Manawatū River Source to Sea/ENM Submission

**Draft Submission to**

**Tararua District Council 2021 - 2031 Longterm Plan:**

**About Manawatū River Source to Sea**

**Manawatū River Source to Sea** is a community-led and catchment-wide initiative, from the headwaters of the Manawatū River in the Ruahine Ranges, through to the confluence at Manawatū Estuary at Foxton in Horowhenua, focused on providing positive outcomes for biodiversity, freshwater and our communities.

The positive outcomes include:

* Providing a network/forum for environmental groups to share information, learning and support, collective planning and action;
* Articulating the challenges of individual groups and raising awareness about pests on a large landscape basis: e.g., *Phragmites karka*
* Enhancing biodiversity, both flora and fauna, e.g., the Southern Ruahine Kiwi Habitat Restoration Project will benefit at least another 19 species as it takes an ecosystem approach;
* Building awareness and capability through Citizen Science (e.g., Palmy’s Plastic Pollution Challenge) which is nationally recognised and contributes to the development of a nation-wide stream litter data methodology;
* Supporting and encouraging more nature-based experiences;
* Developing social enterprises contributing to economic wellbeing;
* Increased social and cultural wellbeing.

Manawatū River Source to Sea, therefore, is a strategic alliance of environmental organisations that collaborate to increase collective impact on a large landscape scale - city, district, or catchment-wide. This community-led initiative has been developed by a subset of around 30 Environment Network Manawatu (ENM) member groups with a particular interest in biodiversity and freshwater:

<https://www.enm.org.nz/Manawat%C5%AB-River-Source-to-Sea>. ENM has more than 60 member groups in total. ENM member groups from the Manawatu District Council include: Awahuri Forest Kitchener Park Trust; Community Fruit Harvest Manawatu; Rangiwahia Environmental Arts Centre Trust; Ruahine Whio Protection Trust; Timona Park Orchard Trust

**SUBMISSION**

**Recycling – Waste Minimisation**

Focus on reducing waste is going to be increasingly important as waste levies are set to rise significantly over the next years. in order to manage cost long-term, people need to reduce their waste full stop, and recognise opportunities to recover resources from waste.

Our recommendation would be to make organic waste reduction and local processing into compost, vermicompost or biochar the immediate priority.

Only plastic categories 1 (clear plastic only), 2, and 5 can be recycled in New Zealand. There is an underdeveloped opportunity to remake category 6 into new products. We strongly recommend a campaign to educate people around reducing their plastic use dramatically.

The government is currently considering a container return scheme and other measures which could have an impact on the effectiveness of kerbside recycling. Council might want to consider offering more disposal points for recyclables, rather than going for kerbside collection in the short-term.

**Community Development**

We think council is making a very strategic move by working with communities more in achieving a shared vision. We wonder whether Council has considered to base the roles in the community? It is our experience that community can achieve a lot, as long as there is some funding available for coordination.

**Growth**

It is refreshing to see a Council recognise the cost of growth and thinking strategically about the right type of growth and where it should occur. Given the challenges the District faces around its rural activities, we are wondering to what extent growth in regenerative activities has been considered? These kinds of activities could also contribute to mitigating climate change and increasing community resilience.

**Community Hubs**

We strongly recommend that Council make new Community Hubs showcases for more sustainable living, by integrating a range of possible on-site features such as compost toilets, sun and wind-energy capture, devices to minimise water use, capturing greywater for watering adjacent (community) gardens, composting facilities, etc.

**Forestry**

We appreciate Council’s concerns around carbon only forestry and recommend strongly to continue the search for regenerative forest practices with multiple harvesting schemes as appropriate. This could invigorate rather than deplete local communities. Productive forests have been managed in Europe for millenia.