

ARF001 Climate Change

Risk Status Progress Report for September 2020

Description of risk and impact

The New Zealand Government has released strategies and guidelines for the mitigation of climate change effects or adaption to those, having regard to the International Panel on Climate Change 2018 report. This report has created a global climate change movement requiring governments and agencies to act to avoid temperature increases and consequential impacts by addressing the underlying causes.

Climate change is the highest scoring risk on the organisational dashboard.

Existing Treatments

A baseline carbon footprint measure:

Data relating to the Council's corporate carbon emissions for the 2018/19 financial year has been provided to the consulting company, WSP (previously Opus), to prepare a Carbon Emissions Inventory. This covers emissions from a selection of buildings, water and wastewater treatment plants, solid waste collection, fuel for the vehicle fleet, air travel and employee commuting. As of August 2020, this report is in its final draft stage and will be presented to the Council when it is finalised.

The Climate Change Roadmap:

This Roadmap was presented to Council on 7 May 2020 and was adopted in the subsequent Council meeting on 21 May 2020. Key elements of this Roadmap include:

- Four key goals and five associated guiding principles
- Indicated action plans in four key focus areas involving mitigation and adaptation
- An outline of the Council's legal obligations.

Participation in the Climate Adaptation Te Taitokerau (CATT) working group:

This group comprises representatives of the four Northland councils with the purpose to create a regional climate change adaptation strategy. To assist in developing this strategy, staff have:

- Participated in five climate change risk assessment workshops.
- Learned from consultants involved in coastal climate change adaptation projects in Hawkes Bay and the Coromandel.
- Included iwi liaison representatives to ensure climate change initiatives will developed in partnership with iwi.

The Northland Regional Council as a key member of the CATT group is preparing a hazard mapping assessment based on the 8.5 RCP (the concentration of carbon that delivers global warming at an average of 8.5 watts per square meter across the planet) climate change scenario, which predicts a temperature increase of about 3.0°C by 2090, relative to pre-industrial temperatures and an associated mean sea level rise of between 0.52–0.98 metres by 2100.

Engagement of Simpson Grierson to provide climate change policy advice:

Staff have commissioned Simpson Grierson to provide a report to Council on the policies we need to prepare regarding climate change. This will be presented to the Strategy and Policy Committee. This report will provide advice on:

- The legal obligations of FNDC decision makers (elected representatives and officers) to consider climate change.
- The subsequent legal risks associated with a failure (or inability) to meet those obligations.
- Developing climate-related legal risk assessment policy against which FNDC decisions would be assessed to ensure that FNDC's climate-related legal risk is appropriately addressed.

These known projects will also impact our climate change action plans:

- FN 2100: FN2100 (phase 1) identifies climate change as a significant issue for the Far North District. Climate change is addressed within the transformational opportunities FN2100 contains. As Phase 2 of FN2100 commences, specific opportunities for adaptation and mitigation will be included within structure plans for specific geographic locations within the district.
- The revised District Plan and mapping, to be notified at the end of this year, will incorporate provisions to address the effects of climate change based on Northland Regional Council's hazard mapping and the development of policy and regulation to appropriately consider land use and subdivision activities.
- The Integrated Transportation Strategy and Plan incorporate provisions to address the effects of climate change by ensuring that road infrastructure will be appropriately managed in accordance with available climate projections.

It will be important that the above projects integrate and provide a comprehensive response to potential effects of climate change.

Approved future activity

At the May 21 Council meeting, Council approved the appointment of a full-time Sustainability Programme Co-ordinator and inclusion of \$125, 000 in the Annual Plan 20-21 to enable actions arising from the adopted Climate Change Roadmap to be implemented. These actions will include:

- Developing an initial carbon footprint reduction programme for the 21-31 LTP based on the baseline carbon footprint
 - Reviewing all current strategies and plans to determine what initiatives that are being put forward will result in a reduction of the District's Carbon Footprint via changing investments and behaviours on the part of households and businesses. This will include:
 - District Plan – land use amendment, policy and regulation development.
 - Transport Strategy and Plans.
 - Infrastructure strategies including reserves and open spaces.
 - Waste minimisation plans.
 - Developing Climate Change Policies to be adopted by Council. This will include:
 - Policy on the source of truth for science behind climate change (sea level rise, temperature increase, weather).
 - Policy on Dynamic Adaptive Planning Pathway (DAPP) as the tool that will inform Infrastructure Planning and community engagement on climate change.
 - Legal liability and financial risk assessment to be completed on the impacts of climate change policy on Council.
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- Climate change policies and strategies embedded and referenced in the District Plan review and the 2021-31 Long Term Plan including the Infrastructure Strategy and Financial Strategy.
- Developing Community Engagement Plans including:
 - Broad and targeted communications to the public on the policy and intent of the council to consult and engage with communities.
 - Where possible, communications and engagement will be combined with other engagement initiatives to provide the public with a comprehensive opportunity to participate.

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

As mentioned in an earlier report to the Assurance, Risk and Finance Committee, limited staff and time resources has hindered, or slowed, climate change-related work. While the appointment of a full-time Sustainability Programme Co-ordinator has been approved, this role has not yet been filled. Once this occurs, action on the approved activities and communication to the public on Council’s commitment to address climate change should pick up speed. This role will also collaborate and co-ordinate with departments and projects on climate change.

In addition, work priorities that respond to the effects of climate change through either mitigation or adaptation will have to be developed and included within Council’s Long-Term Plan. Work to be completed in the near term, particularly through the Simpson Grierson report, will further inform policy and budgeting needs to facilitate identified actions.

Our approach to community engagement will also need to have a longer-term focus in response to climate change adaptation – this was expressed by Dunedin City Council’s senior communications adviser Jamie Shaw:

“Usually when we go out and consult and engage, it’s on a specific issue or project. We have a submission period of four to six weeks – take some feedback, make some tweaks to whatever we’re doing, deliver that, then move on to the next thing. Whereas this [climate change consultation] is very much a long, ongoing conversation with the community”

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

