



DRAFT REGIONAL POLICY STATEMENT

May 2016

Chapter 10

Coastal and Marine Environment

Takutai Moana

I.10 Significant Resource Management Issues: Coastal Environment

The coastal environment is an essential part of Whakatū Nelson's character and identity and is of significance to Whakatū Nelson's tangata whenua Iwi¹ and to Nelson's wider community. The coastal environment includes the coastal marine area (from Mean High Water Springs (MHWS) out to 12 nm (nautical miles)) and an area inland defined in accordance with the criteria set out in national policy (NZCPS Policy 1). The extent of the coastal environment is shown in Map *.

This chapter focuses on the coastal environment unless specifically stating that it focuses only on the coastal marine area. All other chapters also contribute to the management of the coastal environment.

Issue 10.1 Need for recognition of the cultural affiliations of tangata whenua iwi of Te Tau Ihu with the coastal environment, including ancestral lands, waters, sites, waahi tapu, and other taonga.

The eight iwi of Te Tau Ihu have identified their historical interest in coastal resources through their Treaty of Waitangi settlement process and have Statutory Acknowledgement over the coastal marine area. Statutory Acknowledgement recognises the particular cultural, spiritual, historical and traditional association of an iwi with a site or area.

The Whakatū tangata whenua Iwi have strong historical and cultural associations with the coastal environment, including tikanga and maatauranga for sustainable management, gathering and utilisation of resources. Coastal and estuarine waters and associated resources are strongly linked to land activities, such as access, pa, fishing stations, urupa, waahi tapu, waka landing, net repairs and fish drying, while the maritime areas were important for navigation, transport and trading routes.

Cultural associations with the coast are significant for Iwi and careful management in accordance with kaitiakitanga and tikanga Māori is important for future management of Nelson's coastal resources.

¹ Recognised in the Treaty Settlements for Te Tau Ihu which provide for Statutory Acknowledgements for the eight iwi of Te Tau Ihu, over the coastal marine area.

Issue 10.2 Natural character, natural landscapes and other natural features can be adversely affected by inappropriate use and development.

Natural character, landscapes and other natural features all contribute to Whakatū Nelson's coastal character, ecosystem functioning and the amenity that the community enjoys. Natural character, landscapes and features have been affected by past activities and development. Future subdivision, use and development, as well as cumulative changes, can contribute to a loss of these characteristics for future generations. Measures to address these issues are outlined in greater detail in the Landscape section of this RPS.

Issue 10.3 People's enjoyment of and access to the coastal environment can be adversely affected by inappropriate subdivision, use and development.

The coastal environment is an integral part of people's lives in Nelson. Through port, fishing, tourism and aquaculture activities, the coastal environment is a significant contributor to the region's economy and is widely used for people's enjoyment and recreation. Port Nelson's status as a strategic infrastructural asset and the coast's potential as a source of aggregate is recognised in the Infrastructure and Energy section of this RPS. Development can increase access for some users, at the expense of others. Port Nelson and the associated marina have provided enhanced access to the coastal marine area for boat owners, and to some extent restricted more general public access along the coastal edge, for operational reasons.

With the exception of the port area and parts of the coastline that are inaccessible due to their topography, there is reasonable public access to the coastal edge, by virtue of it residing largely in public ownership. However, even here the quality of the experience can be compromised by disturbance from adjacent land uses, particularly infrastructure such as arterial routes, the airport and utilities, or by physical obstacles, such as coastal protection works. The characteristics and features that contribute to people's enjoyment and appreciation of the coastal environment, the allocation of space to activities, together with the life-supporting capacity of the coastal marine area, need to be managed carefully, to ensure a healthy and enjoyable coastal environment for the future. While public access and appropriate activities do need to be provided for, there will be some operational areas where public access and activities need to be restricted. There will be other instances in which the quality of existing public access can be enhanced.

Issue 10.4 Marine water quality and healthy marine ecosystems are important for the sustainability of the coastal marine area.

Marine ecosystems are reliant on a healthy marine area, and good marine water quality is critical to the health of those ecosystems and for people's economic, cultural and social activities. While most of Whakatū Nelson's coastal marine area has good water quality, there are some areas where this is not the case.

Some sources of contaminants can be traced to activities in the coastal marine area, such as boat and facility maintenance. However, most of the threats to the marine environment result from activities 'upstream' of the environment, including, for example, sedimentation and discharges to fresh water associated with urban and rural areas and associated land use and development. While land-based sediment inputs into the wider Tasman Bay over the last two decades have not been exceptionally high, re-suspension of previously deposited sediment is a stressor on marine ecosystems. Sedimentation is more pronounced, and has greater impact on eelgrass and shellfish communities, in estuarine locations such as the Haven. Estuarine ecosystems are also vulnerable to eutrophication from nutrient enriched freshwater inflows. While bacterial contamination is generally low in coastal waters, peaks can occur after rainfall, and is generally associated with uncontrolled, untreated run-off from land and cross-contaminated stormwater discharges, rather than consented point sources.

While the bathing water quality of key recreational locations (Tahunanui and Monaco Beaches, Cable Bay and Atawhai) remains good, discharges of stormwater, sewage, sediments and other contaminants to the coastal environment can adversely affect the health of marine ecosystems, fisheries and the mauri of the water, as well as people's recreational activities and shellfish gathering. Measures to address these issues are outlined in greater detail in the Land and Freshwater sections. Marine biodiversity is dealt with in detail in the Biodiversity section.

Issue 10.5 The vulnerability of Whakatū Nelson's coastal edge can be exacerbated by sea level rise as well as inappropriate activities on the land and/or in the marine area.

The coastal edge is dynamic and is affected by natural processes such as erosion and inundation, as well as by existing development that does not enable the coastal edge to naturally migrate inland. Unless there is integrated management across the line of mean high water springs (MHWS) there is a risk that landward and marine activities could conflict with each other and/or with the natural processes and functioning of the coastal edge. Human activities have modified the coastal edge through

activities such as seawalls and development located close to the sea. In some instances this has increased the risk from coastal hazards, while in others it provides for access between the land and sea, such as in port and marina areas. Climate change, through sea level rise and the increased severity of climatic events, is likely to exacerbate risks of coastal erosion and inundation.

R.10 Resource Management Responses: Coastal Environment

Objectives

Objective 10.1 Recognise and provide for tangata whenua's kaitiaki role in managing coastal resources in accordance with tikanga Māori.

Objective 10.2 Protect the values that contribute to outstanding natural character, outstanding natural landscapes and other significant natural features, and ensure use and development maintains or restores natural values in other areas.

Objective 10.3 Recognise and reconcile the competing social, economic and cultural values that are ascribed to the coastal environment, while providing for uses and development that by their nature must be located in the coastal environment.

Objective 10.4 Maintain or enhance the quality of marine waters to a level that ensures healthy marine ecosystems and safety for people's recreational activities.

Objective 10.5 Protect the integrity, functioning and resilience of coastal physical and ecological processes, from the adverse effects of inappropriate subdivision, use and development.

Policies

Policy 10.1 In conjunction with Whakatū Nelson's tangata whenua Iwi, restore the health of the coastal marine area as a food basket, identify places of significance and value to Iwi, and control activities sensitive to those places.

Explanation

The Council and Iwi of Te Tau Ihu have noted that the health of the coastal marine area is not as good as it could be in all areas. A focused

project is underway for the Waimea estuary and further restoration activities may be required in other areas, including Nelson Haven.

An approach to identifying and protecting Māori cultural heritage is outlined in the Heritage section of this RPS.

Policy 10.2 Ensure that any use or development avoids adverse effects on the characteristics and values that contribute to areas of outstanding natural character, outstanding natural landscapes and outstanding natural features.

Explanation

Refer to Landscape Policies 1, 2 and 3 where the Council's approach to identifying and protecting outstanding natural landscapes, features and coastal natural character are set out in more detail.

Policy 10.3 Enable people to enjoy the coastal environment for its natural values, amenity values and recreational opportunities, in a way that ensures safe maritime operations and provides quality access to and along the water and foreshore.

Explanation

The coastal environment is an important part of people's recreation and enjoyment, for a variety of passive and active opportunities. Access to and within the coast is therefore a fundamental part of enabling use of coastal areas. Access alone is insufficient; it must enable a quality experience. It is also important to ensure that the use of space within the coastal marine area can occur in a safe manner that recognises there are different requirements for different activities.

Policy 10.4 Identify use and development activities that are appropriate in the coastal environment and ensure that:

- **Any activity in the coastal environment has regard to relevant objectives and policies in other sections of the Nelson Plan**
- **The safe and efficient operation of the port, airport, marina and mooring activities is enabled**
- **Activities which have a functional need to locate in the coastal marine area and utilise space efficiently and in a manner that protects the safety of others and recognises the public nature of the space**
- **Sustainable aquaculture and recreational activities are provided for, in appropriate locations**

- **Māori customary activities are provided for**
- **Consideration is given to off-setting adverse environmental effects through environmental compensation**

Explanation

The coastal marine area is public space, and use and development can result in conflict and competition for space. This policy provides criteria to assist with determining appropriate uses and/or development in the coastal marine area and provides a framework for the regulatory approach taken in the Nelson Plan. There is limited demand for aquaculture in Whakatū Nelson apart from land based opportunities at Wakapuaka and potentially Delaware Bay. Further work needs to be undertaken to determine in what forms and locations aquaculture may be able to be accommodated in the coastal marine area. Appropriate use and development in the landward part of the coastal environment is addressed in other sections of the Nelson Plan.

Policy 10.5 Maintain or enhance water quality by managing discharges of sediments and contaminants.

Explanation

Coastal water quality standards and related discharge standards are a mechanism for ensuring the values and uses found in the receiving catchment (i.e. coastal waters) are managed appropriately. They can also be used to identify areas where degraded waters need to be enhanced. As Whakatū Nelson’s rivers and streams ultimately discharge into coastal waters, the quality of those waters can also be affected by discharges upstream. Council’s approach to setting freshwater values and limits is outlined in the Freshwater section of this RPS.

Policy 10.6 Recognise the dynamic natural functioning of the coastal edge and ensure that natural features and characteristics are protected, enhanced or restored, to maximise the resilience of the coastal edge from coastal hazards and to provide for future public access and amenity.

Explanation

Restoring and enhancing the coastal edge is a fundamental means of integrating the coastal marine and coastal land areas and recognising that natural character, landscape and other natural features are interlinked within the coastal environment. This also recognises the important role of the coastal edge in providing for public access, amenity and contributing to the management of coastal hazards, such as erosion and inundation.

Policy 10.7 Promote an integrated management approach to activities in the coastal environment by ensuring that:

- **Statutory protections are recognised and adverse effects avoided**
- **Joint working opportunities with other regulatory agencies are supported**
- **Other relevant objectives and policies are also considered**

Explanation

The need for integrated management of the coastal environment is identified as a cross-boundary issue in the Introduction to the RPS. This policy recognises the need to work together with Iwi of Te Tau Ihu and agencies such as the Department of Conservation, the Ministry of Primary Industries, Tasman District Council and Maritime New Zealand to ensure that management responses are co-ordinated and are as effective as possible. This acknowledges that in some instances there is limited knowledge about the coastal areas and working together as issues arise ensures that a range of inputs are considered and the effectiveness of responses is maximised. It also recognises that the RMA is one tool amongst others that relate to management of the coastal environment.

Further, in managing resource issues and assessing the effects of resource consent applications that cross MHWS, there are other policies such as those relating to freshwater, hazards, access and subdivision which must also be considered. The Freshwater section, for example, sets out a policy framework for addressing the effects of activities on both streams, rivers and the ultimate receiving environment - the coastal marine area.

Methods

Regulatory methods	Who	Policy link
Nelson Plan		
Include area-specific controls in the coastal marine area to provide for the operations of Port Nelson, Nelson Airport and the marina.	Council	Policy 10.3 Policy 10.4
Include controls (e.g. management areas, consent requirements, assessment criteria) on activities within the coastal environment to manage their adverse environmental effects.	Council	Policy 10.1 Policy 10.2 Policy 10.3 Policy 10.4 Policy 10.5
Map areas with significant biodiversity, landscape or seascape values and place controls on activities seeking to locate there.	Council	Policy 10.2 Policy 10.3 Policy 10.4
Include coastal and freshwater quality values and limits	Council	Policy 10.5

Regulatory methods	Who	Policy link
Include provisions relating to the creation of esplanade reserves and strips.	Council	Policy 10.6
Bylaws		
Administering the Navigation Safety Bylaw.	Council	Policy 10.3 Policy 10.4
Other Statutory Policies, Standards and Plans		
Management plans for reserves with a coastal edge.	Council	Policy 10.6 Policy 10.7

Non-regulatory methods	Who	Policy link
Partnerships and agreements		
Liaise with and involve tangata whenua, Iwi, the Department of Conservation, relevant organisations and community groups, with the aim of achieving integrated management of coastal resources.	Council	Policy 10.1 Policy 10.7
Work with other agencies which have other statutory responsibilities in the marine area, including Department of Conservation (e.g. marine reserves), Ministry for Primary Industries (e.g. fisheries issues), Tasman District Council and Maritime New Zealand (e.g. shipping issues).	Council	Policy 10.7
Monitoring and information		
Monitoring and information gathering, including development of cultural indicators.	Council and tangata whenua Iwi	Policy 10.1
Monitoring and reporting on recreational bathing water quality in coastal locations (Nelson Haven, Tahunanui Beach, Monaco Beach, Cable Bay, The Glen).	Council, Nelson-Marlborough District Health Board	Policy 10.5

Anticipated environmental results

Anticipated Environmental Result	Link to policy	Indicator	Data Source
The values accorded to the coastal marine area by tangata whenua Iwi are not compromised.	Policy 10.1	Cultural indicators	Monitoring and reporting against indicators Ongoing engagement and feedback from tangata whenua Iwi
The quality of resources in the coastal marine area are maintained or enhanced.	Policy 10.5	Coastal water quality meets or exceeds limits set.	Reporting on recreational bathing water quality
	Policy 10.1	Significant areas are protected through use of marine protected areas, taiapure and mahinga mataitai.	Review of marine protected areas

Anticipated Environmental Result	Link to policy	Indicator	Data Source
Coastal edge environments are publicly accessible and resilient to future sea level rise.	Policy 10.3 Policy 10.5 Policy 10.6	Areas available for public access are not reduced.	Coastal access surveys
	Policy 10.6	Areas protected by dune plantings, or otherwise under restoration, increase.	Coastal vegetation surveys
	Policy 10.6	The network of esplanade reserves or access strips increases.	Property records GIS / aerial records Resource consent and subdivision records
	Policy 10.6	Landowners are provided with appropriate information about coastal inundation and erosion risk.	Landowner surveys
	Policy 10.6	Adaptation actions are identified for public infrastructure.	Outcomes of shoreline study
Effective integrated management of the coastal environment.	Policy 10.7	Consent applications which cross into other jurisdictional responsibilities are dealt with consistently and seamlessly.	Resource consent records Permitting records under other jurisdictions
	Policy 10.7	Opportunities are taken to work together with other parties.	Examples of partnerships, MOUs, co-ordinated effort
	Policy 10.7	Other documents such as reserve management plans align with Nelson Plan policies for the coastal environment.	Review of relevant documents

Principal reasons

Whakatū Nelson's tangata whenua Iwi identify strongly with the coastal marine area and are intimately concerned with its present state. Whakatū Nelson's coastal marine area is the ultimate receiving environment and as such its condition is strongly influenced by the way in which land and freshwater in 'upstream' environments are managed. Concern over the effects of land management and stormwater discharges on coastal waters were identified through initial public feedback on the direction of Whakamahere Whakatū. In addition, both the landward and seaward components of the wider coastal environment are influenced by the way in which development on the coast is managed. Public access can be affected by development on the coastal edge. Regionally significant

infrastructure, including Port Nelson, is necessarily situated on the coastal edge and its operational needs need to be provided for. The inter-connectedness of the land and coastal environments demands a set of integrated responses across Whakamahere Whakatū; hence coastal issues are also addressed in other sections.