

Coastal environment



The coastal group of activities contribute to the following community outcomes:

- Air, beaches, ocean and land are all in a healthy condition
- Business and farming activities do not harm the environment
- People feel safe at all times
- Recreational needs are met

Environment Canterbury is responsible for managing the region's coastal water quality, including discharges to the sea, and coastal hazards. This is done through the implementation of the Regional Coastal Environment Plan. In carrying out these functions, Environment Canterbury has a duty to make available information about coastal water quality and the state of the coastal environment (Resource Management Act 1991). Environment Canterbury is also responsible for marine oil spill response (Marine Oil Spill Contingency Plan, Maritime Transport Act 1994). It is the lead agency for this work.

KEY ISSUES FOR 2010/11

Coastal water quality

Coastal waters are highly valued for recreation, fisheries production and as a wildlife habitat.

Although the majority of the coastal marine area has high water quality, in some areas human activities have led to water quality problems arising from sewage disposal, siltation, oil spills, discharge of contaminants and other impacts of land use.

Pressure on the coastal environment

Sensitive coastal environments are under increasing pressure from development, recreational use, climate change and cumulative effects on environmental quality. All of these can threaten the natural character of the coast and ecosystems. The main ports at Lyttelton and Timaru play a vital role in servicing the region's agricultural and manufacturing sectors. Development of aquaculture and management of the coastal environment requires regional councils to work in conjunction with central government agencies.

Coastal hazards

There is a history of coastal erosion and sea water inundation upon land along parts of the Canterbury coast, damaging property and threatening life.

There may be more events such as these in the future due to climate change, which may increase the frequency and severity of storms. In addition, sea level rise is expected to continue at an accelerated rate.

Regional consistency

There are nine district and city councils along the Canterbury coastline and there is a need to integrate coastal management. There is also a need to manage cross regional boundary issues in conjunction with government agencies and other regional councils to give effect to a wider national direction.

Which key issues have changed since the 2009-19 LTCCP?

No change



Effect on the four well-beings

There are benefits to environmental, social and cultural well-being as a result of preventing development within coastal hazard zones. However, the cost of complying with consent conditions for activities in coastal zones could adversely affect the economic well-being of some individuals and businesses.

Involving the community

- Coastcare groups operate in Akaroa Harbour, Lyttelton Harbour/Whakaraupo, Avon-Heathcote Estuary/Ihutai, Northern Pegasus Bay and South Canterbury and Ashburton River/Hakaterere Mouth.
- For 15 weeks over the summer the Avon-Heathcote Estuary/Ihutai Water Sampling Group and Environment Canterbury monitor the swimming water quality at the estuary and Christchurch beaches to identify risks to public health.

UNCERTAINTIES

For 2010/11, the following is uncertain:

- The content and impact of a revised New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement.
- The number of Tier 2 marine oil spills that may occur.

ASSUMPTIONS

For 2010/11, it is assumed that:

- Additional work will be required to give effect to the new NZCPS. Some provision has been made for this extra work in 2010/11.
- Some Tier 2 marine oils spills will occur and provision has been made for responding to them. (Forecasts are based on costs being recovered from the originator of the spill or the Maritime New Zealand Oil Pollution Fund.)

Which uncertainties have changed since the 2009-19 LTCCP?

The government has signalled that a National Environmental Standard (NES) for future sea level rise is to be developed. Because the document has yet to be released, the implications for the Canterbury region are not yet known.

Which assumptions have changed since the 2009-19 LTCCP?

No change.



OUR ACTIVITIES

Priority in 2010/11

The focus for this group of activities is implementing the Regional Coastal Environment Plan. There is also an emphasis on coastal water quality and hazards monitoring and investigations.

WE WILL UNDERTAKE THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES:

Investigations

Investigating coastal environmental issues.

Planning & consents

Developing policy for managing the coastal environment, assessing policy implementation and effectiveness, and processing resource consent applications.

Monitoring

Monitoring the impact of human activity and natural processes on the coastal environment.

Communicating, educating & advocating

Encouraging communities to protect and enhance the coastal environment.

Regulating

Managing discharges into, and impacts on, the coastal marine area through a combination of statutory and non-statutory approaches.

Our work programmes in 2010/11

Investigations

- Investigate coastal erosion and inundation.
- Investigate causes of water quality issues.

Planning & consents

- Ensure district and city plans give effect to or are not inconsistent with regional policies for managing the coastal environment. Work collaboratively with territorial authorities during District Plan amendments to ensure alignment with regional policy.
- Assess the impact of the new New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement on the Regional Coastal Environment Plan and other Regional Plans.
- Introduce a rolling programme of Regional Coastal Environment Plan changes involving Hazard Zones, coastal water quality standards and vehicle access.
- Process any private plan changes to the Regional Coastal Environment Plan.
- Process resource consent applications.
- Develop a framework for aquaculture management including giving effect to central government direction.
- Review the Tier 2 Marine Oil Spill Contingency Plan.

Monitoring

- Monitor ecosystem health.
- Monitor chemical and biological water quality.
- Monitor recreational water quality.
- Monitor the impact of land use on the coastal environment.
- Monitor access to and along the coastal marine area.
- Monitor coastal hazards.
- Monitor the wave climate.
- Publish results of monitoring programmes.
- Compile data for the Regional Environment Report.

Communicating, educating & advocating

- Support coastcare groups in Akaroa Harbour, Lyttelton Harbour/Whakaraupo, Avon-Heathcote Estuary/Ihuta, Northern Pegasus Bay and South Canterbury.
- Support new coastcare groups where their objectives contribute to community outcomes.
- Provide resource material for schools.

Regulating

- Maintain a team of trained personnel who are able to respond to and clean up, regional (Tier 2) and if required, national scale (Tier 3) marine oil spills.
- Advise on, and monitor compliance with, requirements of the Resource Management Act including resource consent conditions
- Investigate breaches of the Resource Management Act, including resource consent conditions, facilitate appropriate steps to remedy or mitigate adverse effects and take enforcement action where required.
- Report significant breaches of resource consents to council three times a year.
- Provide a Pollution Hotline Response Service.

What's changed in our work programmes since the 2009-19 LTCCP?

No change.

OUR LEVELS OF SERVICE

How Environment Canterbury's levels of service relate to the community outcomes

| Levels of Service Outcomes | Community | | | |
|---|---|---|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| | Air, beaches, ocean and land are all in a healthy condition | Business and farming activities do not harm the environment | People feel safe at all times | Recreational needs are met |
| 1 Providing information about coastal hazards | | | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 2 Improving water quality at swimming beaches | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 Improving coastal water quality | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 Working with territorial authorities | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 Maintaining a regional marine oil spill response capability, including clean-up and enforcement | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| 6 Authorising and monitoring the use of natural and physical resources | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

Environment Canterbury's contribution will be reported on each year in our Annual Report.

1 Providing information about coastal hazards

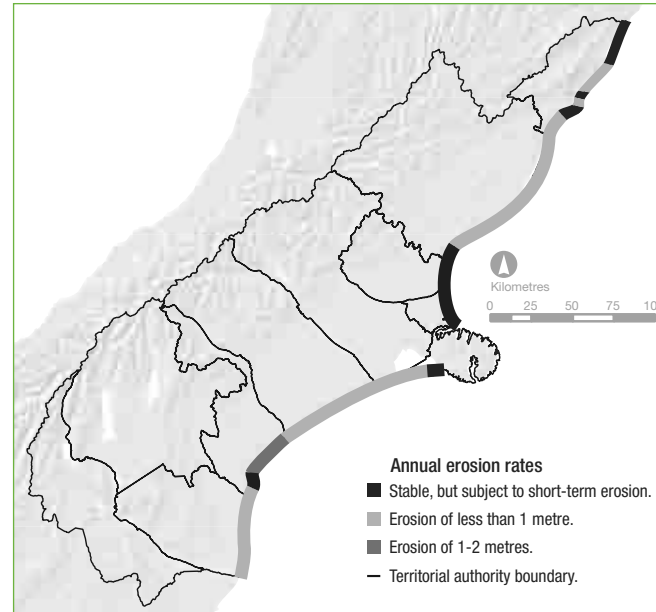
Measure

The percentage of coastal areas susceptible to coastal erosion and sea water flooding identified and mapped.¹

Target

100%

COASTAL EROSION RATES



2 Improving water quality at swimming beaches

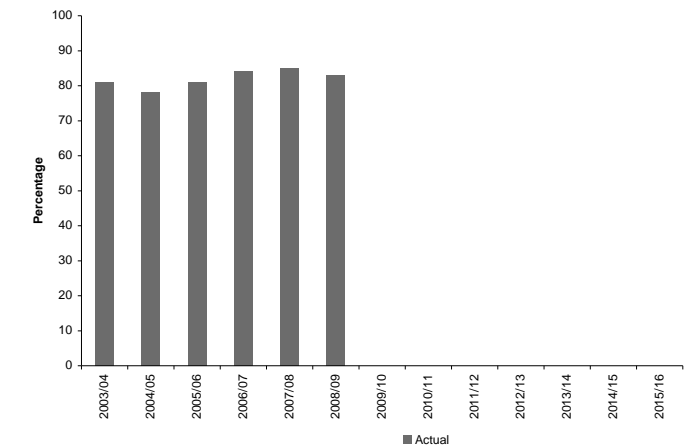
Measure

The percentage of monitored swimming beaches that are suitable for contact recreation,² all or most of the time.

Target

The percentage is increasing.

SWIMMING BEACHES SUITABLE FOR CONTACT RECREATION



Note: Estuaries, such as Avon-Heathcote/Ihuta and Ashley are included in the above measures. River mouths that are predominantly freshwater such as the Waimakariri and Kahutara river mouths, are included in the Water quality, quantity and ecosystems group of activities.

Source: Environment Canterbury.

3 Improving coastal water quality

Measure

The percentage of coastal water quality monitoring sites recording ammonia-nitrogen levels below 0.5 milligrams per litre.³

Target

The percentage is increasing.

¹ The Regional Coastal Environment Plan 2005 identifies coastal erosion hazard zones and areas of the coast that have been historically susceptible to flooding from coastal storm events.

² A site is considered suitable for contact recreation when it receives a "Suitability for Contact Recreation Grade" of fair, good or very good, as defined in the Microbiological Water Quality Guidelines for Marine and Freshwater Recreational Areas (2003). Grading is reassessed at the end of each summer bathing season, based on the most recent five years' individual sample results as well as an assessment of risk factors. This gives a grade that reflects likely water quality at any time, not just when samples were collected.

³ Based on the ANZECC 2000, the Australian and New Zealand Environmental and Conservation Council guidelines for fresh and marine water quality. Ammonia-nitrogen is formed during the breakdown of human and other animal excreta and can potentially be toxic to estuarine and marine life. ANZECC trigger concentrations of 0.5 mg/l ammonia-nitrogen provide protection for 99% of species.

4 Working with territorial authorities

Measure

The percentage of reviewed district and city council plans that give effect to or are not inconsistent with regional policies⁴ for managing the coastal environment.

Target

100% of reviewed plans (see table).

Note: Second generation plans will be developed by district and city councils by way of a plan review under section 79 of the Resource Management Act 1991. Environment Canterbury will review all second generation plans to ensure they give effect to the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement (CRPS) and are not inconsistent with the partially operative Natural Resources Regional Plan (NRRP), the associated variations and plan changes, or the Regional Coastal Environment Plan (RCEP).

| DISTRICT & CITY COUNCIL PLANS | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| District plan | First plan operative | Review of plan commences |
| Ashburton District Plan | 2001 | 2008 |
| Waimate District Plan | 2001 | 2011 |

5 Maintaining a regional marine oil spill response capability, including clean up and enforcement

Measure

Availability of a regional response capability that meets Maritime New Zealand's requirements.⁵

Target

Available at all times.

6 Authorising & monitoring the use of natural & physical resources

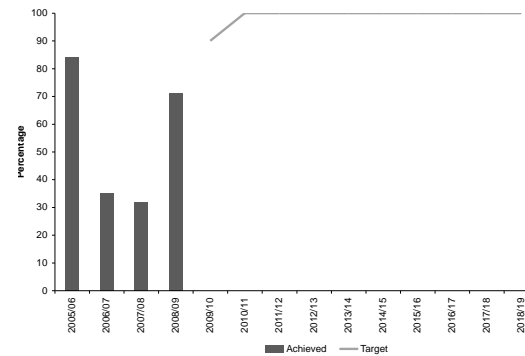
Measure 1

The percentage of coastal resource consent applications processed in compliance with the statutory time frame set down in the Resource Management Act 1991.

Target

100%.

PROCESSING OF APPLICATIONS



Source: Environment Canterbury Resource Management Act database.

What's changed in this measure since the 2009-19 LTCCP?

Targets adjusted to reflect statutory requirements.

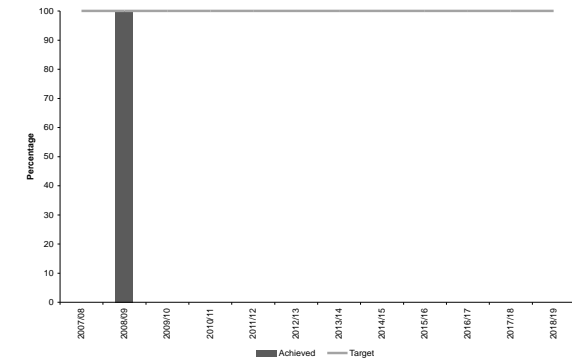
Measure 2

The percentage of coastal resource consents consistent with Resource Management Act 1991 requirements, including proposed and operative regional plan requirements.

Target

100%⁶ of independent audit.

CONSENTS CONSISTENT WITH RMA



Note: No historical data is available as due to the small sample size of resource consents audited, the data collected was not adequate to determine a result.

Source: Environment Canterbury.

⁴ The Regional Coastal Environment Plan 2005 outlines how Canterbury's coastal environment is managed under the Resource Management Act (RMA). The RMA requires all regional councils to have a regional coastal plan.

⁵ Environment Canterbury works in collaboration with Maritime New Zealand to maintain a regional oil spill response capability. This function is required under the Maritime Protection Rules and Maritime Transport Act 1994.

⁶ For measures 2, 3 and 4 data collection started in 2007/08.

⁷ Means non-compliance assessed as Grade 3 – Significant non-compliance or repeated minor non-compliance – moderate adverse environmental effects, or Grade 4 – Major and/or persistent non-compliance – serious or persistent adverse environmental effects.

⁸ Means re-assessed as Grade 1 – Fully complying, or Grade 2 – Minor non-compliance – nil or minor short-term adverse environmental effects.

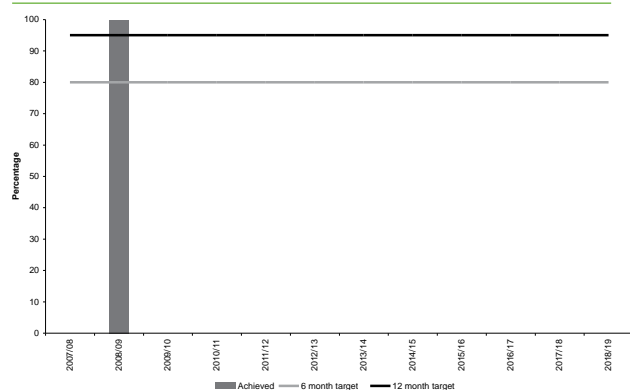
Measure 3

The percentage of significant or major non-compliance⁷ with coastal resource consent conditions resolved⁸ (no further action is required).

Target

80% are resolved in six months⁶, 95% are resolved in 12 months.⁶

CONSENT CONDITION NON-COMPLIANCE RESOLVED



Note: No data is available for 2007/08 as no non-compliances were able to be resolved due to all instances relating to off-site marine farms where a legislative change is required before resolution is possible.
Source: Environment Canterbury.

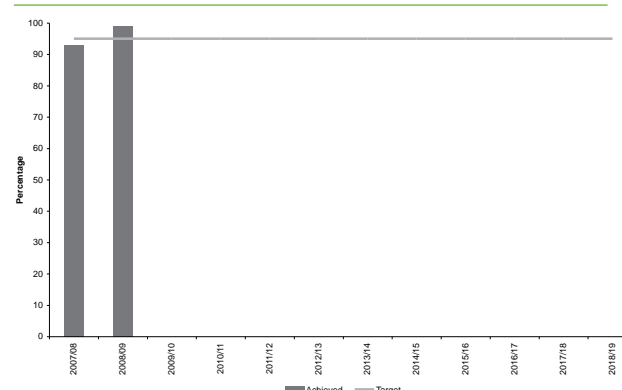
Measure 4

The percentage of environmental incidents resolved (no further action is required) for the coastal environment.

Target

95%⁶.

INCIDENTS RESOLVED



Source: Environment Canterbury.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

| \$000 | Annual Report 2008/09 | Annual Plan 2009/10 | LTCCP 2010/11 | Annual Plan 2010/11 |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| Total Expenditure | 1,863 | 2,007 | 2,218 | 2,095 |
| <i>Funded by:</i> | | | | |
| General rates | 1,557 | 1,667 | 1,873 | 1,796 |
| Targeted rates | - | - | - | - |
| User pays/Other | 164 | 326 | 330 | 290 |
| Grants | 98 | - | - | - |
| Interest | 11 | 14 | 15 | 9 |
| Total Income | 1,830 | 2,007 | 2,218 | 2,095 |
| Reserves Increase/(Decrease) | (33) | - | - | - |

Asset management & capital expenditure

There are no significant assets involved in this group of activities.

How this work is funded

For more information on source of funds and rationale for selection, see:

- Funding and Financial Policies 2009, Long Term Council Community Plan 2009-19 Part B.
- Rating information on pages 99-110.

What's changed in this financial summary since the 2009-19 LTCCP?

No significant change.