



NEW ZEALAND
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Te Kokiringa Taumata

FEEDBACK ON LONG-TERM INSIGHTS BRIEFING 2022 – WHERE TO FROM HERE? HOW WE ENSURE THE FUTURE WELLBEING OF LAND AND PEOPLE

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Introduction

1. Te Kokiringa Taumata | New Zealand Planning Institute (NZPI) welcomes the opportunity to present this feedback on the Ministry for the Environment's (MfE) Long-term Insight Briefing to Parliament on the future of land and people's relationship with it, up to 2050.
2. This submission is made by NZPI on behalf of its members, without direct input from members given the short consultation timeframe. The submission makes general comments on the draft briefing and then provides specific feedback on the consultation questions.

General comments

3. NZPI supports the overall direction of the Long-term Insight Briefing. It agrees that the wellbeing of the whenua is intrinsically linked to the wellbeing of the overall environment, including people.
4. NZPI considers that the timeframe for achieving the vision is ambitious and, drawing on the experience of its members who work to achieve environmental outcomes, its success would require a significant societal change in a relatively short time. NZPI considers that the magnitude of societal change should not be underestimated and should be a key focus of the Government's approach.
5. NZPI also considers that the Vision and some of the challenges to achieving it are wider than the whenua. For example, empowering tangata whenua to exercise kaitiakitanga extends across all aspects of environmental management and in our view should not be considered in an isolated or siloed manner. Rather, it should be the subject of a long-term insight briefing itself.
6. Societal change and empowering tangata whenua are intrinsically interlinked. NZPI members' experience in working to achieve environmental outcomes is that the success of outcomes can be thwarted due to who is empowered to make decisions, and people's willingness to make personal changes for societal wellbeing. There is a plethora of examples that can be cited, including most recently, implementing the Resource Management (Enabling Housing Supply and Other Matters) Amendment Act. Other examples include the reticence of some to make changes to achieve improved freshwater management and identify and protect significant natural areas. NZPI encourages the Government to take a holistic approach in focusing on those aspects of transformational change that would enable the necessary societal shift.

Question 1: Whether all main drivers that could affect the state of land have been identified

7. NZPI agrees that all relevant drivers have been identified in the draft briefing, but we note three additional matters of detail.
8. In terms of policy and regulation and how it influences how land is used, NZPI notes that the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020 (NPS-UD) and sections 30 and 31 of the RMA are not included in the list of relevant policy and legislation. Combined, these require all councils to ensure that there is sufficient development capacity to accommodate growth in the short, medium and long term, placing additional pressure on land. In our view, these need to be



considered carefully alongside the other recent and proposed policy and legislative changes, and in particular through the Resource Management System reform to ensure that any conflicts are addressed.

9. We also note that this section does not address the National Environmental Standard for Assessing and Managing Contaminants in Soil to Protect Human Health which is an important regulation in addressing the challenges facing the land. In our view, there is an opportunity to consider how this regulation could be augmented to address wider environmental matters beyond human health.
10. We support this section's reference to climate mitigation measures being a driver of land use change, but we note that this will not always be as a result of policy and regulation. For example, there may be community initiated mitigation projects that result in revegetation outside of a legislative requirement.

Questions 2 and 3: Whether the “vision” aligns with your aspirations for the land and New Zealander’s relationship with it, and whether you would add to or change the descriptions of what that might look like

11. NZPI considers that the vision described in Chapter 4 of the briefing document generally aligns with its core values, while noting that this vision should apply more widely to the environment as a whole. Recognising the interconnectedness of people and the land, as captured in the whakataukī *‘ko au te whenua, ko te whenua, ko au’* cited on page 24 is critical. However, we consider the outcome of ensuring all New Zealanders are connected with nature is very ambitious and requires a significant societal shift that MfE should not underestimate. We addressed empowering tangata whenua to exercise kaitiakitanga earlier in this submission.

Questions 4 and 5: Whether the nine “pathways” for transformational change could be made more effective, and should others be included

12. NZPI generally agrees and supports the pathways for achieving change.
13. We support “empowering communities” as a key way to ensure there are real, on-the-ground physical changes the result in improvements. We also support the “investing in science and mātauranga Māori” pathway as a way to make a real difference. We consider the “investing in sustainable infrastructure and technology” pathway could be broadened to include much better use of digital technology to improve the processes and mechanisms we use to plan for, manage, and monitor use of the land.
14. In respect of “increasing effectiveness of policy and legislation”, NZPI encourages MfE to take an integrated and holistic approach to developing an improved policy and legislative framework that does not consider the whenua in isolation. NZPI supports the consideration of other policy tools, such as economic incentives. In our view, these are an important tool in achieving change, and in particular, societal change where the true cost of people’s actions can be identified and addressed.
15. The last paragraph of “promoting environmental education and knowledge transfer” is in our opinion critical. In our observation, it is the ageing demographic that is often the most resistant to



change AND in positions where they can influence or make decisions on whether change happens or not. Ensuring that this demographic is making decisions for the wellbeing of future generations and the environment as a whole is a significant issue to address if change is to be achieved.

16. NZPI agrees that advancing all these changes will require a more active role for government. Its members are well-positioned to be able to support MfE in a more active role.

Question 6: Any other final comments

17. One matter that has not been covered in the draft briefing is an observation from our members who work in the regional space that many regional plans do not adequately address discharges to land. Improvements to the way our regional plans (NBA Plans under the Reform) address and manage discharges of contaminants to land is an important part of addressing pollution of the whenua.
18. We also consider that the draft briefing would benefit from including a focus on the active monitoring and reporting of progress towards outcomes in relation to the land. Performance monitoring of how well the system under the RMA achieves outcomes for the whenua is generally not well done. This is a key aspect that needs to be addressed in the RM Reform.

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