

ARF001 Climate Change

Risk Status Progress Report August 2019

Description of risk and impact

Climate change has been identified as the highest priority risk to Council. In May 2019, the Deep Dive Workshop with Council introduced staff's current understanding of climate change risks to Council and Far North communities, acknowledging that climate change may also provide economic opportunity. Risks arise from rising temperatures and anticipation of more intense weather events such as storms and drought, projections for sea level rise and coastal erosion, ecological adaptation and potential introduction of pests, all of which affecting community sustainability and Council investment strategies. Economic opportunity for Council and Far North Communities may arise from longer growing seasons and increased tourism as a result of rising temperatures.

The New Zealand Government has released strategies and guidelines for the mitigation of climate change effects or adaption to those, having regard to the IPCC 2018 report. This report has created a global climate change movement requiring governments and agencies to act to avoid temperature increases by addressing the underlying causes. This movement has resulted in the declaration of Climate Emergencies by a number of Councils around New Zealand, while in the Far North youth in particular follow climate change initiatives and demonstrate for action. FNDC has received some enquiries regarding our actions to mitigate or adapt to the effects of climate change. With growing interest and effects of climate change through sea level rise and weather events becoming evident, it will be imperative for FNDC to show leadership towards climate change effect mitigation and adaption.

Existing Treatments

While Far North District Council has not declared a Climate Emergency, there are already numerous initiatives which include and provide for the effects of climate change. These include a high level treatment plan, mainly founded in:

- Acknowledgement of the climate change as a high risk for Council.
- Implementation of a Chief Executive Critical Success Factor as per Council Resolution 2019/22. This requires the development of a Council Climate Change road map 2020 (notwithstanding any earlier requirement to prepare for a national resilience and adaptation deadline within 2020). To address this KPI, FNDC's SPP staff have commenced the following work program:
 - relationship building with staff across all Council divisions in anticipation for representation on a FNDC climate change group;
 - drafting of the development of a Terms of Reference to be presented to SLT (in Q4 2019) together with a draft work plan or strategy in alignment with that of the TTCCAWG, however focusing on FNDC specific internal and external opportunities for involvement. The early stages will gather information on:
 - actual measures FNDC currently uses to consider climate change effects and projections;
 - identification of quick win opportunities to increase climate change considerations in current and future decision making;

- education to ensure climate change projections will factor into the development of Council strategies, policies, bylaws etc
 - monitoring of eventual outcomes of the consideration of submissions and finalization of the Bill.
 - will be limited to the Council's function as described in the LGA, the RMA and other relevant statutes.
 - drafting of external-facing key messages for FNDC together with the communications team; the revision of Council's website provides an opportunity for more direct engagement with the community on climate change initiatives and to demonstrate leadership.
 - Far North 2100:
 - develops an overarching long-term district-wide strategy and spatial plan to guide management of the District's resource now and for the future. This strategy will inform Council's growth strategy (e.g. the District Plan), financial strategy (e.g. the LTP), transportation strategy and infrastructure strategies etc.
 - takes into account climate change in the district's role as a producer of food and timber, with the additional benefit of forestry acting to off-set CO2 emissions. The strategy will also consider the fair and resilient supply and distribution of water.
 - considers areas and infrastructure vulnerable to hazards including sea level rise, coastal erosion, or flooding through an adaptive planning approach
 - considers opportunities for civil defence preparedness and community resilience.
 - will identify specific implementation projects will develop the detailed measures to facilitate adaption.
 - District Plan revision and implementation
 - Reviews the appropriateness of currently operative objectives and regulatory methods to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects, including hazards. In collaboration with NRC sea level rise contours are currently being developed to enable the assessment of affected lands and how to plan for these. Hazard assessment will also consider geotechnical risk due to heavy rain and associated requirements for future growth and development, with the potential to create sliding-scale assessment criteria depending on development categories
 - Reviews the appropriate of land use and zoning to facilitate economic growth.
 - Timing for notification of the proposed plan is Q4 2020.
 - Transportation Strategy
 - Addresses climate change given the potential for more frequent and intense weather events to disrupt a vulnerable transport network, essential services, critical supplies, and commerce.
 - Seeks to provide proactive resiliency and reliability strategies to ensure "Lifelines are maintained all day, every day".
 - Includes strategies for sustainable transport and mobility choices for walking and cycling, and encourages clean green transport modes and fuels, reducing the need to travel, and the development of Dynamic Adaptive Pathways to follow when climate trigger points are reached
 - Submissions on Climate Change (Zero Carbon) Amendment Bill
 - FNDC has made a submission on this Bill in support of the Bill however seeking clarification of intent, responsibilities, accountabilities and most importantly the availability of funding. Specific provisions in the Bill will have an impact on Council projects, e.g. data gathering and reporting through to actual project deliverables, most will currently be unfunded and which may require considerable investment. FNDC is monitoring the outcomes of the submission process and next steps.
 - FNDC also contributed to the common submission by TTCCAWG. Similar points of concern were raised, while providing overall support to the Bill.
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- Participation in the TTCCAWG:
 - to create a framework for an approach to adapting to the effects climate change which is consistent across the Northland Councils.
 - to develop a draft work program and is progressing its communication plan. These plans will be presented at the CE Forum as per the Group’s Terms of Reference.
 - included iwi liaison representatives to ensure climate change initiatives will developed in partnership with iwi.

Where are the gaps? / what more could we be doing?

As identified in the “for information paper” to Council on June 27, 2019, FNDC currently does not have a central point of coordination for climate change mitigation or adaption initiatives. Based on this, Council approved the recommendation to commence the introduction of an internal climate change group for this purpose. To this point, limited staff and time resources have hindered the development of a formal terms of reference for this group, however on an informal basis, staff, led by SPP, now engage frequently regarding the need to act and show climate change leadership in the Far North.

The recent employment of additional SPP staff will enable the development of a more formal work plan, including Terms of Reference for a group. It is envisaged that such ToR and a work plan will be available to SLT, ARF, and Council for review and reference in Q4 of 2019. Such documents would be managed as living documents, taking guidance and be aligned with the work program and Climate Change Adaption Strategy of the TTCCAWG with a local emphasis. It will facilitate collaboration between departments to ensure the realization of organization-wide objectives, consistent methodology and communication and decision-making. Despite this, resourcing of departments other than SPP will have to be addressed.

Inherent Risk:	Trend	Residual Risk:	Accountable:	CEO	Date raised:	29/11/18	Report frequency:
	—		Responsible:	GM SPP	Date accepted:	30/05/19	Six monthly

