

Water quality, quantity & ecosystems



The water quality, quantity and ecosystems group of activities contributes to the following community outcomes:

- Water is in a healthy condition, clean and plentiful enough to support life
- Business and farming activities do not harm the environment
- Environment, in general, is to be looked after
- Native plants and animals can thrive
- Recreational needs are met
- A strong economy

Environment Canterbury is responsible for managing the region's water resource, including the flows and levels in any water body; control of taking, use, damming and diversion of water; the allocation of water and the control of discharges. In carrying out these functions, Environment Canterbury has a duty to gather information and undertake research on fresh water resources, and to monitor, report and make available information about the state of the whole or any part of the fresh water environment (Resource Management Act 1991). Environment Canterbury is the lead agency for this work and works in collaboration with land holders, industry groups, territorial authorities, statutory bodies, NGOs and other agencies.

KEY ISSUES FOR 2010/11

Integrated water management

The Canterbury Water Management Strategy (CWMS), released by the Mayoral Forum in November 2009, involves a number of integrated actions on environmental improvement, efficiency improvements and infrastructure for reliable water to address a suite of freshwater issues. Work involved in implementation of the strategy is a separate programme of work (see Appendix 1 on page 119), but Environment Canterbury's existing work programmes for water will be a key part of delivering the outcomes of the strategy. Key roles for Environment Canterbury in support of the CWMS are: preparing a revised water chapter for the Regional Policy Statement, implementing environmental limits through regional plans, and monitoring the state of the environment and providing data to measure progress against strategy targets.

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

The CWMS has been endorsed by the Council. See the Amendment to the LTCCP in Appendix 1 on page 119. All text in green boxes refers to this amendment.

Environmental limits

While some of Canterbury's streams, rivers, lakes and groundwater are of high quality and are still largely in their natural state, in some places pressure from rural and urban land-use discharges, and increasing water demand, is placing stress on ground and surface water systems. Environment Canterbury sets limits for both environmental flows for surface and groundwater, and water quality through regional plans. Establishing environmental limits safeguards ecological, recreational, cultural and other values and protects the reliability of existing users. Importantly they provide clarity on water availability – a key requirement for water users and for infrastructure planning.

Tangata whenua

The ability to exercise kaitiakitanga and rangatiratanga for fresh water is a key issue for Ngāi Tahu. Kaitiakitanga is a fundamental principle of the CWMS. Safeguarding sources of mahinga kai and protection of wāhi tapu and wahi taonga are also important issues for tangata whenua.

Regional economy

The regional economy is increasingly dependent on a reliable supply of water, driven by land use intensification and a variable climate. Environment Canterbury authorises the damming, using, discharging and taking of water – activities that contribute to the economic and social well-being of communities in the region. The economic and social benefits of water use and the effects on existing activities including tourism and recreation are all considered in resource consent decisions.

Fresh water quality

Land use intensification and discharge of contaminants such as nitrates are affecting Canterbury's water quality in some areas. Protecting water quality requires management of the cumulative effects of urban and rural land use, stormwater, subdivision sediment control, wastewater and septic tanks.

Regulation

Fresh water is a public resource and those wishing to access water and discharge into water must be authorised. Controls are placed on use of the resource to protect reliability, economic value, and ensure sustainable use. These controls are designed to ensure that the region's freshwater bodies will be available for enjoyment and use by future generations. Water users are required either to comply with a permitted activity rule in a regional plan or obtain a resource consent from Environment Canterbury. Consent conditions and subsequent compliance monitoring (and where required enforcement) of those conditions provides a mechanism to ensure that consents are being exercised within environmental limits and environmental effects are managed.

Partnerships

Successful water resource management requires Environment Canterbury to work in partnership with communities. This involves working collaboratively with land occupiers, territorial authorities, Government agencies and community groups to develop solutions to issues. The Canterbury Water Management Strategy provides the major and overarching partnership for water management, but it is complemented by many more local examples of partnerships, for example, Living Streams and water user groups.



Effect on the four well-beings

Reviewing environmental flows in rivers and groundwater enhances environmental well-being and protects reliability of supply for existing consent holders.

Clean and plentiful water increases social, cultural and environmental well-being. However, meeting the cost of complying with conditions for permitted and consented activities may adversely affect economic well-being.

Ensuring sufficient water is available to support healthy ecosystems increases environmental well-being. However, limitations on water allocations and restrictions during droughts may adversely affect economic well-being.

Involving the community

- The Canterbury Water Management Strategy will establish a process for more local involvement in decision making to improve biodiversity, provide reliable water supplies, improve water efficiency and manage land use within environmental limits.
- Catchment groups bring together landholders, local businesses, Government agencies, interest groups and other community members to identify issues and work in a collaborative way.
- Community advisory groups are set up to provide local input into proposed variations and reviews of environmental river flows.
- Monitoring recreational water quality at swimming sites involves working closely with territorial authorities and public health authorities.

UNCERTAINTIES

For 2010/11, the following is uncertain:

- The timing and final content of the National Environmental Standards for water, relating to measurement of water use, ecological flows and water levels, and on-site wastewater treatment.
- The number and complexity of resource consent applications for water, particularly in fully allocated catchments.
- The work needed to properly manage fully allocated catchments.
- Timing and final content of the National Policy Statement on Freshwater Management and any changes to the Resource Management Act.
- The extent to which the CWMS will decrease regulatory consenting and compliance costs.

Which uncertainties have changed since the 2009-19 LTCCP?

Uncertainty e) relating to the CWMS is new.

ASSUMPTIONS

For 2010/11, it is assumed that:

- The National Environmental Standard on Measurement of Water Takes (or the equivalent regulation) will become operative in 2009/10 and provisions will be as proposed in 2008. The other proposed National Environmental Standards will become operative in 2010/11.
- The number and complexity of consent applications for water will continue at current levels.
- Proposed increases in work programmes will be sufficient to manage fully allocated catchments.
- No provision has been made for additional work that could arise from a National Policy Statement on freshwater management or from legislative change.
- No reductions in consent and compliance costs as a result of the CWMS have been factored into the budget for 2010/11

Which assumptions have changed since the 2009-19 LTCCP?

Assumption e) relating to the CWMS is new.

OUR ACTIVITIES

Priority in 2010/11

The priorities for this group of activities are supporting the Canterbury Water Management Strategy; setting environmental limits for surface and groundwater; continuing to improve knowledge of the interactions of groundwater flows, river flows, land-use and water quality; and monitoring the state of the environment. Processing consents and ensuring compliance with the RMA, including consent conditions, is also a high priority.

WE WILL UNDERTAKE THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES:

Strategy

Developing regional strategies for Environment Canterbury's contribution to community outcomes for water quality, quantity and ecosystems.

Investigations

Investigating water quality, quantity and ecosystem issues.

Planning & consents

Developing policy for managing water quality, quantity and ecosystems, assessing policy implementation and effectiveness, and processing resource consent applications.

Monitoring

Measuring water quantity, water quality and the health of aquatic ecosystems.

Communicating, educating & advocating

Informing the community and working with stakeholders to raise awareness of water quality and quantity issues.

Regulating

Managing allocation, diversion and takes of fresh water and discharges under the Resource Management Act 1991 and ensuring compliance with consent conditions.

Our work programmes in 2010/11

Strategy

- Continue to provide technical and policy support to the implementation of the Canterbury Water Management Strategy.
- Establish a forum for local involvement in water investigations and monitoring work programmes, budgets and allocation of costs.
- In partnership with rural stakeholders and science agencies, develop and test an enduring approach to the management of intensive land use consistent with catchment nutrient load limits (refer also the land portfolio).
- Respond to rural land issues that impact on water quality and quantity through partnerships and sector agreements with the primary sector (refer also the land portfolio).

Investigations

- Investigate surface water and groundwater quality issues, including the effects of land use and management, leading to the setting of catchment load limits.
- Investigate surface water issues needed to support development of flow regimes including understanding how flows may be affected by climate change.
- Investigate groundwater resources to characterise aquifers to support the review or confirmation of regional plan allocation limits for groundwater zones.
- Improve understanding of interactions between rivers/streams, springs and groundwater in the Waimakariri-Ashley plains.
- Investigate water quality for Living Streams catchments and other community-based projects to benchmark water quality and assess the effectiveness of management initiatives.

Planning & consents

- Issue decisions and progress appeals on the water quality and quantity chapters of the Proposed Natural Resources Regional Plan through statutory processes including schedules for Kaikoura and Conway environmental flows.
- Prepare and progress environmental flow and allocation plans on rivers, streams and groundwater zones in Canterbury – Waipara, Hurunui, Waiau, Pareora, Hinds, Ellesmere and Upper Selwyn, Waihao, Wainono, Waimate and Orari catchments.
- Prepare and progress plan changes for existing river/catchment regional plans – Waimakariri allocation blocks, Waimakariri tributaries, Opihi and Waitaki.
- Notify a variation setting water allocation limits for the Christchurch West Melton groundwater zone.
- Ensure district and city plans give effect to regional policies for managing water quality and quantity.
- Implement the National Environmental Standard on Human Drinking Water Sources.
- Process resource consent applications.
- Review resource consents to bring consents in line with operative plans or to address adverse environmental effects.
- Process water conservation orders.

Monitoring

- Maintain the existing surface water flow monitoring network and increase to include more lowland streams (including tributaries to Te Waihora/Lake Ellesmere) and extend the water quality network to include more urban streams, inland lakes and coastal lakes/lagoons.
- Maintain existing groundwater monitoring systems and continue to expand particularly into South Canterbury.
- Support the installation of water measuring devices by consent holders, and establish systems for receiving and reporting the water use data as mandated by consent conditions and the upcoming National Environmental Standard (or equivalent regulation) on Measurement of Water Takes.
- Monitor groundwater levels, river flows and rainfall at representative sites.
- Monitor groundwater quality at representative sites.
- Monitor surface water quality at representative sites on rivers and lakes.
- Monitor recreational water quality.
- Monitor aquatic ecosystem health at representative sites.
- Publish results of monitoring programmes and increase access to data through the internet.
- Monitoring under the Land group of activities, measures the effects (including improvements) of water use on soil quality.

Communicating, educating & advocating

- Work with community groups to improve water quality through the Living Streams approach, existing community-based projects in the Lower Waitaki, Waihao and Orari catchments, participation in Waterwatch and a programme to improve urban waterway health in Christchurch.
- Provide the Waitaha Wai programme to schools, with those in Living Streams catchments being a priority.
- Provide information about water resources to resource users and other interested parties, particularly through the annual State of the Water Resource report.
- Respond to requests for information about water resources from the public, consultants, researchers, zone/regional committees (CWMS) and other interested parties.
- Work with consent holders (water user groups) on initiatives to improve water use efficiency as water measurement systems are established throughout the region.

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

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

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.
- Review and report on water use information and progress with implementing the proposed national regulation on measurement of water use.
- Explore opportunities for audited self-management aligned with initiatives to improve water use efficiency and land-management through the CWMS.
- Report significant breaches of resource consents to council three times a year.
- Provide a Pollution Hotline Response Service.

See Appendix 2 on page 125 for information on funding for State of the Environment Monitoring.

OUR LEVELS OF SERVICE

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

Levels of Service	Community Outcomes					
	Water is in a healthy condition, clean and plentiful enough to support life	Business and farming activities do not harm the environment	Environment, in general, is to be looked after	Native plants and animals can thrive	Recreational needs are met	A strong economy
1 Implementing sustainable allocation limits for groundwater	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Setting sustainable environmental flows for key rivers and streams	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 Ensuring nitrate-nitrogen concentrations in groundwater meet New Zealand drinking water standards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 Safeguarding community drinking water supply bores	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 Improving recreational water quality at swimming sites	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 Maintaining the ecosystem health of lakes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 Improving the ecosystem health of lowland and foothill rivers and streams	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 Working with territorial authorities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 Authorising and monitoring the use of natural and physical resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<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 Implementing sustainable allocation limits for groundwater

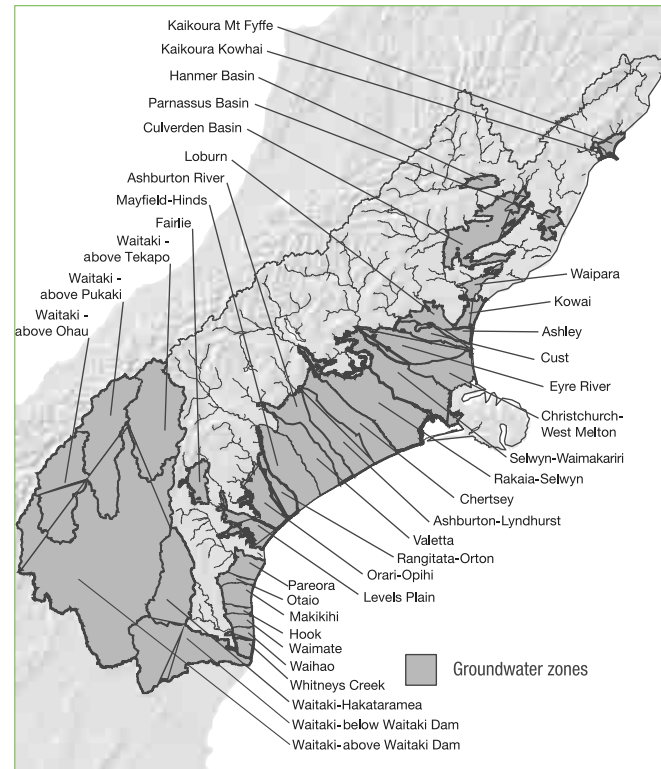
Measure

The rate at which sustainable allocation limits¹ are implemented for groundwater zones.

Target

One zone every two years.²

GROUNDWATER ZONES



2 Setting sustainable environmental flows for key rivers & streams

Measure

The rate at which environmental flows are set on all key rivers and streams.

Target

See table below.

Environmental Flow Review Programme			
Key rivers or catchments	Community consultation & investigations	Notify Environmental Flow review	Set ³ environmental flows
Hurunui River	Completed	Completed	2010/11 ⁵
Waipara River	Completed	2009/10	2010/11
Lake Ellesmere tributaries Pt1, Pt2, Pt3 and upper Selwyn	Commenced 2008/09	2010/11	2011/12
Waihao River	Completed	Completed	2010/11
Pareora River	Commenced 2008/09	2010/11	2010/11
Waiau River	Begins 2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Ashley River tributaries	Commenced 2008/09	2010/11	2010/11
Waimakariri River tributaries	Commenced 2008/09	2010/11	2010/11
Orari River	Commenced 2008/09	2010/11	2010/11
Hinds River	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Banks Peninsula	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Opihi River tributaries	Begins 2010/11	2011/12	2012/13

Source: Environment Canterbury.

3 Ensuring nitrate-nitrogen concentrations in groundwater meet New Zealand drinking water standards

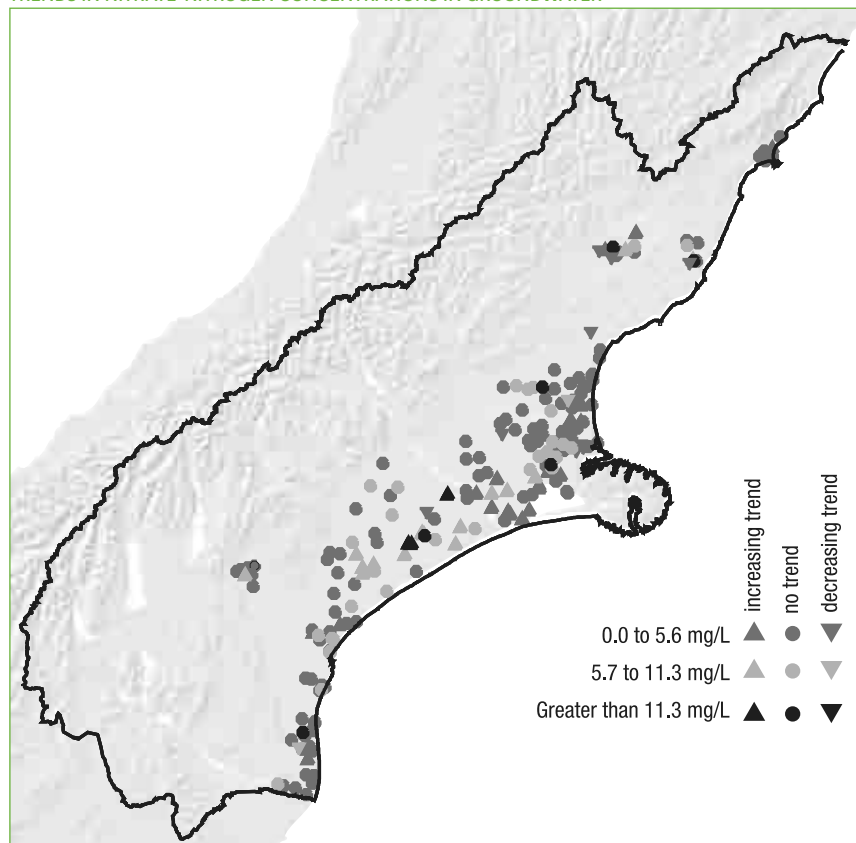
Measure

The percentage of monitored groundwater wells where nitrate-nitrogen concentrations are at or below the maximum acceptable value of 11.3 milligrams of nitrate per litre of water.⁶

Target

The percentage is increasing.

TRENDS IN NITRATE-NITROGEN CONCENTRATIONS IN GROUNDWATER



Source: Environment Canterbury.

4 Safeguarding community drinking water supply bores

Measure

The percentage of community drinking water supply bores that exceed half the maximum acceptable value of 11.3 milligrams of nitrate per litre of water where intervention assessments take place.

Target

100%.⁷

	TREND 1998-2007			
	increase	none	decrease	total
0 - 5.6 mg/L	▲	●	▼	
Number of sites	24	116	9	149
Percentage of monitored sites	12%	57%	4%	73%
5.7 - 11.3 mg/L	▲	●	▼	
Number of sites	15	30	2	47
Percentage of monitored sites	7%	15%	1%	23%
Greater than 11.3 mg/L	▲	●	▼	
Number of sites	3	6	0	9
Percentage of monitored sites	1%	3%	0%	4%
Total	42	152	11	205
	20%	74%	5%	100%

Source: Environment Canterbury.

¹ Limits are set in the Proposed Canterbury Natural Resources Regional Plan (NRRP, Variation 4, 2007).

² Rakaia Selwyn by 2010/11.

³ Set in relation to environmental flows means a decision made by council on a notified plan or variation under the first schedule to the RMA.

⁴ Proposed Natural Resources Regional Plan.

⁵ Hurunui River is subject to a Water Conservation order which has resulted in the need to review the flow regime in variation 8.

⁶ Drinking-water Standards for New Zealand 2005 (Revised 2008), Wellington: Ministry of Health. October 2008. Groundwater is the receiving environment for a number of contaminants from natural and human activities on the land. An indicator of the general state of groundwater quality is the presence of nitrogen because of grazing animals, fertiliser use, septage disposal and other waste disposal which contribute nitrogen.

⁷ These targets were introduced in 2009/10 so no previous data is available.

5 Improving recreational water quality at swimming sites

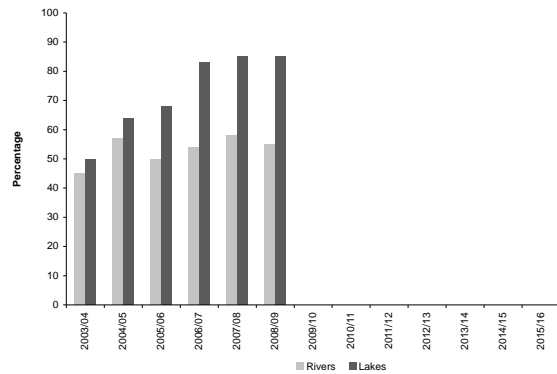
Measure

The percentage of monitored swimming sites at rivers and lakes that are suitable for contact recreation, all or most of the time.

Target

The percentage is increasing.

PERCENTAGE OF SWIMMING SITES AT LAKES & RIVERS GRADED AS SUITABLE FOR CONTACT RECREATION



Source: Environment Canterbury.

Note: 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. It allows for occasional exceedence of single sample trigger values, such as after heavy rain, at otherwise good quality sites. Recreational swimming water quality results are published on the Environment Canterbury website.

Estuaries that are predominantly freshwater, such as the Waimakariri and Ashley/Rakahuri river mouths, are included in this group of activities. Saline estuaries, such as Avon-Heathcote/Ihutai, are included in the Coastal environment group of activities.

6 Maintaining the ecosystem health of lakes

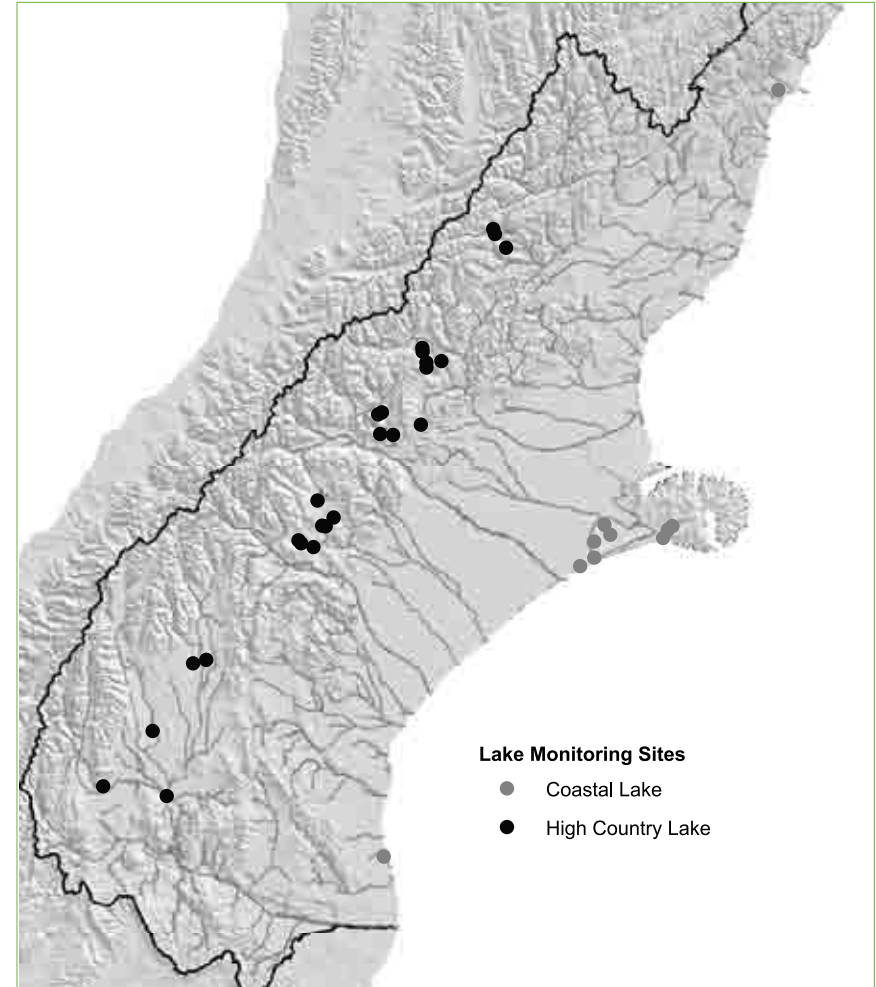
Measure

The percentage of coastal and high country lakes monitored recording an improved trophic state.⁷

Target

The percentage is increasing.

LAKE MONITORING SITES



7 Improving the ecosystem health of foothill & lowland rivers & streams

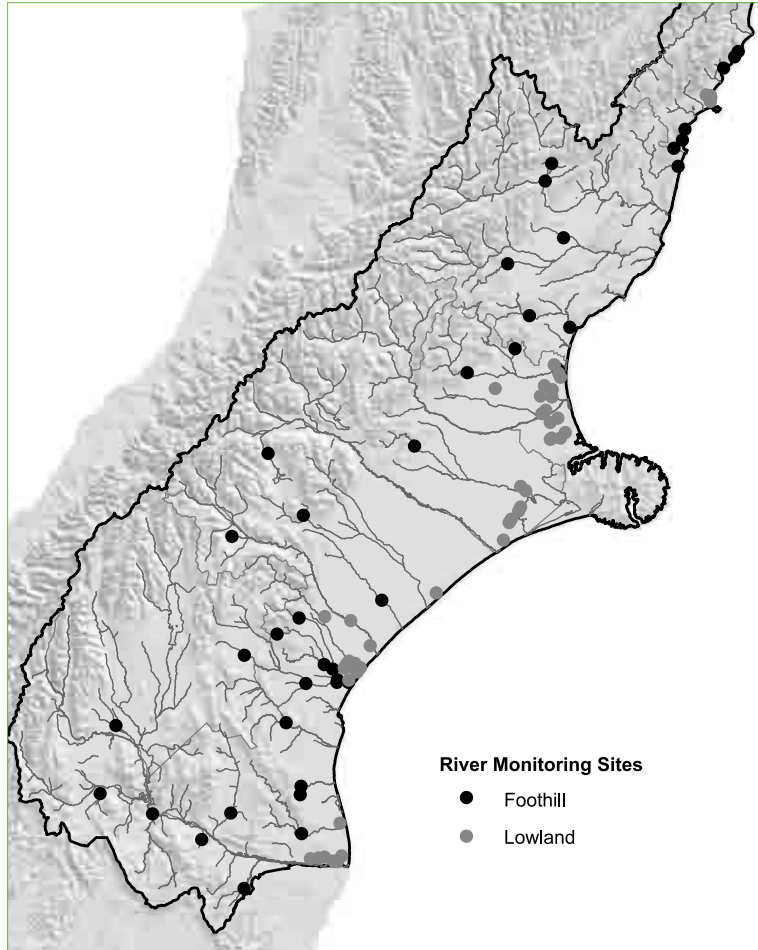
Measure

The percentage of rivers and streams monitored recording fair, good or very good biotic and habitat health (on a scale of very poor, poor, fair, good, and very good).

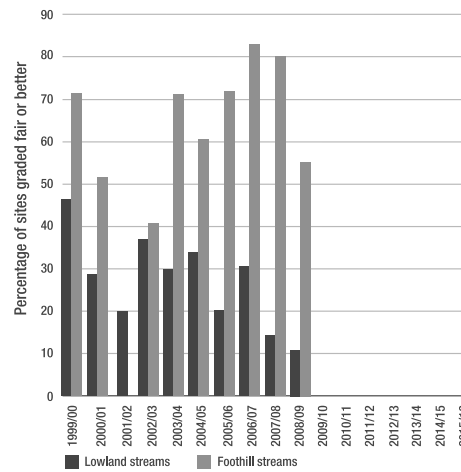
Target

The percentage is increasing.

RIVER MONITORING SITES



PERCENTAGE OF CANTERBURY FOOTHILL & LOWLAND STREAM SITES GRADED FAIR OR BETTER.



Notes: No data for foothill streams in 2001/02 due to high rainfall and associated flooding.

Aquatic health is assessed by the abundance and diversity of large insects, worms and snails (macroinvertebrates) in rivers and streams throughout Canterbury, not including major braided rivers. The streams measured are representative of the different stream types present in Canterbury.

Source: Environment Canterbury.

8 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 water.

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

District plan	First plan operative	Review of plan commences
Ashburton District Plan	2001	2008
Waimate District Plan	2001	2011

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

9 Authorising & monitoring the use of natural & physical resources

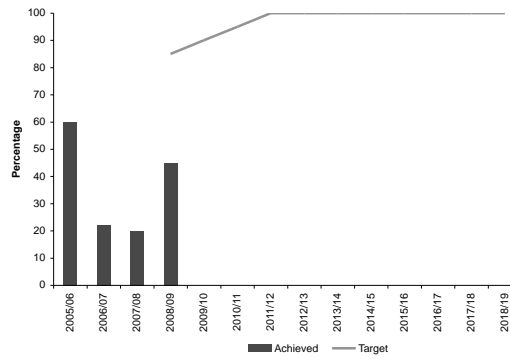
Measure 1

The percentage of freshwater 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.

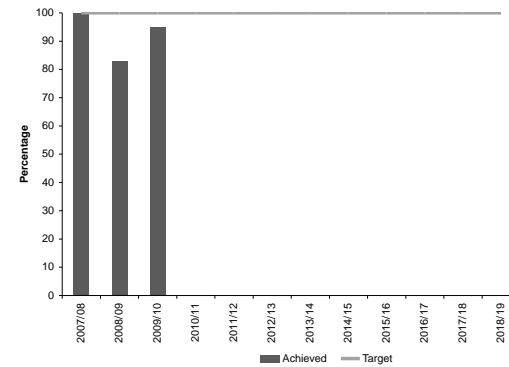
Measure 2

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

Target

100% of independent audit.

CONSENTS CONSISTENT WITH RMA



Source: Independent audit of random sample of issued consents.

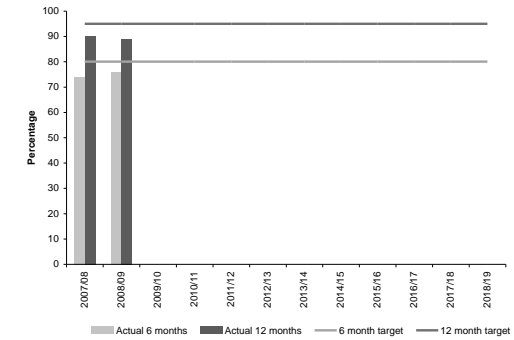
Measure 3

The percentage of significant or major non-compliance⁸ with freshwater resource consent conditions resolved⁹ (no further action is required).

Target

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

CONSENT CONDITION NON-COMPLIANCE RESOLVED



Source: Environment Canterbury.

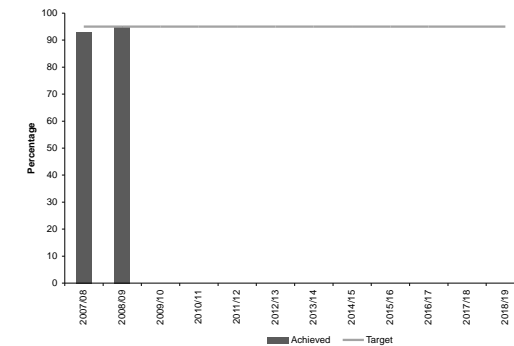
Measure 4

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

Target

95%.

INCIDENTS RESOLVED



Source: Environment Canterbury.

⁷ Trophic state is a measure used to report on the nutrient status of lakes in New Zealand, generally using indicators of nitrogen, phosphorus, algal biomass, and visual clarity.

⁸ 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.

⁹ 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	19,978	19,990	21,408	24,583
<i>Funded by:</i>				
General rates	12,232	13,428	12,657	11,840
Targeted rates	437	515	533	3,683
User pays/Other	5,927	5,629	8,110	8,111
Grants	98	-	-	936
Interest	68	128	108	40
Total Income	18,762	19,700	21,408	24,610
Reserves Increase/(Decrease)	(1,216)	(290)	-	27

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?

Environment Canterbury's contribution to the Canterbury Water Management Strategy (CWMS) has been included in the water quality, quantity and ecosystems group of activities. Grant funding contributions will now also be received from external parties.

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.



Implementing the Canterbury Water Management Strategy - what the council decided

The Draft Annual Plan 2010/11 proposed:

To fund implementation of the strategy until 2013/14 from a targeted rate over the whole of Canterbury, transitioning over time to being funded, at least in part, by water users.

To fund the Immediate Steps biodiversity protection/restoration programme as an integral part of the CWMS, to halt the gradual overall decline of ecosystems and prevent the rapid decline in some habitats and species in Canterbury. The recommended funding option was \$10 million over five years, with \$1.44 million a year as a Regional Council contribution.

To fund Zone Water Management Committees jointly between the Regional Council (\$240,000) and the relevant territorial authority(ies) (\$300,000) and to fund the Regional Committee by the Regional Council (\$93,000 per annum).

Background

Environment Canterbury is implementing the Canterbury Water Management Strategy (CWMS) in conjunction with Canterbury's district and city councils, Ngāi Tahu, central government and key water stakeholders. The CWMS is an integrated approach to address the issues relating to water infrastructure, economic development, water efficiency and use, and environment restoration and improvement, while at the same time recognising cultural and recreational needs.

In the short term the proposal is to largely fund the strategy via an Environment Canterbury targeted rate. Territorial Authorities are being asked to consider funding the operation of zone committees in part in the 2010/11 year. This arrangement provides a short-term funding stream. In the medium term, funding is planned to transition to a shared basis between regional and local government, and water users, recognising the regional importance of water issues and the need to introduce a sustainable funding framework recognising the following principles:

- Canterbury water issues are a regional priority.
- There is significant economic opportunity through addressing water issues.
- Ratepayers should not be expected to fund development of water infrastructure.
- Water-users should expect to pay for access, development and use.

Council's decision

Commissioners agreed to implement all the recommendations in the Draft Annual Plan, and to acknowledge that a balanced and robust selection process is needed to appoint members of the Zone and Regional Committees.

It is therefore planned to increase funding (from 2009-10 levels) of the Canterbury Water Management Strategy by \$3.2 million for 2010/11, including the Immediate Steps biodiversity protection/restoration programme. The total budget for the strategy is \$4 million.

What the submitters told us

149 submitters provided views on the funding of the strategy. 26 submitters disagreed with the proposal because of issues around elected accountability. Aside from these, there was a slight majority of 69 submitters in favour of initial funding from a targeted rate over the region.

77 submitters responded to the question of the Immediate Steps Biodiversity Programme, of whom 57 were in favour.

There were 80 submissions on the question of zone committees, and views were mixed.

THIS IS AN AMENDMENT TO THE 2009-19 LTCCP

We made an amendment to the 2009-19 LTCCP to introduce a targeted rate to fund the implementation of the CWMS. Refer to Appendix 1 on page 121 for more information. Refer also to the separate Statement of Proposal to amend the 2009 Revenue and Financing Policy for details of how implementing the CWMS is to be funded.

See www.canterburywater.co.nz for the full Canterbury Water Management Strategy document.

Implementing State of the Environment water management cost recovery - what the council decided

The Draft Annual Plan 2010/11 proposed:

To apportion the proposed cost recovery for state of environment monitoring by:

- a sliding scale for water-take consents whereby a higher management charge is allocated to the first unit of consented volume and reduces for each successive unit of consented volume;
- a three-band system for discharge consents, based on the type of discharge, the related environmental effects, and the state of the environment monitoring work required; and
- providing local accountability for the scientific work programmes and costs via the Canterbury Water Management Strategy (CWMS) zone committees or by an interim committee if a CWMS committee in a particular zone is not in place by August 2010.

Council's decision

The commissioners decided to adopt the proposed methods for charging consent holders. State of the Environment monitoring charges will be calculated using a sliding scale for water consents, and using a three-band system for discharge consents.

Background

Environment Canterbury is seeking a more equitable mix of funding for its water investigations and monitoring work - also known as the State of the Environment monitoring - which is required to understand the nature of Canterbury's freshwater resource. Currently this work is funded 100% from general rates.

The 2009-19 LTCCP adopted a funding policy to recover a proportion (30%) of the cost of this work from consent holders, with 70% from general rates. Implementing the new charge was delayed one year until 1 July 2010 to allow for more consultation with consent holders on how the costs of the scientific work should be apportioned among consent holders. A working group was set up to achieve this, and 128 submissions were received from consent holders before the Draft Annual Plan was written.

More information can be found in Appendix 2 on page 125.

What the submitters told us

There were 184 submissions on the first part of the proposal - apportioning costs to water-take consents. 157 were supportive: 99 agreed with the proposed methods and the remainder thought that this should be a minimum amount to charge consent holders.

There were 64 submissions on the system for charging holders of discharge consents, with 62 in support.

No submitters supported that a separate committee be established to make recommendations on these charges. Using the CWMS committees was supported.