

An aerial photograph of a vast wetland landscape. A winding river flows through the center, surrounded by dense, low-lying vegetation in shades of green and brown. The background shows rolling hills under a clear blue sky.

Waikare-Whangamarino Action Plan

Council Workshop 22 April 2026

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Workshop Purpose

- Provide Councillors with:
 - An overview of the revised Draft Waikare-Whangamarino Action Plan
 - Update on actions / feedback following the last Council workshop
 - An **opportunity to provide feedback** prior to Draft Action Plan going out for stakeholder engagement

Why an Action Plan?

- Lake Waikare and Whangamarino Wetland are highly degraded and this is not acceptable to the community.
- Issues with these waterbodies have developed over a long time and both causes, and solutions, are extremely complex.
- The fundamental purpose of the Waikare-Whangamarino Action Plan is to identify actions that will drive significant environmental improvements in Whangamarino and Waikare.
- Council endorsed an LTP Business Case to develop a Plan to prioritise future investment in restoration actions.
- Implementation of an approved Action Plan is included in Council's Strategic Direction.

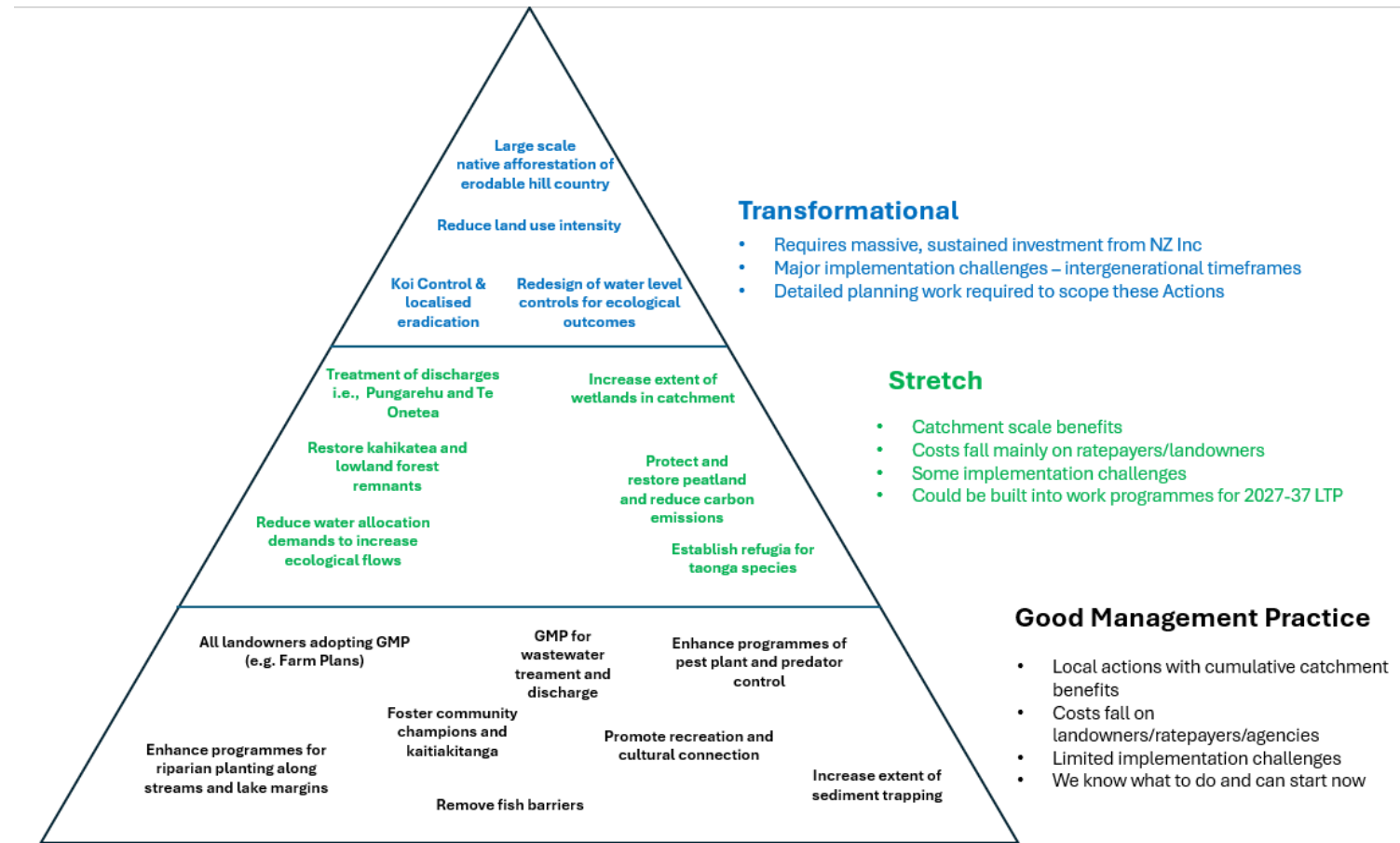
Who has been involved in Plan development?

- A Whangamarino Working Group was formed in April 2024.
- The following interested parties and statutory managers are represented:
 - WRC – staff and Councillors
 - Waikato River Authority (co-funder)
 - Department of Conservation
 - Waikato-Tainui
 - Mana whenua, including Ngaa Muka, Waahi Whaanui, Ngaati Hine
 - Fish & Game
 - Rural landowner representatives
 - Urban community representatives
 - Waikato District Council
- We have engaged more widely with Iwi/Mana whenua, technical experts, farmers and wider community (including youth).
- Inclusive, collaborative – built trust and strengthened working relationships.



The Actions

- 18 Principal Actions – (distilled from 300+ actions)
- Organised into 3 Tiers:
 - Good Management Practice
 - Stretch Actions
 - Transformational Actions
- Each Action assessed against environmental benefit, technical feasibility, rough order costs and timeframes for benefits



Note: All 18 Actions contribute to improving environmental health – variable benefit and implementation challenges.

Implementation

- Proposing an initial 5-yr implementation plan managed by Partners.
- Proposing principles for Governance, not the detailed governance structure
- Recommended initial actions:
 - Integration of work programmes across partner organisations
 - All of catchment approach to managing water levels
 - Mitigation of Lake Waikare discharge effects on Whangamarino Wetland
 - Enhance taonga species populations and improve controls on invasives (e.g. koi)
 - Reduce contaminant loss from human land uses



Feedback from Partners

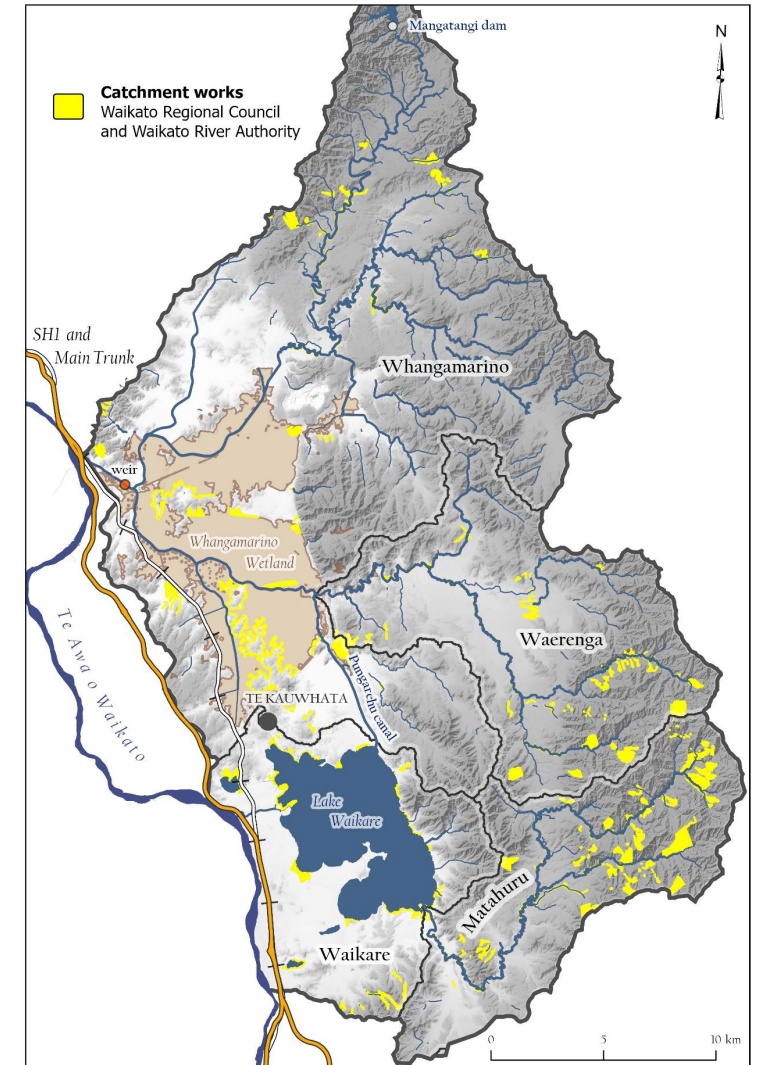
- Align Action Plan with DOC's Whangamarino Ramsar Review. ✓
- Provide clarity on staging of Actions and associated investments over 50+ years. ✓
- Celebrate work to date – recognise need to ramp up. ✓
- Incorporate Measures of Success – “What do we get for our investment and when?” ✓
- Incorporate Kaitiaki Framework. ✓
- Recognise property owner concerns. ✓



KAITIAKI FRAMEWORK FOR
LAKE WAIKARE &
THE WHANGAMARINO WETLAND

Feedback from Last Council Workshop

- Better Graphics - beautification.
- Positive messaging around work done to date.
- Consider innovation and emerging technologies.
- Include outcomes in the document.
- Reflect catchment granularity in document.
- Advocacy for Koi carp management.



Next Steps

- Need to provide all interested parties an opportunity to review Draft Plan (late Apr-May).
- Working Group support a focus session (May) on managing koi (to support Council thinking).
- Revise Draft and seek Working Group consensus (early June).
- Council endorsement sought at June 25 Council Meeting (with prior workshop if needed).
- Continue with implementation planning leading up to 2027/37 Long-Term Plan to deliver on Strategic Direction measure.