressed in this Plan.

Biodiversity in the Manawatu-Wanganui Region

The Manawatu-Wanganui Region now has only 23% of its original forest cover and 2% of its wetland habitat. The majority of the forest is found in the hillcountry and the ranges, with fragments scattered throughout the Region. Remaining natural habitat is small, fragmented and under pressure from pests and disturbance. Aquatic biodiversity is in a similar state of degradation with indigenous fish populations greatly reduced, poor habitat (loss of riparian margins and introduction of exotic fish and pest plants) and many barriers between coastal wetlands, streams and headwaters.

Much of the remaining indigenous biodiversity is in poor condition and health. Ecosystem processes are more often than not interrupted. The long-term viability of natural areas is further compromised by continued pressure from invasive species and surrounding land use. If such habitats and linkages between them are to survive they will require protection and ongoing management.

Future Approach

This Plan’s approach to biodiversity management focuses primarily on habitats, rather than on individual species or genetic diversity. The Regional Council believes that by managing habitats it will most effectively sustain regional biodiversity into the future.

The Regional Council proposes to take a more active role around the coordination of biodiversity management within the Region. The Regional Council’s overall biodiversity strategy is two-tiered, involving:

- (a) **Halting the decline** – Those habitats that are rare or threatened or at-risk (as shown in Schedule E of this Plan) will be given a high level of protection, through rules, from activities likely to cause any further loss or modification



- (b) **Active Management** – In addition, rare and threatened and at-risk habitats will be proactively managed through collaboration with landowners for work such as pest control and fencing, and provision of economic incentives such as grants and rates relief.

The protection and active management of sites on private land is crucial to maintaining indigenous biological diversity in the Region. Success in halting the biodiversity decline depends largely on the involvement and commitment of private landowners. This is a tall order for individuals, and the Regional Council recognises that the public good arising from maintaining indigenous biological diversity should not be solely at the expense of landowners. The Regional Council is therefore committed to seeking arrangements that adequately assist landowners and fairly apportion the costs of biodiversity management.

7.1.3 Landscapes and Natural Character

The protection of outstanding landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use and development is a matter of national importance.

A number of outstanding or unique regional landscapes and their associated values are identified in Schedule F. Although the issue of landscape change and competing pressures is best dealt with at a territorial level, some policies giving guidance on the appropriate balance between important infrastructure, including renewable energy, and other values, such as landscape, are provided in Chapter 3.

Preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment, wetlands, rivers, lakes and their margins is also a matter of national importance. Natural character is a sliding scale and varies from a low degree of naturalness, such as urban environments, to a high degree of naturalness (for example, Tongariro National Park).

The approach of the One Plan is to maintain the current degree of naturalness of the natural character of the coastal environment, wetlands, rivers, lakes and their margins by:

- continuing to provide a regional policy on natural character to guide decision-making
- protecting and managing biodiversity, important wetlands, rivers and lakes as described elsewhere in this Plan.

The natural character of rivers, lakes and their margins can be adversely affected by activities, in particular structures and flood mitigation measures such as stop-banks. It is important that preservation of the natural character of rivers, lakes and their margins, where this is reasonable, is considered when making decisions on relevant activities. The natural character of wetlands can best be provided for by proactively managing the top 100 wetlands in the Region (as provided for in the sections of this chapter dealing with biodiversity).

The natural character of the coastal marine area is covered in Chapter 9. The natural character of the coastal environment landward of mean high water spring, wetlands, rivers, lakes and their margins is dealt with in this chapter.

The coastal environment has seen some change in the last 10 years. There has been an increase in residential subdivision on both the western and eastern coastlines. Within a 1-km inland coastal strip, however, this development accounts for only 4% of the area. Although residential development is expected to continue, it is unlikely to affect the natural character of the coast at a regional scale for some time beyond the life of this Plan. Nevertheless, it is important and



appropriate for local decision-making on land use, particularly residential subdivision, to continue to take into account the natural character of a particular area.

7.1.4 Historic Heritage

The protection of historic heritage from inappropriate subdivision, use and development is a matter of national importance. Some activities that are controlled by the Regional Council can have an adverse impact on historic heritage values. For example, earthworks can modify or destroy archaeological sites, and the discharge of sewage to land could have an adverse impact on the values of a particular site. The Regional Council can control these activities to ensure that adverse impacts are minimised.

Subdivision and land use can also have a negative effect on historic heritage values. This is particularly an issue in coastal areas which are rich in historic sites, including waahi tapu and archaeological sites. Subdivision and land development is controlled by Territorial Authorities.

7.2 Significant Resource Management Issues

Issue 7-1: Indigenous biological diversity

Indigenous biological diversity is not being maintained in the Manawatu-Wanganui Region. Only a small proportion of the original extent of indigenous habitats remains as a result of historical land development practices. The diversity within remaining areas is declining owing to their isolation and/or as a consequence of a range of activities, most notably:

- (a) pest plants and animals
- (b) stock access
- (c) land drainage, which impacts upon wetlands
- (d) perched culverts and other barriers to fish migration
- (e) run-off and discharges causing poor water quality
- (f) vegetation clearance*.

Issue 7-2: Landscapes and natural character

- (a) The Region's landscapes are at risk from the effects of development, particularly the Tararua and Ruahine ranges. Developments with the potential for greatest impact include wind farms, residential subdivision and other major structures.
- (b) The natural character of the coastal environment, wetlands, rivers, lakes and their margins is at risk from the effects of land-use activities and development, particularly new river works, drainage and subdivision in areas with a high degree of naturalness.

Issue 7-3: Historic Heritage

Historic heritage is at risk from the effects of land-use activities, particularly land disturbance*, activities in the beds of rivers and lakes, and discharges to land.



7.3

Objectives

Objective 7-1: Indigenous biological diversity

The existing level of indigenous biological diversity is maintained into the future by ensuring that:

- (a) rare and threatened habitats*, as defined in Schedule E, are protected from activities that may cause any loss or modification to the representativeness, distinctiveness or ecological context of these areas
- (b) at-risk habitats*, as defined in Schedule E, are maintained by ensuring that activities do not cause any significant adverse effects on their representativeness, distinctiveness or ecological context
- (c) the best representative examples of rare and threatened habitats* and at-risk habitats* are proactively managed in order to improve their function.

Whāinga 7-1: He kanorau koiora taketake

Mea ake nei ka tiakina te taumata o nāianeī o te kanorau koiora taketake kia hua ai:

- (a) *Ka whakamarumarutia ngā wāhi noho (e ai ki Schedule E) kua āhua onge, kua whakawetia hoki i ngā ngohe ka whakamate pea, ka whakarerekē rānei i te āhuatanga, te wehe kē, āhuatanga taupuhi kaiao rānei o ēnei wāhi*
- (b) *Ka tiakina ngā wāhi noho (e ai ki Schedule E) ka tāruke ki te mate kia hua ai e kore e puta i ngā ngohe pānga kōaro ki ō rātou āhuatanga, wehe kē rānei, āhuatanga taupuhi kaiao rānei, ā*
- (c) *Ka tino whakahaeretia ngā tauira tino pai rawa atu o ngā wāhi noho kua āhua onge, kua whakawetia hoki, ka tāruke ki te mate hoki, hei whakapai ake i ā rātou mahi.*

Objective 7-2: Landscapes and natural character

- (a) The characteristics and values of the outstanding landscapes identified in Schedule F are protected as far as practicable.
- (b) Adverse effects, including cumulative adverse effects, on the natural character of the coastal environment, wetlands, and rivers, lakes and their margins are:
 - (i) avoided in areas with a high degree of naturalness
 - (ii) avoided, remedied or mitigated in other areas.

Whāinga 7-2: Ngā mata whenua me te āhuatanga māori

- (a) *Ka whakamarumarutia ngā āhuatanga me ngā ūara o ngā mata whenua motuhake (e ai ki Schedule F) e tika ana.*
- (b) *Ko ngā pānga kōaro, ehara tonu ko ngā pānga kōaro hui katoa, ki te āhuatanga māori o te taiao takutai moana, ngā papa waiwai, ngā awa, ngā roto hoki, me ō rātou takiwā:*
 - (i) *Ka parea i roto i ngā wāhi nui te āhua māori, ā*
 - (ii) *Ka parea, ka whakatikaina, ka whakangāwaritia i wāhi kē.*



Objective 7-3: Historic Heritage

Historic heritage is protected from activities that would significantly reduce heritage values.

Whāinga 7-3: Ngā taonga tuku iho o mua

Ka whakamarumarutia ngā taonga tuku iho o mua i ngā ngohe whakaiti i ngā ūara taonga tuku iho.

7.4 Policies

7.4.1 Indigenous Biological Diversity

Policy 7-1: Responsibilities for maintaining indigenous biological diversity

In accordance with s 62(1)(i) RMA, local authority responsibilities for controlling land use activities for the purpose of maintaining indigenous biological diversity in the Manawatu-Wanganui Region are apportioned as follows:

- (a) **The Regional Council shall be responsible for:**
 - (i) developing objectives, policies and methods for the purpose of establishing a region-wide approach for maintaining indigenous biological diversity
 - (ii) developing rules controlling land use activities for the purpose of maintaining biological diversity.
- (b) **Territorial Authorities shall be responsible for:**
 - (i) implementing the objectives and policies of this chapter when developing rules and making decisions on subdivision and land-use consent applications
 - (ii) retaining schedules of notable trees and amenity trees in their district plans and/or such other measures as they see fit for the purpose of recognising amenity and cultural values associated with indigenous biological diversity.

Policy 7-2: Activities in Rare and Threatened Habitats

- (a) Rare and threatened habitats* are identified in accordance with Schedule E.
- (b) Rare and threatened habitats* shall be protected by generally not allowing any of the following activities unless the provisions of subsection (c) or (d) apply:
 - (i) vegetation clearance* or land disturbance* within these areas
 - (ii) discharges of contaminants to land or water, or drainage or diversion of water, within or near these areas.
- (c) The activities described in subsection (b) will be allowed where they are for the purpose of pest control or habitat enhancement.
- (d) The activities described in subsection (b) may be allowed for other purposes where there are no more than minor adverse effects on the representativeness, rarity and distinctiveness or ecological context of the rare and threatened habitat*, as assessed in accordance with Schedule E.



Policy 7-3: Activities in at-risk habitats

- (a) At-risk habitats* are identified in accordance with Schedule E.
- (b) At-risk habitats* shall be maintained by regulating the following activities, and by making consent decisions in accordance with subsections (c) and (d):
 - (i) vegetation clearance* and land disturbance* within these areas
 - (ii) discharges of contaminants to land or water, and drainage and diversion of water, within or near these areas.
- (c) The activities described in subsection (b) will be allowed where they are for the purpose of pest control or habitat enhancement
- (d) Where the activities described in subsection (b) are carried out for other purposes, consent decisions will be made on a case by case basis, having regard to an assessment of the ecological significance of the site based upon the site's representativeness, rarity and distinctiveness, and ecological context as assessed in accordance with Schedule E. Consents will generally be granted in circumstances where:
 - (i) there will be no significant adverse effects on the factors which contribute to the significance of the area as assessed in accordance with Schedule E, or
 - (ii) any significant adverse effects can be adequately avoided, remedied or mitigated, or
 - (iii) financial contributions can be used to adequately compensate for or offset significant adverse effects.

Policy 7-4: Proactive management of representative habitats

- (a) The Regional Council will aim to improve the health and function of the best representative examples of rare and threatened habitats* and at-risk habitats* by working in partnership with relevant landowners to establish a plan for the proactive management of each of these areas by 2016.
- (b) For the purposes of subsection (a), separate programmes will be established for wetlands, bush remnants, native fish communities and coastal ecosystems.
- (c) The management plans under subsection (a) will generally address the following matters as a minimum:
 - (i) fencing and prevention of stock access
 - (ii) pest control
 - (iii) planting
 - (iv) agreed land uses
 - (v) work and materials to be provided by the Regional Council or a third party
 - (vi) financial assistance to be provided by the Regional Council or a third party
 - (vii) monitoring
 - (viii) legal options for ensuring longevity of the measures implemented.

Policy 7-5: Fostering an ethic of stewardship

The Regional Council will aim to equip landowners and others with the information they need to act as good stewards for biodiversity, and to act responsibly and proactively. These initiatives will be additional to the council-led programmes under Policy 7-4.



Policy 7-6: Pest plants and animals

- (a) To the extent that they relate to the maintenance of biodiversity, the plant and animal pest management functions of the Regional Council will primarily target pests threatening rare and threatened habitats* and at-risk habitats*.
- (b) When making decisions about subdivisions and land-use activities, the risks of introducing plant or animal pests into rare and threatened habitats*, at-risk habitats* and nearby areas shall be taken into account.

7.4.2

Landscapes and Natural Character

Policy 7-7: Outstanding landscapes

The landscapes listed in Schedule F shall be recognised as outstanding. All subdivision, use and development affecting these areas shall be managed in a manner which:

- (a) avoids or minimises to the extent reasonable any adverse effects on the characteristics and values specified in Schedule F for each landscape
- (b) takes into account and avoids any cumulative adverse effects
- (c) takes into account the policies in Chapter 3 when assessing activities involving renewable energy and infrastructure of regional importance.

Policy 7-8: Natural character

The natural character of the coastal environment, wetlands, rivers, lakes and their margins shall be preserved and protected from inappropriate subdivision, use and development, by encouraging the natural character of these areas to be restored where appropriate and by making decisions on resource consent applications that take into account whether the activity:

- (d) is compatible with the existing level of modification to the environment
- (e) is necessarily located in or near the wetland, river or lake and whether any alternatives exist
- (f) is of an appropriate form, scale and design to blend with the existing landforms, geological features and vegetation
- (g) does not significantly disrupt natural processes or existing ecosystems.

Policy 7-9: Public access

- (a) Activities within or near rivers and lakes shall be established and operated in a manner which readily provides for public access, and public access may be restricted only where necessary for safety, cultural or conservation purposes.
- (b) Public access for recreational purposes shall recognise the need to protect rare and threatened habitats* and at-risk habitats*.

7.4.3

Historic Heritage

Policy 7-10: Historic heritage

Historic heritage is recognised as a matter of national importance and all resource-use activities controlled by the Regional Council shall be managed in a manner



which protects historic and archaeological values and avoids, remedies or mitigates any adverse effects, including cumulative adverse effects, on historic heritage.

7.5 Methods

The main non-regulatory methods the Regional Council will pursue are outlined below as action plan summaries.

Project Name	Wetlands – Biodiversity
Project Description	<p>The Regional Council and other agencies will work with landowners to protect and enhance priority wetlands throughout the Region. Resources will be directed towards the most significant sites.</p> <p>Wetland owners will be provided advice and financial/project management assistance to carry out enhancement and protection measures including fencing, planting, and pest (plant and animal) control. The Regional Council will seek funding from third parties to assist with this project, and encourage the establishment of covenants.</p> <p>Monitoring of the effectiveness of the protection and enhancement works will be undertaken.</p> <p>The project will include publicity to increase public awareness about the importance of wetlands and indigenous biological diversity.</p>
Who	Regional Council, Territorial Authorities, Department of Conservation, non-government agencies including NZ Fish and Game, QEII Trust, NZ Wetland Trust, NZ Landcare Trust and relevant funding agencies including the He Tini Awa Trust, Biodiversity Condition Fund, Nga Whenua Rahui and Ducks Unlimited.
Links to Policy	This project links to Policy 7-4.
Targets	The top 100 wetlands in the Region are actively managed, including protection and/or enhancement measures, within 10 years of this Plan becoming operative.

Project Name	Bush Remnants – Biodiversity
Project Description	<p>The Regional Council and other agencies will work with landowners to protect and enhance priority bush remnants throughout the Region. Resources will be directed towards the most significant sites.</p> <p>Bush remnant owners will be provided with advice and financial/project management assistance to carry out enhancement and protection measures including fencing, planting, and pest (plant and animal) control. The Regional Council will seek funding from third parties to assist with this project, and encourage the establishment of covenants.</p> <p>Monitoring of the effectiveness of the protection and enhancement works will be undertaken.</p> <p>The project will include publicity to increase public awareness about the importance of bush remnants and indigenous biological diversity.</p>
Who	Regional Council, Territorial Authorities, Department of Conservation, non-government agencies including QEII Trust and NZ Landcare Trust, and relevant funding agencies including the He Tini Awa Trust, Biodiversity Condition Fund and Nga Whenua Rahui.
Links to Policy	This project links to Policy 7-4.



Project Name Bush Remnants – Biodiversity	
Targets	The top 200 bush remnants in the Region are being actively managed, including protection and/or enhancement measures, within 10 years of this Plan becoming operative.

Project Name Sites of Significance – Aquatic	
Project Description	<p>The Regional Council and other agencies will work with landowners to protect and enhance waterways and parts of waterways that serve an important role in the lifecycle of the Region's rare and threatened native fish. Resources will be directed towards the most significant sites.</p> <p>Waterway owners will be provided advice and financial/project management assistance to carry out enhancement and protection measures including fencing, planting, replacement of perched culverts and pest (plant and animal) control. The Regional Council will seek funding from third parties to assist with this project.</p> <p>Monitoring of the effectiveness of the protection and enhancement works will be undertaken.</p> <p>The project will include publicity to increase public awareness about the importance of native fish and indigenous biological diversity.</p>
Who	Regional Council, Territorial Authorities, Department of Conservation and funding agencies including the He Tini Awa Trust, Biodiversity Condition Fund and Nga Whenua Rahui.
Links to Policy	This project links to Policy 7-4.
Targets	The top 100 sites of significance – aquatic are actively managed, including protection and/or enhancement measures, within 10 years of this Plan becoming operative.

Project Name Inanga Spawning and Native Fishery Sites – Biodiversity	
Project Description	<p>The Regional Council and other agencies will work with landowners to protect and enhance waterways and parts of waterways (wetlands and streams) that serve an important role in the lifecycle of the inanga and whitebait species. Resources will be directed towards the most significant sites.</p> <p>Waterway owners will be provided advice and financial/project management assistance to carry out enhancement and protection measures including fencing, planting, replacement of perched culverts and pest (plant and animal) control. The Regional Council will seek funding from third parties to assist with this project.</p> <p>Monitoring of the effectiveness of the protection and enhancement works will be undertaken.</p> <p>The project will include publicity to increase public awareness about the importance of native fish and indigenous biological diversity.</p>
Who	Regional Council, Territorial Authorities, Department of Conservation and funding agencies including the He Tini Awa Trust, Biodiversity Condition Fund and Nga Whenua Rahui.
Links to Policy	This project links to Policy 7-4.
Targets	The top 30 inanga spawning and native fishery sites are actively managed, including protection and/or enhancement measures, within 10 years of this Plan becoming operative.



Project Name	Biodiversity (Terrestrial and Aquatic) Research, Monitoring and Reporting
Project Description	The aim of this project is to develop an integrated research, monitoring and reporting programme that supports delivery and refinement of existing policies and methods, guides implementation planning, and allows implementation effectiveness to be assessed.
Who	Predominantly Horizons Regional Council, with assistance from research institutes, universities and non-government agencies and community groups as required.
Links to Policy	This project links to Policy 7-4.
Targets	A research, monitoring and reporting programme that supports delivery and refinement of existing policies and methods, and guides and assesses implementation.

Project Name	Education in Schools – Biodiversity
Project Description	The aim of this project is to raise awareness amongst the youth of the Region of the significance of our indigenous biological diversity, the threats to it, and what they can do to protect/restore it. This will be achieved through various environmental education programmes/initiatives eg., Green RIG, EnviroSchools, Trees for Survival etc.
Who	Horizons Regional Council, Department of Conservation, and various national and local environmental education providers
Links to Policy	This project links to Policy 7-5.
Targets	The Regional Council develops and delivers a biodiversity-related environmental education programme

Project Name	District Planning – Natural Features, Landscapes and Habitats
Project Description	<p>The Regional Council will formally submit on resource consent applications received by Territorial Authorities for land use activities where there is potential for effects on outstanding natural features, landscapes or native habitats.</p> <p>The Regional Council will formally seek changes to district plans if required to ensure provisions are in place to provide an appropriate level of protection to natural features, landscapes and native habitats.</p>
Who	Regional Council and Territorial Authorities.
Links to Policy	This project links to Policies 7-7 and 7-8.
Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submissions completed on consent applications. • District plan changes sought if necessary by 2008.

7.6 Anticipated Environmental Results

Anticipated Environmental Result	Link to Policy	Indicator	Data Source
By 2017, the area of each habitat type identified as rare, threatened or at-risk is the same as that estimated prior to this Plan becoming operative, and no “not threatened” habitat types have fallen into the at-risk category.	<p>Living Heritage Policies: 7-1, 7-2, 7-3, 7-5, 7-6 and 7-8</p> <p>Administration Policies: 2-1, 2-2, 2-3 and 2-5</p> <p>Water Policies: 6-1, 6-2, 6-3, 6-4, 6-5, 6-7, 6-10, 6-17, 6-18, 6-19, 6-26 and 6-28</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area of each habitat type compared to former extent Number of rare and threatened and at-risk habitat sites damaged by unauthorised activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landcare Research: Land Environments NZ Tool, Ecosat tool and Landcover Database 2 tool Horizons’ incidents database
By 2017, the Region’s top 100 wetlands and top 200 bush remnants will be in better condition than that measured prior to this Plan becoming operative.	<p>Living Heritage Policies: 7-1, 7-4, 7-5, 7-6 and 7-8</p> <p>Administration Policies: 2-1, 2-2, 2-3 and 2-5</p> <p>Water Policies: 6-1, 6-2, 6-3, 6-4, 6-5, 6-7, 6-10, 6-17, 6-18, 6-19, 6-26 and 6-28</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of top 100 wetlands and top 200 bush remnants under proactive management Habitat condition measure(s) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Horizons’ identification and assessment of significant indigenous aquatic, coastal and terrestrial habitat types Horizons’ progress reports on results of proactive management of top wetland and bush remnant habitats
Except for change because of natural processes, at 2017 the characteristics/values of all outstanding landscapes and natural features identified in the Region (Schedule F) will be in the same state as assessed prior to this Plan becoming operative.	<p>Living Heritage Policies: 7.7 and 7-8</p> <p>Administration Policies: 2-1, 2-2, 2-3 and 2-5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of Schedule F outstanding landscapes and natural features where identified characteristics/values have been damaged Level of protection afforded to Schedule F outstanding landscapes and natural features in Territorial Authority district plans Ratio of successful submissions versus total submissions made on outstanding landscapes and natural features to Territorial Authority consent planning processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outstanding landscapes and natural features characteristics/values assessment survey Horizons’ incidents database Horizons’ SED (Subdivision Enquiry Database) database Territorial Authority district plans Territorial Authority consent decisions

7.7 Explanations and Principal Reasons

Biodiversity

Rare and threatened habitats* are made up of habitats that are either naturally rare in the Region, (that is, there was never a large number of that type of habitat) or have been reduced to level of less than 20% of their original extent in the



Region. At this level they cannot sustain themselves without intervention. Even a small loss of, or small amount of damage to, these habitats may lead to the total loss of this habitat type in the Region.

At-risk habitats* are made up of habitats that have been reduced to a level of less than 33% of their original extent in the Region. These habitats are at risk of falling into the threatened category (described above) in the lifetime of this Plan if something is not done to prevent that habitat loss. At-risk habitats* also include those areas which provide a habitat for a rare or threatened species.

The objectives, policies and methods adopted here aim to prevent the further deliberate loss of rare and threatened habitats and to control activities which may have an adverse effect on the unique characteristics of at-risk habitats*. Also included are objectives, policies and methods to actively manage, improve and protect the best examples.

Landscapes

The protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use and development is a matter of national importance. While this issue is best dealt with at a territorial level, it is considered important that this document should continue to provide a list of outstanding natural features and landscapes and their associated values. The objectives, policies and methods adopted here are to provide guidance and direction in the protection of these values.

Natural character

Preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment, wetlands, rivers, lakes and their margins is a matter of national importance. The approach of the One Plan is to maintain the current degree of naturalness of the natural character of the coastal environment, wetlands, rivers, lakes and their margins. The objectives, policies and methods adopted in this document aim to achieve this by providing policy guidance on natural character to be taken into account when making decisions on applications which may affect natural character and by actively protecting and managing biodiversity.