**Manawatū River Source to Sea submission to PNCC DAP:**

**About Manawatū River Source to Sea**

**Manawatū River Source to Sea** (Source to Sea) is a community-led and catchment-wide initiative focused on providing positive outcomes for our community, from the headwaters of the Manawatū River in the Ruahine Ranges, through to the confluence at Foxton Estuary in Horowhenua.

The positive outcomes include:

* Enhancing biodiversity, both flora and fauna;
* Building awareness and capability through citizen science (e.g. Palmy’s Plastic Pollution Challenge);
* Support and encourage more nature-based experiences;
* Social enterprises contributing to economic wellbeing;
* Social and cultural wellbeing.

This community initiative has been developed by the Biodiversity Cluster, a subset of Environment Network Manawatu (ENM) member groups. It is closely aligned with Palmerston North City Council’s Goal 4, an Eco-City, especially with the Biodiversity Plan, and with parts of the Three Waters Plan and the Waste Plan. It is also well aligned with Goal 2, a Creative & Exciting City.

If still appropriate in the context of Covid-19, we would like to speak to our submission.

**SUBMISSION**

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the PNCC Annual Plan 2020/21.

We look forward to continuing to work with Council towards common goals. We encourage Council to consider Source to Sea as a strategic partner in the implementation of the Eco-City goal, particularly in relation to the Biodiversity Strategy, the Three Waters Plan and the Waste Plan. The community sector can help the council achieve its goals through community engagement (including citizen science), maximising the opportunities for collective action and by leveraging funding.

**Biodiversity enhancement**

We fully support the Council’s investment in biodiversity and sustainable practices (currently 0.67% of Council spending), and believe that more should be done going forward. This is because our environment is under increasing threats, anthropogenically initiated due to a mix of over-population and excessive resource demands, resulting in its capacity to support future humans declining.

Protecting biodiversity in the wider community will become increasingly important post-Covid. The very likely decline in international tourism could be off-set by the development of nature-based domestic visitor experiences, especially in the Manawatu and adjacent areas which are currently not high on the tourism agenda. We see the opportunity to engage visitors in guided walks and on the ground efforts to enhance biodiversity, such as walking traplines or engaging inplanting activities.

In order to align our efforts, we would like to initiate a joint planning session between Source to Sea and Council staff in preparation for the upcoming 10-year plan. This session should cover:

* Opportunities to increase native biodiversity in the city;
* Valuation of functioning eco-systems services to the city;
* Opportunities to increase sustainable practices for living in the city;
* Opportunities for co-funding (E.g. Predator Free 2050, Waste Minimisation Fund, etc.) to grow available funds to achieve outcomes of mutual interest;
* Opportunities to offer a range of nature-based experiences for locals and visitors

**Three Waters Plan**

Source to Sea will take a particular interest in the Nature Calls consultation process, because it is essential that humans take responsibility for sustainable disposal of their waste products. Further this must be done in the context of upcoming climate change, which will change the ability of future generations to employ parts of their environment for waste processing, whilst adding many new, unpredictable challenges which they will need to address.

**Waste Plan**

Source to Sea through Palmy’s Plastic Pollution Challenge sees opportunities to further align Council- and Community-driven activities around education and action. We suggest a planning session with Council staff in preparation fot the 10-year plan.

**Eco-city**

This is a major aim of PNCC, and the current Covid-19 situation has many lessons which Source to Sea would like to share with PNCC. These include:

- Improving cycling in the city; currently riding a bicycle around town is a pleasant and safe exercise, due to the decline in traffic, and the even more important decline in the aggressiveness of that traffic. This suggests there are many ways to improve the cycling experience, particularly in terms of creating, marking and surfacing cycleways.

- Financial changes are inevitable post-Covid, and this, unless counteracted by strong and clear moves on the parts of community leaders, could impact negatively on local biodiversity.

- At the same time, these changes will promote the development of many new businesses for the region, and PNCC has a major role to play in directing these towards greener alternatives, with which Source to Sea would be keen to assist.

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On behalf of

Manawatū River Source to Sea

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