

So, what's new in the draft Regional Policy Statement?

Greater Wellington's commitment has been to make the Regional Policy Statement clear and targeted. The draft Regional Policy Statement is therefore very specific about:

- what must be put into regional and district plans and when;
- what matters decision-makers must have "particular regard" to when deciding on resource consents and plan changes; and
- what advice, information and other non-regulatory actions need to be undertaken over the next 10 years to achieve the objectives.

What does this mean in practice – some examples

The draft Regional Policy Statement requires district plans to identify and protect significant indigenous vegetation, outstanding landscapes and historic heritage.

It contains policies that assist with implementing actions in the Wellington Regional Strategy (the region's sustainable economic growth strategy) to maintain and enhance the region's good regional form and deliver quality urban design.

The list of sites on the coast that require protection has been reviewed and updated and there is additional information about what makes a site significant. The same has been done for the list of lakes and rivers that are important for their recreational or amenity values, or because they have extensive areas of native vegetation in their catchments.

New policies have been included to protect the 'mauri' – or life force – of natural resources, to improve involvement of iwi authorities in decision making and protect cultural heritage.

In recognition of the impact of climate change, policies have been included to prevent new development in areas with high risk from natural hazards.

Renewable energy generation and specified infrastructure is recognised as being of significance to the whole region.

Water sensitive and energy efficient development is promoted along with the need to minimise demand for water and assess the impact of land use on the water quality in rivers, lakes and the coast.

Help us sustainably manage the Wellington region's natural and physical resources

Greater Wellington is seeking feedback on the draft Regional Policy Statement.

Copies of the draft Regional Policy Statement and a feedback form are available online at www.gw.govt.nz/rps. For a hard copy call Christina Parnell-Harris on 04 802 0337 or email rps@gw.govt.nz.

Your comments will be used to help us prepare a proposed Regional Policy Statement which will be formally notified later this year. **Submissions on the draft close on 16 May 2008.**



REGIONAL POLICY STATEMENT REVIEW NEWSLETTER

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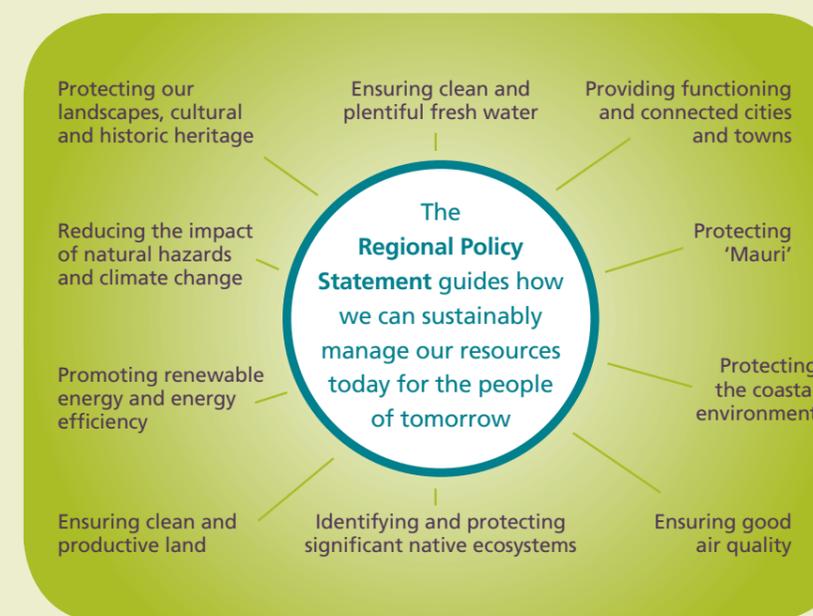
Draft Regional Policy Statement released

The draft Regional Policy Statement is all about sustainable management. This means ensuring the way we use resources today doesn't compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

We need to use our resources more sensibly, especially those which are in limited supply or highly valued.

This does not mean that we have to stand still socially or economically, rather we must strike a balance where environmental, social and economic objectives can be achieved – but not at the expense of one another.

It's about respecting the environment, recognising our dependence on it and protecting its mauri – life force, for the common good.



District and regional plans must give effect to the Regional Policy Statement, so the contents of this document will ultimately have a direct bearing on what you or your business can do and what local councils do to enhance our environment.

Because of this effect on the lives of all people in the region, we tried to ensure that our approach took a holistic view of all the different areas of environmental impact as illustrated in the diagram on this page.

The publication of the draft Regional Policy Statement follows a lengthy review of the existing document and significant work in collaboration with the other councils in the Wellington region. The document is now open for public consultation until 16 May. It's an opportunity for councils, businesses and all the people of the region to see the draft document and give us further comments.

Why is the Regional Policy Statement being reviewed?

Regional councils are required to review their regional policy statements after 10 years and then open up the content of the policy statement for public discussion. The starting point for our review was the state of the environment report, *Measuring up, 2005*, which checked the region's progress towards the Regional Policy Statement objectives set in 1995. Using the findings of that report, we released a discussion document *Our region – their future* in May 2006 to seek people's views on resource management issues. In June 2007, Greater Wellington released draft Regional Policy Statement objectives, policies and methods for public comments.

What has been happening and what happens next?

We have now prepared a draft Regional Policy Statement, which is being released for feedback. The draft Regional Policy Statement will have no statutory effect, and is a useful way of sharing our ideas and gathering input from you. Your comments will be used to help Greater Wellington prepare a proposed Regional Policy Statement, which will be publicly notified later this year. Proposed regional policy statements have immediate effect, and regional, city and district councils will need to consider the proposed Regional Policy Statement in their resource management decision making.

Once proposed, the process becomes much more formal. People can make submissions on any part of the proposed Regional Policy Statement and may speak about their submissions at a hearing. The proposed Regional Policy Statement can however only be changed in response to submissions, and when decisions on submissions are made by Greater Wellington, submitters have the right to appeal decisions on their submission to the Environment Court.



How does the Regional Policy Statement relate to other policy documents and plans?

Policies in the Regional Policy Statement will achieve the region's sustainable management objectives and will assist Greater Wellington and the region's city and district councils in developing and achieving the community outcomes in their Long-term Council Community Plans.

The Regional Policy Statement sits alongside other policy documents such as the Regional Land Transport Strategy and the Wellington Regional Strategy (a sustainable economic growth strategy for the region).

Both regional and district plans are required to give effect to the Regional Policy Statement.

The Regional Policy Statement itself must give effect to national policy documents prepared under the Resource Management Act and also take into account matters identified in iwi management plans.

It is not the job of the Regional Policy Statement to have rules, but it does direct what sort of rules need to be included in district and regional plans. For example, the draft Regional Policy Statement directs district plans to have rules controlling earthworks so that sediment does not pollute streams.

Resource management policy and planning framework for the Wellington region

