

Visions and Values in NPSFM 2020 – what are they and what do they mean

Overarching requirement to give effect to Te Mana o Te Wai

The vital importance of water – providing for the health and wellbeing of water first, before enabling other uses when managing freshwater.

Long-term visions

Values

Identified for an FMU

Environmental Outcomes

A desired outcome in relation to a value. Included as an objective in a Regional Plan

Target attribute states

What is measured/monitored in freshwater to determine whether an environmental outcome is achieved.

Environmental flows/levels

For water quantity – expressed in terms of the water level and flow rate. Also links to environmental outcomes for values.

Limits and/or Action Plans

Rules in regional plans to achieve target attribute states, including:

Take limits (e.g. how much water can be taken and when)

Limits on resource use (e.g. rules about the extent of a land-use, the amount of fertiliser that can be applied, or the amount of discharge allowed)

Long-term visions for freshwater

What communities and tangata whenua want their FMU*/catchment to be like in the future.

'Long-term visions for freshwater' must:

- **Be 'ambitious but reasonable'** – the goals they set and the timeframes for achieving them
- **Have a timeframe** – they are described as being 'multi-generational'
- **Be informed by the history of the FMU/catchment** and environmental pressures
- **Apply the Te Mana o Te Wai hierarchy** – i.e., the health and well-being of water first, second the health needs of people and the third the ability of people and communities to provide for their social, economic and cultural well-being.

How do long-term visions influence water policy:

Long term visions will be included as an '**objectives**' in Regional Policy Statements – as shown on the left, long-term visions will influence the approach to managing freshwater in regional plan.

The freshwater management objectives, policies and rules must be set to achieve the long-term vision for the FMU/catchment.

*Note: An **FMU** is a 'freshwater management unit' - it is the geographical scale at which freshwater management occurs in the NPSFM 2020. An FMU could be all or any part of a water body or water bodies and their related catchments. A part could be a specific site, river reach, water body, or part of a water body.

Values

Values associated with waterbodies are required to be identified by the NPSFM 2020

- Values are a reflection for **what is considered important about freshwater** – this may be characteristics about a waterbody, or what it provides
- The NPSFM lists four compulsory values which apply to every FMU: ecosystem health, human contact, threatened species and mahinga kai. A further nine cultural, environmental, social and economic values are listed which councils must consider
- Additional values can also be identified.

How do values influence water policy

For each value councils must set an 'Environmental Outcome' which describes the desired outcome for that value. 'Attributes' are how this is measured

The rest of the framework (see left) is about how Councils then measure progress towards achieving that outcome and the methods of doing so (i.e. making rules which set out limits for example nitrogen).

What does it mean for growers?

- Long-term visions and values **set the direction** for whether maintenance or improvement (and how much) of freshwater is required
- They will inform **how stringent limits and rules in regional plans** will be for different activities or contaminants
- Objectives in Regional Policy Statements and Regional Plans (which will reflect long-term visions and values) will be **assessed when considering resource consent applications** (if one is required)
- Meeting the long-term vision and environmental outcomes identified for an FMU/catchment **may require reduction in resource use or water take over time**
- **Growers will likely have to understand how their activity contributes** to the vision and outcomes identified for the FMU/catchment
- **Visions and values will form part of the 'catchment context'** which will need to be considered in a Freshwater Farm Plan.

Why growers need to have their say

Councils must notify their plans by the end of 2024. Many are consulting now to set long-term visions and values for individual FMUs and this will direct how limits are set.

It is important to be a part of shaping the vision and value for your FMU, as this will influence the limits that you will have to comply with