



# NZCPS 2010 Guidance note

## Policy 7: Strategic planning

### Contents

|   |    |
|---|----|
| <i>Policy 7</i> .....   | 1  |
| <i>Overview of the policy</i> .....   | 2  |
| <i>Rationale</i> .....  | 2  |
| <i>Related objectives, policies and provisions</i> .....                              | 3  |
| NZCPS 2010 .....  | 3  |
| Resource Management Act 1991.....   | 4  |
| Other legislation.....  | 5  |
| <i>Origins of the policy</i> .....  | 7  |
| <i>Implementing this policy</i> .....   | 9  |
| Policy 7(1)(a)—Identify and manage future activities in the coastal environment ..... | 10 |
| Policy 7(1)(b)—Protection of the coastal environment from inappropriate uses.....     | 10 |
| Policy 7(2)—Identify risks from cumulative effects and proposed management.....       | 14 |
| <i>Related and ongoing work</i> .....   | 19 |
| <i>Resources</i> .....  | 21 |
| Examples of strategies.....   | 21 |
| Reports, websites and additional information .....                                    | 21 |
| <i>Glossary of terms and definitions</i> .....  | 23 |
| NZCPS 2010 glossary.....  | 23 |
| Other definitions .....   | 23 |



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## **Policy 7**

1. In preparing regional policy statements, and plans:
    - a. consider where, how and when to provide for future residential, rural residential, settlement, urban development and other activities in the coastal environment at a regional and district level; and
    - b. identify areas of the coastal environment where particular activities and forms of subdivision, use, and development:
      - i. are inappropriate; and
      - ii. may be inappropriate without the consideration of effects through a resource consent application, notice of requirement for designation or Schedule 1 of the Resource Management Act process; and provide protection from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development in these areas through objectives, policies and rules.
  2. Identify in regional policy statements, and plans, coastal processes, resources or values that are under threat or at significant risk from adverse cumulative effects. Include provisions in plans to manage these effects. Where practicable, in plans, set thresholds (including zones, standards or targets), or specify acceptable limits to change, to assist in determining when activities causing adverse cumulative effects are to be avoided.
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## ***Overview of the policy***

Policy 7 of the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010 (NZCPS 2010) requires strategic planning in the preparation of regional policy statements, regional plans and district plans. Priority is required to be given to three strategic planning actions:

- to consider where, how and when to provide for activities in the coastal environment
- to identify where uses are inappropriate
- to identify coastal processes, resources or values that are under threat or at significant risks from adverse cumulative effects and where practicable setting thresholds in plans to help determine when activities causing adverse cumulative effects are to be avoided.

All readers of this policy guidance note should also refer to the NZCPS 2010 Implementation Guidance Introductory note<sup>1</sup>. The Introductory note contains general information and guidance that is important for implementing all of the objectives and policies in the NZCPS 2010.

## ***Rationale***

The coastal environment contains a wide range of uses and values, many of which are fundamental to the economic and social well-being of the communities including those who live near it or actively use and enjoy it. These uses and values provide significant environmental goods and services to the New Zealand economy.

The coastal environment faces many pressures. These pressures can produce effects that individually may not be significant. When viewed as a whole—or cumulatively—these effects can be very damaging. Examples include the damage to ecological health and water quality from sedimentation.

The coast is also a very dynamic place. Physical changes from climate change related sea level, for example, are expected to raise significant planning issues for management and use of the natural and physical resources in the coast.

Policy 7 promotes strategic planning by local government to proactively address resource management issues in the coastal environment in a way that achieves the sustainable management purpose of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) and will give effect to the NZCPS 2010 as well as other national policy statements (NPSs).

Good strategic planning will be based on high quality information, identify thresholds for management, and achieve better decisions on the management of natural and physical resources in the coastal environment. Without strategic planning, the risk of continued incremental loss of important coastal values is increased. Ad hoc development can also impact the supply and operations of strategically important facilities and services. The environmental goods and services generated by the coast may also be significantly reduced.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.doc.govt.nz/nzcps-introductory-note>

## ***Related objectives, policies and provisions***

This section covers the links (in terms of strategic planning) between the various provisions of the NZCPS 2010, the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA), and other legislation.

### **NZCPS 2010**

Implementing Policy 7 of the NZCPS 2010 requires careful consideration of all NZCPS 2010 objectives and policies. Objective 6, and Policies 1, 3, 4 and 6 of the NZCPS 2010 are particularly relevant to planning and decision-making regarding strategic planning. These links are considered below:

| Key objectives and policies           | Other related objectives | Other related policies |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Objective 6<br>Policies 1, 3, 4 and 6 | All other objectives     | All other policies     |

Implementation of Policy 7 requires careful consideration of the key NZCPS 2010 objectives and policies as summarised below:

#### ***Objective 6***

Objective 6 focuses on enabling people and communities to provide for social, economic and cultural well-being and their health and safety as a result of decisions on activities affecting the coastal environment and the coastal marine area. Strategic planning is an important way to achieve these outcomes. Policy 7 contributes directly to the implementation of Objective 6.

#### ***Policy 1: Extent and characteristics of the coastal environment***

Policy 1 outlines matters relevant in determining the extent and characteristics of the coastal environment and relevant to its management under the RMA. Policy 1 recognises that the extent and characteristics of the coastal environment vary from region to region and locality to locality. Policy 1 sets out relevant natural and physical resources for consideration.

Strategic planning considers the effects of subdivision, use and development on coastal resources and includes recognition that relevant activities may sometimes occur beyond the coastal environment.

#### ***Policy 3: Precautionary approach***

Implementation of Policy 7 is relevant to the precautionary approach specified in Policy 3.

There are two arms to Policy 3. The first arm promotes a precautionary approach to managing activities in the coastal environment when their effects are uncertain, unknown, or little understood, but potentially significantly adverse. The second arm promotes adoption of a precautionary approach to the use and management of coastal resources that are potentially vulnerable to effects from climate change, to

achieve outcomes specified in the policy. A precautionary approach will be relevant to decisions about strategic planning in the coastal environment.

#### ***Policy 4: Integration***

Policy 4 promotes integration through coordinated management of natural and physical resources in the coastal environment, and activities that affect the coastal environment.

Ways to achieve integration include coordinated management of activities within the coastal environment that cross administrative boundaries, and working collaboratively with other resource management interests.

An integrated approach will support effective strategic planning.

#### ***Policy 6: Activities in the coastal environment***

Policy 6 addresses the provision for activities (or uses) in the coastal environment and applies to all RMA processes relevant to the coastal environment including regional policy statements, regional plans, district plans, and regulatory decision-making.

Policy 6 includes but is not limited to direction on the provision and management of public infrastructure, coastal settlements and other built development, energy generation and transmission, and mineral extraction. Policy 6 requires decision-makers to consider the ‘reasonably foreseeable needs of population growth’ for built development, public infrastructure and energy generation.

Policy 6 requires decision-makers to consider particular coastal values including built character, headlands and ridgelines, natural character, open space, public access, amenity, indigenous biodiversity and historic heritage. It promotes consideration of activities with a functional need to locate and operate in the coastal marine area, and providing for those activities in appropriate places. Ad hoc ribbon development is discouraged.

The matters included in Policy 6 are relevant considerations for strategic planning affecting the coastal environment.

#### **Resource Management Act 1991<sup>2</sup>**

Section 30 of the RMA sets out the functions of regional councils. These functions include the provision and review of objectives, policies and methods to achieve integrated management of the natural and physical resources of the region. Section 30(1)(d) gives regional councils responsibility for control in conjunction with the Minister of Conservation of specified matters within the coastal marine area in their region. The matters listed in section 30 (1)(d) are:

- i. land and associated natural and physical resources;

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<sup>2</sup>[http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1991/0069/latest/DLM230265.html?search=ts\\_act\\_resource+management\\_resel&p=1&sr=1](http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1991/0069/latest/DLM230265.html?search=ts_act_resource+management_resel&p=1&sr=1)

- ii. the occupation of space in, and the extraction of sand, shingle, shell, or other natural material from, the coastal marine area, to the extent that it is within the common marine and coastal area;
- iii. the taking, use, damming, and diversion of water;
- iv. discharges of contaminants into or onto land, air, or water and discharges of water into water;
- v. the dumping and incineration of waste or other matter and the dumping of ships, aircraft, and offshore installations;
- vi. any actual or potential effects of the use, development, or protection of land, including the avoidance or mitigation of natural hazards and the prevention or mitigation of any adverse effects of the storage, use, disposal, or transportation of hazardous substances;
- vii. the emission of noise and the mitigation of the effects of noise;
- viii. activities in relation to the surface of water: ...’

Regional policy statements and regional and district plans are the principal means to strategically plan for sustainable management in the coastal environment.

The purpose of a regional policy statement is ‘to achieve the purpose of the Act by providing an overview of the resource management issues of the region and policies and methods to achieve integrated management of the natural and physical resources of the whole region’ (RMA section 59).

The purpose of regional and district plans is to assist regional and district councils to carry out their functions in order to achieve the purpose of the RMA (RMA sections 63 and 72 respectively). Regional policy statements and regional and district plans are to include proposed management responses to the resource management issues identified through the planning process. The process to prepare a policy statement or plan is specified in Schedule 1 of the RMA.

The RMA recognises and makes provisions for the lodgement and recognition of iwi management plans (section 35A) in regional policy statement, regional plan, and district plan preparation processes (sections 61(2A)(a), 66(2A)(a), and 74(2A) respectively). See also the ‘prepared for Policy 2: The Treaty of Waitangi, tangata whenua and Māori heritage’.

## **Other legislation**

### ***Local Government Act 2002***

Non-statutory plans—such as coastal strategies—are not formal RMA documents and have limited status in RMA decision processes. Some strategies are prepared under the Local Government Act 2002 using the special consultative procedures of that Act.

Strategies are sometimes prepared by local authorities as a way to build consensus on resource management issues and actions in cooperation with key partners including other statutory bodies, iwi, community interests and relevant central government agencies. A strategy can be a good way to establish direction for a more

formal RMA plan development that follows. The process to prepare a strategy is often determined and resourced by the participants.

## *Origins of the policy*

Policy 7 is new and is the result of consideration of the approach required to best manage the significant uses and values within the coastal environment in achieving sustainable management.

The effects of subdivision, use and development in the coastal environment and the thinking behind the term ‘strategic planning’ are considered in the Board of Inquiry’s report to the Minister of Conservation on a revised NZCPS<sup>3</sup>:

... a major issue is the extent and scale of subdivision and development on the coast, particularly for residential and rural residential use, and the resulting loss of the coastal character. The natural character and recreational values of New Zealand’s coast are an important resource... The intensity of built development along the coastline also has consequences for biodiversity and other direct and indirect effects such as limiting opportunities for future development of necessary infrastructure and other resource uses both on land and in the coastal marine area. (p. 5)

Submissions emphasised that it is hard to tell where the pressure for built development on the coast may come from. There are techniques and approaches available under the Act to deal with these problems but not enough councils are adopting them. The focus tends to be on the process rather than the environmental outcomes required, with little attempt to adopt a forward looking and spatial approach to avoid potential adverse cumulative effects... (p. 9)

Given the extent and scale of development of the coast, combined with the lack of strategic planning, the Board of Inquiry observed an incremental loss of important coastal values. The Board also observed a growing tendency by applicants and decision-makers on the mitigation of adverse effects, rather than avoiding them in the first instance:

....many of the conflicts that are occurring in the coastal environment stem from a lack of forward thinking at a strategic and spatial level. Those conflicts are not just about the location and nature of coastal settlement, whether consolidated or of a spread-out character, but also about a potential inability to provide activities important to the social, economic and cultural wellbeing of people and communities. The points made by those with an interest in aquaculture and renewable energy for example demonstrated a need to ensure that ad hoc development does not compromise the ability to locate and undertake these activities in the coastal environment. That would not achieve the sustainable management of natural and physical resources. Regional and territorial authorities need to co-operate to address these issues at a strategic and spatial level in policy statements and plans. (p. 7)

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.doc.govt.nz/upload/documents/getting-involved/consultations/closed-consultations/nzeps/NZCPS-2008-board-of-inquiry-vol-1.pdf>

Ad hoc development of coastal space can compromise local government's ability to achieve the purpose of the Act in relation to the coastal environment. In the absence of strategic planning it can be difficult to make adequate provision for activities that have a need to be in the coastal marine area, such as ports and other important infrastructure. The coast is also home to other economically important uses including ports, aquaculture, commercial fishing and tourism.

Significant natural and physical resources also occur within the coastal environment. These include but are not limited to its ecological values and natural character, its importance to people as a place to live and recreate, and customary values for tangata whenua.

Together these benefits amount to significant environmental goods and services produced from the coast.<sup>4</sup> Present and future community social and economic well-being is dependent on a healthy coastal environment. At the same time the coast is far from static and by its very nature the coast is a dynamic environment. Climate change effects including sea-level rise is expected to provide a more dynamic environment.

For further information refer to the NZCPS Board of Inquiry Report, Volume 2 (pp. 90–107).<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Townsend, M.; Thrush, S. 2010: Ecosystem functioning, goods and services in the coastal environment. Prepared by the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research for Auckland Regional Council. Auckland Regional Council Technical Report 2010/033. <http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/SiteCollectionDocuments/aboutcouncil/planspoliciespublications/technicalpublications/tr2010033ecosystemfunctioninggoodsandservicesinthecoastalenvironment.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.doc.govt.nz/getting-involved/consultations/results/new-zealand-coastal-policy-statement/proposed-new-zealand-coastal-policy-statement-2008-board-of-inquiry-report-and-recommendations/>

## ***Implementing this policy***

While guidance is provided here on implementing Policy 7, it is also necessary to consider the entire NZCPS 2010 when implementing each policy. Please also refer to the NZCPS 2010 Implementation Guidance Introductory note<sup>6</sup>, which covers the matters that are relevant in giving effect to the NZCPS 2010.

The amount of work required to be done to give effect to the NZCPS 2010 should reflect the issues occurring in each region and district, and the amount of planning already done. For example, a council's investment in strategic planning is expected to reflect the issues to be managed in a region or district. These principles build on the feedback provided particularly by local government to the Board of Inquiry.

Policy 7(1)(b) and (2) require that certain matters are to be identified in regional policy statements and plans but does not specify how this requirement should be met. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to addressing these matters in the course of strategic planning. Ways to address these requirements are discussed below and examples given under 'Related and ongoing work'. The guidance notes for other policies of the NZCPS 2010 are also relevant.

As a further general principle, strategic planning will be effective if it protects the environmental goods and services that are important to community economic and social well-being. Strategic planning often means addressing issues with ad hoc development and cumulative effects. Strategic planning is generally more effective where there is commitment and cooperation between regional and territorial authorities to improve ways to address these issues at strategic and spatial levels in policy statements and plans. Major efficiency gains can also be achieved by regions and districts working together to share information gathering and working with their communities.

A strategic approach can also be extended to consider areas managed under other legislation yet relevant to sustainable management in the coastal environment, such as the Reserves Act 1977, Marine Reserves Act 1971, and the Fisheries Act 1996, and where relevant and within the scope of the RMA.

Policy 7 specifies three strategic planning actions in preparing RMA policy statements and plans:

- a. to consider where, how and when to provide for activities in the coastal environment (Policy 7(1)(a))
- b. to identify areas of the coastal environment where particular uses are inappropriate and to protect these areas from inappropriate activities. (Policy 7(1)(b))
- c. to identify coastal processes, resources or values that are under threat or at significant risks from adverse cumulative effects and where practicable setting thresholds in plans to help determine when activities causing adverse cumulative effects are to be avoided. (Policy 7(2)).

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.doc.govt.nz/nzcps-introductory-note>

The actions in (a) to (c) above are strongly inter-related. Each action, and the linkages between them, is discussed below.

### **Policy 7(1)(a)—Identify and manage future activities in the coastal environment**

A strategic approach to planning will consider where, how and when to provide for future subdivision, use and development including future residential, rural residential, settlement, urban development and other activities in the coastal environment at a regional and district level. Other relevant activities include transport infrastructure, tourism, aquaculture, cables, and pipes.

Read alongside the other NZCPS 2010 policies, including ‘Policy 6: Activities in the coastal environment’, Policy 7 is encouraging local authorities to proactively forecast and provide for communities’ social and economic needs alongside identifying those values or uses that should continue to be recognised and provided for. In particular, thresholds for management of important values are expected to be identified in RMA statutory plans.

Other policies of the NZCPS 2010 are relevant in further considering user needs in the coastal environment, for example:

- Provision for new aquaculture in appropriate places, and protection of existing aquaculture from deterioration in water quality (Policy 8: Aquaculture)
- Provision for an efficient national network of safe ports servicing national and international shipping (Policy 9: Ports)

The action directed in Policy 7(1)(a) is strongly related to the actions in clauses (1)(b) and (2). Consideration of where, how and when to provide for future uses in the coastal environment also needs to look at the issues of effects on important coastal processes, resources and values and cumulative environmental effects. For this reason, the other policies of the NZCPS 2010 are very relevant when implementing Policy 7.

Predicting the future with any certainty is a difficult task. While there are methods to provide key indicators of likely changes, gathering this information can be expensive. Collaboration between regional and district councils can assist in directing effort and reducing costs to individual councils. Examples of information gathered and approaches to support this work are provided in the section ‘Related and ongoing work’.

### **Policy 7(1)(b)—Protection of the coastal environment from inappropriate uses**

Assessment of known coastal uses and values is required to inform strategic planning and decisions about the appropriateness of activities.

In summary, Policy 7(1)(b) directs the identification of areas of the coastal environment where particular uses or forms of use: (i) are inappropriate; and (ii) may be inappropriate without the consideration of effects through relevant regulatory

processes. Decision-makers are directed to protect these areas from inappropriate subdivision, use and development through objectives, policies and rules.

These areas can include strategically important assets, such as major ports or navigation requirements, through to ecologically important yet vulnerable places, such as estuaries. It's important to recognise also that the ecologically important areas may be valuable because of the environmental goods and services they produce (e.g. estuaries can be important fish spawning habitat).

Policy 7 does not explicitly require councils to identify such areas in policy statements and plans. The direction is to provide protection for them from inappropriate subdivision, use and development. Identification can be useful to identify the important places and values and for this reason a number of other NZCPS 2010 policies do promote this approach.

Where areas are to be identified, the task can be addressed in a variety of ways. A judgement call is required as to which approach to use to achieve the protection from inappropriate uses. This decision will require a judgement call that considers matters such as the significance of the values, the threat to them, and other methods available to be used in combination (e.g. incentives) or as alternatives.

Commonly used approaches include scheduling specific high value areas, the identification of 'character areas', through to more general criteria-based provisions. These methods can be used in combination with these or other methods. Community and stakeholder consultation will be part of all approaches.

Each approach is summarised briefly below in Table 1. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list. Methodologies for area identification are discussed in the guidance notes on related NZCPS 2010 policies.<sup>7</sup>

The determination of what is appropriate or inappropriate will be driven by a consideration of what is required to achieve sustainable management. Some uses or forms of uses will be easily identified as inappropriate in every circumstance, while some will require a more thorough case-by-case assessment. The policy drivers in making this call include RMA Part 2, other relevant NZCPS 2010 policies, and other NPSs.

Wording for district and regional plans about what is or is not appropriate is not expected to repeat the higher direction from the RMA or the NZCPS 2010. Wording and policies should be attuned so that the higher policies make sense in the regional or district context and to provide certainty for regulatory decision-making in determining whether or not an activity is inappropriate.

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<sup>7</sup> See in particular the guidance notes for the following: Policy 11: Indigenous biological diversity; Policy 13: Natural character; Policy 14: Restoration of natural character; Policy 15: Natural features and natural landscapes; Policy 16: Surf breaks of national significance; Policy 17: Historic heritage identification and protection; Policy 19: Walking access; Policy 20: Vehicle access; Policy 21: Enhancement of water quality; Policy 24: Identification of coastal hazards; Policy 25: Subdivision, use, and development in areas of coastal hazard risk; and Policy 27: Strategies for protecting significant existing development from coastal hazard risk.

Strong relationships exist between ‘Policy 7: Strategic planning’ and the other NZCPS policies, particularly those which relate to the extent and characteristics of the coastal environment (Policy 1) and identify management thresholds in relation to matters of national importance, such as biodiversity (Policy 11), natural character (Policy 13), and outstanding natural features and landscapes (Policy 15). Policies regarding provisions for specific activities are also relevant, including aquaculture (Policy 8) and ports important for national and international transport networks (Policy 9) and making decisions on appropriate location, form and design of these uses.

Table 1: Examples of Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) approaches to the identification of areas

| Approach  | Information required   | Advantages   | Disadvantages  |
|---|--|--|--|
| 1. Schedule specific areas: places are identified in an appendix to a regional policy statement and or plan. Particular objectives, policies and rules apply to activities within or near the trigger site. | Technical assessment of areas by appropriate specialists against suitable criteria (e.g. priorities for water quality enhancement, aquaculture growing areas, biodiversity hot spots).<br><br>Community feedback (including landowner views) is important to the identification process. | Certain.<br><br>Can be easy to administer.   | May not address situations where site character is not significant but overall character is important to a community and/or the management of cumulative effects.<br><br>May be perceived as preventing any use within scheduled areas, which can result in raising bar to ‘outstanding’ areas only. |
| 2. Characterise management areas:<br>Management areas are identified in regional policy statements and/or plans as requiring  | Built on specialist assessment.<br><br>Good practice combines community feedback to determine  | Useful in situations where information may be limited (e.g. marine environment).<br><br>Can enable flexibility if appropriateness is | Can be uncertain and costly for users as determination of ‘appropriateness’ will require detailed assessment.  |

| Approach   | Information required   | Advantages  | Disadvantages  |
|--|--|---|--|
| particular considerations in decision-making. Activities within the character areas are assessed against objectives, policies and rules. | important / distinguishing character (e.g. port areas versus coastal residential). | determined against the character of the area and related criteria.<br><br>Useful for the management of cumulative effects.<br><br>Addresses situations where individual site character is not significant but overall character is important. |  |
| 3. General rules triggered by criteria   | Requires good specialist knowledge of values in the region / district.             | Can be seen as a less direct threat to landowners / communities.<br><br>Can provide for activities where effects are no more than minor.<br><br>Easier to 'borrow' approaches used elsewhere.   | Potentially uncertain, especially where criteria require interpretation.<br><br>Does not deal well with cumulative effects.<br><br>Unlikely to avoid inappropriate uses in strategically important assets, such as ports or estuaries. |

Alignment of regional and district provisions with national direction in law, NZCPS 2010 and other NPSs will provide greater certainty for users and the achievement of environmental outcomes on the ground. Other relevant NPSs include:

- National Policy Statement on Electricity Transmission 2008 (NPSET)<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/rma/central/transmission/index.html>

- National Policy Statement on Renewable Electricity Generation 2011 (NPSREG)<sup>9</sup>
- National Policy Statement on Freshwater Management 2011 (NPSFM)<sup>10</sup>.

Guidance on their application in the coastal environment is provided in the NZCPS 2010 Implementation Guidance Introductory note<sup>11</sup>.

## **Policy 7(2)—Identify risks from cumulative effects and proposed management**

Policy 7(2) directs that the values at risk from adverse cumulative effects are identified in regional policy statements and plans, and provisions to manage these effects are also included.

### ***Cumulative effects in the coastal environment***

Cumulative environmental effects are effects that arise over time or in combination with other effects.<sup>12</sup> Examples that occur in the coastal environment include a proliferation of structures (e.g. jetties, moorings, some types of marine farms), sprawling and sporadic coastal land development, and nutrient and sediment inputs into coastal waters.

Cumulative effects that occur in the coastal environment may have originated from other places e.g. sediment and nutrients derived from land uses including beyond the coastal environment. Strategically important assets, such as some infrastructure, can also be vulnerable to cumulative effects.

There are often practical difficulties in addressing cumulative effects in isolation through individual resource consent processes. These effects are better addressed through a strategic planning approach, including the identification of environmental limits and integrated management of the impact of different and/or numerous similar activities.

The need to consider, anticipate and avoid the occurrence of adverse cumulative effects within the coastal environment over time can be both important and often challenging. They can arise from direct and indirect influences. Effective management of cumulative effects needs good information and usually requires specialist assessments. The assessments of cumulative effects may be done separately or as part of the specialist assessments in relation to other NZCPS policies, including Policy 7(1)(b).

### ***Management responses***

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/rma/central/nps/generation.html>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/rma/central/nps/freshwater-management.html>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.doc.govt.nz/nzcps-introductory-note>

<sup>12</sup> Refer to the glossary of terms for the RMA definition of ‘cumulative effects’.

Management responses to cumulative effects need to consider all sources; a management approach that tackles only a fraction of the problem will be ineffective and often lack credibility with users and communities. The scale of management responses are subject to a number of considerations including the test of practicability, and will vary according to the significance of the issue and the resources available.

Effectively managing cumulative effects can pose adjustment issues for current resource use practices. Transition to an improved state can be expensive and challenging for resource users. Options include requiring a gradual transition to specified targets in practical time frames. Integration with other tools, such as incentives, may assist in achieving these transitions. Policy 4 (Integrated management) of the NZCPS 2010 is therefore relevant.

### ***Thresholds and limits***

Policy 7(2) requires plans, where practicable, to set thresholds or limits to change, to assist in determining when activities causing adverse cumulative effects are to be avoided.

The actual limits set should also consider direction contained in other policies of the NZCPS 2010 and the policies of other NPSs including the NPS for Freshwater Management.

The types of RMA tools available to set thresholds or acceptable limits to change are summarised in Table 2.

Cumulative effects are often the result of direct and indirect contributors (e.g. water quality), and can involve important social factors that affect the ease of any transition. Management responses may involve more than one method. For example, a limit could be phased in over time as part of a package that includes financial assistance to make the adjustment, education and enforcement.

Table 2: Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) tools to manage cumulative effects in the coastal environment

| Thresholds and limits to change | Examples of coastal process, resource or value threats and relevant cumulative effects  | Examples of information required   | Implementation   |
|---------------------------------|---|--|--|
| 1. Zones*                       | <p>Structures and associated activities in coastal waters can displace habitats and affect natural character, natural landscapes and the provision of public open space and access to that space.</p> <p>Proliferation of structures can be difficult to manage where structures are already present.</p> | <p>Expectations of current users and future needs.</p> <p>Adjoining land uses including areas managed for protection.</p> <p>Information on high value areas and other character areas, including benthic, other marine ecological, and terrestrial values.</p> <p>Opportunities for provision of activities elsewhere or for sharing facilities (e.g. jetties, moorings).</p> | <p>Identify areas where structures are inappropriate or are to be limited through regional policy statement (RPS) / regional coast plan (RCP) objectives, policies and zones.</p> <p>Limit exclusive occupation where structures can be shared through objectives, policies and rules.</p> <p>Integrate provisions with district plan.</p> |
| 2. Standards                    | Water quality standards for coastal waters  | <p>Existing state.</p> <p>Sources of direct and indirect effects.</p> <p>Expectations of current users and future needs.</p>   | <p>RPS objectives, policies and methods.</p> <p>RCP standards.</p> <p>Regional and district plan provisions.</p>   |

| Thresholds and limits to change   | Examples of coastal process, resource or value threats and relevant cumulative effects   | Examples of information required   | Implementation  |
|---|--|--|---|
|   |  | Adjoining land uses.   | <p>Resource consent conditions.</p> <p>Monitoring.</p> <p>Other methods including education and incentives, especially where transitioning to a new regime.</p>   |
| 3. Targets – a target sets an objective for management and is particularly useful in reversing deteriorations | Water quality  | <p>Existing state.</p> <p>Sources of direct and indirect effects.</p> <p>Expectations of current users and future needs.</p> <p>Adjoining land uses.</p> | <p>Integration across statutory tools including an integrated response to the NZCPS 2010 and other NPSs.</p> <p>Methods to secure community and stakeholder agreement.</p> <p>Education and incentives.</p> |
| 4. Limits – specified limits to change that identify an envelope within which use can occur                   | Controls on coastal land development to avoid sprawling or sporadic patterns of settlement and urban growth and to protect important infrastructure. | <p>Existing state.</p> <p>Information on high value areas and other character areas.</p> <p>Expectations of current users and</p>                        | RPS and district plan identifies outer boundary to land development in the particular environment.  |

| Thresholds and limits to change | Examples of coastal process, resource or value threats and relevant cumulative effects  | Examples of information required  | Implementation   |
|---------------------------------|---|---|--|
|                                 |   | <p>future needs.</p> <p>Adjoining land and marine uses including importance of coastal waters for recreational, customary or commercial shellfish or other harvesting.</p>  |  |
|                                 | <p>Controls specify upper limits on nutrient discharge to manage contributions from land (e.g. farming) and marine (e.g. fish farms) sources to ensure the activities occur within the carrying capacity of the receiving waters.</p> | <p>Existing state of nutrient levels and existing sources (including land based).</p> <p>Hydrodynamics of water bodies including temporal / seasonal changes.</p> <p>Expectations of current users and future needs.</p> <p>Other objectives for management, e.g. health of freshwater and marine habitats, recreational water quality, and shellfish harvesting.</p> | <p>Regional plan, RCP, and district plan objectives, policies and methods.</p> <p>Decisions on individual resource consents.</p> <p>Integrated management of nutrient sources and enforcement.</p> <p>Education and incentives.</p> <p>Monitoring.</p> |

\*See also the guidance note on ‘Policy 9: Ports, and the identification of port zones’.

## ***Related and ongoing work***

A number of regions, districts and other authorities are progressing strategic planning for their places including the coastal environment.

### ***Auckland spatial and unitary plans***

The Auckland Council is preparing integrated and strategic spatial and unitary plans for the region:

- **Auckland Spatial Plan**  
<http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/EN/ABOUTCOUNCIL/PLANSPOLICIES/ESPUBLICATIONS/THEAUCKLANDPLAN/Pages/theaucklandplan.aspx>  
The Auckland Spatial Plan is a Local Government Act 2002 plan to provide future direction for population growth in Auckland City. The plan was launched by the Auckland Council in 2012.
- **Auckland Unitary Plan**  
[http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/EN/planspoliciesprojects/plansstrategies/unitaryplan/Pages/home.aspx?utm\\_source=plansandstrategieslandingpage&utm\\_medium=topcontent&utm\\_campaign=landingpages](http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/EN/planspoliciesprojects/plansstrategies/unitaryplan/Pages/home.aspx?utm_source=plansandstrategieslandingpage&utm_medium=topcontent&utm_campaign=landingpages)  
The Auckland Unitary Plan is the principal means to implement the Auckland Spatial Plan for Auckland City. It includes the regional coastal plan but does not cover the Hauraki Gulf Islands Plan which was recently made operative. Public consultation on the Auckland Unitary Plan is scheduled for 2013.

### ***Hauraki Gulf Marine Spatial Plan***

The Waikato Regional Council and the Auckland Council are working with other agencies including the Hauraki Gulf Forum to prepare a marine spatial plan for the Hauraki Gulf to address coastal management issues in the Gulf, including through the monitoring results outlined in the report “State of our Gulf Tikapa Moana, Hauraki Gulf State of the Environment Report 2011”.

- <http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/en/aboutcouncil/representativesbodies/haurakigulfforum/Pages/home.aspx>

### ***Bay of Plenty Smart Growth***

<http://www.smartgrowthbop.org.nz/>

Smart Growth is researching and planning a strategy for long-term and sustainable growth in the western Bay of Plenty with reports on growth demand (e.g. infrastructure needs, development trends and scenarios, land availability, population trends), tangata whenua needs, transport, and natural heritage. Smart Growth is based on a partnership between Bay of Plenty Regional Council, Tauranga City Council, Western Bay of Plenty District Council and tangata whenua.

***Marlborough Sounds Resource Management Plan Private Plan Change 21—***

***Waikawa Bay Mooring Management Areas and Marina Zone Extension***

[http://www.marlborough.govt.nz/Your-Council/RMA/Marlborough-Sounds-](http://www.marlborough.govt.nz/Your-Council/RMA/Marlborough-Sounds-Resource-Management-Plan/Plan-Changes/PC21.aspx)

[Resource-Management-Plan/Plan-Changes/PC21.aspx](http://www.marlborough.govt.nz/Your-Council/RMA/Marlborough-Sounds-Resource-Management-Plan/Plan-Changes/PC21.aspx)

A private plan change has been sought by Port Marlborough to manage occupation and uses within the Waikawa Marina at Picton. This plan change is currently under appeal.

***Northland Regional Coastal Plan Plan Change 4—Aquaculture Planning***

[http://www.nrc.govt.nz/Your-Council/Have-your-say/Regional-Coastal-Plan/Plan-](http://www.nrc.govt.nz/Your-Council/Have-your-say/Regional-Coastal-Plan/Plan-Change-4-Aquaculture-Management/)

[Change-4-Aquaculture-Management/](http://www.nrc.govt.nz/Your-Council/Have-your-say/Regional-Coastal-Plan/Plan-Change-4-Aquaculture-Management/)

Northland Regional Council is progressing Plan Change 4 to the Northland Regional Coastal Plan to manage new and existing aquaculture in the region including the identification of where aquaculture is inappropriate, and related provisions. This plan change is currently under appeal.

## **Resources**

### **Examples of strategies**

- Te Korowai o Te Tai o Marokura marine strategy  
<http://fishnet.co.nz/teamkorowai/>  
Te Korowai o Te Tai o Marokura marine strategy from the Kaikōura Coastal Guardians 2012 sets out a vision to achieve a healthy functioning and productive marine ecosystem for the people of Kaikōura.
- The Wairarapa Coastal Strategy 2004  
<http://www.gw.govt.nz/assets/Plans--Publications/Wairarapa-Coastal-Strategy/711FinalStrategywis1347.pdf>  
The Wairarapa Coastal Strategy 2004 was released in 2004 by the Wairarapa Coastal Strategy Group as a joint initiative between the Masterton, Carterton and South Wairarapa district councils, Rangitāne o Wairarapa and Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairarapa iwi, and Greater Wellington Regional Council. The Strategy sets a long-term vision and strategy to sustain the Wairarapa coast and identifies an inland coastal boundary based on a landscape and ecological criteria.

### **Reports, websites and additional information**

#### *Department of Conservation*

- What effect will the new NZCPS have on coastal development?  
<http://www.doc.govt.nz/conservation/marine-and-coastal/coastal-management/nz-coastal-policy-statement/questions-and-answers/#8-aquaculture>
- What will the new NZCPS do for the environment?  
<http://www.doc.govt.nz/conservation/marine-and-coastal/coastal-management/nz-coastal-policy-statement/questions-and-answers/#6-environment>
- Regional coastal plans and the Department of Conservation's involvement:  
<http://www.doc.govt.nz/conservation/marine-and-coastal/coastal-management/regional-coastal-plans/>

#### *Ministry for the Environment*

- National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2011.  
<http://www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/rma/nps-freshwater-management-2011/docs/nps-freshwater-mgmt-2011.pdf>
- National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2011: Implementation Guide (Wellington: Ministry for the Environment. 2011).  
<http://www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/rma/nps-freshwater-guide-2011/nps-freshwater-management-guide.pdf>
- Technical and scientific considerations when setting measurable objectives and limits for water management (NIWA, 2010)

<http://www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/water/technical-scientific-considerations-setting-measurable/index.html>

### *Quality Planning*

- 'FAQs on iwi management plans'<http://www.qualityplanning.org.nz/index.php/supporting-components/faq-s-on-iwi-management-plans>

### *Other*

Philip Milne, 'When is enough, enough? Dealing with cumulative effects under the Resource Management Act' (2008) <http://www.horizons.govt.nz/assets/new-uploads/about-us/one-plan/submitters-expert-evidence-2/general-hearing/Attachment-to-TAG-Witness-Statement-Dealing-with-cumulative-effect-under-the-RMA-Rec-29-June-2009.pdf>

## *Glossary of terms and definitions*

### **NZCPS 2010 glossary**

No relevant definitions.

### **Other definitions**

**Cumulative effect:** ...In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires, the term effect includes—

- a. any positive or adverse effect; and
- b. any temporary or permanent effect; and
- c. any past, present, or future effect; and
- d. any cumulative effect which arises over time or in combination with other effects—regardless of the scale, intensity, duration, or frequency of the effect, and also includes—
- e. any potential effect of high probability; and
- f. any potential effect of low probability which has a high potential impact [emphasis added]

(Definition from section 3 of the RMA)

**Designation:** ‘...means a provision made in a district plan to give effect to a requirement made by a requiring authority under section 168 or section 168A or clause 4 of Schedule 1’.

(Definition from section 2 of the RMA)