

# Contents

## Introduction

---

<b>PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION TO MONITORING</b>	<b>3</b>
Managing Environmental Resources	
Monitoring the Environment	
Environmental Indicators	
Reporting on the state of the environment	
<b>STRUCTURE OF THIS REPORT</b>	<b>4</b>

---

# Introduction

**T**he Resource Management Act (RMA) 1991 requires local authorities to undertake environmental monitoring of the state of the environment, and the suitability and effectiveness of its District Plan. This monitoring enables Council to assess how well it is meeting its statutory obligations under the Resource Management Act 1991 and to assess the effectiveness of resource management policies and environmental goals.

Environmental monitoring provides information that enables Council to keep an environmental scorecard against which its objectives can be measured. This information enables Council to report on the state of the environment (SOE) to the public. This report documents Matamata-Piako District Council's environmental policies and targets, methods for managing the environment, and current environmental state and trends. Monitoring and reporting has also been designed to raise environmental awareness in schools and identified business/community sectors throughout the district.

The report includes baseline information, targets and strategies that have been adopted to protect and enhance the environment. Using this information

Council can assess whether the state of the environment is improving or getting worse. The report will be updated every five years to provide information about the quality of the environment in the district.

This is the first state of environment report produced by Council. It presents information on six of the district's significant resource management issues. Within the next three years, the other six issues will be presented in a report such as this.

## PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

---

This report brings together environmental information from many monitoring programmes, the resource consent process and investigations undertaken by the Matamata-Piako District Council. It also includes information from the Department of Conservation (DoC), other resource management agencies, and

certain research institutes. The information presented relates to the significant resource management issues identified by the District's community through the District Plan preparation process.

The figure below shows how Council intends to integrate information on the state of the environment with policy development, implementation and review. Regular reporting on the state of the District's environment is an important part of this cycle. It provides a framework to identify together with the regional community, priority environmental issues.



## INTRODUCTION TO MONITORING

### Managing Environmental Resources

The environment is made up of natural and physical (human-made) resources that we all rely on for our social,

cultural and economic wellbeing. The Matamata-Piako District Council along with Environment Waikato and other organisations are responsible for the management of environmental resources to ensure they remain in a condition suitable for the use of future generations. This means managing them to avoid any adverse effects that result from inappropriate use and development.

The Council sets objectives, policies and rules in the District Plan which manage the effects of human activities on the environment. However, understanding the effects of our activities on the environment and the success of the Council's objectives, policies and rules can only be achieved through the systematic collection of relevant environmental information.

### Monitoring the Environment

Environmental monitoring is the collection of data over time that tells us about the state of our environmental resources. Information gathered through monitoring the state of our environment is used to help determine the impact that our activities are having on the environment and the effectiveness of the Councils objectives, policies and rules for managing the

environment. This allows the Council to make better and more informed decisions regarding how environmental resources should be managed.

Monitoring allows us to determine whether the condition of our resources is improving, remaining the same or degrading. Council monitors all of the District's significant resource management issues as defined in the district plan. These issues were developed in consultation with the community and reflect the major environmental resources in the district and the activities that affect these resources.

Council has developed a monitoring strategy detailing what is being monitored, how often and by whom. A copy of the strategy is available from Council.

Each resource chapter in this report uses the Pressure-State-Response (PSR) Framework to present environmental information. Each chapter contains sections that consider

- The **pressures**, or threats that can cause environmental effects
- The **state**, or condition of the environment that is affected by, or relevant to a particular resource management issue
- The **responses**, or actions taken by Matamata-Piako District to address the effects (or state).

### Environmental Indicators

The Council uses environmental indicators to collect relevant information. Indicators are sometimes known as parameters, and define what should be monitored on a regular basis to detect changes in the environment. Indicators also measure the threat or pressure on a resource, the state of the resource and the responses taken by Council and other organisations to protect the resource. The environmental indicators used by the Matamata-Piako District Council to monitor the pressures on the environment, the state of the environment and the response to the pressures and state, are presented in appendix one. The environmental information collected to date on each of these indicators is presented in the body of this report.

### Reporting on the state of the environment

The Council has decided to publish this 'State of Environment Report' to allow the wider community to understand the effects of human and natural activities on the environment and to inform the community about the state of the District's environment.

As this is the first time that environmental information on

the district has been presented in such a complete form, much of the information is presented as baseline data only. This means that most of the data is only presented for one year. Ideally information should be presented for a longer period of time as this enables trends to be identified. The baseline data presented in this report will however enable trends to be identified in future years.

## STRUCTURE OF THIS REPORT

This report contains nine chapters. Chapters 1 and 2 provide an introduction to the report and an overview of the Matamata-Piako District, its people, natural and cultural heritage, economy and natural environment. Chapter 3 identifies twelve significant resource management issues identified in the Matamata-Piako Proposed District Plan. Chapters 4 - 9 discuss the following six of the twelve identified issues;

- Rural Development
- Residential Growth
- Solid Waste
- Natural Environment
- Heritage and Cultural Values
- Natural Hazards

Each chapter starts with a statement of what the district wants to achieve in addressing

the issues. This provides an introduction to compare the current state of the environment with the desired state, and over time, track progress towards the desired state.

Each resource chapter includes a case study that discusses a site-specific environmental issue. These case studies illustrate changes in environmental management and show how the community can work together to achieve positive environmental results.

Where appropriate, maps, photographs and diagrams have been used to illustrate key points, findings and trends. The following symbols are used within the report to indicate the district's progress towards its objectives and visions.



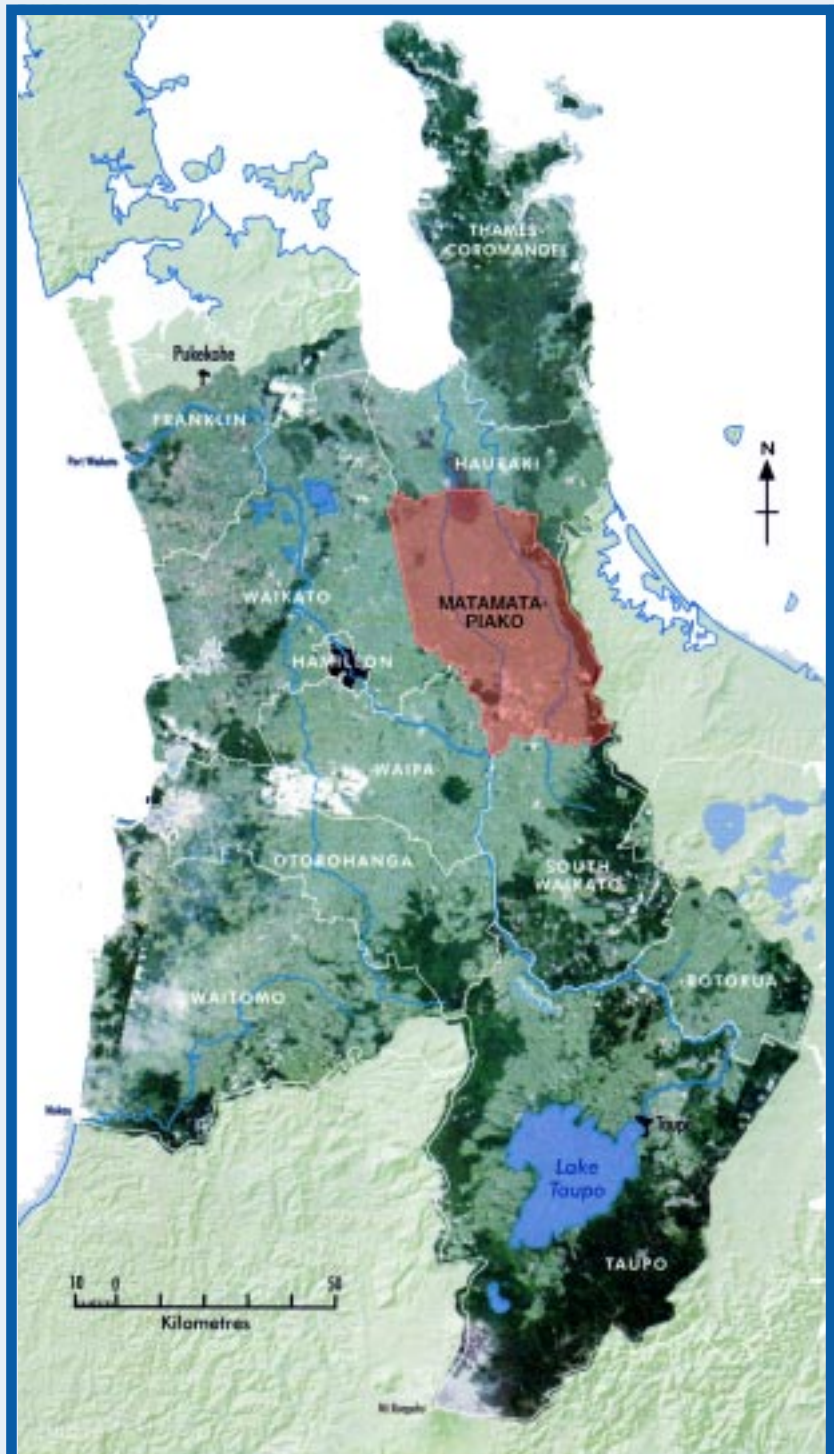
The tree symbol indicates that the district is meeting or making strong progress towards meeting the objectives and visions of the District Plan.



The seedling indicates that progress is being made, but that a continued effort will need to be sustained to improve.



The acorn symbolises 'starting out' which indicates that there is either not enough information to determine whether progress is being made or that the progress is just beginning.



Map Source: Environment Waikato 'State of the Environment Report 1998'

The Waikato region and territorial authority boundaries with Matamata-Piako District highlighted