

The proposed Regional Policy Statement is now open for submissions until May 25.

By writing or presenting a submission, you are providing the Council with your own insights, observations and opinions about this proposed Regional Policy Statement and the form it should take.

Submissions need to be relevant, clear, concise, and accurate. Consider listing your submission's recommendations or summing up its main points. It's important to note that submissions are not votes. Their significance comes from their content, not from the number of submissions expressing similar views.

Any person may make a submission on any part of the proposed Regional Policy Statement. The closing date for submissions is **4.00 pm, Monday 25 May 2009**. Please address your submission to Freepost 118112, Proposed Regional Policy Statement, Greater Wellington Regional Council, PO Box 11-646, Wellington 6142.

Please note that under the Resource Management Act all submissions must be made available for public inspection. If you are making a submission as an individual, Greater Wellington will consider removing your personal details if you request so in your submission.

What happens next?

After the closing date for receiving submissions, council staff will make available a summary of submissions and invite people to make further submissions. Once the Council has received all submissions, staff prepare a report on submissions and make recommendations to a hearing committee on whether they should be accepted or declined. All submitters will be sent copies of the staff report and invited to a hearing at least 10 days before it is held. Submitters have the right to be heard at the hearing in support of their submission.

The hearing committee, made up of regional councillors, will hear submissions on the Regional Policy Statement. Following the hearing, the committee makes decisions on all submissions and submitters are notified of these.

The process does not end there. Submitters can appeal the Council's decisions to the Environment Court. Following mediation and/or a hearing, the Environment Court makes its decisions on any appeals. The Regional Policy Statement then goes back to the Council for final approval and is made operative.

Where can I see the full document?

You can download the proposed Regional Policy Statement from www.gw.govt.nz/rps. It is at all public libraries in the Wellington region, and can be obtained free of charge from the Regional Council Centre, 142 Wakefield Street, Wellington.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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REGIONAL POLICY STATEMENT REVIEW NEWSLETTER

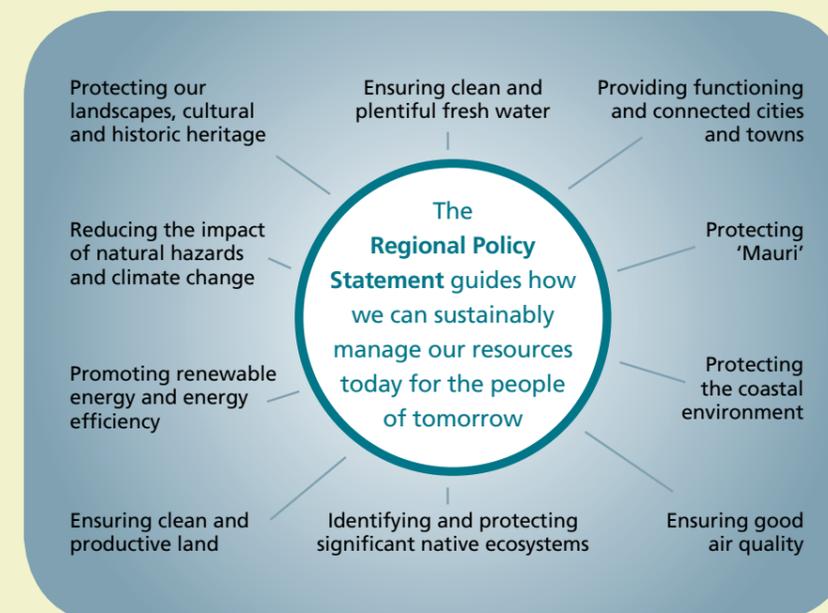
No 6: March 2009

Proposed Regional Policy Statement now open for submissions

After three years of development, collaboration with other councils and public feedback on the draft document released last year, the proposed Regional Policy Statement is now open for submissions until 25 May 2009. It's important that we continue to have feedback on the proposed Regional Policy Statement before it is finalised, so we encourage you to take advantage of this submission period.

Greater Wellington's proposed Regional Policy Statement, a policy document prepared under the Resource Management Act 1991, provides a framework for sustainably managing the region's natural and physical resources.

It highlights regionally significant issues with our land, air, water, soil, energy and ecosystems, including issues of significance for iwi, and sets out what needs to be achieved (objectives) and how it will be achieved (policies and methods).



Sustainable management in the Resource Management Act encapsulates the idea of environmental sustainability. In other words, natural and physical resources can be used and developed by people and communities today to provide for their economic, social and cultural wellbeing, and health and safety, but in such a way that ensures that their children, grandchildren and great grandchildren will also be able to use them.

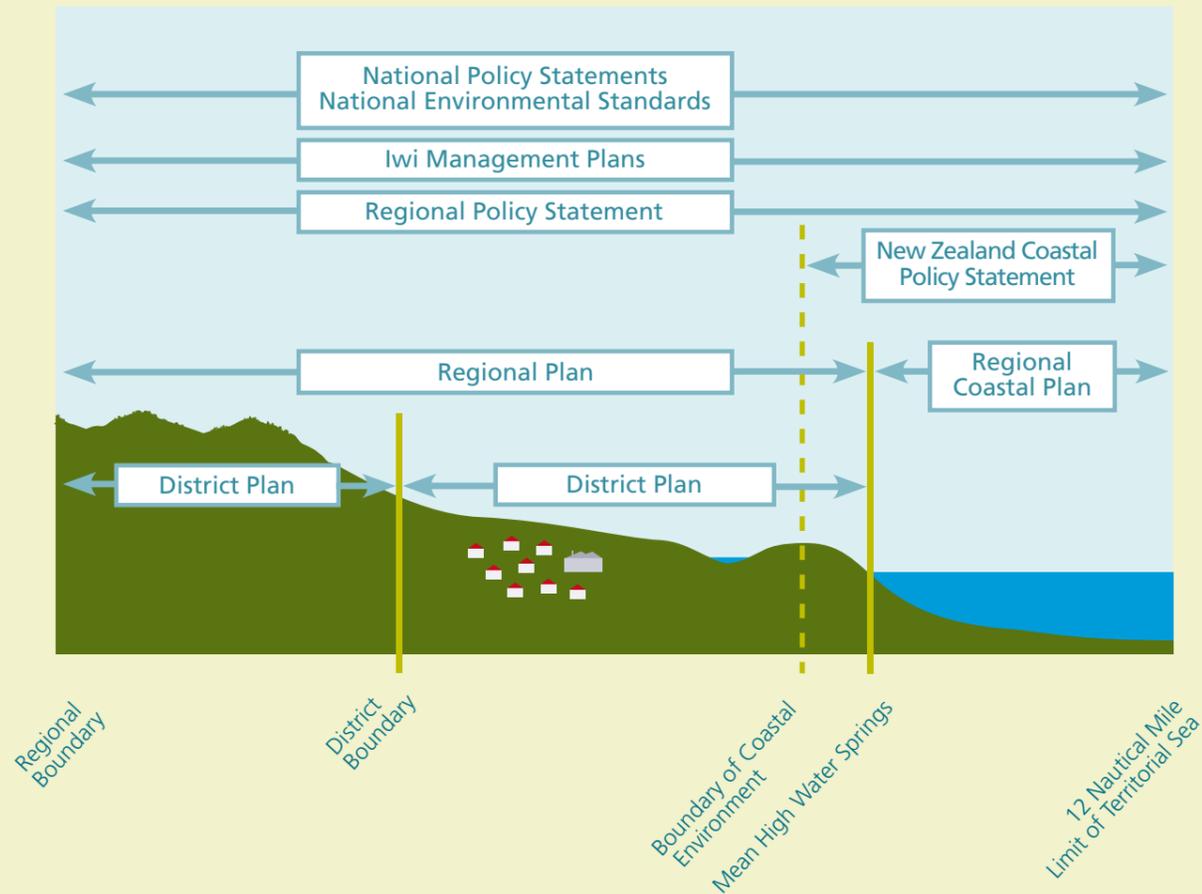
Sustainable management is neither anti-development nor anti-environment. It is about striking a balance where environmental, social and economic objectives can be achieved - but not at the expense of one another. It is about respecting the environment and recognising our dependence on it, protecting the mauri (life force) of the ecosystem for the common good.

Like the Regional Land Transport Strategy and the Wellington Regional Strategy (a sustainable economic growth strategy for the region), the proposed Regional Policy Statement is a key policy document assisting Greater Wellington and the region's city and district councils to achieve the community outcomes in our long-term council community plans. These include outcomes such as a healthy environment and community, a connected community, quality of life and a prepared community.

This is the second regional policy statement (the previous was made operative in 1995) prepared for the Wellington region under the Resource Management Act. A lot has been learned about effective resource management since the adoption of the Act and this experience is reflected in the policies in this proposed Regional Policy Statement, which are more specific and clear as to what is required, when and by whom.

Because city, district and regional plans must give effect to a regional policy statement's objectives, policies and methods, the document has a direct bearing on what individuals, businesses and councils can do on their land and also what they must do to protect and enhance their environment.

Resource management policy and planning framework



What's different from the draft?

The proposed Regional Policy Statement follows publication of a draft document last year. Greater Wellington received 107 submissions on the draft and these have resulted in a number of key changes in the proposed Regional Policy Statement:

- Appendix 1, which listed regionally significant suites in the coastal environment, has been replaced by a new coastal environment policy requiring district and regional plans to avoid development in areas in the coastal environment with high natural character. There is also a new policy which outlines factors that district and regional planners should consider when they assess natural character.
- The regional form section now clarifies that a compact, well designed and sustainable regional form means that development should occur within existing urban areas, or in accordance with a district's development strategies/frameworks. There is a corresponding section on the form that rural development should take.
- A new policy requiring Greater Wellington to control the discharge of stormwater to land and/or water where stormwater contains ecotoxic contaminants (for example, heavy metals).
- A new policy requiring Greater Wellington to address the effects of fine particulate discharges (for example, smoke from domestic fires) to improve peoples health in locations where the national environmental standard for air quality is exceeded.



To read the submissions on the draft document, as well as officers' comments and recommendations, see www.gw.govt.nz/rps. and follow the link to the page on "What has happened so far".