

## Land and Water Forum engagement meeting Gisborne, 2 March 2011

**Venue:** Gisborne District Council, Rose Room, 15 Fitzherbert Street, Gisborne.

**Small Group Members:** Alastair Bisley (Chair, Land and Water Forum); Alastair Smaill (Auckland Regional Council); Bryce Johnson (Fish and Game); Chris Keenan (Horticulture New Zealand); Dean Stebbing (Tuwharetoa Māori Trust Board); Hugh Canard (Whitewater New Zealand); Kevin Hackwell (Forest and Bird); Lachlan McKenzie (Federated Farmers); Peter Whitehouse (Water New Zealand); Tony Petch (Environment Waikato).

**Officials:** Kerry King (Land and Water Forum), Alastair Patrick (Land and Water Forum), Mark Sowden (Ministry for the Environment); Josie Beruldsen (Ministry for the Environment); Onur Oktem (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry).

**Facilitator:** Glen Lauder

**Attendees:** Approximately 43 people (excluding Forum members and officials).

### *Break-out group led by Kevin Hackwell and Alastair Smaill*

#### Responses and issues from round-table session

Interest in water	Comment
Forestry	Wants to understand how the recommendations will impact on forestry. Urban water needs to be metered to drive behaviour. Sees value in seasonally adjusted prices.
Coastal scientist	Wants improved water quality. We often focus on polluted waterways but what about the ones that aren't, e.g. Motu River? Will it stay that way?
Local government	Central leadership needs to come with funding. The community does not have the resources to address the issues. Water quality is a key issue that comes from erosion and deforestation (less than extraction). Concerned about the recommendation of consents for large infrastructure projects to be longer than 35 years. This may cause lost opportunities to review and adjust consents to changing environmental flows.
Sheep and beef farmer	The Gisborne District is different to other regions. Issues with water shortages and excesses in the region hit economically hard. Farmers don't get enough credit for what they do. A National Policy Statement or a strategy should have been done before councils started.
Dairy farmer/	Money and awareness is an issue.

Federated Farmers	<p>80% of water users are in town and need to take responsibility for water use. Farmers are aware of how much we use. Urban wastage needs to be addressed.</p> <p>Water tanks should be allowed.</p> <p>During the dry period last year \$3.5 billion in agricultural production was not generated. Value of water to agriculture is not well understood as a whole.</p>
Environmental scientist/ Recreationist	<p>Concerned about resourcing. Gisborne is a huge region with lots of degradation. We have no money to support non-regulatory measures.</p> <p>We cannot afford to get water bodies up to standards and targets.</p>
Vet/ Local Environment Centre	<p>There is a lack of overview from above. It would be good to get the National Policy Statement in place.</p> <p>Likes the recommendations on quality and quantity limits – need to be regionally specific and enforceable.</p> <p>Considers that limits as value judgments will vary. There is an implication that every water system needs to be used, however, we need to support water conservation orders, recognise the value of water not being used and that some water should be left alone.</p>
Retired veteran/ Forest and Bird	<p>A National Land and Water Commission is a good idea.</p>
Local Government	<p>We need to work together and keep decision-making at the local level.</p> <p>Regional councils are not equally resourced. Only has a team of three to deal with the entire region's water issues, although NIWA helps out a little. We need funding and science.</p>
Iwi/ Iwi and Hapū researcher	<p>Represents a view of hapū ownership and rights. On the East Coast iwi are the majority land owners with little say on water. There needs to be iwi representation on decision making bodies (in relation to land ownership).</p> <p>Waipa catchment is heavily degraded yet hapū don't have a voice in this. Scientific view wasn't evident in the report.</p>
Student/ Local Environment Centre	<p>Interested in hearing others' views.</p>
Fish and Game	<p>What happens next – we often get buried in the talking and recommendations – what will physically happen?</p> <p>Forestry gets a lot of grief but I find that the water clears a lot quicker where there's forestry.</p>
Local government	<p>One size does not fit all. Water issues in the region differ substantially from other regions such as Canterbury and Waikato.</p> <p>It is hard to compare the benefits of riparian planting in Taranaki to Gisborne – it is hard in Gisborne due to high erosion and keeping them stock proof.</p> <p>Currently meeting with iwi, stakeholders and council on a water plan.</p>

### ***Urban water issues discussed***

Iwi/ Iwi and Hapū Researcher	<p>Supports the idea of urban dwellers and landowners having water tanks – makes them more environmentally aware.</p> <p>We need to rethink our grey water system.</p>
Student	<p>Asked whether there are grey water recycling companies?</p> <p><b>Response from LWF:</b> There are a number e.g. a good system in Kapiti.</p>

	The wheel has been invented somewhere else so you can use best case examples.
Sheep and beef farmer	Raised concerns about the inefficiencies in the wastage of high quality drinking water. A lot of work to get this water to a high standard and 99% is not drunk. Why spend so much money on treating all water when only a small percentage is used for human consumption?
Fish and Game	Water tanks are a good idea – I'm sure Canterbury would appreciate them right now.

### ***Discussion on collaboration***

Forestry	Need to ensure it has full representation in a collaborative process, good way for people to take ownership of the decisions. The antagonistic approach is changing. A small community who know each other makes it easier. In the Netherlands, they have used collaboration for centuries – here it has been much more confrontational and we have a judicial system.
Forest and Bird	Science funding is important in collaboration. We need to be well educated.

### ***Break-out group led by Dean Stebbing and Bryce Johnson***

#### **Responses and issues from round-table session**

<b>Interest in water</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Forest and Bird	There is a lack of capacity due to low rating base. The East Coast Forestry Project (ECFP) is a privilege. There are good things happening here, but it takes time.
Forestry	Forestry is not a big user of water, but trees are a big interceptor of water. Is forestry potentially a problem in dry catchments? There is no conflict here; ECFP is useful for afforestation and preventing erosion. The Ngati Porou Treaty settlement may be useful.
Forest and Bird	New Zealand is different from Austria; is surprised about the New Zealand process. Austria have clearance measures.
Local government	The Gisborne District Council has no water plan and it is hard as they are missing much of the technical expertise. Using Enviro-Link functions to undertake science. First-in first-served worked for a long time, and there is not a huge demand locally, but we don't know the quantum of water available. Need to balance the wellbeings. We're now developing a fresh water plan and working with stakeholders. Has seen an increase in community involvement.
Unknown	There is not much demand, and we have had metering for some time. Land use has changed over time, which has changed irrigation needs. We still don't know much about the resource. Monitoring is good, but

	one day allocation will kick in.
Farmer/ Federated Farmers	Water arrives in irregular levels. We have highly erodible soils. Gisborne is a unique area, with a unique mix of land use. Hill country farmers don't use much water. We need to protect the resource and need to be careful about incentives.
Unknown	Water quality in streams is not good for swimming. Pastoral farming has an impact on water quality. The Forum is promising to remediate water quality. A flood scheme is being recommended, but who pays for it? There is currently a danger for our clean, green image. Likes the goals and principles of the report.
Farmer/ Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry	Imposing riparian planting is not feasible. The council is making a good effort, but with low resources.
Local government	Does acknowledge the poor water quality in the district. A change in the mindset of people is the key.
Unknown	Water quality problems will take time to fix.
Farmer/ Federated Farmers	Has seen a change in water availability with land use change; forestry absorbs lots of water.
Unknown	Need to justify water use and discharge; use Good Management Practice examples.
Forestry	Interested in the Forum process and the people around the table.
Farmer/ Federated Farmers	The report is high level; not sure how to make the recommendations fit at the local level, where the rubber hits the road is key.
Unknown	Likes the Land and Water Commission and more national directives.
Local government	The report's recommendations push toward a fresh water management regime. The Gisborne District Council structure is disjointed. Water quality is a big issue. The council's focus is on allocation and erosion control. The draft National Policy Statement and Forum have forced the council's hand. The view of the general public is that the system is working.
Farmer/ Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry	We need a cost effective model that is tailored to fit and achieves the right results.
Farmer/ Federated Farmers	The toolbox needs to be flexible.
Local government	Will the Resource Management Act be the path for change?

***Break-out group led by Lachlan McKenzie and Hugh Canard***

**Responses and issues from round-table session**

<b>Interest in water</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Local government	Team leader for resource consents and science capability.
Recreational user	Interested in water conservation and water quality.
Local government	Working on a water plan at the moment as well as the recreational and amenity flows now turned into ecological flows.

Forest and Bird	Very concerned about water quality and the big polluters.
Farmer	There is a lack of law; I have legal rights to a spring on my property and this right has never been considered.
Beekeepers' Association	Interested in the bee health in our country and food supply and the importance to our economy. If you are improving your water quality and development that means the native pollen process and protein sources need to be maintained. 40 years of erosion planting, a lot of them being the willows, and helping regional economy. What trees you can remove and what you cannot is a policy decision. Gorse is good but not good for farmers.
Recreational user	Have been involved in riparian planting with the District Council and Environment Centre in the city and my main interest is trying to improve water quality.
Farmer	Involved in water for 30 years and interested in the correct use of water as well as sharing, true allocation and storage.
Farmer	Representing property rights the primary reason to come here is that property rights are not considered in our consent process. During the final drawing of consents and easements written in these consents, I was not consulted and they wiped me out just like that. The issue is ten years in the making and the main reason for that is protecting the environment.
Farmer	The local issues are property rights and a lack of expertise in the District Council.
Local government	Catchment concept is really good. We have 107 water takes in our area and while it is not huge it is a lot of money to monitor with a small rate payer base. We are trying to provide a short consent period and involve the community; one size does not fit all and sometimes it requires a lot of money.
Farmer	I have a legal easement under my property and that has never ever been recognised and I have been disconnected from the process. It cost me personally three times the amount of my earnings in the High Court and Environmental Court, plus a lot of agitation in the process. It was a five year process. We are not getting anywhere.
Farmer	It is not fair when the easement holder is registered and there is a right to take the water and convey, but that legal document is thrown out of the window. The council totally dismissed it.
Farmer	There was the lack of an early water plan. It should have gone out for public consultation and a lot of this could have been sorted out with the collaborative processes. It is just unfortunate; Gisborne has other issues we should be looking at such as allocation and storage etc.
Farmer	Gisborne is too small so perhaps land and water planning should be combined with the Hawke's Bay.
Forest and Bird	District issues are important, but I consider what is more important is the big picture stuff. I certainly see this Forum working and we can do more than tidying up the dairying sector. We need to fix the big picture.
Farmer	You have got chaos when you don't get the law right.
Recreational User	Communities and businesses are trying to work together on riparian planting, but my focus is the city rather than going to the country side.
Recreational user	Since I have been back in Gisborne, I have seen little riparian planting.
Planner	We are in the early stages of having a freshwater advisory group. In the second

	<p>stage we are going to outline our proposed work.</p> <p>The farming community seem to be buying into the process; we had our upper Motu report done.</p>
Local government	<p>Again, we haven't incentivised the willow planting or other initiatives and we are not doing anything in that space at the moment. We are trying to encourage other things such as name and shame.</p> <p>In the Motu area, they have a lot of community planting. We don't have the intensive farming which nationally is where the pressure is.</p>
Beekeepers' Association	<p>Forestry is a big thing in this District. Have a look at the silting problem; in Canada, they devote their policy to planting and protecting the environment.</p>
Forest and Bird	<p>I get very annoyed when I see cattle grazing in the waterways; is there a law against that?</p>
Local government	<p>The water plan should address that and we need to raise the concern with the community.</p> <p><b>Response from LWF:</b> information coming back to me from farmers is that they are concerned about the wellbeing of the community.</p>
Local government	<p>The waterways we have are of very high value with lots of native fish and habitat. There are also highly erodible rivers; we have a range of catchments.</p>
Beekeepers' Association	<p>Silting is a problem and shellfish are badly affected.</p> <p>Question from LWF: Are tree plantings helping to resolve the issues?</p>
Farmer	<p>You cannot do much without money. Gisborne had preferential treatment and the city is now changing a lot for the better.</p> <p>Erosion is not going to change overnight. Planting with willows clarifies the water, keeps it cool and traps the silt.</p> <p>Gisborne should get started on the water plan process collaboratively but if you expect something to happen you need to take part in it and pay for yourself.</p>
Farmer	<p>If one person makes a mistake and if they have different hats, recognising the mistake is hard.</p>
Farmer	<p>Regional issues and water issues are long term. In districts you have different priorities like libraries etc and in regional councils you have different concerns and different types of people working on different priorities.</p>
Farmer	<p>A lot of the land is Maori trust and Maori land. There is multiple land ownership and you cannot get a loan if you have multiple ownerships on the land.</p> <p>My question is what is their long term vision? Better water quality and how they are going to pay for it or how they are going to store water and improve the economic uptake?</p>
Local government	<p>We encourage water storage and we have capacity for allocating more water; 60-70% is allocated.</p> <p>We have an advantage in that we can wait and see what other councils are doing; we are not scared of some of the issues here as other regions are.</p>
Recreational user	<p>Trout fishing is a popular tourist activity. Dairy farms upstream and the headwaters are a concern; we used to be able to drink the water.</p>
Local government	<p>Water quality isn't going down in the Motu area, but there are polluted areas in our district.</p>
Recreational user	<p>Lower areas are not considered important because there are not enough resources.</p>
Farmer	<p>Gisborne needs to attach to Hawke's Bay.</p>

	I am right against regulations. If you have people listening to what you are saying, you don't need regulations but if they don't, then you need to have a stick. But you need to work with people.
Farmer	We need to extend to Hawke's Bay area. There is lack of expertise and I am right behind the proposal.
Farmer	Dams, rivers and tanks – I am here to represent an aquifer. Aquifers don't seem to replenish and nobody is looking after them. Storage and the groundwater should be appreciated. <b>Response from LWF:</b> Interconnections are explicit in all of our discussions. They are part of the hydrological picture.
Forest and Bird	Aquifers can be finite.
Local government	We know more about our water than the Canterbury region does; we know what everybody is using but we don't know the interactions very well. My next question is what mechanisms are there for incentivising storage and what other mechanisms have you have considered? <b>Response from LWF:</b> We thought about a restoration fund but that is supposed to do a direct clean up of legacy issues. We are also saying collaboration is a must for storage schemes because they easily become contestable.
Farmer	Drive behind the Forum is the Resource Management Act not working or it is not applied properly. Look at the easements and legal rights. <b>Response from LWF:</b> The Resource Management Act has the capability to address the issues; we need to address behavioural change.
Farmer	The Resource Management Act has not been looked at and does not consider my perspective. The consent process is a joke. <b>Response from LWF:</b> Law should underpin the framework. Same with farming; there are a lot of rules and I don't read or know all of them. I know to use common sense and that is what I see here. That is why everybody has some problem with the Resource Management Act. If there is one sector you can say okay but it is about all the sectors and they are not happy. Officials need to look at this in a different perspective. What are the rules and should these be commonalities? First-in first-served is a Resource Management Act system for instance.
Farmer	It is not only the Resource Management Act but also the regional councils and district councils that are part of the problem.

***Break-out group led by Chris Keenan and Tony Petch***

**Responses and issues from round-table session**

<b>Interest in water</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Terawhiti Environment Centre	Is very happy to have heard of the collaborative process the Land and Water Forum has been engaged in. Usually acts as an advocate of the environment but knows of getting to a co-operative place with others also.
Federated Farmers	As a farmer the significant change for him has been the difference to water flows through his property because of surrounding forestry; it has brought decreased water flows, less stream ecology and now dries up several times a year where it never used to. This impact concerns him if forestry were pursued further in the

	area.
Local government	Is interested in the process of the Land and Water Forum as a fundamentally different approach. Notes also that a council would be concerned to invest in a collaborative process because of the doubt that at the end of it people involved may still end up in the courts. She also notes the limitations of council's resources and capacity which is good to have acknowledged by the Forum.
Crop farmer/ Irrigator	Would not want to see his water allocation diminished given the \$100,000+ investment he has had to put into it. In this region issues of scarcity only occur in some of the flat country. Because of cropping in early autumn some of the pressure on water is relieved at the same time it begins to get most scarce. Notes that Matawai has issues with water quality given there is more dairying in that area.
Farmer	Shares the above concerns. His personal view is that somewhere between water in the hand basin and water in the sea there are many un-delineated issues of ownership. It is the ownership of water that needs to be clearer. Also supports greater access of the public and anglers to waterways.
Member of Public	Personal concern over decline in water quality and barriers to recreational use.
Wastewater advisor	Is encouraged by the collaborative process of the Land and Water Forum. Commented that with 90% of the region as hill country and significant land use changes now, around a quarter of the arable area is in plantation forestry. This has helped erosion issues for many places.
Local government	Is interested in the governance recommendations of the Forum and notes that the experience as a unitary authority is very different to that of a regional council. Noted the effect of soils and geography on water quality, especially for their region which highlights the inapplicability of national standards to every area. Added that the Gisborne area is not significantly under pressure at this stage. Has most difficulty rationalising urban water service recommendations. Feels he struggles to see how in smaller communities water quality could be greatly affected by a different water services delivery model. Communities are diverse in values as well as in geography.
Land and Water Forum	Has heard similar discussions in other parts of the country. Added that the Forum is conscious of local variation between communities.
Ecology teacher	On the topic of forestry types, native forests are observed to have different hydrological implications than plantation forestry, without the sediment control, issues of harvesting, and a less demanding water reduction.
Farmer	Also agrees that issues with plantation forestry have not been resolved in the area such as harvesting too close to waterways.
Local government	Commented that the larger issue to this discussion is about defining what land uses are appropriate to which areas.
Farmer	Interested in knowing about regional priorities for water use, by what standards, and covering all values and uses.
Land and Water Forum	Commented that this region appears to have an opportunity to be proactive on water policies before there are pressures and conflict. Added that the significant Environment Court costs being faced by other councils should serve as an advance warning to the region.
Local government	Commented that a difficulty with being proactive on an issue is convincing the public it is a priority.



Crop farmer	Added that a parallel issue to land use change and water is that of emerging carbon farming and forestry which will also be a driver of land use changes. <b>Response from LWF:</b> Affirmed that with the greater issues facing us then this is good motivation to act early on.
Farmer	Added that when there is pressure on a system we will discover what our true priorities are due to having hard choices at hand. When it is not pressured we may not realise priorities of value to us.
Local government	Other 'big picture' costs would be taken into account in any good planning like energy costs and larger scale bio-fuel crops. The region would have to allow for potential change. Question to Forum: What did the Land and Water Forum discuss about land use? <b>Response from LWF:</b> Commented that it is essential to think about allocation, quality, and governance in tandem with land use.
Land and Water Forum	Question to group: How could a commitment to front-end collaboration be 'hard wired' into local processes?
Local government	Commented that first people must shift from operating in an environment of tension to communicating, allowing relationships to be built and to be open to ideas.
Land and Water Forum	Another feature is being able to tell each other's stories as they experienced a sign of coming into understanding of each other.
Ecology teacher	Question to Forum: What did they decide on standards and limits? <b>Response from LWF:</b> It is fundamental that communities get to choose with regard to their values, for instance whether they want to swim in their waterways or not.
Land and Water Forum	They acknowledge that a danger with long processes is getting into consultation fatigue and that this also occurs from the perspective of the council by going back and forward between stakeholders. He found that the structured process of the Forum helped combat this because it guided Forum members on what to communicate and when for instance; they did not start talking about solutions for nearly four months while they got to understand the issues and each other's views. Outside support may be able to help the council think about these things.
Local government	Added that in comparison to the scale of infrastructure, collaboration is not that expensive. There is just a need for commitment to be present.
Ecology teacher	Question to group: What is the possibility for setting local catchment plans and how could we create a fund for local rivers in the catchment?
Land and Water Forum	Their own discussion recognised the right of local regions to set their own standards and rules. Notes that there is a distinct difference between national direction nominating that standards must be set and local communities getting to set it themselves.
Local government	Commented that there are many community schemes and collective projects in the area that are working well of their own accord and would not want these things diminished by demanding water management plans over top of them.
Land and Water Forum	Noted that a plan does not have to have rules per se, the most important thing is having a defined strategy. How they put a plan into action is up to them.
Terawhiti Environment Centre	Asked how the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment could conduct extensive review with limited resourcing. <b>Response from LWF:</b> Noted this is an area where there was agreement from the

	whole group. The primary issue here is that monitoring happens which could come from a variety of bodies.
Land and Water Forum	Question to group: If we have to monitor, where should the finance for this come from? Especially where rating bases are unrelated to region size.
Local government	Noted there can be a deliberate trade off between the quality or veracity of monitoring and the coverage by using less costly techniques.
Land and Water Forum	Added there is a big picture of where to finance other services, for instance water treatment.
Farmer	Commented that good management practices do need to be incentivised for self auditing to be widespread.

### **Points raised in general discussion**

- What it may take for collaborative processes to occur locally
- Security of allocation
- Impacts of forestry

### **Final report back to the wider group**

Each LWF member reported back on a couple of points that struck them from the group conversations.

#### *Bryce Johnson*

- Geology and geography of the area makes its water issues special.
- Under-resourcing issues.
- How to operationalise the recommendations.
- Dissatisfaction with District Council.

#### *Kevin Hackwell and Alastair Smaill*

- Resourcing base issue – how to balance and assist.
- Urban issues – need for domestic water tanks and waste water recycling.

#### *Chris Keenan*

- Currently there is less pressure on the resource – advantages of acting now when the pressures are less apparent.
- Collaboration is already happening – the Schedule 1 process is hard and we need to recognise the benefits of collaboration.

*Lachlan McKenzie*

- Planning and tools are just getting started in the area, there may be opportunities to pick some off the shelf.

*Hugh Canard*

- Limited resources and funding.
- In the process of embarking on a water plan, could consider attaching to the Hawke's Bay.
- Willingness there, but need help – science, money, etc.