

7 Indigenous biological diversity, landscape and Living historic heritage

7.1 Scope and Background

7.1.1 Scope

This chapter addresses three matters:

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

Chapter 4 - Te Ao Māori - also contributes to the management of historic heritage, in particular *sites** of significance to Māori, including *wāhi tapu**.

7.1.2 Indigenous Biological Diversity

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

Indigenous Biodiversity in the Manawatu-Wanganui Region

The ~~Manawatu-Wanganui~~ Region now has only 23% of its original forest cover and ~~2~~ 3% of its wetland habitat. The majority of the forest is found in the hill country and the ranges, with fragments scattered throughout the lower-lying and coastal areas of the Region, where typically less than 10% of original habitat remains. Remaining natural habitat is small, fragmented and under pressure from pests and disturbance. Aquatic indigenous biodiversity is in a similar state of degradation with ~~indigenous~~ native fish populations greatly reduced, poor habitat (loss of riparian margins in most areas and introduction of exotic fish and pest plants) and many barriers between coastal wetlands, streams and headwaters.

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

Future Approach

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



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

- (a) **Halting the decline** - Those habitats that are *rare habitats**, ~~or threatened habitats*~~ or *at-risk habitats** (as determined in accordance with shown in Schedule E of this Plan) and that are recognised as being an area of significant indigenous vegetation or a significant habitat of indigenous fauna will be given a high level of protection, through rules, from activities likely to cause any further loss or modification.
- (b) **Active Management** - In addition, *rare habitats**, ~~and threatened habitats*~~ and *at-risk habitats** will be proactively managed through collaboration with landowners for work such as pest control and fencing, and provision of economic incentives such as grants and rates relief.

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

7.1.3

Natural features, Landscapes and Natural Character

The protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use and development is a matter of national importance. Outstanding natural features and landscapes are memorable, affording aesthetic pleasure and experiences that are shared and valued by a wider community. Outstanding natural features and landscapes have natural and cultural dimensions that are central to a community's identity and sense of belonging. They are places that reveal a community's history and a coherence and connectedness of people's lives through time and space.

A number of outstanding ~~or unique~~ natural features and regional landscapes and their associated values are identified in Schedule F¹. These outstanding natural features and landscapes exist on both public and private land and were originally identified by the Regional Council, in consultation with the Territorial Authorities and the Department of Conservation, and included in the Regional Policy Statement for the Manawatu-Wanganui Region (August 1998). In determining these natural features and landscapes as being "outstanding and regionally significant" specific matters were considered, including geographical and geological features and their contribution to the Region's character, ecological significance, the cultural significance of the *site** or area, amenity, intrinsic, scientific and recreational values, and any recognised (national or regional) level of protection.

Territorial Authorities have the responsibility of managing the effects of land use, through district plan provisions and land use resource consents. Although the issue of landscape change and Consequently, the management of competing pressures for the subdivision, use and development of land that may affect outstanding natural features and landscapes is best most appropriately dealt with at a territorial level. However, to aid local decision-making, ~~some~~ regional policies provide guidance for managing the effects of subdivision, use and development of land that may affect outstanding natural features and landscapes, giving guidance

¹ Schedule F is a component of Part I - the Regional Policy Statement.



~~on the appropriate balance between important infrastructure, including renewable energy, and other values, such as landscape, are provided in Chapter 3.~~

Preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment, wetlands, rivers, lakes and their margins is also a matter of national importance. Natural character is generally accepted as being an expression of:

- natural landform,
- natural water bodies (lakes and rivers) and the sea,
- vegetation cover (type and pattern),
- natural processes associated with the weather and the ecology,
- wildness, exposure, and the natural sculpturing of landforms and vegetation,
and
- the wider landscape context and the *site's** relationship to this.

Natural character is a sliding scale and varies from a low degree of natural character naturalness, such as urban environments, to a high degree of natural character naturalness (for example, Tongariro National Park).

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

- continuing to provide a regional policy on natural character to guide decision-making,
- protecting and managing indigenous biological diversity, important wetlands, rivers and lakes as described elsewhere in this Plan, and
- restoring and rehabilitating natural character where appropriate.

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

~~The natural character of the coastal marine area is covered in Chapter 9. Chapter 9 addresses the management of activities in the coastal marine area (CMA), including policy guidance on the management of the elements of landscapes and seascapes that contribute to the natural character of the CMA. Chapter 7 deals with outstanding natural features and landscapes and the natural character of the non-CMA portion of the coastal environment landward of mean high water springs and wetlands, rivers, lakes and their margins is dealt with in this chapter.~~

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



7.1.4

Historic Heritage

The protection of historic heritage from inappropriate subdivision, use and development is a matter of national importance. Historic heritage is defined in the RMA. It means those natural and physical resources that contribute to an understanding and appreciation of New Zealand's history and cultures, deriving from archaeological, architectural, cultural, historic, scientific or technological qualities. Historic heritage includes historic sites, structures, places and areas, archaeological sites, sites of significance to Māori, including wāhi tapu, and surroundings associated with the natural and physical resources. Some activities that are controlled by the Regional Council can have an adverse impact on historic heritage qualities values. For example, earthworks can modify or destroy archaeological sites, and the discharge of sewage to land or water could have an adverse impact on the historic heritage qualities values of a particular site* or structure. The Regional Council can control these activities to avoid, remedy or mitigate ensure that adverse effects impacts are minimised.

The Region has a long and recognised history and culture, and contains special places such as the Tongariro National Park, Whanganui River, Lake Papaitonga, the wreck of the Hydrabad, historic towns such as Whanganui, Marton, Taihape, Bulls and Raetihi, and many important archaeological sites such as Willis Redoubt, Waiū Pā and Te Āputa Pā. The accurate identification of historic heritage sites* or structures, including the identification of currently "unknown" sites*, is an issue in the Region, as is their protection from potential threats including demolition, "demolition by neglect", fire, flood and earthworks.

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

Along with the Regional Council and Territorial Authorities, a number of other agencies have responsibilities for the identification and management of historic heritage. These agencies include the New Zealand Historic Places Trust (NZHPT), the New Zealand Archaeological Association (NZAA) and the Department of Conservation. In particular, the modification of archaeological sites as defined in the Historic Places Act is controlled by the NZHPT, and a person carrying out any activities that may damage, destroy or modify these sites must have authority from the NZHPT to do so. The NZAA owns and manages the national database of archaeological records, the Site Recording Scheme.

Decision-makers may refer to the NZHPT document dated 3 August 2007, Sustainable Management of Historic Heritage Guide No. 1 Regional Policy Statements (pp 12-13), which provides an example of the matters to be considered by local authorities.



7.2

Significant Resource Management Issues

Issue 7-1: Indigenous biological diversity

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

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

Issue 7-2: Outstanding natural features, landscapes and natural character

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

Issue 7-3: Historic heritage

Development and land use can damage and destroy historic heritage of significance in the Region. In the context of the Regional Council's role, this includes activities in the coastal marine area ~~Historic heritage is at risk from the effects of land use activities, particularly land disturbance*, activities in the beds of rivers and lakes,~~ and discharges to land and water. Outside of the coastal marine area, Territorial Authorities are responsible for managing the effects of land use activities on historic heritage, including under s9(2) RMA for activities in the beds of rivers and lakes.

7.3

Objectives

Objective 7-1: Indigenous *biological diversity*[△]

~~The existing level of~~ Protect areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna and maintain indigenous *biological diversity*[△], including enhancement where appropriate. ~~is maintained into the future by ensuring that:~~



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

Whāinga 7-1: He kanorau koiora taketake

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

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

Whāinga 7-1: Te kanorau koiora taketake

~~Ka whakamarumarū i ngā wāhi kei reira ētahi tipu taketake tino motuhake, ngā nohonga motuhake kei reira a ngai kīrehe taketake hoki, me te tiaki tonu i te kanorau koiora taketake, ka whai wāhi hoki ngā whakarākaitanga i ngā wā e tika ana.~~

Objective 7-2: Outstanding natural features and landscapes, and natural character

- (a) The characteristics and values of:
 - (i) the Region's outstanding natural features and landscapes, including those identified in Schedule F, and
 - (ii) the natural character of the coastal environment, wetlands[^], rivers[^] and lakes[^] and their marginsare protected from inappropriate subdivision, use and development, as far as practicable.
- (b) Adverse effects[^], including cumulative adverse effects[^], on the natural character of the coastal environment, wetlands[^], and rivers[^] and lakes[^] and their margins, are:
 - (i) avoided, as far as reasonably practicable, in areas with a high degree of naturalness natural character. When avoidance is not reasonably practicable, the adverse effects[^] must be remedied or mitigated, or
 - (ii) avoided, remedied or mitigated in other areas.
- (c) The natural character of the coastal environment, wetlands[^], rivers[^] and lakes[^] and their margins, is rehabilitated or restored where that is appropriate and reasonably practicable.



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

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

Whāinga 7-2: Ngā tohu kōhure, ngā mata whenua motuhake me te āhuatanga māori

- (a) *Ko ngā āhuatanga me ngā ūara o:*
- (i) ngā tohu kōhure me ngā mata whenua motuhake o te Rohe ehara tonu ko ērā ka tautuhia i roto i Pukapuka Āpiti F, me*
- (ii) te āhuatanga māori o te taiao takutai moana, ngā papa waiwai, ngā awa, me ngā roto me ngā tapa o ērā*
- ka whakamarumarutia i te wehewehe whenua, te whakamahi me te whakaahu whenua kāore i te tika.*
- (b) *Ko ngā pānga kino, ehara tonu ko ngā pānga kino katoa, ki te āhuatanga māori o te taiao takutai moana, ngā papa waiwai, ngā awa, ngā roto hoki, me ngā tapa o ērā:*
- (i) i ngā wā e tika ana ka parea i roto i ngā wāhi nui te āhua māori. I ngā wā kāore e taea te pare atu ka mate ka whakatikaina, ka whakaitingia rānei ngā pānga kino,*
- (ii) ka parea, ka whakatikaina, ka whakaitingia i wāhi kē.*
- (c) *Ka whakaoratia, ka whakahoutia rānei te āhuatanga māori o te taiao takutai moana, ngā papa waiwai, ngā awa, ngā roto me ngā tapa o ērā – ki ngā wāhi e tika ana, ka taea pea hoki.*

Objective 7-3: Historic heritage[^]

Protect historic heritage[^] is protected from activities that would significantly reduce heritage qualities values.

Whāinga 7-3: Ngā taonga tuku iho o mua

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

Whāinga 7-3: Ngā taonga tuku iho o mua

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



7.4 Policies

7.4.1 Indigenous *Biological Diversity*[^]

Policy 7-1: Responsibilities for maintaining indigenous *biological diversity*[^]

In accordance with s62(1)(i) RMA, local authority responsibilities for controlling *land*[^] use activities for the purpose of ~~maintaining~~ managing indigenous *biological diversity*[^] in the ~~Manawatu-Wanganui~~ Region are apportioned as follows:

(a) **The Regional Council shall must be responsible for:**

- (i) developing objectives, policies and methods for the purpose of establishing a Region-wide approach for maintaining indigenous *biological diversity*[^], including enhancement where appropriate
- (ii) developing *rules*[^] controlling the use of *land*[^] use activities to protect areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna and to for the purpose of maintaining indigenous *biological diversity*[^], including enhancement where appropriate.

(b) ***Territorial Authorities*[^] shall must be responsible for:**

- ~~(i) implementing the objectives and policies of this chapter when developing rules and making decisions on subdivision and land use consent applications~~
- (ii) retaining schedules of notable trees and amenity trees in their *district plans*[^] and/or such other measures as they see fit for the purpose of recognising amenity, intrinsic and cultural values associated with indigenous *biological diversity*[^], but not for the purpose of protecting significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna as described in (a)(ii) above.

(c) **Both the Regional Council and *Territorial Authorities*[^] must be responsible for:**

- (i) recognising and providing for matters described in s6(c) RMA and having particular regard to matters identified in s7(d) RMA when exercising functions and powers under the RMA, outside the specific responsibilities allocated above, including when making decisions on *resource consent*[^] applications.

~~Policy 7-2: Activities in Rare and Threatened Habitats~~

~~(a) Rare and threatened habitats* are identified in accordance with Schedule E.~~

~~(b) Rare and threatened habitats* shall be protected by generally not allowing any of the following activities unless the provisions of subsection (c) or (d) apply:~~

- ~~(i) vegetation clearance* or land disturbance* within these areas~~
- ~~(ii) discharges of contaminants to land or water, or drainage or diversion of water, within or near these areas.~~

~~(c) The activities described in subsection (b) will be allowed where they are for the purpose of pest control or habitat enhancement.~~



- (d) ~~The activities described in subsection (b) may be allowed for other purposes where there are no more than minor adverse effects on the representativeness, rarity and distinctiveness or ecological context of the rare and threatened habitat*, as assessed in accordance with Schedule E.~~

Policy 7-3: Activities in at-risk habitats

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

Policy 7-2A: Regulation of activities affecting indigenous biological diversity[^]

For the purpose of managing indigenous *biological diversity[^]* in the Region:

- (a) Rare habitats* and threatened habitats* must be recognised as areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna unless site*-specific assessments determine otherwise.
- (b) At-risk habitats* require site*-specific assessments to determine their ecological significance.
- (c) Vegetation clearance*, land disturbance*, cultivation* and certain other resource use activities within rare habitats*, threatened habitats* and at-risk habitats* must obtain a resource consent[^].
- (d) Potential adverse effects[^] on any rare habitat*, threatened habitat* or at-risk habitat* within an area of forestry* must be minimised.
- (e) When regulating the activities described in (c) and (d), the Regional Council must, and when exercising functions and powers described in Policy 7-1, Territorial Authorities[^] must:
- (i) allow activities undertaken for the purpose of pest plant and pest animal control or habitat maintenance or enhancement,
 - (ii) allow indigenous biological diversity[^] mitigation offsets in appropriate circumstances, which may include the establishment



- of infrastructure[^] and other physical resources of regional or national importance as identified in Policy 3-1,
- (iii) allow the maintenance* and upgrade* of existing structures[^], including infrastructure[^], and
- (iv) not unreasonably restrict the existing use of production land[^].

Policy 7-4: Proactive management of representative habitats indigenous biological diversity[^]

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

Policy 7-5: Fostering an ethic of stewardship

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

Policy 7-6: Pest plants and pest animals

- (a) To the extent that they relate to the maintenance of indigenous biodiversity, the pest plant and pest animal pest management functions of the Regional Council will primarily target pests threatening rare habitats*, and threatened habitats* and at-risk habitats*.
- (b) When exercising functions and powers as set out in Policy 7-1, making decisions about subdivisions and land-use activities, Territorial Authorities[^] must take into account the risks of introducing pest plants or pest animals pests into rare habitats*, and threatened habitats*, at-risk habitats* and nearby areas ~~shall be taken into account.~~



7.4.2

Landscapes and Natural Character**Policy 7-7: Regionally outstanding natural features and landscapes**

The natural features and landscapes listed in Schedule F Table F1 shall must be recognised as regionally outstanding. All subdivision, use and development directly affecting these areas shall must be managed in a manner which:

- (aa) avoids any significant adverse cumulative effects[^] on the characteristics and values of those outstanding natural features and landscapes, and
- (a) except as required under (aa), avoids or minimises to the extent reasonable any adverse effects[^] as far as reasonably practicable and, where avoidance is not reasonably practicable, remedies or mitigates adverse effects[^] on the characteristics and values of those outstanding specified in Schedule F for each natural features and landscapes.
- ~~(b) takes into account and avoids any cumulative adverse effects~~
- ~~(c) takes into account the policies in Chapter 3 when assessing activities involving renewable energy and infrastructure of regional importance.~~

Policy 7-7A: Assessing outstanding natural features and landscapes

The Regional Council and Territorial Authorities[^] must take into account the criteria in Table 7.2 when:

- (a) identifying outstanding natural features and landscapes, and
- (b) considering adding to the list of outstanding natural features or landscapes listed in Table F1 of Schedule F, or
- (c) considering the inclusion of outstanding natural features or landscapes into any district plan[^], or
- (d) establishing the relevant values to be considered when assessing effects[^] of an activity on:
 - (i) outstanding natural features and landscapes listed in Table F1 of Schedule F, or
 - (ii) any other outstanding natural feature or landscape.



Table 7.2 Natural Feature and Landscape Assessment Factors

Assessment factor	Scope
<u>(a) Natural science factors</u>	<p>These factors relate to the geological, ecological, topographical and natural process components of the natural feature or landscape:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) <u>Representative: the combination of natural components that form the feature or landscape strongly typifies the character of an area.</u> (ii) <u>Research and education: all or parts of the feature or landscape are important for natural science research and education.</u> (iii) <u>Rarity: the feature or landscape is unique or rare within the district or Region, and few comparable examples exist.</u> (iv) <u>Ecosystem functioning: the presence of healthy ecosystems is clearly evident in the feature or landscape.</u>
<u>(b) Aesthetic values</u>	<p>The aesthetic values of a feature or landscape may be associated with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) <u>Coherence: the patterns of land[^] cover and land[^] use are largely in harmony with the underlying natural pattern of landform and there are no, or few, discordant elements of land[^] cover or land[^] use.</u> (ii) <u>Vividness: the feature or landscape is visually striking, widely recognised within the local and wider community, and may be regarded as iconic.</u> (iii) <u>Naturalness: the feature or landscape appears largely unmodified by human activity and the patterns of landform and land[^] cover are an expression of natural processes and intact healthy ecosystems.</u> (iv) <u>Memorability: the natural feature or landscape makes such an impact on the senses that it becomes unforgettable.</u>
<u>(c) Expressiveness (legibility)</u>	<p>The feature or landscape clearly shows the formative natural processes or historic influences that led to its existing character.</p>
<u>(d) Transient values</u>	<p>The consistent and noticeable occurrence of transient natural events, such as daily or seasonal changes in weather, vegetation or wildlife movement, contributes to the character of the feature or landscape.</p>
<u>(e) Shared and recognised values</u>	<p>The feature or landscape is widely known and is highly valued for its contribution to local identity within its immediate and wider community.</p>
<u>(f) Cultural and spiritual values for <i>tanqata whenua</i>[^]</u>	<p>Māori values inherent in the feature or landscape add to the feature or landscape being recognised as a special place.</p>
<u>(g) Historical associations</u>	<p>Knowledge of historic events that occurred in and around the feature or landscape is widely held and substantially influences and adds to the value the community attaches to the natural feature or landscape.</p>



Policy 7-8: Natural character

- (a) The natural character of the coastal environment, *wetlands*[^], *rivers*[^] and *lakes*[^] and their margins shall must be preserved and these areas must be protected from inappropriate subdivision, use and development, by encouraging.
- (b) The natural character of these areas ~~to~~ must be restored and rehabilitated where appropriate and by reasonably practicable making decisions on resource consent applications that take into account whether the activity.

Policy 7-8A: Managing natural character

In relation to the natural character of:

- (a) the component of the coastal environment which is not *coastal marine area*[^] (CMA), and
- (b) *wetlands*[^], *rivers*[^] and *lakes*[^] and their margins
subdivision, use or development must generally be considered appropriate if it:
 - (~~d~~)(c) is compatible with the existing level of modification to the environment,
 - (~~e~~)(d) is necessarily has a functional necessity to be located in or near the *wetland*[^], *river*[^] or *lake*[^] and whether any no reasonably practicable alternatives locations exist,
 - (~~f~~)(e) is of an appropriate form, scale and design to blend with the existing landforms, geological features and vegetation,
 - (~~g~~)(f) does will not, by itself or in combination with *effects*[^] of other activities, significantly disrupt natural processes or existing ecosystems, and
 - (g) will provide for the restoration and rehabilitation of natural character where that is appropriate and reasonably practicable.

Policy 7-9: Public access to and along *rivers*[^] and *lakes*[^] and their margins

- (a) Activities within or near *rivers*[^] and *lakes*[^] shall must be established and operated in a manner which readily provides for public access, ~~and~~ Public access may be restricted only where necessary for safety, cultural or conservation purposes, or to ensure a level of security appropriate for activities authorised by a *resource consent*[^].
- (b) Public access for recreational purposes shall must recognise the need to protect rare *habitats*^{*}, ~~and~~ *threatened habitats*^{*} and *at-risk habitats*^{*}.
- (c) Public access must recognise existing private *property*^{*} rights.

7.4.3

***Historic Heritage*[^]**

Policy 7-10: *Historic heritage*[^]

~~Historic heritage is recognised as a matter of national importance and all resource-use activities controlled by the Regional Council shall be managed in a manner which protects historic and archaeological values and avoids, remedies or mitigates any adverse effects, including cumulative adverse effects, on historic heritage.~~



The *Regional Coastal Plan*^ and *district plans*^ must include provisions to protect *historic heritage*^ of national significance, which may include places of special or outstanding heritage value registered as Category 1 historic places, wāhi tapu, and wāhi tapu areas under the Historic Places Act 1993.

Policy 7-11: *Historic heritage*^ identification

- (a) *Territorial Authorities*^ must develop and maintain a schedule of known *historic heritage*^ for their district to be included in their *district plan*^.
- (b) The Regional Council must develop and maintain a schedule of known *historic heritage*^ for the *coastal marine area*^ to be included in the *Regional Coastal Plan*^.
- (c) *Historic heritage*^ schedules must include a statement of the qualities that contribute to each *site*^.

7.5 Methods

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

Project Name Method 7-1	Wetlands - Biodiversity
Project Description	<p>The Regional Council and other agencies will work with landowners to protect and enhance priority wetlands throughout the Region. Resources will be directed towards the most significant <i>sites</i>^.</p> <p>Wetland owners will be provided advice and financial/project management assistance to carry out enhancement and protection measures including fencing, planting, and pest (plant and animal) control. The Regional Council will seek funding from third parties to assist with this project <u>method</u>, and encourage the establishment of covenants.</p> <p>Monitoring of the effectiveness of the protection and enhancement works will be undertaken.</p> <p>The <u>This project method</u> will include publicity to increase public awareness about the importance of wetlands and indigenous biological diversity.</p>
Who	<p>Regional Council, <u>landowners, foresters, relevant consent holders, Federated Farmers</u>, Territorial Authorities, Department of Conservation, <u>hapū</u>^ and <u>iwi</u>^, non-government agencies including NZ Fish and Game, QEII Trust, NZ Wetland Trust, NZ Landcare Trust and relevant funding agencies including the He Tini Awa Trust, Biodiversity Condition Fund, Nga Whenua Rahui and Ducks Unlimited.</p>
Links to Policy	<p>This project <u>links to method</u> implements Policy 7-4.</p>
Targets	<p>The top 100 wetlands in the Region are actively managed, including protection and/or enhancement measures, within 10 years of this Plan becoming operative.</p>

Project Name Method 7-2	Bush Remnants - Biodiversity
Project Description	<p>The Regional Council and other agencies will work with landowners to protect and enhance priority bush remnants throughout the Region. Resources will be directed towards the most significant <i>sites</i>^.</p> <p>Bush remnant owners will be provided with advice and financial/project</p>

<u>Project Name</u> <u>Method</u> 7-2	Bush Remnants - Biodiversity
	<p>management assistance to carry out enhancement and protection measures including fencing, planting, and pest (plant and animal) control. The Regional Council will seek funding from third parties to assist with this project <u>method</u>, and encourage the establishment of covenants.</p> <p>Monitoring of the effectiveness of the protection and enhancement works will be undertaken.</p> <p>The <u>This project method</u> will include publicity to increase public awareness about the importance of bush remnants and indigenous biological diversity.</p>
Who	Regional Council, <u>landowners, foresters, relevant consent holders, Federated Farmers</u> , Territorial Authorities, Department of Conservation, <u>hapū* and iwi*</u> , non-government agencies including QEII Trust and NZ Landcare Trust, and relevant funding agencies including the He Tini Awa Trust, Biodiversity Condition Fund and Nga Whenua Rahui.
Links to Policy	This project <u>links to method implements</u> Policy 7-4.
Targets	The top 200 bush remnants in the Region are being actively managed, including protection and/or enhancement measures, within 10 years of this Plan becoming operative.

<u>Project Name</u> <u>Method</u> 7-3	Sites of Significance - Aquatic
Project Description	<p>The Regional Council and other agencies will work with landowners to protect and enhance water <u>bodies ways</u> and parts of water <u>bodies ways</u> that serve an important role in the lifecycle of the Region's rare and threatened native fish. Resources will be directed towards the most significant <u>sites*</u>.</p> <p>Waterway Owners of land <u>adjacent to water bodies</u> will be provided advice and financial/project management assistance to carry out enhancement and protection measures including fencing, planting, replacement of perched culverts and pest (plant and animal) control. The Regional Council will seek funding from third parties to assist with this project <u>method</u>.</p> <p>Monitoring of the effectiveness of the protection and enhancement works will be undertaken.</p> <p>The <u>This project method</u> will include publicity to increase public awareness about the importance of native fish and indigenous biological diversity.</p>
Who	Regional Council, <u>landowners, foresters, relevant consent holders, Federated Farmers</u> , Territorial Authorities, Department of Conservation, <u>hapū* and iwi*</u> and funding agencies including the He Tini Awa Trust, Biodiversity Condition Fund and Nga Whenua Rahui.
Links to Policy	This project <u>links to method implements</u> Policy 7-4.
Targets	The top 100 Sites of Significance - Aquatic are actively managed, including protection and/or enhancement measures, within 10 years of this Plan becoming operative.

<u>Project Name</u> <u>Method</u> 7-4	Inanga Spawning and Native Fishery Sites - Biodiversity
Project Description	The Regional Council and other agencies will work with landowners to protect and enhance water <u>bodies ways</u> and parts of water <u>bodies ways</u> (wetlands and streams) that serve an important role in the lifecycle of the inanga and <u>whitebait*</u> species. Resources will be directed towards the most significant



<u>Project Name</u> 7-4	<u>Method</u>	Inanga Spawning and Native Fishery Sites - Biodiversity
		<p>sites*</p> <p>Waterway Owners of land adjacent to water bodies will be provided advice and financial/project management assistance to carry out enhancement and protection measures including fencing, planting, replacement of perched culverts and pest (plant and animal) control. The Regional Council will seek funding from third parties to assist with this project <u>method</u>.</p> <p>Monitoring of the effectiveness of the protection and enhancement works will be undertaken.</p> <p>The This project <u>method</u> will include publicity to increase public awareness about the importance of native fish and indigenous biological diversity.</p>
Who		Regional Council, <u>landowners, foresters, relevant consent holders, Federated Farmers</u> , Territorial Authorities, Department of Conservation, <u>hapū* and iwi*</u> and funding agencies including the He Tini Awa Trust, Biodiversity Condition Fund and Nga Whenua Rahui.
Links to Policy		This project <u>links to method implements</u> Policy 7-4.
Targets		The top 30 inanga spawning and native fishery sites * are actively managed, including protection and/or enhancement measures, within 10 years of this Plan becoming operative.

<u>Project Name</u> 7-5	<u>Method</u>	Biodiversity (Terrestrial and Aquatic) Research, Monitoring and Reporting
Project Description		The aim of this project <u>method</u> is to develop an integrated research, monitoring and reporting programme that supports delivery and refinement of existing policies and methods, guides implementation planning, and allows implementation effectiveness to be assessed.
Who		Horizons the Regional Council, with assistance from research institutes, universities, and non-government agencies and community groups as required.
Links to Policy		This project <u>links to method implements</u> Policy 7-4.
Targets		A research, monitoring and reporting programme that supports delivery and refinement of existing policies and methods, and guides and assesses implementation.

<u>Project Name</u> 7-6	<u>Method</u>	Education in Schools – Biodiversity
Project Description		The aim of this project <u>method</u> is to raise awareness amongst the youth of the Region of the significance of our indigenous biological diversity, the threats to it, and what they can do to protect/restore it. This will be achieved through various environmental education programmes/initiatives eg., Green RIG, EnviroSchools, Trees for Survival <u>and Youth Environment Forum</u> etc.
Who		Horizons Regional Council, Department of Conservation and various national and local environmental education providers.
Links to Policy		This project <u>links to method implements</u> Policy 7-5.
Targets		The Regional Council develops and delivers a biodiversity-related environmental education programme.

Project Name Method 7-7	District Planning – Natural Features, Landscapes and Indigenous Biological Diversity Habitats
Project Description	<p>The Regional Council will formally submit on resource consent applications received by Territorial Authorities for land use activities where there is potential for effects on outstanding natural features, landscapes or <u>indigenous biological diversity native habitats</u>.</p> <p>The Regional Council will formally seek changes to district plans if <u>required necessary</u> to ensure provisions are in place to provide an appropriate level of protection to natural features, landscapes and <u>indigenous biological diversity native habitats</u>.</p> <p>The Regional Council will formally seek changes to district plans if <u>necessary to ensure district plan rules requiring protection of significant indigenous vegetation and the significant habitats of indigenous fauna do not contradict rules on indigenous biodiversity in this Plan</u>.</p>
Who	Regional Council and Territorial Authorities.
Links to Policy	This project links to <u>method implements Policies 7-1, 7-4, 7-5, 7-7, and 7-8 and 7-8A</u> .
Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submissions completed on consent applications. • District plan changes sought if necessary <u>by 2008 after this Plan becomes operative</u>.

Method 7-7A	Consistent Landscape Assessment
Description	<p>The purpose of this method is to <u>develop a consistent and robust characterisation of the landscape within the Region and consistent identification of outstanding natural features and landscapes</u>.</p> <p>The Regional Council will collaborate with Territorial Authorities to <u>develop and adopt consistent methodology for undertaking any assessment of landscape including for the purposes of identifying the outstanding natural features and landscapes within the Region. The methodology will include consideration of the factors detailed in Table 7.2</u>.</p> <p>The Regional Council will make available relevant resource data including maps suitable for the study area description.</p>
Who	Regional Council and Territorial Authorities.
Links to Policy	This method implements Policy 7-7A.
Targets	<u>Methodology for assessment of natural features and landscapes agreed between the Regional Council and Territorial Authorities within one year of this Plan becoming operative</u> .

Method 7-8	Indigenous Biodiversity Advice and Information
Description	<u>The aim of this method is to provide landowners and other parties with an interest in biodiversity with advice and information about the state of biodiversity in the Region, information about the rules and methods contained within this Plan to manage indigenous biodiversity, and advice about how these methods and rules will be implemented. This includes providing guidance on the rules contained within this Plan so that they can be easily understood and used by landowners</u> .
Who	<u>Regional Council, with assistance from landowners and community groups as required</u> .



Method 7-8	Indigenous Biodiversity Advice and Information
Links to Policy	This method implements Policies 7-4 and 7-5.
Targets	An education and advice programme that is freely available and allows those interested to understand and use the methods and rules provided for in this Plan.

Method 7-9	Proactive Identification of Historic Heritage
Description	<p>The aim of this method is to determine an approach to provide for the proactive identification of historic heritage resources within the Region.</p> <p>The approach may include the development of a Region-wide database or list of areas with a high potential for containing unidentified historic heritage <i>sites*</i> and structures, amendments or variations to existing regional or Territorial Authority plans, or agreed partnerships for funding and carrying out surveys.</p>
Who	Regional Council, Territorial Authorities, New Zealand Historic Places Trust, New Zealand Archaeological Association, <i>hāpu*</i> and <i>iwi*</i> and landowners.
Links to Policy	This method implements Policies 7-10 and 7-11.
Targets	An approach is agreed upon within two years of this Plan becoming operative.

7.6 Anticipated Environmental Results

Anticipated Environmental Result	Link to Policy	Indicator	Data Source
Except for change because of natural processes, or change authorised by a resource consent, by 2017, the extent area of each habitat type identified as rare <i>habitat*</i> , threatened <i>habitat*</i> or at-risk <i>habitat*</i> is the same as (or better than) that estimated prior to this Plan becoming operative, and no "not threatened" habitat types have fallen into the number of at-risk <i>habitats*</i> category has not increased.	<p><u>Living Heritage</u> Indigenous biological diversity, landscape and historic heritage Policies: 7-1, 7-2A, 7-3, 7-4, 7-5, 7-6 and 7-8</p> <p>Administration Policies: 2-1, 2-2, 2-3 and 2-5 11A-4, 11A-5, 11A-6 and 11A-8</p> <p>Water Policies: 6-1, 6-2, 6-3, 6-4, 6-5, 6-7, 6-10 6-17, 6-18, 6-19, 6-26 and 6-28</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent Area of each habitat type compared to former extent Number of rare <i>habitats*</i>, and threatened <i>habitats*</i> and at-risk <i>habitats*</i> sites damaged by unauthorised activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landcare Research: Land Environments NZ Tool, EcosSat tool and Land Cover Database 2 tool Regional Council's Horizons' incidents database
By 2017, the Region's top 100 wetlands and top 200 bush remnants will be in better condition than that measured prior to this Plan becoming operative.	<p><u>Living Heritage</u> Indigenous biological diversity, landscape and historic heritage Policies: 7-1, 7-2A, 7-4, 7-5, 7-6 and 7-8</p> <p>Administration Policies: 2-1, 2-2, 2-3 and 2-5 11A-4, 11A-5, 11A-6 and 11A-8</p> <p>Water Policies: 6-1, 6-2, 6-3, 6-4, 6-5, 6-7, 6-10</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of top 100 wetlands and top 200 bush remnants under proactive management Habitat condition measure(s) which, where possible, will be consistent with those used by the Department of Conservation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Council's Horizons' identification and assessment of significant indigenous aquatic, coastal and terrestrial habitat types Regional Council's Horizons' progress reports on results of proactive management of top wetland and bush remnant habitats



Anticipated Environmental Result	Link to Policy	Indicator	Data Source
	6-17, 6-18, 6-19, 6-26 and 6-28		
By 2017, the Region's known historic heritage will be recorded in district plans and the Regional Coastal Plan.	<u>Living Heritage Indigenous biological diversity, landscape and historic heritage</u> Policies: 7-10 and 7-11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Territorial Authorities have schedules of known historic heritage in their district plans</u> • <u>Regional Council has a schedule of historic heritage for the coastal marine area in the Regional Coastal Plan</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>District plans</u> • <u>Regional Coastal Plan</u>
Except for change because of natural processes, <u>or change authorised by a resource consent</u> , at 2017 the characteristics and values of all outstanding landscapes and natural features identified in the Region (Schedule F <u>Table F1</u>) will be in the same <u>or a better</u> state as assessed prior to this Plan becoming operative.	<u>Living Heritage Indigenous biological diversity, landscape and historic heritage</u> Policies: 7-7 and 7-8 <u>7-7A</u> Administration Policies: 2-1, 2-2, 2-3 and 2-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Schedule F outstanding landscapes and natural features where identified characteristics and values have been damaged • Level of protection afforded to Schedule F outstanding landscapes and natural features in Territorial Authority district plans • Ratio of successful <u>Regional Council</u> submissions versus total <u>Regional Council</u> submissions made on outstanding landscapes and natural features to Territorial Authority consent planning processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outstanding landscapes and natural features characteristics and values assessment survey • <u>Horizons' Regional Council's incidents database</u> • <u>Horizons' Regional Council's SED (Subdivision Enquiry Database) (SED) database</u> • Territorial Authority district plans • Territorial Authority consent decisions

7.7 Explanations and Principal Reasons

Indigenous biological diversity

*Rare habitats** and *threatened habitats** are made up of habitats that are either naturally rare in the Region (that is, there was never a large number of that type of habitat) or have been reduced to a level of less than 20% or less of their original extent in the Region. At this level they cannot sustain themselves without intervention. Even a small loss of, or small amount of damage to, these habitats may lead to the total loss of this habitat type in the Region.

*At-risk habitats** are made up of habitats that have been reduced to a level of less than ~~33~~ 50% of their original extent in the Region. These habitats are at risk of falling into the threatened category (described above) in the lifetime of this Plan if something is not done to prevent that habitat loss. *At-risk habitats** also include those areas which provide a habitat for a rare or threatened species.

The objectives, policies and methods adopted ~~here~~ aim to prevent the further ~~deliberate~~ loss of *rare habitats** and *threatened habitats** and to control activities which may have an adverse effect on the unique characteristics of *at-risk*



*habitats**. Also included are objectives, policies and methods to actively manage, improve and protect the best examples identified habitats.

Natural features and landscapes

The protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use and development is a matter of national importance. While the regulation of land use with regard to competing pressures for the subdivision, use and development of land that may affect natural features and landscapes is most appropriately this issue is best dealt with at a Territorial Authority level, it is considered important that this document should continue to provide a list of regionally outstanding natural features and landscapes and their associated characteristics and values. The objectives, policies and methods adopted here are to provide guidance and direction in for the protection of these values. For example, the policies require avoidance of significant adverse cumulative effects (ie., cumulative effects that are so adverse that they have the potential to significantly alter or damage the essential characteristics and values of the natural feature or landscape).

Natural character

The preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment, wetlands, rivers and lakes and their margins is a matter of national importance. The natural character of the CMA is dealt with in Chapter 9. The approach of the One Plan is to maintain the current degree of naturalness of the natural character of the coastal environment, wetlands, rivers, and lakes and their margins and to restore and rehabilitate natural character where appropriate. The objectives, policies and methods adopted in this document aim to achieve this by:

- (a) providing policy guidance on matters natural character to be taken into account when exercising functions and powers under the RMA and when making decisions on applications which may affect natural character, and
- (b) the restoration and rehabilitation of natural character where appropriate, and
- (c) by actively protecting and managing indigenous biodiversity, wetlands, and rivers and lakes as described in other parts of this document.

Historic Heritage

The protection of historic heritage from inappropriate subdivision, use and development is a matter of national importance. It is considered important to provide a regional framework for the protection of historic heritage by:

- (a) requiring Territorial Authorities and the Regional Council to identify historic heritage sites* and structures, and to include them in district plans and the Regional Coastal Plan, and
- (b) requiring the Regional Council to manage the effects on historic heritage for those resource use activities for which it has jurisdiction.

Objective 7-3 and Policies 7-10 and 7-11 provide the regional framework, guidance and direction required to manage historic heritage.