

# Democratic process

*Environment Canterbury's role is as the lead agency for democratic and effective regional government*



## What we achieved this year

Within the democratic process portfolio we contribute towards achievement of all community outcomes:

### Our contribution

### Community outcome

- This year we undertook our two-yearly opinion survey to measure community confidence in the work of Environment Canterbury. The survey, which was conducted by telephone among a representative sample of 500 people aged 18 years and over, illustrated the community's recognition of Environment Canterbury as follows.
  - Eight out of ten people consider Environment Canterbury undertakes useful planning and regulatory work.
  - More than two thirds of people (69%) consider they get good value for their Environment Canterbury rates.
  - More than 90% agree that community partnerships, planning and education are key to increasing environmental performance.
  - 67% of people agree that decisions made by Environment Canterbury are in the best interests of the community.
  - 61% of people recognise the organisation as the region's leader in environmental management.
- The 2008 Canterbury Regional Environment Report was completed, providing a comprehensive stocktake of the region's natural resources. The report adopts a sustainability framework for environmental reporting, providing a more integrated way of analysing the region's resource base, the outcomes of human-induced processes and the response by Environment Canterbury in terms of the programme of activities it undertakes.
- The Canterbury community was consulted on the 2009-19 Long Term Council Community Plan. Over 600 submissions on the plan were received, with a focus on water management cost recovery and other key changes proposed by the Council. Submitters had the opportunity to present their material at hearings held in Christchurch and Timaru. The plan included a review of funding and financial policies and received a clear audit opinion.
- It was a busy year for our Customer Services staff who answered over 65,000 calls, up 5,000 on the previous year. We also achieved an 82% customer satisfaction rating for our customer services.

**All community outcomes**

In this portfolio we report on three levels of service to illustrate our achievements this year.



*Environment Canterbury acknowledges and thanks the people who took the time to make submissions to the council. It is vital that citizens and stakeholders can voice their concerns directly and have input into the decision-making process.*

## Effect on the four well-beings



The election of councillors and the council decision-making process contributes to well-being across the community, as does the formulation of the Long Term Council Community Plan, the Regional Policy Statement and the Regional Environment Report. Providing information and advice also assists promotion of environmental, economic, social and cultural well-being. There are no negative effects on well-being.

## Other key achievements this year

- The number of people accessing information and services via the Council's website increased by 20% over the previous year, with repeat visitors making up 71% of the 730,000 total. During heavy flooding in July 2008 the use of the site increased by 300%, to 9,000 visitors/day.
- We provided regular information to the Canterbury community on the council's activities through a range of activities, including the publication and distribution of eight issues of the newsletter Living Here, regular news media liaison and updates on our website.
- Environment Canterbury provided input on a number of central government policy documents. For example, submissions were made to the Proposed National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management, the Proposed National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation, and the Resource Management Act Phase 1 reforms.
- The review of the 1998 Canterbury Regional Policy Statement (CRPS) is continuing. Notification of the revised CRPS is expected in 2010.
- There were 19 council meetings and 109 committee meetings and workshops. Councillors took part in a two-day tour of Ashburton district. Four governance workshops were held. The Southern Committee held meetings at Omarama, Waimate, Timaru and Oamaru and the Christchurch Area Committee met regularly during the year. The Canterbury Mayoral Forum was also supported.
- Our relationship with Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu continues to develop. The 2009-19 Long Term Council Community Plan makes provision for the development of iwi management plans and there is agreement to review iwi liaison at the Council. The Maori Advisory Committee met four times during the year, one of the meetings being held at Nga Hau E Wha National Marae. The committee organised a hui for Councillors at Rehua Marae where iwi management plans were discussed.
- Environment Canterbury's archives were maintained and made available.
- The contract to provide regional council services to the Chatham Islands Council was renewed for another four years, commencing in 2008/09. This includes implementation of the pest management strategy approved last year.
- Over 100 students representing 19 schools took part in a hui held at Rehua Marae to raise awareness and understanding of Maori perspectives on the environment. The day, co-ordinated by Enviroschools Canterbury, was held in partnership with the marae, the Ministry of Youth Development, Trade Aid and UC Education Plus. Interest in the Enviroschools programme continued, with 46 schools actively involved. Over 40 schools are on a waiting list to join the programme.
- The Opuha Dam water management project was the supreme winner of Environment Canterbury's 2008 Resource Management Awards. The awards attracted 36 high calibre entrants, ranging from large businesses and organisations through to individuals.
- Tom Shearson and Bert Tijssen jointly won this year's Environmental Awareness Award, a programme run in conjunction with the Tai Poutini Polytechnic Digger School. The award encourages students to apply environmental awareness skills to their work.
- Environment Canterbury sponsored the 2008 Champion Canterbury Awards which are run annually by the Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce to celebrate the role that business excellence, passion and success play in the vitality of the Canterbury region.

# Levels of service

This section reports on performance for 2008/09 against Annual Plan targets.

## 1. Providing environmental leadership

### Measure

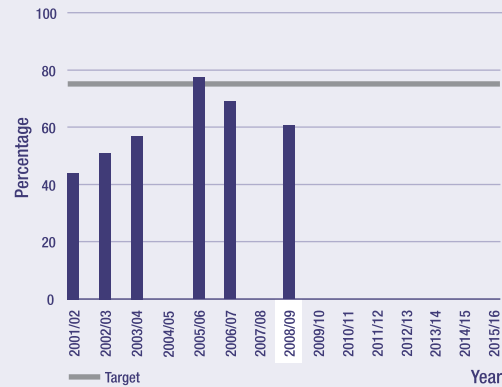
Percentage of the community who consider Environment Canterbury to be the lead agency in environmental management in the region.

Target 2008/09  
75%.

This information is collected every two years.

*Not achieved (61%).*

Environmental leadership



Source: Environment Canterbury two-yearly survey.

## 2. Providing value for money

### Measure

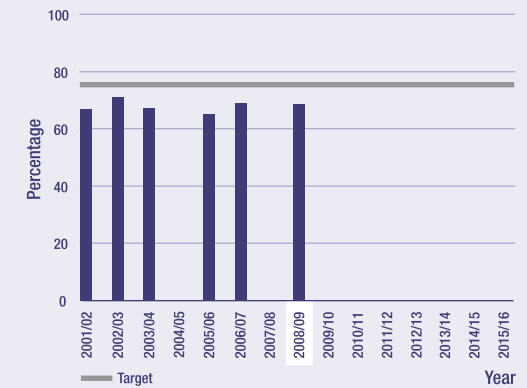
Percentage of the community who feel they get good value for money spent by Environment Canterbury.

Target 2008/09  
75%.

This information is collected every two years.

*Not achieved (69%).*

Value for money



Source: Environment Canterbury two-yearly survey.

### 3. Making decisions that reflect the best interests of the community

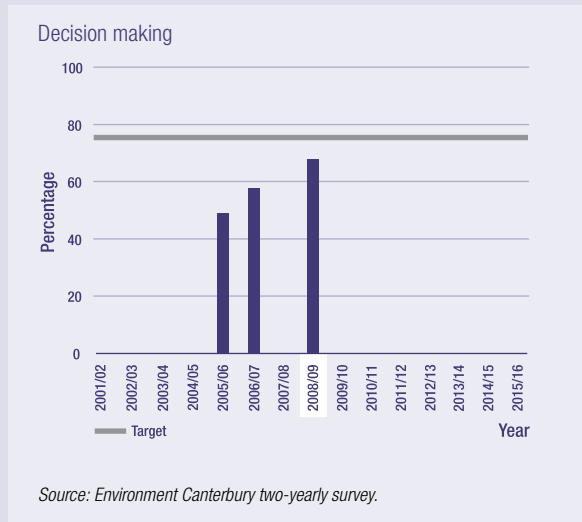
#### Measure

Percentage of the community who say they have faith that decisions made by Environment Canterbury represent the best interests of the community.

Target 2008/09  
75%.

This information is collected every two years.

Not achieved (67%).



### Financial summary

\$000	Actual 2008/09	Budget 2008/09	Actual 2007/08
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	6,865	7,413	7,950
<b>Funded by:</b>			
<b>General rates</b>	6,356	6,007	6,865
<b>Targeted rates</b>	-	-	-
<b>Grants</b>	41	1	60
<b>User pays and other</b>	646	1,020	860
<b>Total Funding</b>	7,043	7,028	7,785
<b>Reserves Increase/(Decrease)</b>	178	(385)	(165)

Completion of the LTCCP 2009-19 required significant staff input and a consequent reduction in other programmes. Services to the Chatham Islands Council for implementation of their Pest Management Strategy were delayed for one year pending finalisation of a long-term programme.

#### Capital expenditure

Capital expenditure associated with this group of activities was funded from general funds and included as depreciation expense.