

# Section 35 Evaluation of the Te Ao Māori Provisions of the One Plan

*Iwi Māori insights on the effectiveness and efficiency of Chapter 2*

For: Horizons Regional Council

REPORT



# Executive Summary

This evaluation was commissioned to understand how well the Te Ao Māori Provisions in the One Plan are working for iwi Māori across the Horizons region. Building on the initial Section 35 evaluation, this report provides a deeper analysis of how these provisions are functioning both on paper and in practice, and whether they are enabling iwi Māori to meaningfully fulfil their role as kaitiaki. Through a series of kōrero, interviews, hui, and wānanga, this evaluation sought to capture the voice of iwi Māori. Whilst it does not represent the whakaaro or experience of those who did not participate, the feedback is clear: iwi Māori value the intent of the Provisions but feel their implementation and impact is falling short.

In many cases, the provisions have not been resourced or activated in ways that build genuine relationships or empower Māori partnership in resource management. There is a shared aspiration among iwi Māori for these provisions to be more effective, not just acknowledging te ao Māori, but embedding it in practice by supporting Māori programmes and leadership across all parts of the planning and decision-making system.

The evaluation identified several core insights. First, te ao Māori values, perspectives, and priorities must be embedded across the entire One Plan, not limited to a single chapter. Second, the current provisions are less effective because they exclude iwi influence over controlled or restricted discretionary activities, despite those activities often impacting Māori values. Iwi also highlighted the underutilisation of tools such as Cultural Impact Assessments (CIAs) and Iwi Management Plans (IMPs), which could provide efficient, values-based guidance if used early, appropriately, and intentionally.

Iwi also expressed a strong desire to be actively involved in monitoring and enforcement, not only as stakeholders but as practitioners. Resourcing iwi to lead their own kaupapa Māori monitoring programmes, and ensuring these are recognised in council decision-making, would significantly strengthen outcomes for te taiao. Investing in iwi capacity, through access to training, tools, and experts, was another key theme.

Iwi consistently emphasised that effective implementation is underpinned by trusted relationships. Early, consistent, and proactive communication, grounded in whakawhanaungatanga and shared responsibility and respect, is what makes the difference. While one-off initiatives have shown promise, long-term progress requires deeper structural change.

Iwi Māori have clearly stated their willingness to lead the next phase of this kaupapa. They have called for Horizons to pause, reflect, and share power, to move from consultation to co-design. This includes enabling iwi to lead the

review and rewriting of the provisions, and strengthening the role of Te Tiriti o Waitangi not only in planning documents but in day-to-day decision-making, governance, and culture across the Horizons.

This report outlines practical recommendations to support that direction. It is not a checklist, it is an invitation. An opportunity for Horizons to walk alongside iwi Māori and together realise a more effective, enduring, and essential approach to environmental management in the region.



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# 1 Introduction

How well does the One Plan provide for hapū and iwi needs, aspirations, priorities and the unique context of iwi Māori within the Manawatū-Whanganui Region?

Under [Section 35](#) of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA), Horizons Regional Council (HRC) is required to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of its regional policy statement and regional plan. Chapter 2 of the One Plan (the Plan) sits within the regional policy statement and focuses on Te Ao Māori provisions (the Provisions<sup>1</sup>), intended to promote Māori involvement in resource management and deliver outcomes, both for Māori and te taiao.

HRC completed the first stage of the Section 35 evaluation in May 2023 (Tucker, 2023). That stage was primarily a desktop assessment. While that work was a useful start, it lacked the voices of whānau, hapū, and iwi and recommended that the perspectives of Māori be sought to fully understand whether the provisions were considered to be effective and efficient. Kāhu Environmental was invited to support the second phase of the review by engaging directly with iwi Māori across the region to better understand how the Provisions are working in practice and whether they are creating meaningful outcomes.

Between July 2024 and April 2025, Kāhu facilitated hui, wānanga, interviews, and kōrero with tangata whenua across the rohe. This process sought to provide iwi and hapū an opportunity to share their insights and perspectives on key aspects of the One Plan, by asking questions about:

- **Awareness** – The level of understanding among iwi and hapū regarding the *Te Ao Māori* provisions in the One Plan.
- **Application** – How effectively and efficiently the policies and methods are being applied.
- **Outcomes** – Whether the anticipated environmental results and objectives are being achieved.
- **Feedback** – What aspects are working well, what challenges exist, and where improvements may be needed.

This report builds on the Stage 1 Section 35 Evaluation<sup>2</sup> initiated by HRC, and offers a more detailed analysis of the Provisions grounded in the experience of

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<sup>1</sup> The original “Chapter 2: Te Ao Māori Provisions” in the One Plan did not meet National Policy Statement standards and was later renamed “Ngā take nui te whakahaere rauemi ki ngā hapū me ngā iwi – Resource management issues of significance to iwi authorities.” While the chapter title changed, the Provisions themselves remain the same. In this report, we refer to these unchanged provisions collectively as “the Provisions.”

<sup>2</sup> Tucker (2023). *Section 35 Evaluation Report Te Ao Māori Provisions* (Report No. 2024/EXT/1865). Horizons Regional Council.

iwi Māori<sup>3</sup>. It draws on examples, direct quotes, and lived experiences shared throughout the engagement process. While this report reflects the voices of the iwi who engaged with the process, we acknowledge it does not fully capture the full diversity of Māori perspectives across the region.

The insights and recommendations in this report aim to support HRC to better understand iwi and hapū aspirations and offer a foundation to shift policy, processes and practice to reflect iwi and hapū realities, foster stronger relationships, and enable more meaningful outcomes.



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<sup>3</sup> We use the term 'iwi Māori' because most of the people we engaged with were iwi representatives. Hapū and whānau perspectives are just as important, and their context or perspectives may differ. More work is needed to understand those perspectives fully. Using 'iwi Māori' here is simply to reflect who we spoke with and to keep the wording consistent, it's not about saying one is more important than the other.

## 2 Background

The HRC rohe spans a significant area of the lower North Island, extending from the central plateau in the north to the Kāpiti Coast in the South. It stretches from the Ruahine and Tararua Ranges in the east to the Whanganui River and Tasman Sea in the west. The region encompasses diverse landscapes, including fertile river plains, coastal dunes, and expansive native forests, covering key areas such as Palmerston North, Whanganui, Horowhenua, and the Rangitīkei District.

These natural and physical resources are managed under the region's One Plan, a combined regional policy statement, regional plan, and regional coastal plan. Chapter 2 (the Provisions) focuses on resource management issues that are significant to hapū and iwi.

This rohe is home to over 20 distinctive iwi in the Horizons region including Muaūpoko, Ngāti Maniapoto, Ngaa Rauru, Ngāti Apa, Ngāti Hāua, Ngāti Hauti, Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāti Maru, Ngāti Raukawa, Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Rangitāne, Tama Kōpiri, Whanganui/ Te Ātihaunui-ā-Pāpārangi (which includes Ngāti Rangī, Tamaūpoko, Hinengākau, Tūpoho, and Tamahaki), Whitikaupeka, Uenuku. Each iwi holds a distinct relationship with te taiao and while some of their rohe may overlap, their histories, mātauranga, tikanga, and intergenerational responsibilities to care for place remain unique and deeply rooted in their own identity.

Alongside engagement with HRC, these iwi also interact with the local authorities across the region, which are Manawatu District Council, Horowhenua District Council, Tararua District Council, Rangitīkei District Council, Whanganui District Council, and Ruapehu District Council, as well as Palmerston North City Council. The need for iwi and hapū to engage simultaneously with multiple councils, agencies, organisations, and resource users, as well as their own people, requires significant time, energy, and capacity.

HRC's Oranga Wai programme has played a large role in shaping iwi engagement with the council over the past decade. Designed to improve freshwater management in the region, Oranga Wai has been a key touchpoint for iwi Māori involvement in planning and policy. Iwi Māori hold a range of experiences and perspectives about that programme, which are acknowledged throughout the report where relevant.

### 2.1 Context

The expectation for iwi Māori to maintain relationships with multiple groups, agencies, organisations, and authorities demands time, expertise, infrastructure, and sustained effort<sup>4</sup>. Adding to this pressure, is the multi-faceted responsibilities that iwi Māori juggle, from social and economic development to health,

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<sup>4</sup> Te Waihanga, 2022; Department of Internal Affairs, 2022.

education, and cultural revitalisation, alongside kaitiaki duties to the environment<sup>5</sup>.

This disparity means some iwi Māori can more readily engage with planning and resource management processes, while others face barriers in responding to complex policy demands and must be selective in where time, effort, and resources are used.

The broader regional landscape also plays a role in shaping how Māori aspirations are realised. As expressed by iwi Māori during this evaluation, dominant land uses such as agriculture and pastoral farming hold significant economic and political influence in the HRC region. This context matters because it shapes the conditions under which iwi aspirations, particularly those related to restoration, protection, and exercise of kaitiakitanga, are interpreted, prioritised, and acted on within planning processes. Iwi Māori have observed that efforts to prioritise the health and balance of te taiao are often met with resistance or diluted by the push to maintain economic productivity and existing land use systems.

Despite the recent efforts of regulatory frameworks like Te Mana o te Wai, colonisation is ever-present in the planning system<sup>6</sup>. The resource management system in place today, was largely introduced without Māori decision-making or worldviews<sup>7</sup>. As a result, iwi Māori are operating within structures that were historically designed without them, and they often have to expend substantial energy to try negotiating or reshaping these Crown-imposed systems to better reflect te ao Māori principles.

A history of exclusion and marginalisation in environmental governance underpins this context, meaning that efforts to give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi obligations in plans like the One Plan are essentially trying to retrofit Māori perspectives into an inherently Western paradigm. As the Waitangi Tribunal has noted, “the RMA has not delivered appropriate levels of control, partnership, and influence for kaitiaki in relation to taonga in the environment. Indeed, the only mechanisms through which control and partnership appear to have been achieved are historical Treaty and customary rights settlements”<sup>8</sup> This systemic context creates tension.

Despite these structural and capacity challenges, iwi Māori continue to be strong leaders in environmental management and restoration. Their holistic understanding of, and intimate relationship with, te taiao, paired with intergenerational knowledge and experience at place, continues to drive

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<sup>5</sup> Te Wai Māori Trust, 2020; Rout et al, 2021; Ministry for the Environment, 2023.

<sup>6</sup> Bennett et al, 2021; Berghan, Hoskins & Raerino, 2023.

<sup>7</sup> Ministry for the Environment; 2021.

<sup>8</sup> Waitangi Tribunal, 2011, p 273, 280.

innovative solutions and strategies for restoring the health and wellbeing of awa, whenua, ngāhere, moana, and subsequently, communities.

## 2.2 Horizons One Plan

The Horizons One Plan (the Plan) is a combined Regional Policy Statement, Coastal Plan and Regional Plan for the Manawatū-Whanganui Region.

Importantly:

- The plan defines how the natural and physical resources of the region will be cared for and managed.
- It holds statutory power under the Resource Management Act (RMA) 1991, meaning it has legal force and must be followed. It sets out rules and policies that businesses, landowners, and the public are required to comply with.
- The Te Ao Māori chapter seeks to identify resource management issues that are important to hapū and iwi and set out how the issues will be addressed. The objectives in this chapter are:
  - 1) *To have regard to the mauri of natural and physical resources to enable hapū and iwi to provide for their social, economic, and cultural wellbeing.*
  - 2) *Kaitiakitanga must be given particular regard and the relationship of hapū and iwi with their ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu and other taonga (including wāhi tūpuna) must be recognised and provided for through resource management processes.*
- It has the potential to empower Māori by creating opportunities for partnership and shared decision-making, ensuring that Māori voices influence how resources are managed.

To provide further context on the Chapter 2 Provisions, the following indented and italicised excerpts are drawn from HRC's *Draft Section 35 Evaluation Report Te Ao Māori Provisions*.

*The chapter provides background on:*

- *the Region's hapū and iwi*
- *hapū and iwi involvement in resource management*
- *an understanding of Māori values including mauri, taonga, wāhi tapu, wāhi tūpuna, tikanga Māori and kaitiakitanga*
- *resource management issues of concern to hapū and iwi.*

The Plan also states:

*Tangata whenua have a special and unique role as kaitiaki in the Region. This relationship with the environment is significant to the identity of whānau, hapū and iwi. Tangata whenua are also significant landowners and contribute to the local economy.*

*The special position of hapū and iwi as a Treaty partner is reflected in the specific provisions for Māori under the RMA. The RMA requires the Regional Council to take into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi in exercising its functions and powers. The Council does this in a number of ways in the objectives and policies that follow in this chapter, and throughout the rest of the Plan.*

*The key principles of the Treaty of Waitangi which are relevant include:*

*(a) principle of active protection,*

*(b) duty to act in good faith,*

*(c) duty to make informed decisions through consultation,*

*(d) principle of redress and a duty not to create new grievances,*

*(e) principle of reciprocity, and*

*(f) principle of mutual benefit.*

*In particular, the Regional Council acknowledges the special relationship that hapū and iwi in the Region share with the environment. The Council is committed to strengthening relationships and partnerships to involve hapū and iwi more actively in managing the Region's resources. This is provided for in particular by Policy 2-1 which identifies how increased hapū and iwi involvement in resource management must be enabled.*

*The major frustration for hapū and iwi has been the lack of acknowledgement of their concerns in resource management planning and resource consent processes.*

## 2.3 Horizons Draft Evaluation Report

The *Draft Section 35 Evaluation Report Te Ao Māori Provisions* report provided a comprehensive desktop assessment of the effectiveness and efficiency of the Provisions, based on the information available to the Council, but did not include the perspectives and experiences of iwi Māori. This report has not been published, as Horizons recognised the crucial need to engage with iwi Māori before coming to a conclusion on whether the Chapter 2 provisions are efficient and effective.

The Report focused on the objectives, policies and non-regulatory methods, relevant glossary terms, Schedule B Freshwater Values and whether the current provisions give effect to the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020 (NPS-FM) and other national policy direction. It found that:

- Progress has been made to achieve the Anticipated Environmental Results (AERs) and thus Objective 2-1, but a robust assessment was not possible because ways to monitor and compile evidence had not been established by HRC to track AERs progress.
- Most methods have been implemented, or partially implemented, except for Joint Management Agreements (RMIA-M8).
- All policies are being used to guide resource consent decision-making. The report concludes they establish ways to build relationships and support hapū and iwi to increase their capacity and capability to participate in resource management processes. This includes culturally appropriate and effective ways to improve the environment.
- The Plan provisions assist but are limited in addressing resource management system challenges for iwi and hapū, especially in providing sufficient capacity to meaningfully participate at the rate required by regulatory processes and across the range of high priorities areas that impact Māori.
- Chapter 2 and its implementation throughout the Plan does not always give effect to the aspirations of some hapū and iwi or enable resource management participation, particularly consent processes around controlled, and restricted discretionary activities and non-notification clauses.
- There is limited evidence to assess the efficiency (cost and timeframe) of provisions. However, it appears that the cost of the Iwi Activity budgets has been in line with what was expected in HRC's Long-term Plans.
- The provisions do not meet the hierarchy of obligations to freshwater set through the NPS-FM.

The report further states that *“current provisions and methods are outdated and have been overtaken by different expectations, aspirations, practices, and requirements under the RMA... they reflect practices and attitudes about when and how hapū and iwi would wish to engage in resource management processes and decisions from more than a decade ago.”*

Therefore, the engagement undertaken to prepare this report is an opportunity to take stock of how the Plan is currently meeting expectations. Once this stage of the evaluation process is completed, the Provisions can be further reviewed

and tested more explicitly with iwi and hapū, as well as stakeholders and the community to update and better incorporate the interests of hapū and iwi.



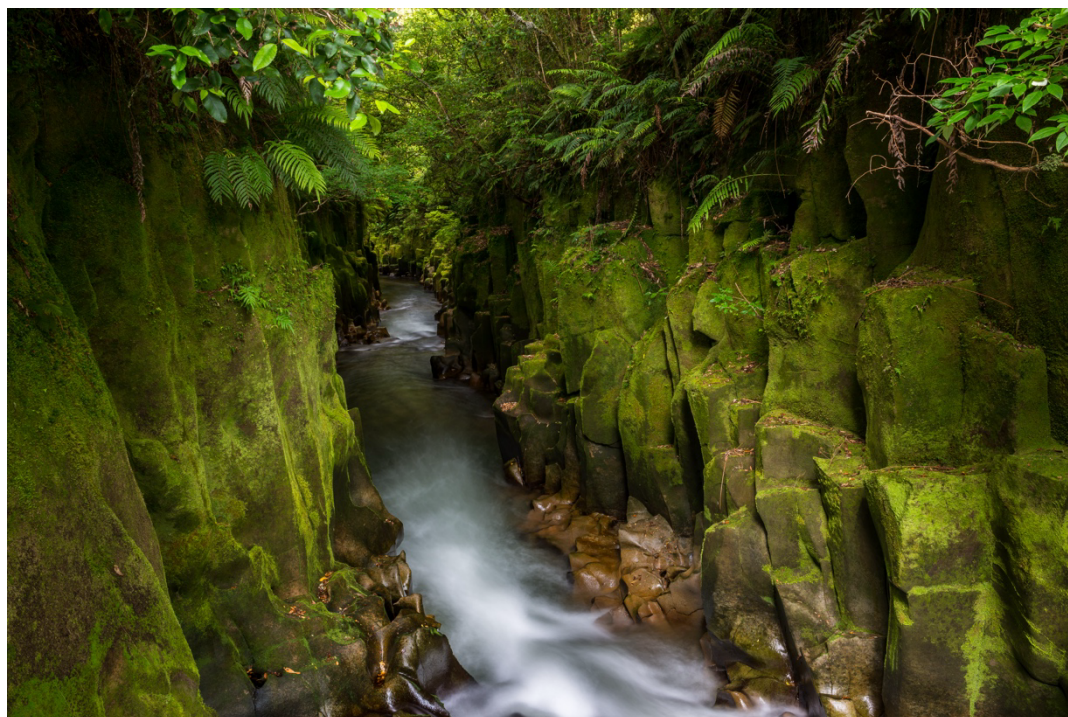
### 3 Methodology

The project scope was to engage with iwi Māori to collect and collate evidence to determine both the effectiveness and efficiency of the Provisions in achieving

outcomes for Māori. This required us to redefine 'effective' and 'efficient' through a kaupapa Māori lens, which set the precedent for our analysis.

We took a Developmental Evaluation<sup>9</sup> (DE) approach, recognising the vital importance of relationships and values, as well as the complexity of the context that we were working within. DE is flexible and adaptive, with the evaluation design evolving alongside the kaupapa it is evaluating, which allowed iwi Māori to shape the focus and implementation of the evaluation. Multiple methods, including wānanga, interviews, hui, surveys, and casual kōrero were used to gather information. The details of this approach and methods are set out in Appendix 2.

As with any kaupapa of this nature, there were a number of limitations that shaped the scope and depth of engagement. Key challenges included the limited capacity of iwi and hapū to participate due to competing demands, tight timeframes, and the realities of limited capacity. As a result, not all voices were able to be included, and engagement occurred at a high level rather than in-depth or at the marae or grassroots level. A more detailed discussion of these limitations and the mitigations put in place can also be found in Appendix 2.



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<sup>9</sup> Patton, McKegg & Wehipeihana, 2015.

## 4 Defining effective and efficient as Māori

The analysis in HRC's *Section 35 Evaluation Report Te Ao Māori Provisions* report were centred on **efficiency** (largely defined by costs, budgets, risks, time, and outcomes) and **effectiveness** (largely defined as the achievement of anticipated outcomes, alignment with statutory requirements, and the practical application and enforceability of provisions).

Through wānanga and hui we developed an understanding of effective and efficient through a kaupapa Māori lens which is used as the framework to evaluate the provisions in the Plan.

### 4.1 Effectiveness redefined

For iwi Māori, 'effectiveness' is better articulated through relational, cultural, and place-based values rather than solely through economic or procedural outcomes.

From a kaupapa Māori perspective, **effectiveness** can be defined by outcomes that honour the mana and mauri of the environment. It is about respecting the role of iwi Māori as kaitiaki, and reflecting mātauranga Māori and tikanga in decision-making. For iwi Māori, an effective approach must:

- **Recognise mana:** Respect the mana of iwi, hapū and te taiao, ensuring their perspectives, tikanga, and mātauranga are respected and valued.
 

*Effectiveness is not just ticking boxes, it's seeing the mana of our whenua and wai uplifted*
- **Create tangible outcomes:** Achieve meaningful improvements for the environment and communities over time, not just on paper.
 

*The outcomes we want to see are a healthy awa, thriving whenua, and whānau that feel empowered*
- **Reflect Local Context:** Recognise that each iwi and hapū is unique, with different histories, aspirations, and relationships to their whenua.
 

*Effectiveness means solutions and processes that fit us - not one-size-fits-all*
- **Foster Whanaungatanga:** Strengthen genuine relationships, grounded in trust, collaboration, and mutual respect.
 

*Relationships are the foundation. Effective work comes from people knowing each other, not just meeting once.*

Based on that understanding, this report uses the following questions to analyse the effectiveness of the Provisions through a kaupapa Māori lens:

1. How well have the Provisions allowed for iwi Māori to act as kaitiaki within the resource management system to uphold the mana of te taiao?
2. How well have the Provisions created tangible outcomes for te taiao?
3. How well do the Provisions reflect local context, whakapapa, and histories of iwi Māori in resource management outcomes?
4. How well have the Provisions allowed for tikanga and mātauranga Māori to be reflected in decision making?

## 4.2 Efficiency redefined

For iwi Māori, efficiency is not about speed or cost-effectiveness alone, but about processes that are meaningful, collaborative, and enduring.

From a kaupapa Māori perspective, **efficiency** can be defined by outcomes that build capacity and capability within iwi Māori to be a strong part of the resource management system. Therefore, efficiency is about:

- **Acting with Purpose and Integrity:** Making decisions and taking actions that align with tikanga and values, rather than prioritising speed or cost-cutting.

*Efficiency is working together with purpose and shared understanding, like whānau in the kitchen preparing a hākari – everyone knows their role, their strengths, and it all comes together*

- **Minimising Burden on Iwi and Hapū:** Recognising that iwi Māori have limited capacity and should not be forced to carry the load of poor processes. However, this should not be used as a reason to exclude them—early engagement, proper resourcing, and genuine collaboration create opportunities for meaningful partnership.
- **Investing in Long-Term Solutions:** Efficiency is not short-term gains but actions that create lasting benefits for iwi Māori and te taiao.

*Efficient outcomes today must also serve our mokopuna tomorrow*

- **Honouring Reciprocity** Ensuring iwi Māori are properly resourced and supported to engage, so the effort is shared fairly.

*Recognising the value of our time and knowledge, and resourcing us accordingly*

Based on that understanding, this report uses the following questions to analyse the efficiency of the Provisions through a kaupapa Māori lens:

1. How well have the Provisions facilitated collaborative and early engagement, while avoiding ‘last-minute’ or potentially tokenistic consultation?
2. How well have the Provisions promoted whakawhanaungatanga and the strengthening of trust and relationships between iwi Māori and Horizons?

3. Is there abundant capacity and capability within iwi Māori to implement these policies?
4. How well have Provisions allowed for long-term solutions that benefit iwi Māori and te taiao?



## 5 Analysis and Insights

This section uses the following criteria to analyse whether the Provisions have been effective and efficient in delivering the needs, aspirations, priorities and the unique context of iwi Māori within the region:

- **Awareness** – The level of understanding among iwi Māori regarding the *Te Ao Māori* provisions in the One Plan.
- **Application** – How effectively and efficiently the policies and methods are being applied.
- **Outcomes** – Whether the anticipated environmental results and objectives are being achieved.
- **Feedback** – What aspects are working well, what challenges exist, and where improvements may be needed.

It is important to note that the One Plan has been updated. The original ‘Chapter 2: Te Ao Māori’ no longer exists as a standalone section, with its provisions now integrated throughout the wider document. In each ‘relevant provisions’ box below, we reference the updated locations of those provisions to make them easier to find. We acknowledge that many people may be more familiar with the earlier version, where this content sat together in its own chapter.

### 5.1 How much awareness do iwi Māori have of the One Plan?

This part of the enquiry explored iwi awareness and understanding of the Provisions, and more broadly, how well the Plan reflects and responds to iwi Māori values. Levels of awareness varied significantly.

Some iwi Māori have been closely involved since the Plan was first developed, including participation in the submission process when the Plan was publicly notified. Others, particularly those with less regular interaction with HRC, had more limited familiarity with the details of the Plan or its implementation. More established iwi regularly utilise the Plan in the delivery of their mahi.

*I provided a verbal submission on the One Plan when it was first released, and much of the content of that submission remains relevant today.*

*The Resource Management Act and the One Plan have had minimal relevance to how [iwi name] operate. There has been no real opportunity to develop a deep understanding of these documents, and as a result, there is limited awareness of what they actually say or how they apply.*

*In the broader iwi probably not a lot of awareness of the existence of the chapter but because of [particular team within the iwi] it's kind of like their role to know about plans and stuff that affect the iwi, so they are they have to be aware of that chapter to fulfil the functions of their jobs.*

*I know it exists, but I don't really know what it says. All I know is that we have never felt like it reflects us.*

Iwi Māori identified two key factors that would strengthen their awareness and understanding of the Provisions: first, being directly involved in its development, having the opportunity to hold the pen themselves; and second, receiving intentional training tailored to their unique context. One iwi who had received training like this spoke highly of its value, noting that it deepened their understanding and ability to utilise the Provisions.

*Yup, they came and sat down with us, we had a wānanga, went through the whole thing. But we did request that, we asked them to come and we made sure they did it, so we do know that chapter and how we can use it.*

The Provisions are only as effective as the knowledge and confidence people have to use them. Building greater awareness and understanding among iwi Māori will require dedicated time, resourcing, and relationship-based approaches. Maintaining a living resource of examples and stories that show how the provisions have been applied in different contexts could be a powerful way to support iwi to see their value and use in practice.

There is a strong case to be made for supporting iwi Māori to develop their own legislation, statutes, and policies. Rather than attempting to integrate Māori values, knowledge, practices, and aspirations into existing Western frameworks, empowering iwi Māori to create their own approaches would more effectively address their unique needs. Examples such as Te Awa Tupua and Te Waiū-o-te-Ika demonstrate the potential of this approach for genuinely centering iwi Māori in resource management. These successes offer valuable insights for the HRC in ensuring policies and provisions genuinely put the health and wellbeing of te taiao at the centre of resource management.

## **5.2 How effective and efficient has the One Plan been in practice to deliver meaningful outcomes for iwi Māori?**

This section uses the evaluation framework questions set out in 4.1 and 4.2 to analyse how effective and efficient the Provisions have been from the perspective of iwi Māori. Section 5 below analyses the Provisions as a whole, rather than each individual provision. Appendix 3 provides an evaluative judgement on each Provision more specifically. These insights can support HRC in shaping future improvements to planning provisions.

### **5.2.1 How well have the provisions allowed for iwi and hapū to act as kaitiaki within the resource management system to uphold the mana of te taiao?**

Relevant provisions are:

RMIA-O1: Resource Management

1. To have regard to the mauri of natural and physical resources to enable hapū and iwi to provide for their social, economic and cultural wellbeing.

2. Kaitiakitanga must be given particular regard and the relationship of hapū and iwi with their ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu and other taonga (including wāhi tūpuna) must be recognised and provided for through resource management processes.

RMIA-P1: Hapū and iwi involvement in resource management

RMIA-P3: The mauri of water

RMIA-P4: Other resource management issues

RMIA-AER3: Improved wetland protection and restoration.

### **5.2.1.1 Insights**

**Insight 1.** Te Ao Māori values, issues, and provisions need to be embedded across the entire Plan in order to be effective, not restricted to a single chapter.

**Insight 2.** The effectiveness of the provisions is limited because they do not allow for Māori participation or influence on permitted, controlled or restricted discretionary activities, despite them sometimes having a significant impact on Māori values. Matters of control or discretion should still specify that activities could negatively impact Māori values and include ways for iwi to determine these impacts themselves.

**Insight 3.** CIA's and IMP's are an efficient way to support the role of tangata whenua as kaitiaki within the resource management system, but they are underutilised. Iwi and hapū have taken great care to express themselves in IMP's and/or EMP's and these should be a 'first port of call' for council and resource users to save time and repetition. CIAs are an efficient tool to identify and manage effects on cultural values, and should be utilised more often.

**Insight 4.** Empowering iwi Māori to carry out monitoring and enforcement in their respective rohe not only recognises their role as kaitiaki, but could provide a more efficient, locally grounded response to environmental breaches, rather than relying solely on stretched council resources.

### **5.2.1.2 Analysis**

Broad provisions fail to support context-specific kaitiakitanga.

Many iwi felt that there is a disconnect between the Provisions and how iwi engage with te taiao. The Provisions deal with issues at a regional level which does not account for local context to manage situations. That local context could include protection of particular taonga or other natural resources.

Feedback we received reflects the view that the Provisions lack authenticity and fail to empower iwi Māori in their role as kaitiaki within their own respective rohe. The Provisions are perceived as a 'homogenised' Māori perspective, ignoring iwi-specific values, needs, histories, and aspirations.

*The provisions are just Māori stuff - not tikanga-a-iwi, not mātauranga at place. It's one size fits all.*

*Our local context is different in every way – even how we interpret and uphold these concepts varies a lot. A blanket chapter to represent us all just isn't appropriate. We need to be able to write our own chapter, define these things for ourselves, and create provisions that reflect our specific context that people in our rohe have to uphold.*

#### Concepts of mauri and kaitiakitanga can support iwi to assert their position.

Some of the participants we spoke to acknowledged that the Provisions help reinforce and realise critical components, such as mauri and kaitiakitanga, that are central to upholding and protecting the mana of te taiao.

*So the way we approach projects, assessments, consents, whatever is we make up our own view on it and then we find all the legislation that supports our position and we often reference mauri and kaitiakitanga, the objectives of the one plan to support that... they're two concepts that are important to us, mauri is the like the health and well-being of the environment and kaitiakitanga is the ability to engage in these processes and be part of them so I feel like it does capture two key concepts, obviously I think those concepts should be built on and added to, but I wouldn't like to see those concepts retracted from the one plan.*

#### The provisions lack influence in smaller controlled activities.

One of the most significant challenges is that Māori concepts are only present in a small section of the Plan, rather than being embedded throughout. This becomes particularly problematic for smaller-scale or controlled activities, which may not be considered to have 'significant ecological effects' but can still have a deep impact on mauri and other principles that Māori hold in relation to the health and integrity of the environment. It gives the impression that Māori values only matter once the damage is severe—rather than being recognised as central to assessing all forms of resource use and environmental change.

*If there's any sort of lower level of consent activity status I personally think they're useless because those two concepts don't inform any part of*

*the plan or much of the plan that I can see so you know in a controlled activity status matters of control are never cultural values or mauri or anything like that. So it's only when it's like that higher level activity so obviously more damaging to the environment or for some reason it just doesn't quite meet the plan things that's when we've got the ability to use that chapter.*

The ability for the provisions to protect te taiao is dependent on Horizons ability and commitment to work with tangata whenua, as kaitiaki, to enforce them.

Although there are policies intended to protect te taiao, this does not always happen in practice. Some have reported serious breaches of environmental regulation, such as heavy machinery in waterways. And when iwi Māori have tried to uphold their roles as kaitiaki, this has not always been supported by HRC.

One example shared during wānanga, was from an iwi who experienced significant pushback from HRC to hold companies accountable for damage that was occurring in a wāhi taonga. Despite having partnered with HRC in the past to hold a different resource user accountable in a similar case, Horizons declined to act. The position of iwi was that supporting each other to take action to protect taonga was critical to upholding the role of iwi as kaitiaki, and HRC's role as Treaty partners.

*Horizons took 5 months to notify us, and the critical wind-down period was completely missed. They were extremely rigid in this process and communications were seriously lacking. They were ignorant of our knowledge of the affected area and there were limited responses to our information requests. There appeared to be a strong 'unwilling to cooperate with iwi' from them that we had not experienced before.*

In this case, the Provisions in the Plan and the relationship with HRC were not useful in supporting the iwi to protect their awa, despite their best efforts.

There are other cases where HRC has worked with iwi to prosecute or act and have had great success, so potentially, this is a circumstantial issue rather than a policy one. However, a clear and transparent process for all these matters would be appreciated by iwi Māori.

*I don't think it [a process for supporting iwi to take regulatory action] exists. I think there is a huge gap there, and it could be resource issues on their side, and its resource issues on both sides.*

*We can do all of the talk at this higher level with [Māori liason team], and their boss, you know, and they understand, but they're not at the coalface. It's the ones that are at the coalface that need to understand those, our visions and aspirations, in our books, in our documents, because if they don't understand, how are they supposed to work with Māori?*

HRC have a large rohe to cover and it is impossible for them to be everywhere at once. On the other hand, iwi Māori spend a significant amount of time out in their communities, on the ground and in the environment. Multiple participants in this evaluation reported witnessing members of the public breaching the law by directly discharging contaminants into their awa or by cutting down native vegetation. These activities have a direct impact on iwi Māori, through degrading the environment and therefore, degrading their livelihoods. Iwi representatives stated that in many of these circumstances, HRC didn't have the time or capacity to respond, or by the time they could it was too late, so people are getting away with such behaviour. Having provisions to enable kaitiaki to have enforcement authority at the ground level and setting up processes and procedures to ensure this is done well<sup>10</sup>, could be a way that the provisions better allow for iwi and hapū to act as kaitiaki within the resource management system.

#### CIA's and IMPs are highly valued but under-utilised

Two mechanisms that were highly valued by iwi Māori are Cultural Impact Assessments (CIA) and Iwi Management Plans (IMP), as they have statutory weight and are embedded within the resource management system.

*Policies and plans are only as effective as the way they are interpreted and the level to which they are known and understood by the community.*

CIAs and IMPs support iwi Māori in their role as kaitiaki, by allowing them to define their perspectives, priorities, positions, and values, and to offer direction to resource users on how to acknowledge and embed them into processes and activities. They can be used by iwi Māori when they are directly engaging with the resource management system, such as going to court or appealing a resource consent. It is also a way to articulate bottom lines so they can be considered when decisions are being made.

*CIAs are awesome, for us and developers. They allow people to connect culturally and can shift attitude and behaviour—especially the recommendations. Developers actually like to read those.*

*It's used as a means to back up our decisions. You know, council's must take into account iwi management plans, therefore, yeah, I suppose it's just that extra layer of, um, certainty that we're clear on what our bottom lines are, they're clear on what our bottom lines are and there's substance to the decision.*

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<sup>10</sup> 'Well' means that kaitiaki are equipped with a clear understanding of relevant regulations and how to respond appropriately to breaches. This includes training in conflict resolution, facilitation, and mediation, so that enforcement strengthens relationships and builds mutual understanding between Māori and the wider community.

*We love our iwi management plan. We took a lot of time in developing, we talked with our people. It represents us.*

*They're a good resource and tool for Māori, but the level to which they are taken by Horizons and used and put into practice is really lacking. It's not reducing their effectiveness. Iwi management plans have weight under the Resource Management Act. So whenever we do a cultural impact assessment or a thing, we can refer to our iwi management plan and beef up our argument, which is an immensely good thing. But that takes iwi to implement it. So at the moment, the iwi management plans, iwi are implementing themselves, not councils.*

Despite the value of CIAs and IMPs, iwi Māori feel they are not well understood, and they are underutilised. Iwi Māori expressed that they feel HRC don't genuinely invest in understanding IMPs and working with iwi Māori to determine how the council can support the use and implementation of them.

*So that's why we created... My uncles and aunties created this environmental management plan back in 2008. Because it encompassed all of our rivers that flow through our whenua. And so they've got it, it's in with Horizons. It's been in there for the last three years, but nothing is... Like a lot of the EMPs in there, they're sitting documents in there, and they're just not being utilised.*

*We write these words on a page - but what difference do they make on the ground?*

*The plans are there, but no ones using them. We're sick of repeating ourselves.*

If HRC dedicated intentional time to sit down with each iwi and work through their IMP, testing likely scenarios or situations, and working out what implementation genuinely looks like for different stakeholders, this would support alignment and reduce barriers or challenges further down the line.

## **5.2.2 How well have the provisions created tangible outcomes for te taiao?**

In order for the Provisions in the Plan to be considered effective, they must be generating positive outcomes for te taiao. These outcomes need to be tangible, through the experience and observations of tangata whenua.

Relevant provisions are:

RMIA-P3: The mauri of water

RMIA-P4: Other resource management issues

RMIA-M5: Regional Hapū and Iwi Projects

RMIA-AER3: Improved wetland protection and restoration.

RMIA-AER4: Improved working relationships with hapū and iwi to achieve mutually acceptable environmental outcomes.

### 5.2.2.1 Insights

**Insight 5.** The plan is less effective at achieving tangible outcomes for te Taiao because it does not address underlying value systems, address unequal power dynamics or shift systems thinking.

**Insight 6.** The plan would be more effective if it enabled iwi Māori and Māori experts and practitioners to be embedded into decision-making and processes

**Insight 7.** The Plan has been less effective at achieving tangible outcomes for te taiao because it does not support Māori to define their own priorities and lead projects on their own terms, at the marae and hapū level.

**Insight 8.** Initial council funding is effective for kickstarting tangible outcomes for te taiao. However, initiatives must be designed for long-term financial sustainability, including building iwi capacity to sustain momentum. Strengthening the Māori economy is key to enabling this.

### 5.2.2.2 Analysis

Funding projects, particularly at the marae and hapū level, is important and effective

Tangible outcomes for te taiao are most evident when iwi Māori have had the resources and autonomy to lead their own projects. Funding provided by HRC has enabled whānau and iwi-led initiatives (Table 1). The examples shared during this evaluation process were native planting, wetland restoration projects, tuna surveys and the development of taiao strategies.

*They have funded some of our restoration projects and we have seen positive changes in the health of our awa as a result.*

*They're paying one of our own to do stuff in the awa, so that's awesome.*

*Where our people lead kaupapa, we see impacts.*

While iwi authorities often lead in higher-level resource management processes, it is at the marae and hapū level where whānau are ready to get out and do the mahi. Supporting marae and hapū to identify their own priorities and develop

projects on their terms is where the most tangible outcomes for te taiao are likely to be realised.

Table 1. Ngā Puna Rau o Rangitīkei have, with support from Horizon's, worked to collectively protect and restore the Rangitīkei awa. This vignette shares some of the achievements and challenges of their journey.

#### Ngā Puna Rau o Rangitīkei: Collective action and putting the needs to te taiao first

With funding from Te Mana o te Wai and Horizons Regional Council, a collective of eleven hapū and iwi came together to establish Ngā Pae o Rangitīkei, with a shared vision to protect and restore the health and wellbeing of the Rangitīkei river, from source to sea. A key focus was restoration, with a *“goal to fence and plant as much of the Rangitīkei and it's tributaries as possible”*.

Horizons funding enabled the collective to take early action, supporting operational needs like kai, travel, and hui. It also provided a platform for hapū and iwi to identify shared environmental priorities and start building momentum toward larger restoration outcomes. This collective *“was initially an effective and valuable forum for engagement, allowing Horizons to interact with a consolidated iwi voice rather than engaging seperately with 22 different marae”*. However, over time, capacity constraints, unequal representation, and shifting political dynamics created challenges. So, the collective evolved into a smaller group, Ngā Puna Rau o Rangitīkei, which continued to maintain momentum towards freshwater protection and restoration. A major achievement of this collective, has been the development of *Ki Uta, Ki Tai, Ngā Puna Rau o Rangitīkei*, the Rangitīkei Catchment Strategy and Action Plan, which provides the essential context, values, needs, and priorities, building a practical framework and roadmap to guide activities and decisions along the Rangitīkei awa.

Another key initiative was the 253 project, where a series of interviews captured the kōrero, experiences, and observations of those connected to the river. *“As part of this project we 253, a series of interviews carried out to capture the kōrero, stories, and experiences of those living in the Rangitīkei, including changes that kaumatua and kuia had experienced in the health of wai in their lifetime.”* This work was critical in capturing the whakapapa, mātauranga, and kōrero tuku iho which is essential to inform freshwater policies, although participants acknowledged that *“this hasn't necessarily progressed to that stage”*.

The early progress made through Ngā Pae o Rangitīkei and Ngā Puna Rau highlights what is possible when funding, trust, and iwi-led leadership are in place. However, it also reinforces that without sustained resourcing and structural support, there is a risk that hard-earned momentum can stall. This experience provides valuable insights for Horizons about the realities iwi and hapū face and the importance of long-term investment to realise collective freshwater aspirations.

#### Administrative demands are getting in the way of tangible outcomes

Although, the provisions have often supported iwi Māori in resource management, many participants noted that a significant amount of time and resource gets used up on processes and paperwork, and there is doubt and frustration on what difference it is actually making for te taiao.

*Too much time is spent inside talking about it, and we just need some tools and resources to support us to get out there and do it, that's our role, they just need to hand over the power and control so we can truly work on restoring the mauri of our wai.*

In other contexts, HRC has provided funding and granted autonomy and flexibility to iwi, enabling them to lead their own projects in their own way. In most instances, this is having a positive impact. However, in other cases, the limited capacity of marae, hapū, and iwi to manage projects, provide the necessary administrative support, and plan for sustainability after initial funding has expired has presented the biggest challenges to achieving tangible outcomes.

*It's good to be given resource, and also autonomy to use it in a way that aligns best to our needs and aspirations.*

*I suppose they keep just dishing out cash and then, like, leaving people to it, whereas I suppose if they actually got some trusted Māori experts like yourself, to come and work with hapū, that would be far more effective. It's the way in which, yeah, I mean, that's what they did with the Oranga Wai consultation. They just dished out a whole lot of cash and then got to the end of the process and didn't get anything that they needed. I was like, well, that's because you didn't get any expertise to, like, coordinate it.*

*They needed to give that money to iwi, and then they needed to actually provide some expertise to iwi to coordinate it all and, like, put it into a proper thing. And so they don't actually have that expertise currently. It goes back to needing technical mātauranga science expertise across the region, that are specifically there to support us, to build capability and capacity in our people and be a conduit between the council and iwi at place.*

The type of support iwi Māori often need isn't always what HRC can provide, particularly when it comes to working alongside iwi Māori on the ground to help build their own capacity, infrastructure, skills, and resources. This kind of support is essential if iwi Māori are to lead their own kaupapa independently, without relying on HRC. Iwi Māori want to see HRC actively facilitate connections between whānau and experienced Māori practitioners in areas such as policy, planning, ecology, and strategy. This would support whānau to build capacity in ways that are meaningful to them, and ensure the knowledge and benefits are embedded within their communities.

*I guess if you, in some areas, yeah, I know they are supporting some good kaupapa, but they don't have the capacity or resource to support us to care for the mauri of wai in our own rohe, and yet we are the ones best equipped to do it... and we are doing everything we can*

### Progress feels limited when the root causes of degradation remain unchanged

Iwi Māori often find it disheartening when they are putting everything they have into the resource management system, writing submissions, showing up in court, and doing so much on the ground, but the root cause of the environmental degradation, which is largely perceived as agriculture, horticulture, and land development, has not changed. As outlined in the context piece earlier in this

report, these industries hold a lot of power and influence, and iwi Māori find them hard, and at times unsafe, to work with.

*They [HRC] don't value it they don't see the value in integrating it into their programs, they don't understand it so they couldn't possibly value it because they don't understand it, yeah and thirdly they didn't want to allow any high level political influence of mana whenua values in the One Plan because they need to keep their farmers happy*

*It's not really a question of what anymore. It's a question of how, and the how is being overtaken by corporations and big business interests and the old regime, I suppose.*

A key issue raised is the different value system that are driving iwi Māori, farmers, other industry, and HRC. Iwi Māori emphasise that values are not just abstract ideas to be learned, they are lived, embodied, and guide everyday decisions. However, other players in the resource management system often do not recognise the significance of cultural values, as they do not see an economic benefit from acknowledging them. During wānanga, one person shared an experience where they were given an opportunity to sit down with an individual who held a lot of power and influence in the farming community, who said 'I'm not actually interested in your cultural values, they have no value to me, I can't sell that or make money off that'. This illustrates a deeper tension within the resource management system.

The te ao Māori provisions may support Māori involvement and values on paper, but their real-world impact is constrained when the dominant value system, driven by economic priorities, remains unchanged. Without shifting the underlying drivers of degradation, even well-intentioned provisions will struggle to achieve meaningful outcomes for te taiao.

*Some of the content looks great on paper... but it doesn't work in practice. There's no teeth.*

*The One Plan doesn't actually enforce much at all. The fines are not substantial... \$1,000 for an effluent overflow doesn't reflect the true cost of environmental damage. The repercussions are inadequate, and much of the enforcement is left to Horizons' discretion, meaning iwi have little influence over how breaches are addressed.*

Iwi Māori acknowledged that farming and food production are vital to Aotearoa and were clear that this is not at odds with te ao Māori. For mai rānō, whānau, hapū, and iwi have relied on mahinga kai, not just as a means of survival, but as a way of life that maintains balance with te taiao. During this evaluation, iwi Māori highlighted that when kai production is grounded in the right values, it can be sustainable and regenerative. The challenge lies in shifting the current system within the Horizon's region, where land, wealth, and influence are concentrated

in dominant farming families who hold long-standing political and economic power.

The solution is being part of the journey.

When iwi Māori are involved in resource management processes, particularly around resource consent conditions, greater outcomes have been achieved for te taiao. One example is through iwi Māori having influence on the practices that would be used in a development and what measures needed to be in place to protect cultural values, which were largely grounded in mahinga kai. This involvement resulted in a tangible improvement in the health of te taiao, through the restoration of traditional pipi beds.

*Our pipi beds have come back. And during development works, we procured funding for cultural monitoring, for the duration of their work, so we can actually monitor change.*

### **5.2.3 How well have the provisions reflected local context, whakapapa, and histories of iwi Māori in resource management outcomes?**

Relevant provisions are:

RMIA-P2: Wāhi tapu, wāhi tūpuna and other sites of significance

RMIA-M2: Identification of Sites of Significance [Target: To approach iwi in the Region regarding participation in the method by June 2012.]

RMIA-M3: Treaty of Waitangi – Claims [Target: As far as reasonably practicable, Treaty settlement measures will be implemented in accordance with hapū and iwi timeframe aspirations.]

RMIA-M4: Code of Practice for Wāhi Tapu and Wāhi Tūpuna Protection and Discovery. [Target: To develop a code of practice by 2011.]

RMIA-AER1: Increased involvement of Māori in achieving environmental outcomes across the Region.

RMIA-AER2: Discoveries of wāhi tapu and wāhi tūpuna are dealt with appropriately in accordance with tikanga Māori.

#### **5.2.3.1 Insights**

**Insight 9.** The plan is not effective at providing for local context. This should be improved by decision-makers having a deep understanding of local context and whakapapa. There is a strong desire for decisions to genuinely reflect iwi histories, aspirations, and te ao Māori. Building this understanding requires time,

meaningful connection, and investment in local iwi-led training and wānanga to embed knowledge of place, language, and tikanga.

### 5.2.3.2 Analysis

Whilst the Provisions acknowledge that iwi Māori have unique context, whakapapa, and histories, they do not adequately reflect what those local contexts are. This is also discussed in section 5.2.1.1. While iwi Māori agree with many of the issues, values, and objectives included in the Plan, they are expressed in broad and generic terms that do not effectively capture the depth of meaning they hold in specific rohe.

There is a clear desire among iwi Māori to see these shared values articulated through their own stories, histories, and lived realities. Without this, the Provisions remain disconnected from place and people, and do not support resource users in understanding or engaging meaningfully with mana whenua in their region.

*Yes, we do hold those values, but the way they are written and articulated in the One Plan is so generic, it has no substance or weight, it does not embody what they mean to us, and therefore, it feels very tokenistic.*

While the values, issues, and objectives in the Plan are broadly supported by iwi Māori, there is a clear tension in how they are expressed. Many of the ideas iwi Māori hold are not easily translated into the formats expected by the planning system. The need to define, frame, and justify cultural knowledge in a way that fits within Western decision-making structures can feel deeply uncomfortable, and in some cases, diminish the essence of that knowledge.

*How do we define mauri and how do we define its deterioration... I suppose those are the difficulties that iwi have to define and yeah provide context, which feels so wrong so many ways, because you're forced into describing something that is, well not indescribable, but maybe hard to describe in Reo pākeha, or whakaaro pākeha.*

The planning system relies on things that can be written down, quantified, or evidenced in linear ways. But for iwi Māori, key knowledge sits in pūrākau, lived experience, and the relationships between people and place. This creates a mismatch between what iwi Māori know and how that knowledge is expected to be presented.

Despite this, iwi Māori acknowledge that IMPs and CIAs can help to intentionally assert and articulate their own context, values, priorities, and histories into resource management outcomes. These tools enable iwi to communicate in a way that decision-makers can engage with, while remaining grounded in context.

*I think that's the value that iwi management plans, iwi settlement legislation, provides in the context of backing up decisions that other people might criticise... or actually, based on legislation, based on iwi management plan, this is the right reason why the decision is made. [Because] how decisive can decision makers be when there's nothing for them to lean on. So, as iwi Māori actually writing these and putting them on paper and having them in place is critical.*

*We'd love them [Horizons] to come here so we can present and work through our Iwi Management Plan with them.*

For the Plan to effectively reflect local context, etc., a deeper understanding and active awareness of these documents are necessary. This includes council staff, resource users, consultants, and stakeholders reading relevant iwi planning documents before engaging. Doing so helps ensure that whakapapa, history, and local context are understood from the outset, rather than as an afterthought. It also signals that HRC values the effort iwi have put into articulating their position. Beyond this, background research, such as reading Treaty settlement documents, iwi websites, or previous submissions, is an essential starting point for building respectful and informed relationships.

Over time, iwi Māori seek to develop their own legal policy instruments, as exemplified by the Te Awa Tupua (Whanganui River Claims Settlement) Act 2017, which take precedence in law, ensuring that their context, values, and aspirations are genuinely prioritised in decision-making.

#### **5.2.4 How well have the provisions allowed for tikanga and mātauranga Māori to be reflected in decision making?**

Relevant provisions are:

RMIA-P2: Wāhi tapu, wāhi tūpuna and other sites of significance

RMIA-M2: Identification of Sites of Significance [Target: To approach iwi in the Region regarding participation in the method by June 2012.]

RMIA-M3: Treaty of Waitangi – Claims [Target: As far as reasonably practicable, Treaty settlement measures will be implemented in accordance with hapū and iwi timeframe aspirations.]

RMIA-M4: Code of Practice for Wāhi Tapu and Wāhi Tūpuna Protection and Discovery. [Target: To develop a code of practice by 2011.]

RMIA-AER1: Discoveries of wāhi tapu and wāhi tūpuna are dealt with appropriately in accordance with tikanga Māori.

RMIA-AER2: Increased involvement of Māori in achieving environmental outcomes across the Region.

### 5.2.4.1 Insights

- Insight 10. Effectively protecting sites of significance requires more than mapping coordinates, it demands an intimate, place-based approach.** Mapping location points alone is not sufficient to effectively safeguard wāhi tapu and wāhi tūpuna. Genuine protection comes through site visits, kōrero, and wānanga with iwi and hapū, allowing deeper connection and understanding of the place beyond its physical location.
- Insight 11. Cultural monitoring will strengthening environmental management.** Current data and reporting often miss the early warning signs and holistic changes that are observed by tangata whenua. There is a strong opportunity for HRC to partner more actively with iwi Māori, by resourcing iwi-led cultural monitoring, building Māori technical capability, and embedding cultural monitoring observations and findings into decision-making alongside Western science – not secondary to it. Doing so would create a richer, more responsive evidence base to guide more effective outcomes for te taiao.
- Insight 12. In order to be effective, resource management process must make time and space for proper incorporation of tikanga and mātauranga.** The tangible lived aspects of tikanga and mātauranga cannot be captured in spreadsheets or generic processes. Provisions and processes must recognise that the correct knowledge holders, such as kaumātua and kuia, and processes, such as whānau and marae wānanga, must be prioritised.

### 5.2.4.2 Analysis

Embedding tikanga into decision making can support the physical and spiritual health and wellbeing of te taiao, whilst simultaneously empowering tangata whenua to be actively engaged in resource management. Tikanga and mātauranga are relevant to all areas of resource management, providing a set of processes and protocols, supported by a knowledge base that is grounded in place, to guide decisions and actions in a way that puts the needs of te taiao, physically and spiritually, first.

Positive examples exist but are inconsistent and relationship dependent.

The Provisions acknowledge tikanga and mātauranga Māori, yet their reflection in processes and decision making is highly variable. Whilst acknowledging that intentions for proactive engagement exist, iwi Māori consistently reported gaps between intent and practice. Often, council's attempts to ensure tikanga and mātauranga informs decisions, feels superficial to iwi Māori, who have expressed frustration from feeling continually reactive rather than actively involved.

*They say they'll protect and recognise wāhi tapū but the actual mechanisms to protect them are weak*

Despite these challenges, there are also clear examples where meaningful, early engagement and relational approaches have resulted in successful integration of tikanga and mātauranga Māori. In one example, the early involvement of the iwi significantly influenced infrastructure design to protect an important stream, ensuring ecological and cultural connections remained intact.

*We told them, don't touch that stream, because you can't disrupt those connections under the bottom. And they listened. They put it over instead.*

In another example, a private organisations proactive engagement with that same iwi demonstrated the benefits of aligning development with tikanga and mātauranga Māori. Their intention to build a genuine relationship, and subsequent decision to listen and adapt plans based on iwi guidance, had a positive influence on their development.

*The result was a development that acknowledged cultural connections, upheld corporate social responsibility, and was both economically and ecologically sustainable.*

These examples show that genuine relational engagement, rather than compliance-based approaches, significantly enhances decision-making quality and outcomes for all parties. It also highlights how critical it is for iwi to come to the table with solutions and tangible actions, rather than resentment and push-back.

#### A database will not protect wāhi tapu and other sites of significance.

The Provisions promote the identification and recording of wāhi tapu into databases held by the council or the iwi. This is based on the premise that by knowing where these places are, HRC can prevent harmful activities from occurring on or near them. However, this alone is not enough, nor does it acknowledge the whakapapa, mauri, and kōrero tuku iho associated with these places that equally needs to be protected. Recording wāhi tapu in a database does not convey meaning or story, therefore it doesn't feel right for iwi Māori.

*It won't work to build a database with names and locations... because that means nothing. We have to go to these places and tell our stories so that they feel and understand their significance, that's the way we want to share our wāhi tapu.*

Taking council, stakeholders, and private industries to these sites to better understand why they are special, was highlighted as pivotal for all success stories that were shared.

*I think what was critical was that... we went for a site visit and we taught, we gave them a history of this area. Cause it's a site of significance... the outcome has been incredible. That wāhi is looked after, we worked together to do it, and now our relationship is stronger because of it.*

A more effective way to protect wāhi tapu is to move beyond databases and enable better collaboration. HRC staff need to spend more time out on the ground with iwi Māori, visiting these sites and taking a genuine love, care, and interest for the significance they hold. Currently iwi Māori do not feel comfortable sharing the location of all their wāhi tapu, wāhi, tūpuna, and wāhi taonga with the council, without this being a part of the process.

*We are working on our own database, because we don't feel safe allowing them to hold all that data. There needs to be better protocols around it. We want them to come to us first, because there are wāhi tapu that they don't know about, but we will share when it is needed. But we want to share that in a way that upholds the mauri of those places, you know, there is deep tikanga around wāhi tapu, and we have to be there, be a part of the mahi, to ensure that stuffs upheld. The more we do it together, the better our processes and stuff will get, so it's just about both being willing to put in that time and commitment to each other when it comes to this stuff.*

An effective way to protect wāhi tapu is to provide practical support, resources, training, and technology to iwi Māori, so that they can maintain authority over their information and sites, but also respond to HRC when needed.

*They send us waypoints and stuff, like our data that they have in their system, but we don't even have anything to open it in so it's not very useful.*

*We go up and do karakia, uphold the tikanga component of their activities, but that's off our own back, we bear the costs and resourcing of that because it is critical to us, but that would be a barrier for some others for doing the same in their own*

Another person explained that accidental discovery protocols have been disregarded when bones were found. For example in one case, the landowner contacted the museum about them, but iwi were never informed. The person further explained they have had limited experience in being a part of the process when kōiwi are discovered, stating that 'people have found kōiwi and have kept them stored in the garages and stuff for years. There isn't a general respect for the importance of tikanga and kawa around kōiwi'.

*Māori are the last to hear about things when they are discovered*

The significance of wāhi tapu also extends beyond the moment of discovery. Protecting these places includes sustaining the rituals, practices, and

connections associated with them. It's not just about fencing or mapping them, it's about revitalising the relationship people have with them. This includes growing public and iwi awareness through education, signage, and wānanga, but determining the right approach is always context-specific and must be shaped by iwi.

Iwi Māori need time to respond to requests from HRC and developers in a way that is consistent with tikanga. Some need support to ensure processes for upholding tikanga are clear and strong.

Upholding tikanga isn't just about getting a sign off, it's about allowing the right processes, people, and values guide the kaupapa from start to finish. The provisions of the Plan sometimes assume iwi Māori can immediately respond and deliver, but this overlooks the uneven realities on the ground. Additional resourcing, time, and relationship-based support are needed to get some iwi into a position where they can confidently execute and uphold those tikanga-based processes.

Particular elders or individuals within each hapū and iwi hold the deep cultural knowledge, lived experience, and spiritual connection needed to guide how tikanga and mātauranga are upheld. These individuals aren't always the ones front-facing in the resource management space, but their role is critical. Iwi representatives that are engaging with council, planners, and resource users must stay closely connected with their kaumātua and kuia, constantly checking in and ensuring they are guiding and overseeing decisions. This protects the integrity of tikanga and ensures that spiritual safety, accountability, and cultural alignment are maintained.

*We might have different views on stuff, but we come together and talk it all through with Uncle. That protection and guidance is really important.*

There are also different perspectives that exist across whānau, marae, hapū, and iwi, which require them to have the time and space to wānanga and kōrero. Understanding how critical these internal processes are, and making space for them, is key. It cannot be rushed or sidelined.

Many iwi stated that whilst they do want formal protocols and procedures to be in place, not all currently have the capacity or internal infrastructure to operationalise these expectations consistently.

In other cases, iwi Māori are already actively embedded in projects and decision-making processes, contributing to the protection of wāhi tapu and wāhi taonga through proactive and collaborative design changes.

*How do you reclaim that as a people too? If I'm looking at the maunga, the establishment of ski fields... is it still a wāhi tapu? Are we upholding those practices? Are others?*

With the degradation of the environment and the impact of historic decisions, some iwi are still in the process of identifying or reclaiming these sacred sites. Protecting wāhi tapu is just as much about reconnecting spiritually and culturally as it is about regulatory mechanisms. That reconnection process and the tikanga it encompasses, must be respected, not simplified into a check-box.

### Cultural monitoring programmes are effective ways to embed tikanga and mātauranga into resource management

Iwi Māori have a strong desire to monitor the health and changes of their environment in ways that reflect their values, using tikanga and mātauranga as the foundation. This has largely taken shape through the development of cultural health monitoring programmes—tools that allow iwi to document, validate, and share what they already know and observe, based on generations of lived experience and intimate connection with place. For many, this is more than data collection, it's a way of evidencing change in a format that speaks both to iwi and to the resource management system.

Cultural monitoring plays a critical role in embedding a te ao Māori worldview in environmental management, and iwi see it as a central part of how they want to participate and lead. Iwi Māori involved in the evaluation spoke strongly about how important this is and how highly they value it. The Plan does contain a specific provision for cultural monitoring, but there was a shared sense of uncertainty and questioning around what HRC has done in practice to bring this to life.

Iwi are at different stages in this journey. With some having a fully established team who regularly carry out monitoring, which is embedded into consent conditions and large-scale developments.

*We are supported to use our cultural tool and are paid for our work.*

*Our cultural tool is registered under Heritage NZ, so they call us up and we can go out to sites and use it, and our whānau can access it and use it too.*

*We get to go out with Horizons when they do their monitoring, to oversee the cultural and spiritual stuff, so that's good. But really, we would like to be the ones doing the monitoring ourselves.*

In some cases, HRC has played a key role in supporting iwi to get started, particularly through funding. But many have developed their tools and frameworks independently, or continued them after HRC's funding ran out. In some cases, kaupapa Māori monitoring had to be paused for that very reason. Consistent support is needed to build on the desire and momentum from iwi Māori to ensure this becomes a core and valued part of the system, not just a one-off project.

Iwi Māori have expressed a strong desire to take a leading role in environmental monitoring within their rohe, not just alongside council, but as the primary kaitiaki. While some iwi and hapū are already undertaking kaupapa Māori monitoring and have taiao practitioners and ‘boots on the ground’ who are doing taiao work, the aspiration is to be fully resourced and empowered to carry out statutory monitoring functions currently held by the council. This is a significant shift, requiring time, support, and investment in building technical skills. However, it offers enormous potential, creating iwi-led employment pathways, embedding tikanga and mātauranga in practice, and delivering robust, culturally grounded data that reflects both science and whakapapa.

Genuine understanding of te ao Māori is critical to ensuring tikanga and mātauranga can be reflected in the resource management system

One significant barrier identified by iwi Māori is the limited genuine understanding by councils and stakeholders of the Māori worldview. This limited understanding often leads to superficial integration of tikanga and mātauranga Māori, weakening the Provisions' effectiveness. This opinion is also discussed in previous sections.

*They don't need to have an opinion on Māori worldview, but they need to understand it.*

*We've learned what you've given us. Now you need to learn what we're giving you.*

*Being a Western view, it's hard for them to comprehend a Māori worldview in our EMPs.*

This lack of understanding contributes to mistrust, which weakens relationships between iwi and council. Without trust, iwi Māori are reluctant to share culturally sensitive information, which in turn hampers effective decision-making.

*The level of their ability to address our issues at the moment is actually dependent on the level of information that we're willing to give them... and we're not willing to give information because the relationship's not there.*

Improving councils' understanding of tikanga and mātauranga Māori requires intentional relationship-building, training, and structured embedding of the Māori worldview into decision-making frameworks. Addressing this knowledge gap directly improves relationships and decision-making effectiveness, creating positive outcomes for both the environment and iwi Māori. One suggestion, is a thorough evaluation of the One Plan through a Te Tiriti o Waitangi lens, as well as iwi-led training targeted to council. These ideas are discussed in more depth in Section 5.2.6.

## 5.2.5 How well have the provisions facilitated collaborative and early engagement, while avoiding 'last-minute' or deemed tokenistic consultation.

Relevant provisions are:

RMIA-M10: Resource Consent Processes [Target: Ongoing.]

RMIA-AER4: Improved working relationships with hapū and iwi to achieve mutually acceptable environmental outcomes.

### 5.2.5.1 Insights

**Insight 13.** The provisions will be more effective if early, meaningful engagement occurs. Good communication is rooted in strong, genuine relationships between iwi Māori and HRC. Building this means creating a culture where early, informal contact — like picking up the phone to check in, share updates, or seek input — is normal, not formal. Even without all the answers, simple acts of connection build trust, strengthen collaboration, and lead to more meaningful engagement around decision-making.

### 5.2.5.2 Analysis

The evaluation revealed a clear and persistent gap in the effectiveness and application of the Provisions regarding early and collaborative engagement. While some attempts have been made by HRC to improve the timelines of iwi Māori involvement, these efforts are inconsistent and often fall short of expectations. Whilst one iwi spoke really highly of their relationships with Horizons, many iwi experiences indicate that engagement typically happens too late, limiting their ability to influence decisions meaningfully and uphold tikanga appropriately.

*We only seem to be involved when things have gone seriously wrong.*

*We have an awesome relationship, they ring us and let us know about what's going on. We have worked really hard to have that relationship.*

There was a common theme that HRC's engagement tends toward last-minute or reactive. This leaves little room for genuine kōrero about key issues or for understanding how decisions may impact iwi Māori. Moreover, a standardised or 'one-size-fits-all' approach often undermines the local context and specificity that iwi Māori require.

*I think they have tried more with their engagement to get us involved, but the homogenised approach is so wrong. You can't bring everyone together and expect them to give you all you need to know; these*

*conversations and resource management discussions need to happen at place, in local context, and within our own rohe.*

Iwi noted a lack of confidence in HRC's commitment to diligent processes, particularly regarding wāhi taonga and environmental incidents. Iwi engagement is perceived as largely reactive rather than proactive, with iwi only being approached when issues become critical. This significantly reduces the influence and agency of iwi Māori in the resource management system, and reduces the effectiveness of the Provisions seeking to involve them and uphold tikanga.

As outlined earlier (see Section 5.2.1.1 and Section 5.2.4.1), iwi Māori consistently express that current engagement and resource management practices are too reactive, limiting their ability to shape outcomes in a meaningful way. While the provisions enable some participation after consent applications are lodged, they do not support the early, proactive engagement needed to avoid tokenism and meet iwi expectations. Strengthening the methods to enable iwi involvement before applications are submitted would better reflect the intent of the Provisions and create space for more culturally aligned and collaborative outcomes.

## **5.2.6 How well have the provisions promoted whakawhanaungatanga to strengthen trusted relationships between iwi/hapū and Horizons?**

Relevant provisions and AER are:

RMIA-M1: Memoranda of Partnership (MoP) [Target: To develop and implement at least three MOP by 2010].

RMIA-M7: Web-Based Iwi Contacts Database [Target: Complete by 2009].

RMIA-M8: Joint Management Agreements [Target: To investigate options where opportunities arise.]

RMIA-M10: Resource Consent Processes.

RMIA-AER2: Increased involvement of Māori in achieving environmental outcomes across the Region.

RMIA-AER3: Improved working relationships with hapū and iwi to achieve mutually acceptable environmental outcomes.

### **5.2.6.1 Insights**

**Insight 14.** Developing a clear strategy to strengthen relationships between iwi and Horizons would provide a foundation for more enduring, trusted relationships. This could support not only everyday engagement, but also critical processes like notifications, plan

reviews, and conflict resolution, ensuring partnerships are actively lived and continuously strengthened over time.

### **5.2.6.2 Analysis**

#### For Māori, relationships are a long-term commitment, not just part of the job

While many iwi Māori hold partnership agreements with Horizons, they have varying view on how those agreements have been upheld. Most partnership agreements were written some time ago and the people who signed them aren't around anymore. Some iwi also consider that their perceptions and Horizon's perceptions of what living those agreements looks like. Some iwi suggested a review is needed, and more accountability and evaluation is needed.

*The Māori liaison people are good, they get it, they get us.*

*We uphold our part, but for Horizons, I think it is just a piece of paper that sits on the shelf. I don't know if they even know what's in it, and if they do, they obviously don't know what it looks like in practice, like those things we set out to, I guess, define how the partnership is gonna look.*

*There's been no check in, like, how are we doing [with regards to MoP], are we doing what we said we would. So it doesn't really carry much weight.*

*We have an awesome relationship. They ring us if there is anything we need to know about. But, you know, we have worked really hard for that, it didn't just happen overnight.*

*Yeah I think we have one [partnership agreement] but for us a relationship is practice, not on paper, either way, its nowhere near as good as it should be, but they definitely are trying.*

Some iwi Māori expressed that the frequent staff turnover, coupled with complex iwi Māori structures and a lack of long-term commitment have hindered the ability to strengthen relationship.

#### Shifts in internal resourcing and a perception of siloed teams within HRC has a negative impact

Changes in personnel over time has meant that even if agreements or groups are formed, these need to be re-established whenever new people come into roles at HRC. Changes in staff disrupt continuity, meaning iwi need to repeatedly educate and establish new relationships with staff about their whakapapa, history and tikanga. This hinders the ability to develop trusted and mutual relationships between organisations and restricts the effectiveness of Provisions and agreements to achieve environmental outcomes. For example, there is a perception that the recent change in government has led to a shift in how Horizons engage or partner with iwi on outcomes.

*Relationship with HRC has been good – but in the past 12 months there have been a huge change in staff and that has been really detrimental to the relationship. You lose so much context when someone comes in three quarters through – there are several key relationships that have all changed. This has had a huge impact on our relationship and how the programme works*

### Engagement should be with the right people, not just the easiest to reach

HRC staff do not always have a good understanding of the structures of local marae, hapū and iwi, which although can be complex, is better understood through whakawhanaungatanga, established over time.

*Their database is really out of date, and it's not like there is only one key contact usually anyway. Depends on the kaupapa.*

It is not about engaging with those who are the 'easiest' to engage with but investing time into understanding who is most affected by a decision or activity, and then working to understand how HRC can best support them to be involved. When HRC are able to strengthen relationships and understand the nuances of marae, hapū and iwi, there is a greater ability to know who and how to work with iwi Māori. Relationships are strengthened by showing up on the ground and in the community, spending time understanding needs and aspirations at the various structural levels and determining how best to engage.

*Horizons need to know the boundaries; they need to know mana whenua. So that when they cross those boundaries, these are the people you talk to. If you choose to have a relationship with Tom, Dick, and Harry down the road, they have no authority to talk in this space.*

The relationships between iwi and HRC have been weakened through what has been perceived as surface-level and short-term engagement with staff. This limits the ability to quickly or successfully address issues if they arise. Some iwi representatives have expressed that they often have to remind HRC of how to engage in trusted relationships, whether there are agreements in place or not.

*I just feel like it's always iwi, the iwi landscape reminding the government how they need to be behaving.*

### Some iwi Māori want to know Horizon's strategy for engagement

Building an engagement strategy is not just about communication, it is about trust, clarity, and accountability. For some iwi, having a clear sense of why HRC makes certain decisions, and how those decisions are intended to strengthen the relationship, is important. In the current political climate, which is dynamic, complex, and uncertain, there is an even greater need for consistency and reassurance.

A few iwi Māori highlighted the value of regular check-ins, evaluation hui, and space for feedback, not as a courtesy, but as a way to ensure the relationship is functioning and improving over time. Without this, it becomes difficult to tell whether the partnership is genuine or simply procedural.

*We want to know what Horizons' engagement strategy with Māori looks like, because when there is conflict, that's when the true value of your relationship shows—and at the moment, it's absolutely falling over.*

## **5.2.7 Is there abundant capacity and capability within iwi/hapū to implement these policies?**

Relevant provisions and AER are:

RMIA-M5: Regional Hapū and Iwi Projects [Target: To develop and implement at least three projects annually]

RMIA-M7: Web-Based Iwi Contacts Database [Target: To complete this project by 2009 and to maintain the web page on an ongoing basis.]

RMIA-AER2: Increased involvement of Māori in achieving environmental outcomes across the Region.

### **5.2.7.1 Insights**

**Insight 15. Building iwi capacity and capability to effectively implement the Provisions should be done proactively, in partnership, and for the long term.** This will require different approaches depending on the aspirations and needs of each iwi. HRC should work directly with iwi Māori to understand their goals early, and plan targeted support alongside key moments like plan reviews, funding opportunities, or major projects. Having this early clarity will make future engagement more focused, timely, and effective.

**Insight 16. Practical training, capability-building programmes, and access to experts is needed.** Support in areas such as GIS mapping, environmental monitoring, project management, and administration systems is needed to support hapū and iwi. Strengthening iwi capacity in these ways will better enable them to effectively implement the Provisions, respond to funding opportunities, and participate meaningfully in the resource management system.

### **5.2.7.2 Analysis**

Iwi are at various stages of their Treaty Settlement process, and this influences their capacity and capability.

It takes extensive time, effort, and resources to build capability and capacity for iwi Māori to effectively engage with the resource management system. Iwi Māori are at different stages of this journey, and understanding where each iwi most requires support, is important.

*We have worked really hard to be where we are, it hasn't been easy, we have had to have lots of hard conversations, just keep fighting and fighting, learning, growing, but we are now in a place where we can make the resource management system work with us, and at times, for us*

Treaty settlement processes have been essential for iwi Māori to build the necessary capacity and resources to engage effectively in resource management. However, this journey can be long and traumatic, taking a huge toll and impacting genuine partnership and meaningful engagement when adequate and proactive support is not apparent from HRC.

*Treaty settlement processes can be gruelling and traumatic, but necessary to gain the resourcing and capacity needed to engage meaningfully in resource management*

Iwi Māori highlighted that perseverance, strong relationships, adequate resources, and direct, honest communication are critical to actively engaging in resource management (Table 2).

*Table 2. Tūpoho have successfully used the tools of the One Plan to achieve tangible outcomes for their rohe. This vignette shares the small but powerful wins they have made, and the key factors that made them possible.*

### Te Rūnanga o Tūpoho: Hard Conversations, Strong Relationships, Tangible Outcomes

The tools in the One Plan have enabled Te Rūnanga o Tūpoho to be actively involved in resource management in their rohe. However, reaching this point has taken significant time, effort, and perseverance. Tūpoho did not always have the structures, expertise, or capacity to engage at the level they wanted (or were expected) to as mana whenua. Through gruelling and frustrating processes with government authorities, Tūpoho have been able to build the foundation of resourcing and capability needed to participate meaningfully.

Driven largely by their determination, Tūpoho representatives shared how strong relationships and direct, honest communication have been at the heart of their predress. *“We aren’t afraid to talk the hard stuff, we are firm, clear, and unwavering in our direction”*. This has been critical in ensuring their priorities and aspirations are understood, upheld, and has helped to build respect and understanding with key relationships.

One of which has been their valued relationships with technical experts, who act as a bridge between iwi values and technical processes. *“They talk their talk at a technical level, but then tell us what that means, then communicates back what we want, so we can work together.”* This facilitation has allowed Tūpoho to navigate the technical systems and jargon of resource management.

Years of hard work went into building the trusted relationships that now allow for open, productive conversations with key decision-makers. *“We had to scrap out what our relationship looked like years ago. But now, we can sit down and have productive conversations.”* These relationships have created space for solutions that respect cultural values and connections, whilst supporting sustainable outcomes.

Success can be seen in examples like the Amtech development, where initial missed opportunities were turned into a positive outcome. After first engaging with Tūpoho but not being able to implement their feedback, Amtech later returned, listened, and changed their plans. *“They came back to us and listened and changed all their plans to align with our values.”* The resulting development acknowledged cultural connections and upheld both ecological and social responsibility.

Another win was their work with Corrections around Whanganui Prisons wastewater system. *“We told them – this needs to change. We need to restore the whenua, and our whānau need to reconnect with these spaces.”* After sustained advocacy and relationship-building, Corrections decommissioned the damaging wastewater system and have since been working with Tūpoho to restore the whenua. They even asked if they could share the success of that partnership at a conference.

Ultimately, the experience of Tūpoho reinforces that the te ao Māori provisions can empower iwi to be actively involved in resource management processes and decisions, when key people are willing to sit at the table and have hard conversations, build genuine relationships, and listen to and act upon the advice of iwi. Everyone needs to be willing to shift their mindsets initially, and the behaviour will follow. *“Sometimes we just need a head shift, get over ourselves and think about how we can contribute with our role”*. As the emphasised, *“If we’re at the table, we should work together with the experts. It all comes back to relationships. It’s about local people finding solutions to our local issues”*.

Funding is critical but often unsustainable

HRC have contributed financially to important initiatives led by iwi Māori, enabling certain projects to start and grow. However, there remains a significant challenge around the sustainability and continuity of funding, particularly once initial funds run out. This is a problem that both HRC and iwi Māori need to better strategize and plan for.

*They did offer some pūtea to iwi to write the EMP together... but it wasn't much, and most iwi have run out of pūtea*

*HRC gave funding for capability and capacity support for Oranga Wai stuff, but it ceased, the contracts still haven't been written for this next stage*

*These initiatives sought real change on the ground, but funding has dried up, forcing works to stop.*

Without sustainable funding, iwi-led environmental initiatives risk becoming short-term projects rather than ongoing, impactful programmes. At the same time, iwi acknowledge a desire to become less reliant on government funding and aspire to build taiao-centred economies themselves. Partnering with private industry is crucial to realising this vision.

#### Resourcing must match iwi capacity and infrastructure needs

The current model of providing resources or information does not always match the capacity of iwi Māori. For instance, sharing shapefiles of wāhi tapu and wāhi taonga without providing GIS training or resources renders the information unusable. Practical and applied support, such as training in relevant technologies, would significantly enhance iwi Māori capability and independence in managing these critical resources.

#### Internal structures and capability are strengths but require ongoing development

Considerable time and effort have been invested by iwi Māori to build internal structures and capability, but there is also a significant gap. Iwi Māori would like more training and up-skilling from HRC to build expertise themselves about all the various areas of the resource management system, from planning and policy-writing, to on-the-ground monitoring, to administration and project management. This is the most crucial component of ensuring the Provisions can be put into practice, and has been successful in the past.

*They sat down and worked through each section of the One Plan with us. It was really good—it helped us understand it and gave us the opportunity to ask questions.*

Empowerment of hapū to engage directly with HRC, supported by overarching iwi structures, can ensure both autonomy and unity.

*We encourage hapū to work directly with council, and then we work directly with them. We uphold the consenting stuff, but we always feed it back to where it needs to go.*

## **5.3 Are the anticipated environmental results and objectives are being achieved?**

Evaluating the extent to which the anticipated environmental results (AERs) and objectives have been achieved is complex. Experiences and outcomes vary significantly across iwi Māori, and the indicators listed in the Provisions do not fully capture the depth of nature of this variation.

Therefore, this section focuses on reflecting the realities shared by iwi Māori about environmental outcomes and assessing the strengths and limitations of the current indicators.

### **5.3.1 Overall Reflections**

Progress toward achieving the AER's has been made across the rohe, but outcomes are inconsistent, at times disconnected, and often driven more by iwi leadership than by the implementation of the Plan itself.

Iwi Māori are leading the way in building strong foundations for prioritising the wellbeing of te taiao, undertaking mahi that places the needs of the environment at the centre. Their approach is deeply intergenerational, focusing on protecting taonga species, investing in tamariki and rangatahi, and revitalising mātauranga and traditional practices, knowing that all three are interconnected and critical to the future health of both the environment and the people.

Over the last decade, there has been a noticeable increase in the development of Environmental Management Plans (EMPs), Iwi Management Plans (IMPs), and iwi-led Taiao Strategies and Action Plans. It is noted that HRC have provided support in the development of these documents. There has also been growth in formal working relationships between iwi, hapū, research institutes, and Crown agencies, creating stronger foundations for collaboration. Together, these efforts have supported iwi Māori to position themselves strategically and intentionally, so that they can prepare for the environmental, political, and social pressures that continue to emerge.

The number of catchment collectives and community groups that have hapū and iwi representation has also grown over the last decade, leading to a range of outcomes for te taiao. While these initiatives have brought some communities closer together, they have also, at times, created tensions. Horizons has been involved in supporting a number of these groups (Table 1).

However, from a kaupapa Māori perspective, the most tangible on-the-ground outcomes, in terms of the restoration and protection of te taiao, continue to be largely driven by iwi and hapū themselves, rather than the Plan or the Provisions. Many iwi Māori describe a gap between planning frameworks and real-world outcomes, noting that policies and provisions do not always translate into practical action for te taiao. In some cases, policy processes are perceived as creating additional barriers, leading iwi Māori to prioritise practical, collective, and whānau-led initiatives that deliver real change.

The extent and diversity of these kaupapa are evident across iwi Māori social media platforms and through the kōrero that took place during this evaluation. Across the rohe, there is a vibrant body of mahi being led by iwi and hapū, which are having tangible results in the environment and in the people, including (but not limited to):

- The development of numerous EMPs and IMPs;
- Awa and repo clean-up and restoration projects;
- Tuna (eel) surveys and wider mahinga kai monitoring initiatives;
- Increase in community monitoring, including SHMAK testing capability;
- Kura Taiao and environmental education programmes for rangatahi;
- Active participation of whānau in wānanga, seminars, courses and workshops such as the Māori taiao practitioner forums and networking events, Māori Agri-Business Governance Essentials Course, Te Mana o te Wai conference, Iwi taiao symposiums, wetland, biosecurity and indigenous biodiversity seminars, and Māori land development forums;
- The establishment and rollout of iwi-led cultural monitoring tools and programmes tailored to local values and contexts;
- Marae and hapū projects, including pest control and planting initiatives;
- Revitalisation wānanga, including the sharing and teaching of rongoā Māori, weaving, mahinga kai, maramataka etc;
- Strong engagement with local kura to teach tamariki about kaitiakitanga and get them involved in taiao activities;
- Native seed collection, propagation, and planting kaupapa;
- Establishment of dedicated Taiao teams within some iwi to lead responses to resource consent and compliance processes.

These initiatives reflect a deep commitment to the wellbeing of te taiao and future generations, and demonstrate the leadership iwi Māori are providing

across the region. They also highlight the need for planning and resource management systems to better align with, support, and empower the mahi already happening at the ground level.

Funding and resources remain the greatest need to sustain and expand this mahi. Many iwi aspire to build stronger taiao-centric economies, creating financial systems that directly reinvest back into the whenua and wai. There is strong recognition that external and government funding is vulnerable, just as the taiao itself is vulnerable, and that building greater financial independence is essential to truly protecting and caring for te taiao.

### 5.3.2 Reflections against Key AERs

The Provisions outline four Anticipated Environmental Results (AERs), which we would expect to see reflected in outcomes across the rohe, if the Provisions are performing as intended. Each AER has associated indicators and data sources to help guide judgements about whether the result has been achieved. However, there are critical gaps and limitations within these indicators and data sources, particularly when viewed through a kaupapa Māori lens. This sections explores whether the AERs are being achieved, while also unpacking the strengths and weaknesses of the indicators and data sources further.

#### 5.3.2.1 RMIA-AER1: Discoveries of wāhi tapu and wāhi tūpuna are dealt with appropriately and in accordance with tikanga Māori

Table 3. Indicators and Data Source associated with this AER in Chapter 2 of the One Plan.

<p><b>Indicator</b> <i>Ngā Tohu</i></p>	<p>Reduction in the number of wāhi tapu and wāhi tūpuna dealt with inappropriately (including when damaged by inappropriate subdivision, use or development)</p> <p><i>Ka whakaitingia te nama o ngā wāhi tapu, wāhi tūpuna ka mahi kinotia (pērā i te wāwāhi nā te wehewehe hē, whakamahi hē, whakaahu hē rānei i te whenua)</i></p>
<p><b>Data Source</b> <i>Ngā Puna Raraunga</i></p>	<p>Accidental wāhi tapu and wāhi tūpuna discoveries reported to the Regional Council and Heritage New Zealand</p> <p>Hapū and iwi</p> <p><i>Ka whakamōhiotia te Kaunihera ā-Rohe me te Pouhere Taonga i ngā ka huraina kōpeka noa ngā wāhi tapu me ngā wāhi tūpuna</i></p> <p><i>Ngā hapū me ngā iwi</i></p>

On paper, the wording of RMIA-AER1 focuses too narrowly on ‘discoveries’, missing the broader need to proactively protect all sites of significance, including practices, events, and cultural landscapes connected to them. The current wording is too limited to fully uphold and encompass tikanga Māori.

In practice, there have been a number of isolated cases where wāhi tapu have been protected well. These positive outcomes have occurred when iwi Māori are

brought in early, listened to, and trusted to guide the process. In these instances, sharing understanding of the site’s significance created a clear commitment from all parties to protect it appropriately.

In other cases, iwi Māori have raised concerns about wāhi tapu or wāhi tūpuna being disturbed or impacted, and have been met with little action or a sense of helplessness, where council staff feel there is “nothing they can do”. This suggests the Provisions lack the strength or clarity to respond to smaller-scale activities that still have significant impacts.

The overall system remains reactive, centred on accidental discoveries, rather than actively recognising and safeguarding the wider cultural landscape.

The indicator focuses on a ‘reduction’ in the number of wāhi tapu and wāhi tūpuna death with inappropriately, but there is no clear baseline or consistent reporting mechanism to track this over time. What constitutes being ‘dealt with appropriately’ can also differ widely between agencies and iwi Māori, making it difficult to determine whether progress has genuinely occurred. Without a shared understanding of what ‘appropriate’ means across different iwi and contexts, this indicator remains difficult to fully assess.

As iwi Māori develop their own cultural health monitoring tools, these can offer a more meaningful way to assess whether wāhi tapu and wāhi tūpuna are being respected and protected – according to tikanga and mātauranga. In some cases, iwi have already defined what ‘good’ and ‘bad’ looks like, applying their own scales to evaluate the condition and treatment of sites across their rohe.

The associated data sources rely on discoveries being reported to Heritage New Zealand or the Council. While increased reporting is important, iwi Māori raised concerns about process and relationships. It cannot be assumed that hapū and iwi will be immediately engaged or notified, especially where relationships are weak or missing altogether. Iwi Māori are also noted as a data source, but it appears little has been done to properly ask them if they have experienced or observed a reduction in wāhi tapu and wāhi tūpuna being dealt with inappropriately. The data sources also raise a broader question, should iwi not be the first point of contact, rather than peripheral to the process?

**5.3.2.2 RMIA-AER2: Increased involvement of Māori in achieving environmental outcomes across the Region**

*Table 4. Indicators and Data Source associated with this AER in Chapter 2 of the One Plan.*

<b>Indicator</b> <i>Ngā Tohu</i>	<p>Number of environmental projects developed, funded and implemented with hapū, iwi, marae committees or other Māori organisations</p> <p>Number of monitoring programmes developed with hapū and iwi</p> <p>Number of seminars or research projects conducted with hapū or iwi catchment collectives</p>
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	<p><i>Ko te nama o ngā kaupapa aroturuki kua whakaritea me ngā hapū me ngā iwi</i></p> <p><i>Ko te nama o ngā kaupapa mahi taiao ka whakaritea, ka whai putea, ā, ka whakatinanahia me ngā hapū, ngā iwi, ngā kōmiti o ngā marae, ko ētahi rōpū whakahaere Māori rānei</i></p> <p><i>Ko te nama o ngā awheawhe, kaupapa rangahau rānei, ka mahia me ngā hapū, iwi rānei – I roto i ngā takiwā o ngā kohanga iwi/hapū</i></p>
<p><b>Data Source</b> <i>Ngā Puna Raraunga</i></p>	<p>Regional Iwi Environmental Projects Fund</p> <p><i>Ko tētahi putea e kīia nei ko te Regional Iwi Environmental Projects Fund</i></p>

On paper, this RMIA-AER2 is well written and aspirational. The indicators are action-oriented and suggest a strong commitment to building genuine partnerships with hapū and iwi across environmental projects, monitoring, and research. However, in practice, the data source (Regional Iwi Environmental Projects Fund – which was ‘not established as envisaged’<sup>11</sup>) focuses largely on the distribution of funding, rather than whether those investments have resulted in meaningful outcomes or long-term change. There is no clear mechanism for capturing the effectiveness, sustainability, or iwi-defined success of these initiatives.

In practice, iwi Māori acknowledge that having access to funding through HRC, with flexibility and autonomy to use it in ways that align with their own priorities, has been one of the most meaningful forms of support.

However, in kaupapa that HRC initiate, iwi report that involvement is often superficial, limited to short-term projects or consultative roles, rather than embedded, enduring partnerships. Whilst acknowledging that many positive projects have emerged through HRC funding, the indicators frame iwi Māori as participants rather than initiators, leaders, or decision-makers. There is little visibility of iwi or hapū led projects that fall outside of formal funding streams. This means some of the most meaningful and impactful kaupapa, those that are driven by iwi strategy, grounded in tikanga and mātauranga, or resourced through alternative means, are not being recognised in the data.

At the same time, iwi don’t want HRC taking credit for the work they are doing, so it’s about striking a balance and having better indicators and data sources that show what is driving and facilitating the increased involvement of iwi Māori in achieving environmental outcomes across the region.

Further, counting the number of projects, seminars, or partnerships does not reflect the depth, equity, or quality of Māori involvement. There is no signal that this RMIA-AER2 measures influence, leadership, or whether iwi Māori are

<sup>11</sup> Tucker (2023). *Section 35 Evaluation Report Te Ao Māori Provisions*. Horizons Regional Council.

meaningfully shaping environmental decisions and outcomes at a broader level. Without indicators that reflect mana motuhake, shared decision-making, or systemic change, this AER risks reinforcing transactional model of involvement, rather than transforming the way environmental outcomes are achieved in partnership with iwi Māori.

Despite these limitations, there has been genuine progress over the past decade in increasing Māori involvement in environmental kaupapa across the region, much of it driven by iwi and hapū themselves.

### 5.3.2.3 RMIA-AER3: Improved wetland protection and restoration

Table 5. Indicators and Data Source associated with this AER in Chapter 2 of the One Plan

<p><b>Indicator</b> <i>Ngā Tohu</i></p>	<p>Number of wetland projects developed with Māori landowners</p> <p><i>Ko te nama o ngā kaupapa mahi e pā ana ki ngā papa waiwai ka whakaritea me ngā kaipupuri whenua Māori</i></p> <p>Research projects, seminars undertaken</p> <p><i>Ko ngā kaupapa rangahau me ngā awheawhe rangahau ka mahia</i></p>
<p><b>Data Source</b> <i>Ngā Puna Raraunga</i></p>	<p>He Tini Awa Trust</p> <p><i>Ko te tarāti o He Tini Awa, arā, ko He Tini Awa Trust</i></p> <p>Regional Iwi Environmental Projects Fund</p> <p><i>Ko tētahi putea e kīia nei ko te Regional Iwi Environmental Projects Fund</i></p>

RMIA-AER3 is important. Many iwi hold a deep aspiration to protect and restore wetlands, not only those that remain, but also those that have been lost, recognising the critical role they play in the health and resilience of the wider ecosystem. While some projects have been carried out, and statutory recognition has improved through the NPS-FM wetland provisions and delineation protocols, action on the ground has remained limited in both scope and impact. Iwi Māori are calling for a much greater level of investment and effort to restore repo at a landscape scale.

The indicator focuses on projects developed with Māori landowners. While this is valuable, many of the repo that need restoration are located on privately owned land. Iwi Māori want to work with private landowners to protect and restore these sites. By focussing on Māori-owned land, the indicator overlooks this broader vision and the partnerships and private investment needed to realise it.

The data source, *He Tini Awa Trust*, is not currently operational and we are aware that the *Regional Iwi Environmental Projects Fund* was not established as envisaged. So both data sources fall short in providing the information required to understand if there has been improved protection and restoration of wetlands

in the region. Even if they were operational, they would still only reflect how much money is being distributed, not whether the repo are being restored or protected. For iwi Māori, funding is important, but what matters most is what the repo are telling us. Measuring the health and mauri of wetlands through kaupapa Māori assessment tools and cultural health indicators is important moving forward, to help us understand to what extent this AER is being genuinely being realised.

#### 5.3.2.4 RMIA-AER4: Improved working relationships with hapū and iwi to achieve mutually acceptable outcomes

Table 6. Indicators and Data Source associated with this AER in Chapter 2 of the One Plan

<p><b>Indicator</b> <i>Ngā Tohu</i></p>	<p>Number of environmental partnership agreements with hapū and iwi <i>Ko te nama o ngā manatū rangapū me ngā hapū me ngā iwi e pā ana ki te taiao</i></p> <p>Improved localised environmental results <i>Ka pai kē ake ngā hua e pā ana ki te taiao ki ngā takiwā</i></p>
<p><b>Data Source</b> <i>Ngā Puna Raraunga</i></p>	<p>Memoranda of partnership <i>Ko ngā manatū rangapū</i></p> <p>Iwi management plans <i>Ko ngā mahere whakahaere ā-iwi</i></p>

RMIA-AER4 sits at the heart of the wider intent of the Provisions. Much of this report has already explored the state of relationships between HRC and iwi Māori, so this section does not aim to repeat that analysis in detail. Instead, it reinforces that working relationships must be seen not as a by-product of other outcomes, but as a critical foundation in their own right. Meaningful, well-resourced, and enduring relationships are what ultimately enable effective environmental outcomes, and many iwi Māori have highlighted that this is the space where the greatest investment and change is still needed.

The current indicators include the number of environmental partnership agreements and improved localised environmental results. However, iwi Māori have noted that partnership agreements often exist in name only, formal documents that sit on a shelf rather than guide practice. The number of agreements tells us little about how those partnerships function, whether they are being upheld, or whether they influence decision-making in a meaningful way. Similarly, the concept of “improved localised environmental results” raises the question: improved for whom, and according to whose definition? Without iwi and hapū perspectives shaping both the measures and interpretations of these results, the indicator risks reinforcing a one-sided view of success.

The data sources listed, Memoranda of Partnership and Iwi Management Plans, have value, but are currently under-utilised by HRC. Their existence alone does not demonstrate partnership; what matters is how well they are embedded in decision-making, operationalised in daily practice, and respected in implementation. To truly evaluate whether this AER is being achieved, the focus should shift from the presence of documents to the quality and integrity of the relationships behind them.

### 5.3.3 Disparity between Policy and Practice

This analysis highlights a persistent gap between the intent of the Provisions and their implementation in practice. While Māori values and concepts are acknowledged in policy and planning documents, their influence on decision-making remains inconsistent, often requiring significant advocacy by iwi Māori to be meaningfully considered. The disconnect between what exists ‘on paper’ and what occurs ‘in practice’ continues to undermine the full expression of kaitiakitanga and the aspirations of iwi Māori.

To support a deeper understanding of how each Provision is performing, Appendix 3 presents a comprehensive table outlining an evaluative judgement for each Provision. These judgements are based on a tailored rating scale (see Table 6) developed specifically for this evaluation. The assessments draw on both the strengths and limitations identified ‘on paper’ and ‘in practice’ and provide insight into where further effort and improvement are most needed.

Table 6. Rating Scale used to determine the performance of the Provisions, both ‘on paper’ and ‘in practice’.

Rating	How it looks ‘on paper’ description	How it’s being applied ‘in practice’ description
<b>I tae ki te pae tawhito</b> We have reached the distant horizon/achieved the long-term objectives	The provision is clearly articulated, relevant, and aligns with Māori values, context, and aspirations.	The provision is regularly being implemented in practice and Māori see the value and outcomes that the provisions create for their unique context, priorities and aspirations.
<b>I tata tae atu ki te pae tawhito</b> We are close to reaching the distant horizon	The provision is mostly clear and aligned, with good potential to support the needs and aspirations of iwi Māori.	The provision is being applied in some contexts and has created good outcomes, but there are fundamental issues that prevent it from optimal efficiency and effectiveness.
<b>Kei te pae tata tonu</b> We are at the near horizon, and starting to	The provision shows some promise but lacks consistency and strength across the One Plan.	The provision is being used in isolated cases, with limited or inconsistent impact across the rohe.

see early-stage wins or low hanging fruit		
<b>Kāore anō kia tae ki te pae tata</b> We are still far from the near horizon	The provision lacks clarity, strength, alignment, or is too generic to be useful to iwi Māori.	The provision is rarely used or has very little real-world impact for Māori.
<b>Kāore ano kia wehe i te kāinga</b> We haven't even left home yet	The provisions do not reflect the perspectives, needs, and aspirations of Māori.	There is no evidence of the provision's application or relevance in practice.

## 6 Recommendations

To strengthen trusted relationships and improve outcomes for te taiao, iwi would like HRC to go beyond surface-level improvements and written changes or evaluations, and commit to deeper structural change. The following steps reflect a practical summary of the common feedback, perspectives, and experiences of iwi Māori during this evaluation.

### 6.1 Take stock of where relationships are currently

It would be valuable for HRC to do a full stocktake of current relationships across iwi and hapū. Go and sit down with iwi Māori to understand how they want to be engaged, what their priorities and aspirations are, what hasn't worked and what could be improved. It is critical that this involves stepping outside of the groups or individuals that HRC already works well with, to reach wider, deeper, and more genuinely with hapū and iwi across the rohe. This responsibility cannot be

left to 'Māori Liason' kaimahi, but is the collective role and responsibility of the wider HRC team too.

## 6.2 Build an actual strategy for engagement and relationships

Co-develop a strategy with iwi māori for long-term engagement and whakawhanaungatanga. This means:

- Supporting iwi Māori to identify their own needs.
- Ensuring iwi can be involved in monitoring, enforcement, policy/ provision writing, and decision-making, not just as stakeholders, but as partners and practitioners.
- Building a team of Māori experts to support and work alongside iwi Māori in more local contexts, to bridge understanding between HRC and iwi values and approaches, whilst building capability and capacity in iwi Māori.

*[Call for Horizons] to pause, reflect, and share power and authority equally with iwi at the decision-making table, before doing anything further—no more evaluations or re-writing policy and plans, just to enable them to maintain control.*

## 6.3 Let iwi Māori hold the pen

If HRC are serious about improving the One Plan, iwi Māori should lead the review and re-write of the te ao Māori provisions. That means equipping iwi Māori with the tools and knowledge to write their own policy and provisions, resourcing them to lead and being ready to support and implement what is developed.

*It's not up to Horizons to write Māori provisions. Moving forward, we need to be sitting at the table, we need to be the ones writing the provisions—and whatever their next step from here is, that needs to be the first part of it.*

A proactive, independent Treaty-based review of the One Plan, led by iwi experts, could support this too, as a practical and timely way for HRC to understand what a Te Tiriti-aligned planning framework would look like.

## 6.4 Build internal understanding and capability

HRC should ask iwi if they are willing to develop and implement a training wānanga for HRC staff, to understand the unique context, values, people, and expectations of iwi Māori in the rohe. It's important to shift the culture, not just the words. For iwi Māori, this requires shifting from reactive communication and engagement to a proactive approach. It's as simple as picking up the phone to

check in, share updates or seek input on a regular basis. Showing up to tautoko events or activities, and picking up a tea towel.

*We are always re-introducing ourselves and our expectations, re-explaining core matters, and its just a waste of valuable time and effort. We could be doing it a lot more effectively and efficiently if they came to us for an induction or professional development thing on an annual basis.*

Iwi emphasised that Te Tiriti o Waitangi needs to have a stronger place in both the One Plan, and the comprehension and behaviour of HRC and the wider community. There was questions around what Treaty training occurs across the organisation and requests that it be made compulsory for every staff and councillor member at Horizons, with an evaluation mechanism in place to track how well Horizons is upholding their responsibility as a Treaty partner.

*It seems that Treaty training is often targeted at staff working on the ground, while those in management and decision-making roles—who hold the power to make meaningful changes—are not required to undergo this training.*

## 6.5 Invest in iwi leadership

Consider ways to invest in building iwi capability not just to understand planning systems, but to write, lead, and enforce policy, run projects, and support other stakeholders to work in partnership. This would help embed iwi leadership across environmental management and enable iwi to lead out their own approaches in a way that's recognised and supported at every level of the system. This needs to involve resourcing hapū and iwi to implement projects and strategies that are long-term. Iwi Māori think intergenerationally, and this is the approach that HRC need to adopt if they want to put the health and wellbeing of te taiao at the centre of resource management.



## 7 Conclusion

This evaluation has provided an opportunity to step back and talk with iwi Māori to critically examine how effective and efficient the te ao Māori provisions in the One Plan have been, not just on paper, but in practice. It offers a snapshot of the experience and aspirations of iwi Māori, and the practical barriers and enablers

that influence their ability to engage in the resource management system in meaningful ways.

It is clear that the current provisions have supported some small wins, but there is a lot of potential for improvement and progress towards long-term system-level change. Right now, iwi Māori are doing the heavy lifting, writing iwi management plans, creating cultural monitoring frameworks, and showing up despite limited resourcing and capacity.

Strengthening the Provisions is not just about wording. It's about supporting iwi to be active partners in decision-making and enforcement, resourcing them to lead and creating systems that recognise iwi Māori as essential, not optional. This means shifting power, deepening shared understanding, and investing in genuine relationships that endure. If HRC want the Provisions to be effective, iwi need to be at the table, not as stakeholders to be consulted, but as leaders and partners, shaping the future of environmental management and kaitiakitanga across the region.



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## Appendix 1: Chapter 2 Te Ao Māori Provisions

The following outlines the contents of Chapter 2 (the Provisions) of the One Plan.

### An Understanding of Māori Values

Value	Definition	Explanation
<i>Mauri</i>	<i>Mauri means “essential life force or principle; a metaphysical quality inherent in all things, both animate and inanimate”, but the following explains the concept in more detail.</i>	All things, both animate and inanimate, have been imbued with the mauri generated from within the realm of te kore. Nothing in the natural world is without this essential element - mauri represents the interconnectedness of all things that have being. Humans have an added responsibility to ensure that the mauri inherent in natural resources is maintained. Inappropriate use of resources, for example, discharge of sewage to water impacts directly on the mauri of water and therefore all factors associated with it. The natural balance which exists amongst all things is disturbed and, in many cases, irreversibly damaged.
<i>Taonga</i>	<i>Taonga means “all things prized or treasured, both tangible and intangible”, but the following explains the concept in more detail.</i>	The concept of taonga relates to anything that is prized, treasured or valued for what it is, where it came from and what its potential is. The cultural and spiritual relationship of Māori with their ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu and other taonga is referred to in the RMA as a matter of national importance. This implies that the word taonga incorporates not only the stated resources in s6(e) RMA, but also anything that is highly prized - physically, mentally, spiritually and culturally. Physically, taonga include traditional forms of food and natural material harvested for traditional purposes. Adverse effects on these would not only see the demise of the physical taonga (food and weaving materials), but the demise of spiritual and cultural taonga also. Hapū and iwi are concerned that resources of cultural and spiritual significance be protected.
<i>Wāhi tapu and wāhi tūpuna</i>	<i>Wāhi tapu means “a site sacred to Māori in the traditional, spiritual, religious, ritual, or mythological sense and includes rua kōiwi.</i>  <i>Wāhi tūpuna means “a site of cultural and historical significance to hapū or iwi - though not necessarily in a state of tapu”. The following explains these concepts in more detail.</i>	Wāhi tapu relates specifically to sites including areas or locations that remain in a state of tapu. These may include, but are not exclusively, urupā (burial sites), rua kōiwi (sites where human skeletal remains are traditionally placed), wai tohi (streams where baptismal rites are performed), and wāhi pakanga (battle sites). As hapū and iwi have the knowledge of their wāhi tapu, the task of defining wāhi tapu must rest with them. However, there may be some ambiguity as to which sites remain in a state of tapu. It is important to note that wāhi tūpuna exist (though not necessarily in a state of tapu) and should be protected. Such wāhi tūpuna may be ancient pā sites, important caves, landscape features, ancient pathways or tribal boundary indicators.

<i>Tikanga Māori</i>	<i>Tikanga Māori is defined in the RMA as meaning “Māori customary values and practices” and that definition is used in this Plan. The following explains the concept in more detail.</i>	Tikanga Māori not only encompasses the lore, customs and practices of Māori but also the guiding principles of social, economic and political life - a way of life that accounts for all these factors whilst practising a close affinity with nature. Tikanga Māori also gives physical expression, through social norms and behaviour, to the concepts of kaitiakitanga and mana.
<i>Kaitiakitanga</i>	<i>Kaitiakitanga is defined in the RMA as meaning “the exercise of guardianship by the tangata whenua of an area in accordance with tikanga Māori in relation to natural and physical resources; and includes the ethic of stewardship” and that definition is used in this Plan. The following explains the concept in more detail.</i>	The concept of kaitiakitanga is based on spiritual and physical guardianship met within the social norms and everyday practices of tikanga Māori. Recognition of the mauri held by particular resources also necessitates communication with the spiritual kaitiaki (guardian) to whom that resource is dedicated. The physical responsibility of kaitiakitanga is met by the recognition of the interconnectedness of all elements - mauri and wairua, tapu and noa, mana and tikanga Māori. Therefore, the ethics that underpin hapū and iwi responsibility to practise kaitiakitanga are based on spiritual and cultural practices and wise resource management to ensure a healthy environment for future generations.

### Resource Management Issues of Significance to Hapū and Iwi

<b>RMIA-I1: Water quality and demand</b>  <i>Te kounga o te wai me te kiawai</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Management of water quality and quantity throughout the Region does not provide for the special qualities significant to Māori.</li> <li>2. Hazardous substances and nitrate run-off need to be better managed to avoid contaminants entering water.</li> <li>3. Lakes and streams (for example, Punahau/Waipunahau (Lake Horowhenua) and Hokio Stream) have suffered degradation which continues and are considered culturally unclean.</li> <li>4. Access to and availability of clean water to exercise cultural activities such as food gathering and baptismal rituals have diminished.</li> <li>5. Marae groundwater bore supply is affected in some areas during seasonal drought.</li> <li>6. Excessive groundwater abstraction can adversely affect water and existing groundwater users.</li> <li>7. Water diversion from one catchment to another is considered culturally abhorrent.</li> <li>8. Sewage disposed to water, in treated form or otherwise, is culturally abhorrent. Land-based treatment is preferred.</li> </ol>
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<p><b>RMIA-12: Land use and management</b></p> <p><i>Te whakamahi me te whakahaere whenua</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. More riparian retirement and planting is needed to protect river banks from erosion. Several iwi believe harakeke (flax) would provide the most desirable outcome.</li> <li>2. Land management plans need to be encouraged to ensure consistent land management practices Region-wide.</li> <li>3. Adverse effects of land use continue to have a detrimental effect on traditional food gathering areas, native habitats and ecosystems.</li> <li>4. The removal, destruction or alteration of wāhi tapu and wāhi tūpuna by inappropriate activities continues to have a detrimental effect on those sites and upon hapū and iwi.</li> </ol>
<p><b>RMIA-13: Indigenous habitat and biodiversity</b></p> <p><i>Ngā wāhi noho taketake me te kanorau koiora</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The transfer of indigenous plants from rohe to rohe is considered culturally unnatural.</li> <li>2. Indigenous flora and fauna continue to be under increased threat by human and pest activity.</li> </ol>
<p><b>RMIA-14: Research</b></p> <p><i>Te rangahau</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Further research on preventing salt water intrusion into coastal aquifers is a necessity.</li> <li>2. Biodiversity research needs more funding.</li> </ol>
<p><b>RMIA-15: Monitoring and enforcement</b></p> <p><i>Te aroturuki me te ūruhitanga</i></p>	<p>Monitoring and enforcement of environmental standards, including those contained in regional plans, district plans and resource consents, are insufficient at times.</p>

## Objectives

<p><b>RMIA-O1: Resource Management</b></p> <p><i>Te whakahaere rauemi</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) To have regard to the mauri of natural and physical resources to enable hapū and iwi to provide for their social, economic and cultural wellbeing.</li> <li>b) Kaitiakitanga must be given particular regard and the relationship of hapū and iwi with their ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu and other taonga (including wāhi tūpuna) must be recognised and provided for through resource management processes.</li> </ol>
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## Policies

<p><b>RMIA-P1: Hapū and iwi involvement in</b></p>	<p>The Regional Council must enable and foster kaitiakitanga and the relationship between hapū and iwi and their ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu and other taonga (including wāhi</p>
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<p><b>resource management</b></p> <p><i>Te whakauru mai o ngā hapū me ngā iwi ki roto i te whakahaere rauemi</i></p>	<p>tūpuna) through increased involvement of hapū and iwi in resource management processes including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. memoranda of partnership between the Regional Council and hapū or iwi which set clear relationship and communication parameters to address resource management objectives,</li> <li>2. recognition of existing arrangements and agreements between resource users, local authorities and hapū or iwi,</li> <li>3. development of catchment-based forums, involving the Regional Council, hapū, iwi, and other interested groups including resource users, for information sharing, planning and research,</li> <li>4. development, where appropriate, of hapū and iwi cultural indicator monitoring programmes by the Regional Council,</li> <li>5. assistance from the Regional Council to hapū or iwi to facilitate research, projects, seminars and training,</li> <li>6. development of joint management agreements between the Regional Council and hapū or iwi where appropriate,</li> <li>7. the Regional Council having regard to iwi management plans lodged with Council,</li> <li>8. involvement of hapū or iwi in resource consent decision-making and planning processes in the ways agreed in the memoranda of partnership and joint management agreements developed under (a) and (f) above, and</li> <li>9. the Regional Council advising and encouraging resource consent applicants to consult directly with hapū or iwi where it is necessary to identify: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. the relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu and other taonga (including wāhi tūpuna), and</li> <li>b. the actual and potential adverse effects of proposed activities on those relationships.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
<p><b>RMIA-P2: Wāhi tapu, wāhi tūpuna and other sites of significance</b></p> <p><i>Ko ngā wāhi tapu, wāhi tūpuna hoki me ētahi atu papa hirahira</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Wāhi tapu, wāhi tūpuna and other sites of significance to Māori identified: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. In the Regional Coastal Plan and district plans,</li> <li>b. as historic reserves under the Reserves Act 1977,</li> <li>c. as Māori reserves under the Te Ture Whenua Māori Act 1993,</li> <li>d. as sites recorded in the New Zealand Archaeological Association's Site Recording Scheme, and</li> <li>e. as registered sites under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014</li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p>must be protected from inappropriate subdivision, use or development that would cause adverse effects on the qualities and features which contribute to the values of these sites.</p>
<p><b>RMIA-P3: The mauri of water</b></p> <p><i>Te mauri o ngā wai</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Regional Council must have regard to the mauri of water by implementing RPSRMIA-P1(1) to (9) and by restricting and suspending water takes in times of minimum flow consistent with LF-FW-P21.</li> <li>2. In exceptional circumstances the Regional Council, following advice and guidance of hapū or iwi and consultation with potentially affected resource users, may facilitate a voluntary rāhui - temporary cessation of</li> </ol>

	resource activities (with the exception of public water supply).
<b>RMIA-P4: Other resource management issues</b>  <i>Ētahi take whakahaere rauemi anō</i>	RMIA-P4 identifies a range of other issues that are significant to iwi Māori in the context of resource management. While these issues are acknowledged as important, they were not explored individually in this evaluation due to limited time with participants. However, the analysis and insights shared throughout this report offer valuable perspectives that can help inform a deeper understanding of the issues outlined in RMIA-P4.

## Methods

These methods outline the approach the Regional Council will take to support and contribute to the delivery of quality outcomes for the Region's hapū and iwi.

Method	Description
<b>RMIA-M1 Memoranda of Partnership (MoP)</b>  <i>He Manatū Rangapū</i>	The primary focus of this method is to improve working relationships with hapū and iwi of the Region to ensure their relationships with ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu and other taonga (including wāhi tūpuna) are recognised and provided for.
<b>RMIA-M2 Identification of Sites of Significance</b>  <i>Te Tautuhi i ngā Papa Hirahira</i>	The Regional Council will work with hapū and iwi to identify and protect sites of significance without the need to disclose their location publicly. However, where it is consistent with tikanga Māori to do so, information about such sites may be made publicly available in an appropriate database.
<b>RMIA-M3 Treaty of Waitangi - Claims</b>  <i>Te Tiriti o Waitangi - Ngā Kerēme</i>	The Regional Council will work cooperatively and in good faith with hapū and iwi to implement any Treaty of Waitangi claim settlement matters that are relevant to the functions, powers and duties of the Regional Council.
<b>RMIA-M4 Code of Practice for Wāhi Tapu and Wāhi Tūpuna Protection and Discovery</b>  <i>He Tikanga Mahi mō te Whakamarumarū me te Hura i ngā</i>	<p>The aim of this method is to develop a code of practice to ensure all efforts are made to protect wāhi tapu and wāhi tūpuna from unnecessary damage, and procedures are in place in the event wāhi tapu or wāhi tūpuna are discovered.</p> <p>This code of practice may provide for variation in procedures and practices for different hapū and iwi if they identify that this is appropriate.</p> <p>This code of practice will enable those parties carrying out activities under resource consents and permitted activity</p>

<p><i>Wāhi Tapu me ngā Wāhi Tūpuna</i></p>	<p>rules to meet conditions for the protection of wāhi tapu or wāhi tūpuna.</p>
<p><b>RMIA-M5 Regional Hapū and Iwi Projects</b></p> <p><i>He Kaupapa Mahi ā-Hapū, Mahi ā-Iwi hoki o te Rohe</i></p>	<p>This method will allow opportunities for hapū and iwi to work alongside the Regional Council to develop and implement a range of projects initiated by hapū or iwi. These projects could include wetland restoration or enhancement, river bank erosion planting, wāhi tapu or wāhi tūpuna GIS mapping, research projects on Māori land blocks, and hapū and iwi resource monitoring initiatives.</p>
<p><b>RMIA-M6 Iwi Management Plans (IMP)</b></p> <p><i>He Mahere Whakahaere ā-Iwi</i></p>	<p>The objective of this method is to encourage hapū and iwi to develop iwi management plans. This will ensure hapū and iwi resource management perspectives are articulated in order that they can be incorporated in the Regional Council's planning practices and policy documents.</p>
<p><b>RMIA-M7 Web-Based Iwi Contacts Database</b></p> <p><i>He Pātengi Raraunga ā-Ipurangi o Ngā Iwi</i></p>	<p>This method is intended to provide the Regional Council and resource consent applicants with accurate contact information for hapū and iwi with a significant interest in resource management matters.</p> <p>A web page, on the Regional Council's website, will be designed to capture any information relevant to the Region's iwi - for example, iwi management plans, marae and civil defence posts. GIS mapping will be used to show locational information.</p>
<p><b>RMIA-M8 Joint Management Agreements</b></p> <p><i>He Whakaaetanga Whakahaere Ngātahi</i></p>	<p>The Regional Council and relevant hapū and iwi will investigate options for joint management agreements between the Council and iwi authorities, especially those that have settled Waitangi Tribunal claims with the Crown, and where there is an established memorandum of partnership.</p>
<p><b>RMIA-M9 Cultural Monitoring Framework</b></p> <p><i>He Anga Aroturuki Ahurea</i></p>	<p>The Regional Council will work with hapū and iwi to develop and implement a cultural monitoring framework for natural and physical resources.</p>
<p><b>RMIA-M10 Resource Consent Processes</b></p> <p><i>Ngā Tikanga Whakatau Whakaaetanga Rauemi</i></p>	<p>To develop protocols within the Regional Council's consents team to enable affected hapū and iwi to participate in resource consent processes. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• notifying affected hapū and iwi of relevant resource consent activities</li> <li>• appointing Māori hearing commissioners to resource consent hearings</li> <li>• providing the ability to present evidence to hearings in Māori</li> <li>• presenting hapū and iwi submissions on marae</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>imposing cultural monitoring requirements as a condition of resource consents where appropriate.</li> </ul>
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### Anticipated environmental results

Anticipated Environmental Result	Indicator	Data Source
<p><b>RMIA – AER1 Discoveries of wāhi tapu and wāhi tūpuna are dealt with appropriately in accordance with tikanga Māori.</b></p> <p><i>Ka tika ngā mahi me te hāngai tonu ki ngā tikanga Māori i ngā wā ka huraina ngā wāhi tapu, wāhi tūpuna hoki.</i></p>	<p>Reduction in the number of wāhi tapu and wāhi tūpuna dealt with inappropriately (including when damaged by inappropriate subdivision, use or development)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accidental wāhi tapu and wāhi tūpuna discoveries reported to the Regional Council and Heritage New Zealand</li> <li>Hapū and iwi</li> </ul>
<p><b>RMIA – AER2</b></p> <p><b>Increased involvement of Māori in achieving environmental outcomes across the Region.</b></p> <p><i>Ko te piki ake o te whakauru a te Māori ki te whakatutuki i ngā putanga taiao huri noa i te Rohe.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of environmental projects developed, funded and implemented with hapū, iwi, marae committees or other Māori organisations</li> <li>Number of monitoring programmes developed with hapū and iwi</li> <li>Number of seminars or research projects conducted with hapū or iwi catchment collectives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional Iwi</li> <li>Environmental Projects Fund</li> </ul>
<p><b>RMIA – AER3</b></p> <p><b>Improved wetland protection and restoration.</b></p> <p><i>Ka pai kē ake te whakamaruma ru me te whakahou i ngā papa waiwai.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of wetland projects developed with Māori landowners</li> <li>Research projects, seminars undertaken</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>He Tini Awa Trust Trust</li> <li>Regional Iwi</li> <li>Environmental Projects Fund</li> </ul>
<p><b>RMIA – AER4</b></p> <p><b>Improved working relationships with hapū and iwi to achieve mutually acceptable environmental outcomes.</b></p> <p><i>Ka pai kē ake ngā hononga mahi me ngā</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of environmental partnership agreements with hapū and iwi</li> <li>Improved localised environmental results</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Memoranda of partnership</li> <li>Iwi management plans</li> </ul>

<i>hapū me ngā iwi hei whakatutuki i ngā putanga ōrite e pā ana ki te taiao</i>		
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## Appendix 2: Methodology

### Development Evaluation Approach

We used a Developmental Evaluation (DE) approach to frame our methodology. This approach recognises the vital importance of relationships and values, as well as the complexity of the context that we are working within.

DE is flexible and adaptive, with the evaluation design evolving alongside the kaupapa it is evaluating. It allows for changes in evaluation questions, methods, and approaches as new information emerges and the context evolves. This approach is important when working with iwi Māori as it allows iwi Māori to shape the evaluation and influence its focus to ensure it is valuable to them, as well as to HRC. We took 6 interconnected steps to gather the evidence and analysis for reviewing chapter 2 of the Plan.

### Whakawhanaungatanga

Whakawhanaungatanga was crucial to begin this kaupapa and to build trust, good communication, and to determine iwi Māori expectations and aspirations as part of this review process.

To begin, we mapped the iwi across the region, identifying where we had existing relationships or contacts, and where gaps remained. We undertook our own investigations to find relevant contacts and also requested support from HRC to provide names and contact details for iwi Māori representatives.

We asked HRC to share an overview of their relationships with different iwi Māori across the rohe. This ranged from active collaborative partnerships to little or no current engagement.

We did initial background research on each iwi, their publicly available documents and treaty settlement status, as understanding the context is the most critical first step of any evaluation. We developed communication pieces (Figure 1 and Figure 2) to support the whakawhanaungatanga phase, helping to articulate the kaupapa and the timeline that was associated with it.



Figure 1. Simple communication resource to provide iwi Māori with a simple background to the evaluation.

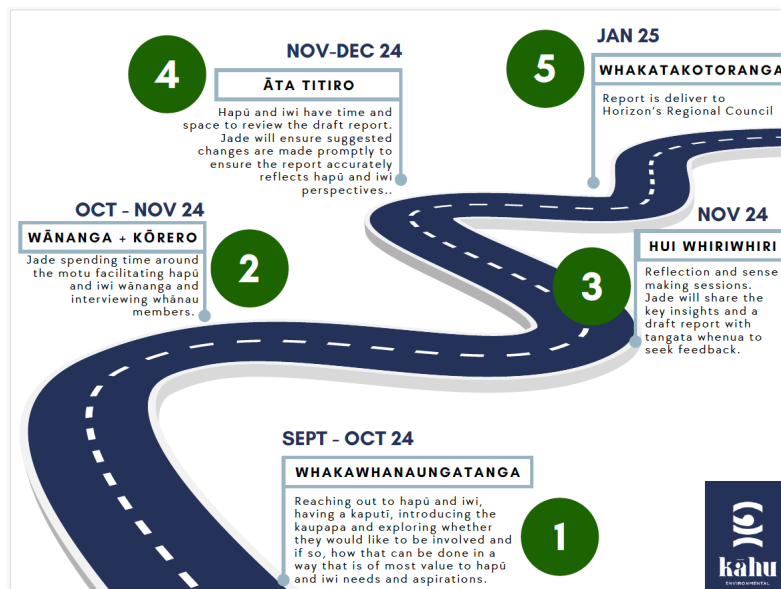


Figure 2. Roadmap for iwi Māori to understand the process and timeline of the evaluation.

Engagement with iwi was initiated through an introductory email, with a one-page overview attached (Figure 3) that explained who we are and the purpose of the kaupapa. Where phone numbers were available, we followed up with a call to try and arrange a kanohi ki te kanohi hui for whakawhanaungatanga.

# Are the Te Ao Māori Provisions in the One Plan serving the needs of Hapū and Iwi?

## KO WAI AU?

Ko Hikurangi te maunga,  
Ko Waiapu te awa,  
Ko Nukutaimemeha te waka,  
He uri ahau no Ngāti Porou me  
Te Aitanga-a-Māte.  
Ko Whareponga tōku marae,  
Ko Jade tōku ingoa.



As a kaupapa Taiao specialist at Kāhu Environmental, I support whānau, hapū, and iwi to actively carry out their role as kaitiaki. Horizons Regional Council have asked me to assist them to evaluate whether the te ao Māori provisions of the One Plan are creating positive outcomes for hapū, iwi, and te taiao.

## HE AHA TE KAUPAPA?

We would like to gather insight from iwi and hapū to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the te ao Māori provisions in the One Plan.

The Key Evaluation Questions are:

**Awareness:** How aware are hapū and iwi of the te ao Māori provisions in the One Plan?

**Application:** Are the policies and methods being used/applied in an effective and efficient way?

**Outcomes:** Are anticipated environmental results and objectives being achieved?

**Feedback:** What is working well? What is not working well? What needs to change?



## HEI AHA TENEI KAUPAPA?

This evaluation is an opportunity to:

1. Understand what policies and provisions can be leveraged to pursue iwi and hapū aspirations.
2. Share your perspective on whether the provisions are effectively and efficiently creating outcomes for Māori.

## KA PĒHEA TE MAHI?

We'll start with whanaungatanga to gauge interest and capacity. Engagement will be tailored to hapū and iwi preferences and could include a survey, wānanga, or interviews.

**Please reach out for a kōrero:**

Jade Gibson  
jade@kahuenviro.co.nz or 027 423 0574

Figure 3. One-pager overview to share with iwi Māori to provide an overview of the kaupapa.

We made gentle but consistent efforts to reach out in a way that was respectful and not disruptive, always aiming to meet people where they were at. When contact couldn't be established, we made it clear that we remained available at any time and that their perspectives would always be valued, regardless of the evaluation timeline. We also encouraged contributions or feedback on the findings at any stage, recognising that meaningful participation cannot always be confined to predetermined windows of time.

Where possible whakawhanaungatanga was done kanoahi ki te kanoahi, with time spent travelling the rohe and sitting down with tangata whenua over kai and kaputī. These hui focused on building relationships and creating a safe space for iwi Māori to share their current context, priorities, and perspectives – if they chose to – before we asked for any information. We began by asking each iwi how they wished to be involved in the evaluation and explored if and how the process could also support their own aspirations. While some offered to help

facilitate engagement at the hapū and marae level, limited capacity made engagement at that level difficult to achieve.

Through the engagement, we were able to get representation and whakaaro from the following iwi:

- Ngāti Whitikaupeka
- Te Rūnanga o Tūpoho
- Rangitane o Tamaki nui a Rua
- Ngā Wairiki Ngāti Apa
- Ngāti Maniapoto
- Ngāti Hauiti
- Ngāti Rangī
- Muaūpoko
- Rangitāne o Manawatū
- Ngāi te Ohuake
- Mōkai Pātea

Two iwi declined to engage. Whanganui Lands Settlement Trust/Ngā Tangata Tiaki, let us know that they did not consider the One Plan relevant to their context as their statutory framework driven by Te Awa Tupua sufficiently addresses their government and management needs. Ngāti Kahungunu ki Tamaki nui a rua, told us that they preferred that HRC engage with them directly.

### Key Evaluation Questions

We built on the questions used in HRC's *Section 35 Evaluation Report Te Ao Māori Provisions* report (Figure 4) and the preliminary research and whakawhanaungatanga phase to develop Key Evaluation Questions (KEQs). These questions were adapted and built on with iwi Māori, to describe what 'Plan Effectiveness' and 'Plan Efficiency' meant from a te ao Māori perspective.

Plan Effectiveness	Plan efficiency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are anticipated environmental results and objectives being achieved? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Does it give effect to Te Mana o Te Wai?</li> <li>○ Does it give effect to the hierarchy of obligations?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Is there evidence that the policies and methods are being used/applied in an effective way? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Do the plan provisions have the support of users – is the plan perceived to work; are the provisions enforceable?</li> <li>○ Can the Plan be reasonably be implemented?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Do the provisions give effect to the NPS-FM?</li> <li>• Do the provisions give effect to other national policy statements?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are the regulatory, consenting and administrative costs in line with what was expected/budgeted?</li> <li>• Are there additional costs/risks/time and resource implications created as a result of the provisions?</li> <li>• Are outcomes generally being delivered at an acceptable rate?</li> <li>• Is the workload implicit in the policy manageable?</li> </ul>

Figure 4 Horizons question's to evaluate Chapter 2 of the One Plan

These were the Key Evaluation Questions that we unpacked with iwi Māori throughout the engagement process.

- **Awareness** – The level of understanding among iwi Māori regarding the Provisions in the Plan.
- **Application** – How effectively and efficiently the policies and methods are being applied.
- **Outcomes** – Whether the anticipated environmental results and objectives are being achieved.
- **Feedback** – What aspects are working well, what challenges exist, and where improvements may be needed.

### Hui and wānanga

In total we had six kanohi ki te kanohi wānanga and two online hui between September 2024 and March 2025. This was typically with groups of 3 to 6 people and spanned between 2 and 3 hours. These hui were with representatives from Rangitāne o Tamaki-nui-ā-rua, Muaūpoko, Ngā Wairiki Ngāti Apa, Te Rūnanga o Tūpoho, Mōkai Patea and Ngāti Whitikaupeka.

We ensured that a koha was included (in the form of hourly rates) for people's time to contribute to this kaupapa.

### Online interviews or casual kōrero

In total we completed five online interviews and one kanohi ki te kanohi interview. This was typically with individuals, often lasting between 60 and 120 minutes. The interviews were with whānau who affiliate to Ngāti Rangī, Ngāti

Whitikaupeka, Ngāti Hauā, Ngāti Maniapoto, Rangitāne o Manawatū, and Ngāti Hauti.

### Survey questions

A survey monkey questionnaire was sent to fifteen people or organisations. There were only three responses to this from whānau who affiliate to Ngāti Maniapoto, Ngāti Haua, and Ngāti Rangī. The survey can be accessed here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/F9W58P7>

### Engagement format and feedback

For each wānanga, interview or kōrero, we begun with whakawhanaungatanga and then moved into semi-structured KEQ's to guide the kōrero. The notes from each wānanga, hui and interview were summarised and shared back with participants.

Ngāti Tamaupoko gave feedback from Te Morehu Whenua Tamariki, a group of rangatahi and Tamariki who are passionate about te taiao and actively carry out learning and restoration activities in te taiao.

### Sense making (analysis and key findings)

After all the information had been gathered, the **sense making** phase began:

1. *Organise the information*, putting it all in order, like sorting pieces of a puzzle.
2. *Thematically analyse the data* by looking closely at the information to find patterns, themes, and important details that will help to evaluation and review to plan chapter.
3. *Understand the data* by unpacking what the patterns and themes mean and how they can help us answer the KEQs.
4. *Integrate this into the context* by taking a step back and considering where the information came from, how and in what ways it was collected, and whether there are other factors at play in the story the data is telling.
5. *Pull it all together into this report* by combining everything we have collected and learned to get a clear picture and tell a story that is of value, both to HRC and the iwi Māori we are working alongside.
6. *Feedback*, which included sending our insights from our engagement out to iwi Māori, so they have an opportunity to review any parts of their kōrero that we might be using, to ensure they are comfortable with what we have written. This is an important opportunity to gather feedback and any other insights that might be shared during this phase.

7. *Review and improve*, we double check our work and make it better if we can, before sharing the final findings with HRC, including the draft Report before finalising.

## Limitations

There are always limitations to any project. Below we have listed and explained the key limitations to this project, and the mitigations we put in place.

<b>Low capacity</b>	We know that iwi Māori are extremely under resourced and overburdened with workload. As a result, they may not have the capacity to be involved. This is something we recognised early as a limitation to the project and sought to make initial contact as soon as possible to allow for a long period of time for them to manage workloads or schedule in this mahi at a time that best suits their busy schedules.
<b>Competing demands and other priorities</b>	There are a lot of projects and work streams that iwi Māori must manage their time across and this evaluation may not have been a priority for them. We sought to mitigate this by providing a number of different ways for iwi Māori to contribute, such as survey, online interview, face to face wānanga or a combination. Phone calls were also utilised to make communication easier in certain instances, rather than email (which can become overwhelming and time consuming).
<b>Timeframes</b>	An initial six months was given to complete this project. This timeframe did not align with the reality of demands on iwi and hapū largely due to the two limitations of capacity and competing demands as explained above. To mitigate this, the timeframe was extended by an additional 4 months. This allowed for project delivery, but only allowed for engagement at a high level rather than getting into specific details. It was not possible to spend at the grassroots, marae level to deeply understand issues, and practical implementation of the Plan at the coal face.
<b>Representation</b>	Because of limited time, capacity and competing demands, as well as potentially some iwi and hapū having less of a relationship with Horizons than others, the feedback and whakaaro analysed as part of this report

was from a small portion of iwi and hapū in the region. This means that not all voices have been represented in this review process.

## Appendix 3: Evaluative Judgements on how the Provisions have performed ‘on paper’ and ‘in practice’

This section presents an overview of how the Provisions have performed from an iwi perspective. This analysis looks not just at policy design, but at lived experience, based on the wananga and kōrero Māori.

We have used a two-part evaluative framework for each provision, with one column analysing how the provision reads and functions on paper, and the other assesses how it has been experienced in practice. The scale used for both categories is outlined in Table 7 below. The results are based on engagement insights, examples, and evidence shared during the review and are explored in further depth in Section 5.

Table 7. Evaluative Framework and Rating Scale for the performance of the Provisions

Rating	How it looks ‘on paper’ description	How it’s being applied ‘in practice’ description
<b>I tae ki te pae tawhito</b> We have reached the distant horizon/achieved the long-term objectives	The provision is clearly articulated, relevant, and aligns with Māori values, context, and aspirations.	The provision is regularly being implemented in practice and Māori see the value and outcomes that the provisions create for their unique context, priorities and aspirations.
<b>I tata tae atu ki te pae tawhito</b> We are close to reaching the distant horizon	The provision is mostly clear and aligned, with good potential to support the needs and aspirations of iwi Māori.	The provision is being applied in some contexts and has created good outcomes, but there are fundamental issues that prevent it from optimal efficiency and effectiveness.
<b>Kei te pae tata tonu</b> We are at the near horizon, and starting to see early-stage wins or low hanging fruit	The provision shows some promise but lacks consistency and strength across the One Plan.	The provision is being used in isolated cases, with limited or inconsistent impact across the rohe.
<b>Kāore anō kia tae ki te pae tata</b> We are still far from the near horizon	The provision lacks clarity, strength, alignment, or is too generic to be useful to iwi Māori.	The provision is rarely used or has very little real-world impact for Māori.
<b>Kāore ano kia wehe i te kāinga</b>	The provisions do not reflect the perspectives, needs, and aspirations of Māori.	There is no evidence of the provision’s application or relevance in practice.

We haven't even left home yet		
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Table 8. Evaluative Judgements based on the performance of the Provisions 'on paper' and 'in practice'.

#	Provision	'On Paper'	'In Practice'
<b>Values</b> He Māramatanga ki ngā Uara Māori An Understanding of Māori Values			
<b>Mauri</b>	Mauri means “essential life force or principle; a metaphysical quality inherent in all things, both animate and inanimate”, but the following explains the concept in more detail.	Mauri is a deeply held value across iwi Māori, especially in relation to te taiao. The definition provided in the Plan is quite generic – for this to reach ' <i>I tae ki te pae tawhiti</i> ', hapū and iwi need to define mauri in their own context.	Mauri is frequently drawn on by iwi in resource management, providing a practical basis to assert values in hearings and legal processes. However, in most cases, it holds little weight in decision-making unless ecological impacts are high. This disconnect means mauri is acknowledged on paper and in argument, but not genuinely valued or upheld through implementation. Use of iwi-led monitoring tools that look at mauri as an indicator is increasing. For this to be ' <i>I tata tae atu ki te pae tawhiti</i> ', it would need to be consistently and legally acknowledged at sites and in settings where iwi and hapū consider it relevant or raise concern.
<b>Taonga</b>	Taonga means “all things prized or treasured, both tangible and intangible”, but the following explains the concept in more detail.	Taonga is included as a value, but the lack of clarity and guidance limits its effectiveness. Its ambiguous nature means applicants may overlook or misunderstand it. Stronger direction and iwi-led definitions would improve how it is acknowledged and applied across planning processes.	Taonga is referenced in hearings and iwi management plans but influence and action is strongest when linked to ecological value, like native species. Broader taonga, such as places, practices, or intangible knowledge, are rarely acknowledged unless explicitly raised and backed by iwi advocacy, limiting its overall impact in decision-making. Taonga, and the tikanga that should accompany its prioritisation, are rarely upheld in current practice.
<b>Wāhi tapu</b>	Wāhi tapu means “a site sacred to Māori in the traditional, spiritual, religious, ritual, or mythological sense and includes rua kōiwi.	Wāhi tapu is acknowledged but framed reactively around discovery and physical evidence. To reach ' <i>I tata tae atu ki te pae tawhiti</i> ' iwi must be supported to define and protect wāhi tapu proactively, based on their own tikanga, not just when sites are identified or disclosed.	In practice, there is little consistent support for iwi to identify, manage, or protect <i>wāhi tapu</i> in a way that aligns with their own kawa and tikanga. Recognition often only occurs when something physical is found, and follow-up processes are unclear or inconsistent. Iwi have developed protocol or have a desire to. To move toward ' <i>I tata tae atu ki te pae tawhiti</i> ', iwi must be supported to lead this space, with their own processes upheld, resourced, and

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			respected, regardless of whether a site is officially mapped or disclosed.
	<p><b>Wāhi tūpuna</b></p> <p>Wāhi tūpuna means “a site of cultural and historical significance to hapū or iwi - though not necessarily in a state of tapu”.</p>	<p>The concept is poorly defined and lacks clarity or direction in the Plan. Unlike wāhi tapu, there are no clear mechanisms to recognise or uphold wāhi tūpuna, and little guidance for planners or applicants, making it difficult to apply meaningfully or consistently across the region.</p>	<p>Wāhi tūpuna is rarely acknowledged or protected, especially where iwi are unwilling to disclose exact locations. Without physical evidence or formal mapping, it holds little weight. Unlike wāhi tapu, it lacks procedural triggers, and iwi feel their kōrero around it is often dismissed or seen as too ambiguous. If this was to be truly upheld in practice, the lands and/or the management of wāhi tūpuna would be being returned to hapū and iwi. For example, tourism on Mount Ruapehu would be better controlled by iwi.</p>
	<p><b>Tikanga Māori</b></p> <p>Tikanga Māori is defined in the RMA as meaning “Māori customary values and practices” and that definition is used in this Plan.</p>	<p>The description of the value lacks any iwi-specific interpretation or direction for how tikanga should shape processes, despite it being central to every part of the resource management system. Tikanga, as a principle, is not given the strength and priority it deserves, as there are very few other references to it throughout the rest of the Plan.</p>	<p>Tikanga Māori is rarely embedded in planning processes in practice and often treated as symbolic or peripheral. It is not regularly used in everyday resource management practice as a living system of logic, law, and responsibility. Without resourcing and genuine engagement with iwi-defined tikanga, it remains disconnected from practice and decision-making.</p>
	<p><b>Kaitiakitanga</b></p> <p>Kaitiakitanga is defined in the RMA as meaning “the exercise of guardianship by the tangata whenua of an area in accordance with tikanga Māori in relation to natural and physical resources; and includes the ethic of stewardship” and that definition is used in this Plan. The following explains the concept in more detail.</p>	<p>Kaitiakitanga aligns with many iwi Māori values it’s definition is relatively clear. However, it is treated as a standalone value rather than a paradigm for resource management. To reach ‘<i>tae ki te pae tawhiti</i>’ it would be strongly referred to throughout the entire Plan, and highlighted as central and imperative to any resource management matter.</p>	<p>Despite being a deeply held practice by iwi, kaitiakitanga is rarely enabled in ways that reflect its full depth or intent. It is often reduced to environmental care, rather than upheld as a worldview and system. Those who are doing the most damage ‘in practice’ are viewed by iwi as having no conception or care for kaitiakitanga, preventing positive outcomes and protection for te taiao.</p>
<p><b>Issues</b></p> <p>Ngā Take Whakahaere Rauemi e Hirahira ana ki ngā Hapū me ngā Iwi Resource Management Issues of Significance to Hapū and Iwi</p>			

#	Provision	'On Paper'	'In Practice'
RMIA-I1	<p>Te kounga o te wai me te hiawai</p> <p>Water quality and demand</p>	<p>Water quality and demand is considered one of the biggest issues for iwi, but the definition of it does not encompass all of its relevant components. The way that Māori view and understand water, it's holistic nature and function, it's mauri and mana, is not strongly articulated, nor is water represented in that way throughout the rest of the Plan.</p>	<p>This remains a huge issue for iwi. While some positive steps have been taken, they are slow and inconsistent. Progress seen is perceived to be largely iwi and community driven and not a result of Chapter 2 provisions. In practice, there is a significant lack of accountability and regulatory pressure on landowners, particularly farmers, to shift land use practices. Opportunities to enforce better behaviours are mostly tied to new or renewing consents. Even then, enforcement is seen as limited by a selective monitoring approach and reliance solely on Western scientific methods, excluding other valid forms of observation and knowledge, such as mātauranga Māori.</p>
RMIA-I2	<p>Te whakamahi me te whakahaere whenua</p> <p>Land use and management</p>	<p>The provision is largely reactive, focusing on riparian planting (which is highly valued by iwi) and mitigating effects on mahinga kai, rather than driving a positive shift toward regenerative land use. Even measures like 'encouraging' land management plans fall short in the eyes of iwi, as they overlook the need for genuine co-development with iwi. This issue could be improved by allowing for local context and history.</p>	<p>Land use, especially agriculture and horticulture, continues to drive degradation. No meaningful tightening of land use rules has occurred, and there is little evidence suggests the Plan has led to any substantive change for Māori.</p>
RMIA-I3:	<p>Ngā wāhi noho taketake me te kanorau koiora</p> <p>Indigenous habitat and biodiversity</p>	<p>This issue does not encompass all for the components that important to iwi Māori. It does not acknowledge the whakapapa relationship that Māori hold with native flora and fauna, or the serious issue of fragmentation. This issue would benefit from being refined defined at a more local scale.</p>	<p>Because ecological values and indicators are well-aligned with this issue, it is often considered in practice. However, the focus tends to be on protecting what remains or mitigating impacts, rather than restoring what has been lost. Iwi-led efforts, such as taonga species monitoring and community nurseries, are contributing to this kaupapa, but iwi have expressed a desire for a more active role in decision-making, stronger partnerships with ecologists and council monitoring teams, and opportunities to build capacity for long-term restoration and monitoring.</p>
RMIA-I4:	<p>Te rangahau</p> <p>Research</p>	<p>Research should create practical and tangible outcomes for Māori and te taiao, not just be a</p>	<p>Some excellent iwi-led research initiatives exist, but many projects still extract knowledge or stories without contributing to iwi goals and tangible outcomes. More infrastructure and</p>

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		way of capturing data and information.	long-term support is needed so that kaupapa Māori research, in collaboration with experts, can be more widely implemented and resourced. Horizon's is not seen by Māori as a visible partner in research projects led by crown agencies and research institutes.
RMIA-I5:	Te aroturuki me te ūruhitanga  Monitoring and enforcement	Monitoring and enforcement is one of the most important functions of the resource management system, but this issue fails to acknowledge the myriad of ways it is currently falling short, including being overly reliant on western science and consent compliance.	Monitoring is under-supported and disconnected from decision-making. some iwi join Horizons during monitoring, and this is highly valued, but unfortunately rare. Monitoring often feels to Māori like a tick-box exercise with little influence on outcomes. Iwi want to develop and implement monitoring through a te ao Māori lens, with structures that give their data weight and influence. Enforcement is seen as weak and rarely seen as driving meaningful change.
<b>Objectives</b>			
Whāinga 2-1: Te whakahaere rauemi Objective 2-1: Resource management			
(a)	Kia aro atu ki te mauri o ngā rauemi māori - ōkiko hoki - hei oranga hapori, ōhanga hoki, tikanga hoki mō ngā hapū me ngā iwi.  To have regard to the mauri of natural and physical resources to enable hapū and iwi to provide for their social, economic and cultural wellbeing.	This objective is powerful and aligns closely with the needs and aspirations of iwi Māori and te taiao. However, the wording "have regard to" feels vague and lacks strength. Many iwi emphasise that mauri and the wellbeing of te taiao must be upheld first, as a foundation for social, economic, and cultural wellbeing, not treated as secondary or conditional.	This objective is often only drawn on in contexts where iwi Māori need a strong legal footing. It has little visible presence in everyday resource management, and is not seen as being actively applied at the ground level where it matters most. While it provides a valuable anchor for iwi Māori in formal settings, such as submissions and court hearings, it tends to remain reactive. If it were genuinely embedded in practice, iwi would be at the table as true partners from the beginning, shaping processes and practices to ensure they 'have regard to' mauri, rather than being brought in after key decisions are made.
(b)	Ka mate ka tino arohia te kaitiakitanga, ā, ka mate ka whakamanatia te hononga o ngā hapū me ngā iwi ki ō rātou whenua tūpuna,	The objective acknowledges kaitiakitanga and the importance of iwi and hapū relationships with their lands, waters, and taonga. However, it lacks strength and specificity to guide action. It treats	The kaitiakitanga objective is acknowledged in formal settings, such as court proceedings and submissions, but is poorly understood and narrowly applied across the resource management system as a whole. It is often reduced to environmental management rather than recognised as a whole-of-system

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	<p>wai, papa, wāhi tapu hoki me ētahi atu taonga (pērā i ngā wāhi tūpuna), ā, ka whakaratongia mā ngā tukanga whakahaere rauemi.</p> <p>Kaitiakitanga must be given particular regard and the relationship of hapū and iwi with their ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu and other taonga (including wāhi tūpuna) must be recognised and provided for through resource management processes.</p>	<p>kaitiakitanga as a concept to be acknowledged, rather than a directive that should actively shape policies, consents, and processes across the system.</p>	<p>worldview that guides all decisions. The result is that kaitiakitanga is cited when convenient but rarely drives how resource use is actually designed or governed. Embedding kaitiakitanga properly would require a fundamental shift in the values, processes, and mindsets applied across the resource management system — not just acknowledgment in legal settings.</p>
<p><b>Kaupapa Policies</b></p>			
RMIA-P1:	<p>Te whakauru mai o ngā hapū me ngā iwi ki roto i te whakahaere rauemi</p> <p>Hapū and iwi involvement in resource management</p>	<p>Involvement is critical, but the policy wording is seen as too soft and non-committal. It signals a desire, not a requirement, and lacks the strength needed to drive active iwi and hapū partnership.</p>	<p>Involvement relies heavily on iwi having existing capacity, structures, and resources. Those iwi that do are actively involved; those still building capacity can be left out of the process. Horizons and resource users provide limited support to bridge this gap. As a result, the burden of involvement falls heavily on a few individuals. Iwi and hapū would like to specifically outline what 'good' involvement looks like from their lens and context, so that resource users and Horizons have better guidance. The provisions could be strengthened to provide better direction and accountability to ensure this involvement happens.</p>
RMIA-P2:	<p>Ko ngā wāhi tapu, wāhi tūpuna hoki me ētahi atu papa hirahira</p> <p>Wāhi tapu, wāhi tūpuna and other</p>	<p>Sites of significance are acknowledged, but the policy frames protection reactively—triggered by discovery—rather than proactively defined through tikanga and mātauranga. The policy would benefit from being rewritten to embed proactive protection</p>	<p>Protection of wāhi tapu and other sites of significance remains inconsistent, often only occurring after physical discovery. Follow-up processes after discovery are unclear and inconsistent. Iwi who have developed their own tools and protocols have had more positive experiences. Others need support to create strategies, aspirations, and tikanga frameworks for identifying,</p>

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	sites of significance	based on iwi-led definitions and processes, without disclosure of sensitive information if that is not appropriate.	protecting, and caring for wāhi tapu and other sites. This includes resourcing for protocol development and wānanga with Horizons to ensure shared understanding. Recognition must not depend on official mapping or disclosure, but be guided by iwi-led processes.
RMIA-P3:	Te mauri o ngā wai  The mauri of water	The intent to protect mauri is strong but too narrowly focused on water alone, and doesn't reflect the interconnectedness of all natural systems. The objective risks becoming isolated from broader environmental and relational wellbeing.	Some positive initiatives exist (e.g., Oranga Wai, catchment groups), but they are not seen as wide enough in scale. Fundamental drivers of degradation, such as economic pressure and sector dominance, remain largely unchallenged. Restoration efforts are happening, but Māori do not believe the necessary system-wide mindsets and behaviours shift have occurred.
RMIA-P4:	Ētahi take whakahaere rauemi anō  Other resource management issues  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- water management quality and quantity</li> <li>- hazardous substances and contaminants</li> <li>- lakes and streams; available clean access to water</li> <li>- marae groundwater bore supply</li> <li>- water diversion to a different catchment</li> <li>- sewage disposal to water and land</li> <li>- land management; activities impacting wāhi tapu</li> </ul>	Many issues listed remain highly relevant, but the structure and length of this section dilutes their impact. Grouping critical matters under 'other' weakens their visibility and importance. A new structure would give each issue appropriate standing and influence. Further work with iwi and hapū is also needed to identify what is missing from this section.	A range of small wins and positive tangible outcomes were identified by iwi in addressing some of these issues (e.g., restoration projects, changes to wastewater discharge systems, fish surveys on lake), but progress is seen as fragmented and inconsistent.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>and wāhi tupuna</li> <li>- indigenous plants</li> <li>- saltwater intrusion to coastal aquifers</li> <li>- biodiversity</li> <li>- monitoring and enforcement)</li> </ul>		
<b>He Tikanga Whakamahi Methods of Implementation</b>			
RMIA-M1:	He Manatū Rangapū  Memoranda of Partnership (MoP)	MoPs are potentially a strong mechanism with statutory weight that embeds relationships at the heart of resource management, aligning well with iwi Māori aspirations.	The experience of Māori is that MoPs are often “dusty documents” with little active life. There is often no regular review, reflection, or accountability to ensure the intent is upheld. iwi often feel they carry out their roles and values set out in the MoP, but feel Horizons struggles to uphold their commitments, largely due to capacity constraints, high staff turnover, and differing value systems.
RMIA-M2:	Te Tautuhi i ngā Papa Hirahira  Identification of Sites of Significance	The wording is sensitive to tikanga Māori and recognises that disclosure is not always appropriate. However, too much reliance is placed on mapping sites, which alone does not capture their meaning or ensure their protection.	Many iwi feel recording sites on a map doesn't align with tikanga Māori. True protection requires connecting with places, learning, and shared understanding, not just dots on a map. Where sites are mapped, Horizons does better at notifying iwi of threats, but the overall approach is felt to lack the necessary depth and intimacy.
RMIA-M3:	Te Tiriti o Waitangi - Ngā Kerēme  Treaty of Waitangi - Claims	It is seen as critical and appropriate to include Treaty settlement matters in the Plan. However, Te Tiriti o Waitangi should be woven consistently throughout the document, not treated as a separate or isolated matter.	There was insufficient information or examples to assess how well this method is actively being implemented.
RMIA-M4:	He Tikanga Mahi mō te Whakamarumarū me te Hura i ngā Wāhi Tapu me ngā Wāhi Tūpuna	This is seen as a necessary method to give iwi autonomy over the protection of wāhi tapu and wāhi tūpuna.	Very little progress has been made in turning this method into an active and standardised practice. Some iwi have developed their own protocols, but many lack the resourcing to do so. Horizons has not consistently partnered with iwi to build or embed these procedures within council

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	Code of Practice for Wāhi Tapu and Wāhi Tūpuna Protection and Discovery		systems. As a result, protection of wāhi tapu and wāhi tūpuna remains reactive, often relying on mapped sites, rather than proactive protection based on tikanga, local knowledge, and spiritual significance. A stronger, partnership-based approach is needed to develop iwi-led codes of practice and formally integrate them into day-to-day council operations.
RMIA-M5:	He Kaupapa Mahi ā-Hapū, Mahi ā-Iwi hoki o te Rohe  Regional Hapū and Iwi Projects	Well aligned with iwi aspirations, provides a tangible, practical avenue for partnership and outcomes on the ground.	Some projects have been supported, but they are seen as sporadic and fragmented. There does not appear to be a coherent strategy or consistent resourcing pathway, which has limited tangible outputs.
RMIA-M6:	He Mahere Whakahaere ā-Iwi  Iwi Management Plans (IMP)	The intent to uplift iwi management plans (IMPs) is positive, but it needs broader application beyond council planning and should extend to all resource users.	Many iwi have developed or are developing IMPs and place immense value on them as expressions of their mātauranga, priorities, values, and aspirations as tangata whenua. However, if there is not consistent understanding, use, and responsiveness to the content of these plans it significantly weakens their influence. There is little evidence for iwi that their IMPs are actively shaping decision-making at the everyday operational level of HRC. Most iwi feel that unless IMPs are upheld across all resource management processes, not just acknowledged in principle, their ability to protect and provide for te taiao remains limited.
RMIA-M7:	He Pātengi Raraunga ā-Ipurangi o Ngā Iwi  Web-Based Iwi Contacts Database	The database is a good idea, aiming to support better access to iwi and hapū contacts for resource users. However, its design is too basic, lacks context around good engagement practices, and hasn't been maintained to reflect the evolving structures, priorities, and points of contact within iwi and hapū.	The database exists but is outdated and offers minimal value beyond basic contact details. It doesn't support meaningful engagement or guide users on how to work respectfully with iwi and hapū. Updating it to include iwi engagement expectations and protocols would make it a living tool, rather than just an outdated directory.
RMIA-M8	He Whakaaetanga Whakahaere Ngātahi  Joint Management Agreements	JMAs are a strong mechanism for formalising shared governance and decision-making between Horizons and iwi. They hold statutory weight and offer a clear pathway for partnership,	The iwi experience of JMAs is that they often sit forgotten once signed, they are under-utilised, with no regular review, reporting, or accountability on whether the partnership is delivering shared outcomes. Reinvigorating JMAs through active relationship-building, clear expectations, and regular

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		but the Plan lacks detail on how they will be nurtured, reviewed, or kept alive after they are signed.	evaluation would better realise their potential as a true co-governance mechanism.
RMIA-M9	He Anga Aroturuki Ahurea  Cultural Monitoring Framework	The method is highly valued and supported by iwi and hapū. However, 'on paper' it focuses too much on creating a framework, rather than embedding cultural monitoring into everyday practice, resourcing iwi leadership, and ensuring that results influence council decision-making and environmental management.	Some iwi have developed cultural monitoring frameworks independently, but Horizons' support for those projects has been minimal. There is a strong desire for Horizons to partner more actively, fund iwi to lead monitoring, build Māori technical capability, and genuinely embed cultural monitoring outcomes into decision-making, rather than treating them as optional or secondary to Western science.
RMIA-M10	Ngā Tikanga Whakatau Whakaaetanga Rauemi  Resource Consent Processes	The method is strong on paper, it recognises the need for early iwi and hapū participation in consents and provides practical steps to achieve it. However, it could be clearer about how Horizons will ensure iwi involvement consistently across all levels of activity, not just major projects.	Some iwi, through significant effort and building internal capacity, are actively involved in resource consent processes. However, engagement remains limited to large-scale projects. Most iwi and hapū experience little meaningful involvement, largely due to resource constraints, council practices, and a reactive rather than proactive approach.
<b>Ngā Hua Ka Tūmanakotia Mā Te Taiao</b> <b>Anticipated Environmental Results</b>			
Ka tika ngā mahi me te hāngai tonu ki ngā tikanga Māori i ngā wā ka huraina ngā wāhi tapu, wāhi tūpuna hoki.  Discoveries of wāhi tapu and wāhi tūpuna are dealt with appropriately in accordance with tikanga Māori.		The AER wording is seen as focusing too narrowly on 'discoveries,' missing the broader role of proactively protecting and embedding all sites of significance, including practices, activities, and events connected to them. This is too limited to fully uphold tikanga Māori.	In isolated cases, iwi and hapū see good outcomes. However, it remains reactive, focused on physical finds rather than actively recognising and protecting the wider cultural landscape.
Ko te piki ake o te whakauru a te Māori ki te whakatutuki i ngā putanga taiao huri noa i te Rohe.		This is considered to be well written and appropriately aspirational. The indicators are clear, strong, and framed to	Involvement in practice tends to be superficial. Some small wins, projects, and outcomes have been achieved, but iwi and hapū do not feel it is meaningfully embedded across the

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	Increased involvement of Māori in achieving environmental outcomes across the Region.	drive genuine partnership and action with Māori across environmental outcomes.	system or consistently supported where it matters most.
	Ka pai kē ake te whakamarumarū me te whakahou i ngā papa waiwai.  Improved wetland protection and restoration.	This AER thought to be positive and well-targeted. It signals the right intent and supports active engagement with Māori values in freshwater and wetland spaces.	Progress is very limited. Current approaches fail to acknowledge or prioritise wetlands that have been historically drained or lost, which iwi want to restore and uplift alongside those that remain. Small projects exist, but meaningful protection and restoration is not occurring at the scale or intent needed.
	Ka pai kē ake ngā hononga mahi me ngā hapū me ngā iwi hei whakatutuki i ngā putanga ōrite e pā ana ki te taiao  Improved working relationships with hapū and iwi to achieve mutually acceptable environmental outcomes.	This is exactly the kind of outcome iwi and hapū want to see articulated - strong, clear, and focused on relationship as central to environmental success.	There are pockets of improvement, but it is far from consistent. Building stronger relationships needs to extend beyond council to include farmers, industry, resource users, and private landowners to achieve the deeper environmental outcomes intended.

## Disclaimer

We have used various sources of information to write this report. Where possible, we tried to make sure that all third-party information was accurate. However, it's not possible to audit all external reports, websites, people, or organisations. If the information we used turns out to be wrong, we can't accept any responsibility or liability for that. If we find there was information available when we wrote our report that would have altered its conclusions, we may update our report. However, we are not required to do so.

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