



Enfocus

Draft Guideline on Strategic Planning for Biodiversity

A report for Action Bio-Community on
using LTCCPs to promote better
biodiversity management

June 2003

Document reference: Document3
Date of this version: 1/07/2003 8:36 a.m.
Report status: Draft/For Client Review
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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of Guidance

This guideline has been prepared to:

- Assist local authorities to understand the *relevance* of biodiversity management in their long term strategic planning and reporting; and
- Provide advice about how and what biodiversity management provisions can be included in Long Term Council Community Plans (LTCCPs).

The guide aims to help local government practitioners to overcome barriers that may be experienced in planning for biodiversity and to ensure that the opportunity presented by LTCCPs to enhance biodiversity management is realised.

1.2 Structure of Guideline

This guideline begins in section 2 by outlining the relevance of biodiversity to LTCCPs. The section seeks to establish that a focus on biodiversity is not only appropriate for LTCCPs but is in fact critical if they are to promote sustainable development.

Section 3 of the guide outlines the strategic planning process and why it is applicable to biodiversity and LTCCPs.

Section 4 describes each step of the strategic planning process in detail and explains what this may mean for the way local authorities approach biodiversity. The general scope of possible provisions is outlined but the guide refrains from including “model” provisions for the reasons discussed in the guide itself.



2 Biodiversity and LTCCPs

2.1 Purpose of local government

The Local Government Act 2002 provides a broad mandate for local authorities to involve themselves in economic, social, environmental and cultural issues. This is generally regarded as setting local authorities the goal of promoting *sustainable development*. The concept of sustainable development is not expressly defined but its meaning is suggested in the “Principles of Local Authorities” where Section 14 (1) (h) states:

- In taking a sustainable development approach a local should take into account-*
- (i) the social, economic, and cultural well-being of people and communities; and*
 - (ii) the need to maintain and enhance the quality of the environment; and*
 - (iii) the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations.*

2.2 What is an LTCCP?

The Act is *outcome* focused meaning that it requires local authorities to plan for, and report on specific and measurable results in communities and their environments. The main instrument the Act uses to promote sustainable development outcomes is the Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP). The LTCCP is, in turn, based on *community outcomes* identified (at least) every 6 years.

The LTCCP is essentially a mandatory long term strategic plan prepared every three years to address a 10 year planning horizon. LTCCPs are important documents because they provide a framework for the direction and priorities on each local authority. Having issues recognised in an LTCCP is a pre-requisite for local authority action.

Text Box 1 – Contents of a LTCCP

Schedule 10 of the Act states that, amongst other things, LTCCPs must:

- State the *community outcomes*.
- Describe how the local authority will *contribute* to furthering the outcomes.
- Outline how the local authority will *work with others* to further the outcomes.
- State the measures to be used to *assess progress*.

2.3 Why biodiversity is essential to LTCCPs

Both territorial authorities and regional councils have been involved in managing biodiversity in various ways for many years.

However, the advent of the new Local Government Act and its emphasis on sustainable development sharpens the focus on maintaining biodiversity as a highly relevant - even critical - outcome for local authorities. This is because of the following.

- As noted above, local governance has a clear direction in the form of *sustainable development*. Maintaining biodiversity is certainly one of *the* critical



measures of sustainability. Although there are many perspectives on sustainable development, there can be little argument that a world where species and ecosystems are being lost is not sustainable by any measure. The state of biodiversity is therefore a core determinant of the success of local governance as defined by the Local Government Act.

- Biodiversity is not just an issue with environmental implications. It is an issue that is relevant for any one concerned about the sort of economic, social and cultural future they want for their children. Maintaining biodiversity obviously has environmental benefits but it also has:
 - ✓ *economic* benefits in the form of ecosystem services (such as pollination, soil stability and fertility, maintaining water quality) tourism opportunities and potential commercial and medical uses;
 - ✓ *social* benefits in the form of a distinctive national identity as well and various recreational and research and educational benefits; and
 - ✓ *cultural* benefits in the form of being able to recognise and continue Maori traditions, knowledge and customary uses.

These characteristics mean that maintaining biodiversity is a flagship sustainable development opportunity.

- High levels of endemism mean the biodiversity management in New Zealand, more than most other places in the world, is a *local* issue. Many local authorities in New Zealand are home to species found no where else in New Zealand – in fact no where else in the world. Local action can make a difference. In fact local action is very often the only thing that can make a difference.
- Although local authorities have much discretion about what and how much they do under the Local Government Act (determined in part by what the community identifies as desired outcomes) it also has many *mandatory* functions under both the LGA and other statues. Maintaining biodiversity is one of those functions. The Resource Management Amendment Act 2003 clarified that managing biodiversity is an explicit function of both regional councils and territorial authorities. They *must* provide for the maintenance of biodiversity in regional and/or district plans. (See Text Box 2).
- Undertaking mandatory functions to maintain biodiversity will require *positive action* – not just reaction by way of regulation. There is probably no where in New Zealand where biodiversity will be maintained over the long term simply by halting vegetation clearance and human harvest alone. The New Zealand ecological balance is at a point where maintaining indigenous biodiversity means taking action such as fencing, pest and weed control, re-vegetation/restoration schemes and dedicated species recovery. To the extent that such actions are a local authority responsibility they need to be planned for over the long term, endorsed by communities, co-ordinated with



the actions taken by others and legally mandated – hence the critical role of LTCCPs in biodiversity.

- Local action is endorsed and supported by both a national and international policy framework in the form of: the New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy that establishes national goals and objectives and identifies many prospective measures that require action and commitment by local government; and
 - ✓ the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity that calls for countries to develop national strategies. In countries with devolved systems of environmental management, of national strategies cannot succeed unless they are translated into local strategies. Hence the importance of the LTCCP and associated planning instruments.

Text Box 2 – Local Authorities’ role in biodiversity under the Resource Management Act

The Resource Management Act 2003 introduced a definition of *biological diversity*. It is a definition that is broadly consistent with the definition set out in the Convention of Biological Diversity. The definition states:

Biological diversity means the variability among living organisms, and the ecological complexes of which they are a part, including diversity within species, between species, and of ecosystems.

Section 30 (1) (c) (iii) provides that it is a function of regional councils to control the use of land for the purpose of the maintaining and enhancing ecosystems in water bodies and coastal water.

Section 30(1) (ga) provides that it is a function of regional councils to establish, implement and review objectives policies and methods for maintaining indigenous biodiversity.

Section 31 (b) (iii) provides that it is a function of territorial councils to control the effects of the use of land on the maintenance of indigenous biological diversity.

The function of “controlling” can be undertaken in various ways. While it is perhaps most common to think of *control* and being about imposing and enforcing rules control might be achieved through other means - means that are specified in plans prepared under the RMA but detailed, prioritised and mandated through the LTCCP.

These new provisions complement and strengthen the provisions of the Resource Management Act 1991 which already recognised in its purpose and principles, the importance of the *life-supporting value of ecosystems* [section 5 (2) (b)] *areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna* [in section 6(c)], and the *intrinsic values of ecosystems* – defined to include biological diversity [section 7(d)].



3 Strategic planning for better biodiversity management

3.1 What is Strategic Planning?

Strategic planning is a term that has become common in organisation and policy contexts. In essence, strategic planning is simply the methodical application of strategic thinking usually resulting in a defined *strategy*. Strategic planning may be distinguished from other forms of planning by the importance of the purpose, the long term nature of planning horizon and the need to consider the “whole” rather than individual parts to achieve success.

The preparation of LTCCPs is a statutory form of strategic planning designed for relevance in a local governance context. The LTCCP is itself a strategic plan but because it may deal with many issues it may be said to comprise (or reflect) many individual contributing strategies (which may themselves be interlinked).

Planning for biodiversity in an LTCCP process therefore involves developing a *strategy* rather than a set of unconnected and partial actions which has typically been the consequence of planning without a strategic framework.

The strategy may be undertaken at different levels of detail¹ but in essence if it is to be successful it will have to have a number of key characteristics.

3.2 Characteristics of a Strategy

In the policy context, the purpose of a *strategy* is generally given as providing for a consistent approach to issues across an organisation or *between* multiple organisations. This is achieved by providing a framework for action that is embedded the short and long term goals and the practices of the organisation(s) and its/their employees.

A strategy has either:

- (a) living utility as a basis for decision-makers to assess strategic and operational situations similarly, discuss the alternatives in a common language and decide on actions based on a shared set of values and understandings; and/or
- (b) value as a record of commitment to a particular programme of action.

In either case a strategy is about encouraging and displaying a unity of commitment across multiple stakeholders who have an interest in attaining a common objective.

Importantly successful strategies must be outcome or issue-based not functionally of organisationally constrained. Being strategic in your approach to biodiversity (or any other issue) involves setting aside the constraints imposed by legislative or functional boundaries and looking for opportunities in better strategic alignment within and between organisations.

¹ One approach is to have the LTCCP represent a summary a more detailed strategy that sits outside the LTCCP.



Successful strategic planning:

- Leads to action
- Builds a shared vision that is values-based
- Is an inclusive, participatory process in which politicians, staff and community partners take on a shared ownership
- Accepts accountability to the community
- Is both internally and externally focused and sensitive to the local authority's operating environment
- Is based on quality data
- Requires an openness to questioning the status quo
- Is a key part of effective management

3.3 The Generic Strategic Planning Process and the LTCCP

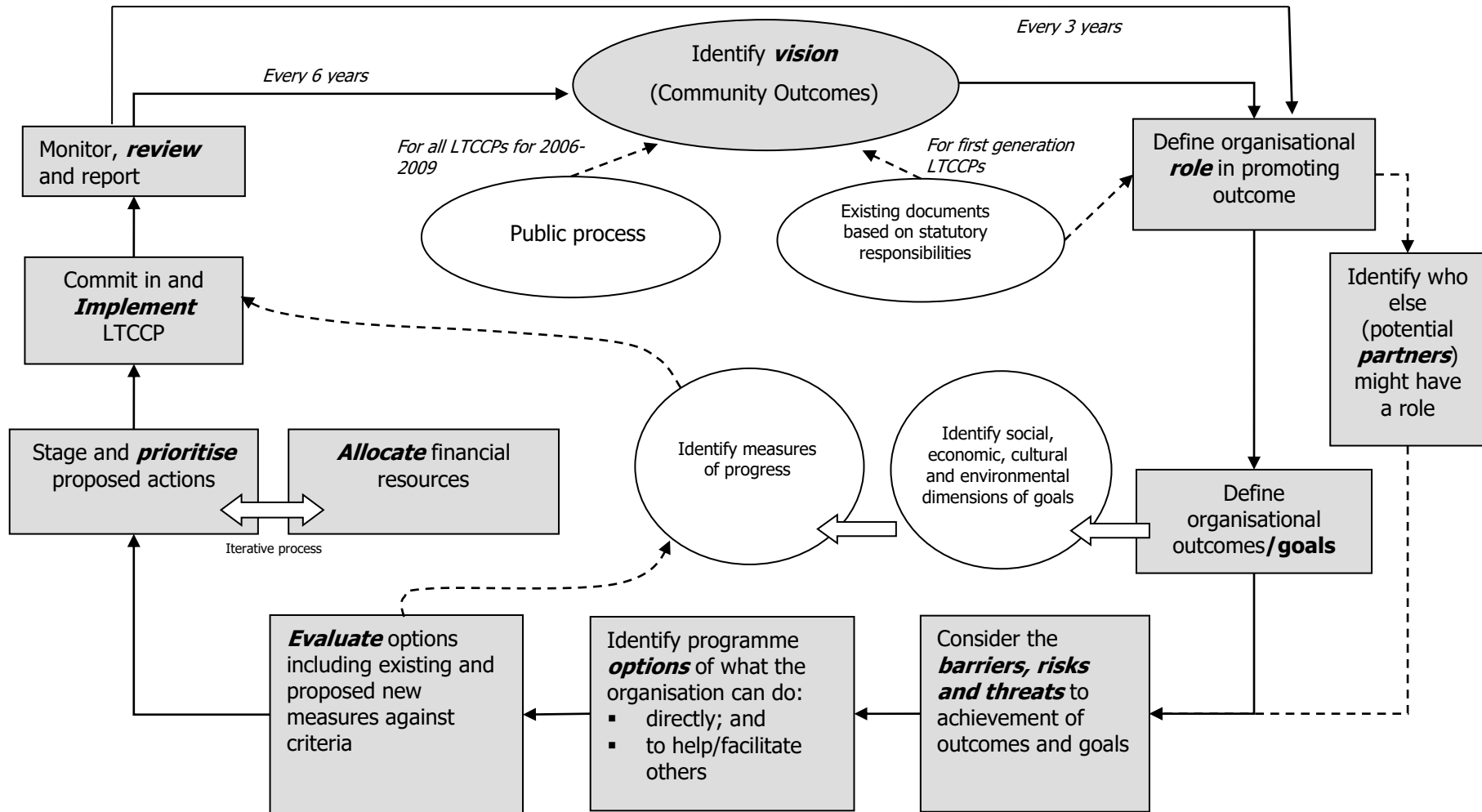
Strategic planning for biodiversity management within this statutory framework is like strategic planning for any other issue.

The process involves the standard policy/planning process of setting an objective, identifying and evaluating options, implementing the preferred action or method and reviewing progress. However, taking a genuinely strategic approach involves a few additional steps. The process is illustrated in Figure 1.

Although figure 1 depicts the strategic planning process as a disciplined and sequential process, in practice it seldom flows smoothly from one step to the next. Inevitably the process moves back and forward before arriving at the final set of plan provisions.



Figure 1 – The LTCCP Strategic Planning Process



4 The Strategic Planning Process and Biodiversity

The Local Government Act 2002 prescribes key steps in the strategic planning process (through the requirement to identify community outcomes and by requiring the inclusion of particular provisions in LTCCPs) but it leaves other parts of the strategic planning process to the discretion of individual local authorities.

Best practice on how to undertake the process will evolve over time. The most important point to remember is that LTCCP does promote and anticipate a strategic planning approach and that practitioners will be required to flesh out the skeletal framework provided by the Act with steps that ensure contents of the LTCCP are rationally planned and properly thought through.

Good Practice Tip

Providing appropriately and effectively for biodiversity within an LTCCP requires local authorities to adopt a genuine strategic planning approach to identifying outcomes and responses.

Avoid the temptation of simply including in the LTCCP the local authority's historical approach and existing commitments (or some a random collection of someone's "good ideas"). Instead do the strategic work in advance of the LTCCP process to ensure that what goes into the LTCCP is coherent, properly targeted and co-ordinated with the contributions of others.

The following sections provide guidance on how a strategic approach might be applied to biodiversity by suggesting:

- how biodiversity might be thought about in each of the planning stages; and
- what the scope of "typical" biodiversity provisions might be.

4.1 Community Outcomes

Community outcomes are simply that – outcomes desired by the community². For all mandatory LTCCPs (those prepared for the year beginning 1 July 2006 and later periods) a local authority must help to identify these outcomes through a process of its own design. Outcomes identified must be included in the LTCCP.

Having biodiversity identified as a community outcome would obviously be useful for those seeking to ensure biodiversity gets recognition through the long term planning process.

Whether biodiversity is so identified will depend on the priorities and circumstances of the particular community. However, it is highly likely that the information extracted from communities in consultation processes will depend to a

² *Outcomes* (results "on-the-ground") should be distinguished from *outputs* (being services, programmes of other "products" that might contribute to the achievement of an outcome).



large extent on the information provided to the community as part of the consultation process.

Good practice tip

When consulting on community outcomes, ensure that the community is given appropriate information about:

- The state of biodiversity in the region or district (including, if appropriate, the historic rate of decline, the number of threatened species the loss of vegetation cover and the loss in naturalness and resilience of the vegetation that remains).
- A vision of what biodiversity might be like and the contribution it would make to community well being.
- Local authorities' statutory role in biodiversity management, including the past level of effort.

4.2 Defining Roles

One of the distinctive characteristics of the LTCCP is that acts as a *community* planning framework not just a *council* planning framework. On few issues will the local authority be the sole contributor to a community outcome.

On most issues, including biodiversity, the local authority will be one player involved in promoting the outcome. Other stakeholders may be making a specific but important contribution. It is important that the strategic planning process identify who is involved in delivering the outcome and the respective roles of each party. This understanding should assist to:

- identify opportunities for collaboration between stakeholders;
- appropriately co-ordinate and sequence programmes and strategies;
- ensure there is no wasteful duplication of effort;
- reveal if there are particular roles that are not being fulfilled; and
- avoid future disputes about who is responsible for what.

When planning for biodiversity, other key stakeholders may be:

- The Department of Conservation.
- National conservation trusts and foundations such as the Queen Elizabeth II National Trust, the National Wetlands Trust and the Forest Restoration Trust, the New Zealand National Parks & Conservation Foundation.
- National not-for-profit organisations working on issues closely related to biodiversity including, notably, the New Zealand Landcare Trust.
- National membership driven environmental groups such as the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society.
- Any local or regional conservation trusts and other organisations.
- Local community groups such as streamcare or land care groups.



- Other local authorities in the region.
- Landowner groups and major landowners (e.g. forestry companies).
- Iwi.

The LTCCP process should seek to involve these stakeholders to:

- Understand their priorities and work plans over the planning period.
- Understand the limitations and barriers they face.
- Develop a foundation for future working relationships.
- Help foster a uniformity of purpose.

The local authority's role may be described either in a narrow functional sense focusing on, for example, a local authority's mandatory role under the RMA or the Biosecurity Act. Or, it could decide to assume a *strategic leadership* role that locates the organisation at the centre of local efforts.

It is often the lack of strategic leadership that is the root cause of poor biodiversity outcomes and councils are encouraged to adopt this role where they can provide the leadership required.

Good Practice Tip

Local authorities should define their role in biodiversity management as more than the sum of their individual (legislatively mandatory parts). Biodiversity needs strategic leadership and local authorities are encouraged to adopt this role outside public conservation lands.

Local authorities should be mindful of others' mandate and expertise and might be define their role as follows.

To co-ordinate, contribute to and build community capacity for the maintenance and enhancement of indigenous vegetation and the habitats of indigenous species outside of public conservation lands.

Local authorities which assume a strategic leadership role in biodiversity should consider the value of identifying a *partner in strategic leadership*. This may be an individual or organisation within the community to who acts as a "champion". This partner should be capable of:

- engendering public confidence in the relevance and worth of the cause;
- fostering goodwill and collaboration between organisations;
- demonstrating that efforts are well grounded and realistic;
- energise community action.

4.2.1 Local Authority Outcomes or Goals

It is important to note that community outcomes need not necessarily be the *local authority* outcomes. Indeed, a local authority need not even agree with outcomes identified.



As noted earlier, local authorities must include in the LTCCP a description of the how the local authority will contribute to furthering community outcomes. In practice, local authorities can do this by identifying (a) their own outcomes or goals (being subset of community outcomes), and/or (b) specific objectives and targets; and/or (c) a programme of specific actions to be undertaken.

Thus, a local authority may still identify biodiversity as a local authority outcome or goal even if it is not an explicit outcome of the community. It would useful to show how the maintenance of biodiversity contributes to an community outcome but this is not a necessary prerequisite for including biodiversity as a *local authority* outcome.

As noted earlier, maintaining biodiversity is a *mandatory* function of both regional councils and territorial authorities. Community outcomes do not mean that mandatory functions drop off the priority list. Recognising biodiversity as a council outcome or goal of an LTCCP demonstrates policy integration and consistency since biodiversity is a significant issue in most local authorities' resource management plans.

Research has shown³ that one of the principal barriers to better biodiversity management is simply that the issue is not accorded priority in local government strategic and budget planning processes.

One way to help overcome this barrier is to highlight the arguments relevance of the issue as described in section 2 of this guide. In particular, it is useful to identify the multiple benefits (economic, social, environmental and cultural) of biodiversity actions. Further ideas for raising internal commitment to biodiversity as described in Text Box 6 – “What do I do when there is no support for biodiversity within my organisation?”

Good Practice Tip

Even if the maintenance of biodiversity hasn't expressly been identified as a community outcome, identify it as a *local authority outcome* (or goal) of the LTCCP.

Identify all economic, social, environmental and cultural benefits that will flow from the attainment of the biodiversity goal and/or the implementation of the proposed actions.

Remember that the biodiversity goal identified can't be less ambitious that what may be included in a district or regional plan or policy statement. Having regard to the functions of local authorities under the RMA a local authority goal might be as simple as “*the maintenance of biodiversity*”.

Text Box 3 - Case study: Greater Wellington

³ See for example, *A National Policy Statement on Biodiversity - The Necessity for Specific Elements*, Gerard Willis, April 2002 and *Implementing the Biodiversity Protection Provisions of the Resource Management Act, A Review of Progress to Date*, Victoria Froude, May 1997.



Twelve *Community Outcomes* were identified for the Wellington Region. One of these was “A diversity of nature”.

Greater Wellington (Wellington Regional Council) decided to develop its own outcomes to express where it sees its role in furthering the broad community outcomes.

Three objectives lay behind the identification of council outcomes. They were to (1) ensure core functions were recognised and accommodated; (2) help break the “silos” within the organisation and between an artificially strict distinction between the social, economic, environmental and culture; and (3) engage the public by outcome being imaginative and meaningful for the average person.

The 10 outcomes identified for the *council* include *Health Ecosystems*. All 10 outcome identified have (potentially) social, economic, environmental and cultural dimensions. This contrasts with the more common approach of identifying community outcomes in discrete social, economic, environmental and cultural terms.

4.3 Doing the SWOT

All strategic planning processes involve analysing *how* they can achieve the vision set. This typically begins by looking at the barriers that might exist to the achievement of the vision or outcome. Another commonly used tool is the identification of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (the so-called SWOT analysis).

No local authority will begin the LTCCP strategic planning process with a blank sheet. They will all be involved in biodiversity through existing commitments made under other statutory mandates. These actions may be of a policy, regulatory, operational or service delivery nature.

The purpose of the SWOT exercise is, to the extent that time and resources allow, *situation awareness* – taking stock of what’s happened in the past, what’s happening now and what’s likely to happen in during the planning period.

In the biodiversity context matters to consider in undertaking a SWOT analysis will including the following.

Strengths and Weaknesses

- *Information* available on the biodiversity of the region or district and its relative significance.
- *Relationships* with other key stakeholders such as the Department of Conservation, environmental groups and landowners.
- *Skills* both within the local authority and available in the community (including ecological skills and landowner and community relations skills).
- The *attitude* and understanding of land owners and the wider community.



- *Alignment* to biodiversity goals across the organisation so that all parts of the local authority consistent position on biodiversity.
- Available *funding* in the region or district for protection and restoration projects (both private and public).
- *District Plan* provisions and implementation practices including an appraisal of compliance and enforcement with rules and implementation of non regulatory methods specified
- The adequacy of *regional pest management strategies* and their implementation.

Opportunities

- the roles and work programmes of other stakeholders in the community and potential for partnership arrangements to:
 - secure increased levels of effort in a cost effective way;
 - transfer knowledge and experience; and
 - build relationships and alignment of commitment.
- Availability of central government (and private sector) funding for biodiversity projects.
- The human and technical resources of the region or district including educational and research institutes.
- Any untapped commitment from individuals and organisations with the will to act but who require information, direction and financial and technical support.
- Incentives and expectations of many private sector stakeholders including in particular the tourism, agriculture and forestry sectors.

Threats

Threats identified will include the *physical threats* to biodiversity including the potential for:

- Land clearance:
 - for exotic/plantation forestry;
 - pasture conversion;
 - firewood production
- Vegetation grazing
- Livestock grazing
- Plant pest invasion
- Animal pest invasion
- Disturbance, edge effects and fragmentation from:
 - subdivision and human settlement;
 - recreational activities



- Pollution (discharges to water and air)
- Over-use of species (from commercial and cultural harvest)
- Drainage/diversion of wetlands and water courses
- Disturbance to places of temporal or seasonal value.

The consideration of these threats should look at the *actual* risk not the theoretical possibility. It should, however, include consideration of the potential for these threats to occur over the planning period and what events or circumstances might trigger the risk.

Threats will also include the risks to being able to deliver quality, co-ordinated biodiversity management these will include (for example):

- Potential for breakdown in relationships between stakeholders;
- Perverse behaviour by landowners and others; and
- Lack of public support for sustained public expenditure.

Many of the threats noted above will already be addressed by local authorities and others to some extent. The SWOT analysis should try to stay focused on what circumstances might change to produce new threats in the future.

Good Practice Tip

Undertaking a SWOT analysis is important but should only be undertaken to the level of detail necessary to identify options for future action.

SWOT analyses need not be highly detailed but you do have to know what has worked, what hasn't - and why. You also need to have thought about what the future might bring and how that might effect what you need to do.

4.4 Identifying and Evaluating Potential Actions

Broadly speaking, there are 2 types of actions a local authority might identify as a result of the SWOT analysis. It may either commit (or recommit) to do certain actions itself or, it may seek to form *partnerships* with other stakeholders.

Options identified for evaluation should include:

- existing actions (that is, those activities the local authority has a history of undertaking and/or a commitment in other policy or operational documents such as district plans, regional pest managements strategies of reserve management plans)
- actions committed to but not implemented (this may include commitments made to non regulatory methods in resource management plans which have not previously been funded).
- new and additional actions to address particular weaknesses or threats or to capitalise on opportunities identified through the SWOT analysis.



The actions considered for inclusion in a LTCCP will depend on each local authority's SWOT analysis and the level of commitment and resource available. However, the following framework provides some guidance on the scope of actions that might be appropriately considered.

- *Governance*

Governance related actions might include:

- ✓ the establishment of local or regional *biodiversity forums* that provide the means for stakeholders to exchange information and ideas and co-ordinate actions.
- ✓ developing *memoranda of understanding* and similar written agreements with key partners (such as the Queen Elizabeth II National Trust and the Department of Conservation) detailing how the agencies will work together.
- ✓ Commitment to *shared services agreements* with public agencies – particularly between regional councils and territorial authorities for biodiversity services provided (such as landowner advisory services, monitoring and research or a regional biodiversity co-ordinator).

- *Information and Research*

- ✓ Commitment to complete or update surveys of indigenous vegetation using recognised methodologies.
- ✓ Assessment of the relative biodiversity values of identified sites.
- ✓ Research practical and cost effective management techniques.

- *Supporting community action*

- ✓ Establishing and facilitating landowner and community groups (such as landcare, streamcare and bushcare groups or project-specific groups).
- ✓ Providing grants for community projects.
- ✓ Providing practical “how to” guides for community groups.

- *Supporting individual landowner commitment*

- ✓ Funding and advisory support for property management plans incorporating biodiversity objectives.
- ✓ Encouragement for, and financial assistance with, securing covenants of indigenous vegetation through the QEII Trust or other means.
- ✓ Development and implementation of schemes recognising landowner commitment through the provision indigenous plants, fencing materials and pest management tools at low cost to the landowner.



- *Raising community appreciation*
 - ✓ Prepare and implement a communications and education strategy aimed at maintaining an enhancing biodiversity.
 - ✓ Develop and promote conservation demonstration projects that are accessible for people to visit.

For a more comprehensive agenda of possible regional council actions see the Environment Waikato experience described in Text Box 5.

Good Practice Tip

Before determining the appropriate mix of actions to include in the LTCCP it is useful to ask the following questions.

- ✓ Are the *critical* risks/threats identified addressed by the actions proposed (this may involve prioritising the threat identified)?
- ✓ Do the proposed actions offer the best “*bang for the buck*” (i.e. could scarce resources produce better results if they were expended differently?)
- ✓ Are the actions *sufficient* (actions might be well targeted and good value but are supplied at an inadequate level to make a difference)

Undertaking an honest evaluation of the adequacy of existing measures and potential efficacy of proposed new measures is the critical stage in the process and distinguishes a good strategy from a “collection of good ideas”.

4.4.1 Getting the right level of detail

There is no “model” LTCCP. The level of detail at which actions and targets are to be specified in the Plan is open to considerable discretion and will vary according to the drafting style and technique of individual plan drafters.

As a general principle, actions should be specified with sufficient detail that readers understand what the local authority proposes to do without removing the ability for local authorities to adapt programmes as experience is gained. Wherever possible, specific programmes should be referenced rather than open-ended commitments to “work towards” or “encourage” certain behaviours or actions by others.

4.4.2 Establishing targets

Detail is particularly useful in establishing how progress towards outcomes may be staged. Outcomes tend to be expressed in very general terms and are likely to be achieved only in the long term. It is recommended that interim and measurable targets be set as milestones to the ultimate outcome. This allows the community to assess, recognise and be motivated by progress made.

Targets may be established as outputs rather than outcomes. For example, possible targets might include:

- ✓ Establishing 5 functioning bushcare groups by 2006



- ✓ To have undertaken 10 riparian restoration projects re-vegetating at least 5 km of riparian margin by 2007.
- ✓ Achieving legal, landowner endorsed, protection of a further 20 sites of high conservation value by 2007.
- ✓ Achieving effective possum control on all sites of high conservation value by 2008.

The articulation of staged targets also allows for *prioritisation* of proposed actions. Prioritisation will be critical, particularly where resources are scarce.

Text Box 5 – The Environment Waikato Biodiversity Action Plan

In 2002 Environment Waikato assembled a Biodiversity Action Plan. The Action Plan aims to:

“Maintain and enhance the indigenous biological diversity of the Waikato Region by the alignment of the organisation’s activities and through collaboration with regional partners”

In essence, the action plan sets out an extensive list of actions that Environment Waikato will undertake promote better biodiversity management in the region. The action plan is notable because it is a genuinely corporate document in the sense that the actions identified involve virtually all parts of the organisation. The actions plan will therefore act as a strategic management tool that builds unity of commitment across the organisation.

4.5 Implementation

In many ways, the LTCCP is simply an expression of commitment. For it to be effective it needs to be implemented through linkages to other policy, regulatory, operational and funding plans and programmes.

The implementation of the biodiversity provisions of the LTCCP will rely on a range on mechanisms that sit outside of the LTCCP itself. These might include:

- *Local governance statements*

Local governance statements are required by the LGA 2002. These statements must include a number of provisions (see section 40 of the Act). However, some of the more important contents of governance statements will be the description of what the local authority expressly acknowledges at its functions, responsibilities and activities.

The LGNZ “*Know How*” guide provides some sample text that includes reference to “environmental management”. However the term environmental management is not an altogether useful one for describing what the authority does since (a) it encompasses a number of discrete activities and (b) it includes functions, responsibilities and activities that are not within the purview of local authorities (being activities undertaken by central government agencies).



It would be more accurate, and therefore preferable, if local governance statements were more specific in describing a local authority's role in environmental matters. Importantly this includes specific mention of local authorities' role in maintaining biodiversity.

Explicit public acknowledgement of this role would be a significant demonstration of local leadership and an important step in the implementation of the biodiversity provisions of LTCCPs.

- *Departmental work programmes*

Many local authorities have formal departmental work programmes of one kind or another. These programmes detail what each department or section will do over the planning period (usually an annual cycle). They provide a management tool to allocate responsibilities and hold individuals and individual teams accountable for particular tasks. They also provide the mechanism through which prioritisation occurs.

Giving effect to an LTCCP means identifying specific tasks associated with delivering the actions specified and allocating these tasks appropriately within the organisation.

Thus, the commitments made in the LTCCP need to be translated into specific work programmes (where they exist).

- *District Plan, regional plans and regional policy statements*

The relationship between the LTCCP and plans and policies prepared under the RMA is complex.

On the one hand, it is clear that the RMA will provide many of the (regulatory) tools that a local authority may use to promote community outcomes. On the other hand, it is equally clear that the LTCCP must authorise the use of non regulatory methods to achieve aims of district and regional plans and policy statements.

LTCCPs and resource management plans are therefore interdependent. In theory, LTCCP is intended as the high level strategic document that drives the actions and priorities of the local authority. However, local authorities also have mandatory roles and objectives under the RMA. They also have *existing commitments* made in the context of preparing and finalising their district and regional plans and policy statements. As noted elsewhere in this guide, district and regional plans should have a significant influence on the biodiversity provisions of a LTCCP as they represent an existing compact with the community.

It is however clear that to provide an integrated policy framework the biodiversity outcomes set in LTCCPs must be linked to and synchronised with the direction and provisions of district and regional plans. A LTCCP should not



commit to do *less* than that agreed to in a district or regional plan. But it may decide to do more.

- *Parks and reserves strategies and management plans*

Strategies for the acquisition and management of parks and reserves represent a direct opportunity for the local authority to show leadership in the good management of areas with conservation values. They also provide potential for demonstration projects as reserves are developed and enhanced.

- *Pest management strategies*

Regional pest management strategies (RPMSs) must play a major role in giving effect to LTCCP biodiversity provisions. If the biodiversity outcomes of an LTCCP are to have real strategic value, RPMSs will need to recognise plant and animal pest risks to conservation values and include appropriate provisions (subject to the provisions of the Biosecurity Act).

- *Human resource strategies*

Human resource strategies will need to ensure they provide appropriate focus on recruiting and retaining expertise relevant to achieving the local authority's biodiversity outcomes.

- *Funding policies*

Under the LGA 2002 local authorities must prepare financial and funding policies. These may include policies on the remission of rates. Rates remission may be part of the LTCCP strategy and would need to be reflected in the financial and funding policy.

- *Community relations plans*

Community and public relations plans and strategies are relevant for two reasons. First, they need to reflect local authorities' accepted role in biodiversity. Second, the way that role is communicated may have a significant influence on local authorities' effectiveness. Strategies need to be mindful of the often tense relationships that exist between stakeholders and ensure that communications build trust and support and don't undermine it.



Text Box 6 – What do I do if there is no support for biodiversity?

There are a number of strategies that may be used to build interest and support for biodiversity within a local authority.

- ✓ Work with communications staff to provide opportunities for politicians to be associated with successful community or council biodiversity conservation projects. Use media articles, speeches, press releases and to link good news to elected members.
- ✓ Seek recognition of efforts (for example the Ministry for the Environment's Green Ribbon awards or other awards made by public and private organisations).
- ✓ Recommend key politicians attend conferences or seminars where biodiversity is being discussed.
- ✓ Highlight the *multiple benefits* associated with promoting biodiversity projects in the community.
- ✓ Link biodiversity to *wider policy frameworks* adopted by the council. For example ensure biodiversity is recognised as a key dimension of sustainable development.
- ✓ Consider holding a *biodiversity forum* involving staff politicians and external stakeholders.
- ✓ Report to politicians on potential funding support – especially the government's Biodiversity Condition and Advice funds.
- ✓ Once interest has been raised make sure the momentum is continued by regularly reporting on progress and future opportunities.

Build a constituency of support at staff level by:

- ✓ Forming a *biodiversity group* made up of all those council personnel whose roles and responsibilities affect biodiversity (This may include planners, reserves planners/managers, biosecurity staff, and community relations personnel).
- ✓ Develop a common strategic understanding of the local authority's role in biosecurity.
- ✓ Appoint a group member as the *biodiversity co-ordinator*.
- ✓ Obtain senior management endorsement for the group and the role of the co-ordinator.
- ✓ Consider developing a biodiversity strategy or in house action plan (see Text Box 5).
- ✓ Investigate how the group might best have an input to the LTCCP development by engaging with the strategic planners (or other personnel tasked with developing the LTCCP early in the process).



✓ If you need help contact *Action Bio-Community* the LGNZ/government capacity building project team at www.biocommunity.org.nz Further useful background information can be found at www.biodiversity.govt.nz.

