

HAURAKI GULF SOE CHAPTER 7:
RESPONSES TO STRATEGIC
ISSUES

Scope of Chapter 7

HGMPA s17(1)(g) – SOE report required to include information on progress towards **integrated management** and **responses to strategic issues**

Chapter addresses:

- How management agencies have *responded to strategic environmental issues* identified in earlier chapters of the report
- Application of *integrated management* approaches
- *Reasons for failure* of current management to halt or reverse decline in Gulf's management resources
- Elements of a possible *new management response*

Responses to human impacts

- Weed and pest control and/or restoration on 28 Gulf islands
- 5 marine reserves (but covering only 0.3% of the Gulf)
- Approval of new marine reserve at Tawharanui
- No progress on identifying representative network of marine protected areas

Responses to fishing

- Setting of TAC resulting in slow rebuild of snapper stock and maintenance of kahawai above BMSY
- Insufficient information obtained to fully ascertain the status of other fish stocks
- Fisheries decision-making single-stock focused and does not address wider ecosystem impacts
- No action to address potential environmental impacts of trawling in outer Gulf

Responses to sediment contamination

- Concerted management efforts to address issue through combination of control at source and treatment of wastewater discharges
- But not sufficient to prevent further contamination

Responses to nutrients

- Stock excluded from lower reaches of Waihou River
- Little additional management response with grazing and fertiliser application permitted activities in relevant regional and district plans

Responses to bathing beach quality

- Ongoing investment in upgrade of wastewater treatment infrastructure

Reponses to sediment

- Strong controls on large earthworks in Auckland region
- Few controls on forestry harvesting in the Auckland region
- Stronger controls on forestry harvesting on the Coromandel Peninsula
- No controls on grazing activities
- Ongoing catchment-based collaborative projects

Responses to introduced marine species

- Import health standard for discharge of ballast water
- No current controls on hull fouling but import health standard under development
- Ongoing marine surveillance programme
- No action focused on increasing resilience of the marine environment

Responses to harmful algae, pathogens and mass mortalities

- No management response other than to ascertain cause of individual incidents

Responses to maintenance and recovery of biodiversity

- Collaborative initiatives to protect and restore Gulf islands
- Collaborative initiative to protect wading birds in Firth of Thames
- No direct action to reduce threats to the Bryde's whale

Integrated management approaches

- Restoration of the Gulf Islands (with the involvement of the Department of Conservation, councils and community trusts).
- Management of coastal development (Auckland regional growth strategy, Auckland spatial plan, and Coromandel Peninsula Blueprint).
- Protection of wading birds in the Firth of Thames (Muddy Feet).
- Restoration of the Mahurangi Harbour (Mahurangi Action Plan).
- Catchment management on the Coromandel Peninsula to achieve multiple objectives (Peninsula Project).
- Catchment management approaches to reducing wastewater discharges (Auckland Regional Plan: Air, Land and Water).

Reasons for failure to halt or reverse decline of Gulf's natural resources

- Intervention is not of sufficient scale or intensity
- Lack of clear environmental goals
- Key gaps in management response
- Implementation gaps
- Fragmentation
- Roadblocks

New management response: the vision

The Hauraki Gulf is a place:

- Which is “celebrated and treasured”
- Which is “thriving with fish, shellfish and kaimoana”
- Which has “rich diversity of life”
- Which supports a “sense of place, connection and identity” and a “vibrant economy”

Key elements of new response

Tangata whenua relationships are acknowledged and reflected in resource management practice

A flourishing “green-blue network”

Enhancement of fisheries

Sediment and contaminants kept on the land

Knowledge generation occurs within an ecosystem-based management framework