

Land



The land group of activities contributes to the following community outcomes:

- Business and farming activities do not harm the environment
- Rural land is mainly for farming and horticulture
- Recreational needs are met
- Water is in a healthy condition, clean and plentiful enough to support life
- Air, beaches and ocean and land are all in a healthy condition
- Environment, in general, is to be looked after

Environment Canterbury is responsible for controlling the use of land for the purpose of soil conservation and controlling land use for the purpose of maintaining or enhancing the quantity and quality of groundwater, surface water and coastal waters; and the maintenance and enhancement of aquatic ecosystems (Resource Management Act 1991). Environment Canterbury may develop regional parks (Local Government Act 2002). Environment Canterbury is the lead agency for this work and works in collaboration with land holders, industry groups, territorial authorities and other agencies.

KEY ISSUES FOR 2010/11

Impact of land use change

Canterbury is faced with rapid land use changes as a result of more intensive use of agricultural land and growth of the greater Christchurch metropolitan area. Agricultural land use intensification and urban growth has impacts on water quality while urban expansion reduces the availability of productive land. Managing the environmental effects of land use changes requires a combination of working collaboratively with agencies and individuals, supported by a statutory framework. The greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy takes a long-term outlook and provides an integrated approach to issues such as future housing, development of activity centres, areas of new employment and the impact of land use on transportation networks.

Impact of land management practices

Management of land use to keep water quality within environmental limits is a key platform of the Canterbury Water Management Strategy (CWMS). In many areas of the region, further growth in intensive land use under irrigation can only occur in a sustainable manner if there is a reduction in the nutrients lost from existing land uses. Good land management practices can prevent loss of soil, improve soil quality and help prevent degradation of water quality.

Recreational demand

Environment Canterbury holds extensive areas of reserve and endowment land associated with its flood and erosion protection work. There is increasing demand for outdoor recreation and leisure opportunities, particularly biking and walking. This is placing increasing pressure on natural areas, such as Lake Tekapo, and destinations close to population centres, such as the lower Waimakariri and Ashley rivers.

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

The launch of the CWMS in late 2009 is informing our activities in this portfolio. See page 83 and Appendix 1 on page 119 for more on the CWMS.



Effect on the four well-beings

Healthy land, clean water and maintaining the productivity of soils increases economic, environmental and social well-being.

Economic and environmental well-being is enhanced through maintaining soil quality and quantity.

Improving land management practices has benefits for environmental well-being, as a result of better water quality.

Allowing responsible use of land resources is essential for social and economic well-being.

Social and cultural well-being is enhanced through the provision of recreational opportunities at regional parks.

Co-ordinating urban development in the greater Christchurch metropolitan area has benefits for economic, environmental, social and cultural well-being.

Meeting the cost of complying with conditions for permitted and consented activities may adversely affect the economic well-being of some individuals and businesses.

Involving the community

- Community Parks Advisory Groups for the Waimakariri River, Lake Tekapo and Ashley/Rakahuri Regional Parks, provide local input into park planning and ongoing management.
- Volunteer outdoor organisations take part in annual wilding conifer control days, in areas such as the Waimakariri Basin, the Rakaia and Ashburton gorges and the Mackenzie Basin.
- Landcare groups promote improved land use practices.
- The public made 73 submissions on the soils chapter of the proposed Canterbury Natural Resources Regional Plan.

UNCERTAINTIES

For 2010/11, the following is uncertain:

- The effect that the Emissions Trading Scheme and any increased uptake of the Afforestation Grants Scheme could have on land use in Canterbury.
- The extent to which the final National Policy Statement on Freshwater Management will place controls on land use development.
- The effectiveness of the Primary Sector Water Partnership.
- Whether actual population and household growth will match Statistics New Zealand projections underpinning Proposed Change Number 1 to the Regional Policy Statement (this relates to the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy).

Which uncertainties have changed since the 2009-19 LTCCP?

No change.

ASSUMPTIONS

For 2010/11, it is assumed that:

- No provision has been made for additional work resulting from changed land use in response to the Emissions Trading Scheme and the Afforestation Grants Scheme.
- No provision has been for additional work arising from a National Policy Statement on Freshwater Management.
- That signatories to the Primary Sector Water Partnership will achieve their targets.
- Proposed Change Number 1 to the Regional Policy Statement is based on Statistics New Zealand's population and household projections.

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 on implementing the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy, progressing the proposed Canterbury Natural Resources Regional Plan, managing regional parks and supporting the land-use components of the CWMS.

WE WILL UNDERTAKE THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES:

Strategy

Developing regional strategies for Environment Canterbury's contribution to community outcomes for land.

Investigations

Investigating soils and land use practices.

Planning & consents

Developing policy for managing land, assessing policy implementation and effectiveness, and processing resource consent applications.

Monitoring

Monitoring the impact of land management practices.

Operations

Managing regional parks.

Communicating, educating & advocating

Promoting sustainable land use.

Regulating

Managing discharges onto or into land and ensuring compliance with resource consent conditions and the Resource Management Act 1991.

Our work programmes in 2010/11

Strategy

- Implement the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy in collaboration with the Selwyn and Waimakariri District and Christchurch City councils and the New Zealand Transport Agency.
- Resolve appeals on proposed Plan Change 1 to the Regional Policy Statement (Development of Greater Christchurch).
- In partnership with rural stakeholders, develop an enduring approach to the management of intensive land use consistent with catchment nutrient load limits.
- Respond to rural land issues by partnerships and sector agreements with the primary sector.

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

These work programmes have been adjusted to support implementation of CWMS.

Investigations

- Investigate soil quality and quantity and the role irrigation and other practices play in improving or degrading soil resources.
- Monitor and report using the land management index for soil aggregate stability.

Planning & consents

- Issue decisions on and progress the beds and margins of lakes and rivers, wetlands and soil conservation chapters of the Proposed Natural Resources Regional Plan through statutory processes.
- Ensure district and city plans give effect to regional policies for managing land. Work collaboratively with territorial authorities during District Plan amendments to ensure alignment with regional policy.
- Process resource consents applications.
- Assess the implementation and effectiveness of the Regional Policy Statement.

Monitoring

- Monitor rural subdivision activity land use change.
- Monitor soil loss from wind erosion.
- Monitor hill country vegetation cover and bare land.
- Establish a regional lysimeter network.

- Compile data for the Regional Environment Report.

Operations

- Operate and continue to develop the Waimakariri River and Tekapo Regional Parks.
- Establish the Ashley/Rakahuri Regional Park.
- Enhance biodiversity on land within regional parks.

Communicating, educating & advocating

- Work with community groups to encourage the adoption of sustainable land management practices.
- Work with community groups to improve land management practices affecting water quality in Living Streams catchments.
- Work with agricultural sectors on the integration of environmental management into farm and industry practices.
- Recognise outstanding examples of sustainable farming practice and water efficiency by supporting the Ballance Farm Environment Awards.

Regulating

- 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.
- Work with the dairy sector to reduce the rate of farm dairy effluent non-compliance.
- Report significant breaches of resource consents to council three times a year.
- Provide a Pollution Hotline Response Service.
- Process Land Improvement Agreements.

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

A new emphasis on developing strategy for management of intensive land use in partnership with rural stakeholders.

OUR LEVELS OF SERVICE

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

Levels of Service	Community Outcomes					
	Business and farming activities do not harm the environment	Rural land is mainly for farming and horticulture	Recreational needs are met	Water is in a healthy condition, clean and plentiful enough to support life	Air, beaches and ocean and land are all in a healthy condition	Environment, in general, is to be looked after
① Providing open space leisure and recreation opportunities on council owned land			<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
② Contributing to the implementation and monitoring of the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
③ Collecting and providing soil quality and erosion information to enable sustainable land management	<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"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
⑤ Working with land managers to achieve sustainable land management	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
⑥ Authorising and monitoring the use of natural and physical resources	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

① Providing open space leisure & recreation opportunities on council-owned land

Measure 1

Visitors' to McLeans Forest, in the Waimakariri River Regional Park, rating of the quality of their experience.

Target

80% of visitors surveyed are satisfied or very satisfied (on a scale of very dissatisfied, dissatisfied, satisfied and very satisfied).

Measure 2

Families' rating of the suitability of the McLeans Forest mountain bike track for family riding.

Target

80% of families using the track are satisfied or very satisfied (on a scale of very dissatisfied, dissatisfied, satisfied and very satisfied).

② Contributing to the implementation & monitoring of the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy

Measure

Progress on implementing actions in the Greater Christchurch² Urban Development Strategy and Action Plan 2007, for which Environment Canterbury is the lead agency.

Target

Actions are being progressed. For a full description of Environment Canterbury's responsibilities, see the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy and Action Plan, available at www.greaterchristchurch.org.nz.

③ Collecting & providing soil quality & erosion information to enable sustainable land management

Measure

The availability of soil quality and erosion information.

Target

See table below.

Year information available	Soil quality factors ³	% bare ground: hill & high country ⁴	Protection from wind erosion ⁵	Land cover & land use ⁶
2010/11	*	*	*	*
2011/12	√	√	√	√

* = Internal progress report prepared.

√ = Full technical report prepared.

Note: Loss of soil quality can result from: soil compaction, reduced organic matter, an imbalance in soil nutrients, a mismatch between soil pH in relation to land use, and changes to biological, chemical, and physical characteristics of a particular soil group. Soil quality thresholds for sustainable land management are being developed in association with the National Soil and Land Use Research Initiative and the regional council National Land Managers' Forum.

² "Greater Christchurch" includes metropolitan Christchurch, parts of the Lyttelton basin, Banks Peninsula, and the Selwyn and Waimakariri Districts between the Ashley and Selwyn rivers adjacent to Christchurch city.

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 policies for managing soil conservation.⁷

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) or are not inconsistent with the partially operative Natural Resources Regional Plan (NRRP), or the associated variations and plan changes.

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

5 Working with land managers to achieve sustainable land management

Measure 1

The percentage of areas with identified soil quality and erosion issues that are being addressed by resource care, community or industry groups.

Target

100%.⁸

Measure 2

The number of catchments involved in the Living Streams Programme.

Target

The number is increasing.⁸

³ Soil quality factors including organic carbon, aggregate stability, readily available nitrogen and fertility are monitored for Canterbury's major land uses across important soil groups.

⁴ The percentage of the area of hill and high country land with more than 20% bare ground.

⁵ The area receiving effective protection from wind erosion.

⁶ Dependent on receiving data from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Statistics New Zealand, and the Ministry for the Environment.

⁷ Soil conservation is defined (Resource Management Amendment Act 2003) as: "avoiding, remedying, or mitigating soil erosion and maintaining the physical, chemical and biological qualities of the soil".

⁸ These targets were introduced in 2009/10 so no previous data is available.

6 Authorising & monitoring the use of natural & physical resources

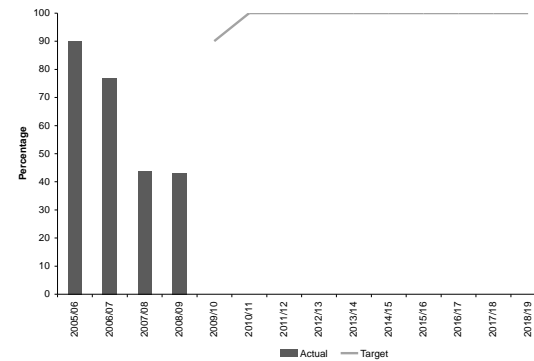
Measure 1

The percentage of land 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.

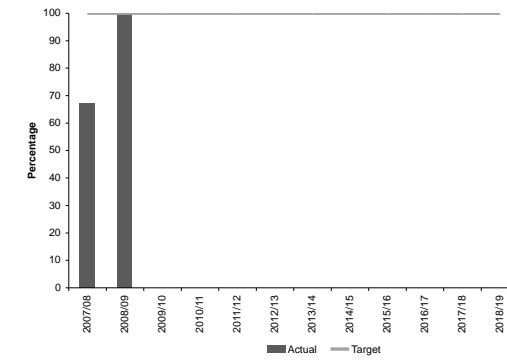
Measure 2

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

Target

100%⁸ of independent audit.

CONSENTS CONSISTENT WITH RMA



Source: Environment Canterbury.

Measure 3

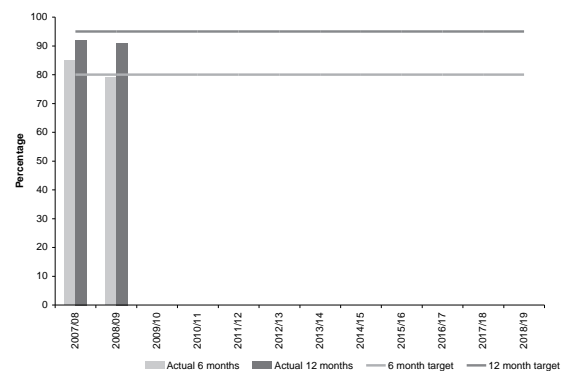
The percentage of significant or major non-compliance⁹ with land resource consent conditions resolved¹⁰ (no further action is required).

Target

80% are resolved in six months.⁸

95% are resolved in 12 months.⁸

CONSENT CONDITION NON-COMPLIANCE RESOLVED



Source: Environment Canterbury.

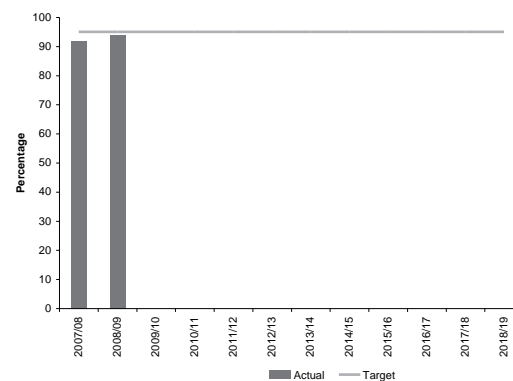
Measure 4

The percentage of environmental incidents resolved (no further action is required) for land.

Target

95%.⁸

INCIDENTS RESOLVED



Source: Environment Canterbury.

⁸ For measures 2, 3 and 4 data collection started in 2007/08.

⁹ Mean 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.

¹⁰ Means re-assessed as Grade 1 – Fully complying or Grade 2 – Minor non-compliance – nil or minor short-term adverse environmental effects.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

\$000	Annual Report 2008/09	Annual Plan 2009/10	LTCCP 2010/11	Annual Plan 2010/11
Total Expenditure	8,751	8,039	8,768	8,099
<i>Funded by:</i>				
General rates	4,565	4,242	4,687	4,482
Targeted rates	855	546	909	732
User pays/Other	2,271	2,538	2,729	2,234
Grants	120	-	-	-
Interest	63	71	73	31
Total Income	7,874	7,397	8,398	7,479
Reserves Increase/(Decrease)	(877)	(642)	(370)	(620)

Asset management & capital expenditure

See Appendix 3 for information on 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?

Reserves are now being used to fund some regional park expenditure instead of rates.

Expenditure and user pays income are expected to be lower in the land group of activities and higher in the water quality, quantity and ecosystems group of activities reflecting a shift in resource consent applications received.