Environment Network Manawatu

# Submission on Horizons 2018-28 LTP Consultation Document

INTRODUCTION

Environment Network Manawatu (ENM) thanks Horizons for the opportunity to make this submission. We are a Charitable umbrella organization dedicated to enhancing the environment within the Manawatu River Catchment area. We currently have 50 active member groups engaging in water quality and biodiversity, food action and community resilience, waste minimization, alternative energies and active transport.

COMMUNITY OUTCOMES

Yes we are very pleased with the 6 new Community outcomes and plan to work with Horizons towards those.

REGIONAL FACITITIES FUND

Rating for a regional fund seems like an excellent opportunity for making improvements to infrastructure in small communities, rather than funding more sports facility assets. The benefits of the former being a more cohesive, resilient rural support sector.

FOXTON EAST DRAINAGE SCHEME

Foxton we believe will in coming years become increasingly popular because of its natural assets, interesting history and community spirit. Solving the complex flooding issues with appropriately engineering design solutions which will cope with the vagaries of the natural landscape should be a priority.

LOWER MANAWATU SCHEME

We support the work that Horizons has taken to preserve the Ashhurst Domain and the plan for further erosion prevention work.

TARARUA DISTRICT RIVER MANAGEMENT

We support creating a new scheme as budgeted for, in order to be able to respond more quickly and have consistency and connectedness between the various branches of the catchment.

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CLIMATE CHANGE

We are pleased to see this now as a consideration across the board in planning. We believe that Horizons should as part of its resilience strategy have a specific Climate Change Policy for this region.

In the 2015 Paris Agreement, Article 2 calls for " making finance flows consistent with a pathway to low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development." This is a **productive** investment for a more sustainable future for our region, its businesses and future generations. A well considered transition could boost long term economic output if we include the avoidance of climate related damage.  The net effect on combined GDP is 4.7% higher than" business as usual" by 2050 [[1]](#footnote-1).

COMPLIANCE MONITORING

Last year we had concerns about the lack of enough funding to properly ensure compliance enforcement. We believe that targets are still not being met and suggest that this area needs urgent review.

THE EFFECT OF SEDIMENT

Eroding hill country needs more monitoring especially in relation to Forestry and Subdivision consents. For example in Abby Road (part of the Moonshine Valley) a developer is intending to fill the valley for housing purposes when there are native species in the stream and sediment is already building up where other developers have tried to dam the sediment in a neighboring development. There should be no question of these valleys being reconfigured for housing on the basis that developers can mitigate the effects, when we already know that future generations will be left with the cost of the consequences of Councils being pressured.

These valleys on the east of the Manawatu River have thin blown top soil and in their natural state provide an essential service by absorbing inundation. They also harbor native eels, mussels and other species and when planted, form pleasant walkways and flight paths and feeding grounds for native birds.

POSSUM CONTROL AND BIOSECURITY

Horizons it taking a responsible roll in this difficult area. An increase in funding is needed for plant pests. The recently released pest management plan shows that there are a number of plant pests that will not be controlled as intended.

One way we might be able to get more funding from the national budget in this area would be to up the status of the Te Apiti Gorge and Manawatu River as an area of National Significance as the number of people walking the Gorge Walk being equal to that of the Tongariro Crossing would indicate that a Regional Park is what we have, even if it has not been Nationally recognized as such.

We are pleased to see a slight budgeted increase for Wetlands and bush remnants being built in.

TRANSPORT

Continued evaluation on the basis of new data is a good approach as needs evolve with our changing society, bearing in mind that changing habits from private to public transport is a generational thing.

CAPITAL CONNECTION

We see this as an essential service. If Central Government funding is not forthcoming then the second option seems more reasonable as all communities benefit and reserves remain. The important thing is that the service is not compromised. It should in fact be increased to a more convenient time for non commuters which would better fit with family excursions and general travelers.

Finally

FRESHWATER

We are pleased with the additional staff member and increased level of grants. We strongly support Horizons vigilance in overseeing the TLA’s water quality systems and being proactive in that regard.

ENM will be presenting separately on our Biodiversity Cluster’s Manawatu River Source to Sea Project.

Our last submission in 2017 signed off with a challenge from Councillors to our offer to partner with Horizons to work through our community groups to bring about a shift from the “them and us mentality” when it comes to finding solutions to the degradation of the Manawatu River and more than that, one which will reinvigorate how we relate to the river in a way that will bring diverse benefits to the region.

I believe the actual words were, “ So how can we make this happen?”.

So I am pleased to be able to say to you one year on, WE HAVE THE PLAN and I hope that you can have the foresight to work with us to optimize the endless opportunity that it presents.

1. Figures are from the Global Commission on the Economy and Climate (with modelling by the OECD) and were highlighted in the recent Dominion Post article: https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/103141057/we-must-spend-more-green-to-get-more-green [↑](#footnote-ref-1)