
State of the Environment

Project Plan

Auckland Regional Council

Version 1.0

14 August 2008

DRAFT

Document Change History			
Revision No.	Scope	Date of Revision	Author
Version 1.0	Project scoping/outline	14/4/08	Grant Barnes

2009SoE Project Plan

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1 Scope and purpose

State of Environment (SoE) reporting has been undertaken at local, regional and central levels of government in New Zealand since the enactment of the Resource Management Act (RMA) 1991. The Act obligates regional government to prepare and make publicly available a review of the results of their monitoring the efficiency and effectiveness of policies, rules, or other methods in its policy statement or its plan at least once every five years.

The ARC publishes extensively the results of its monitoring programmes, typically on a biennial frequency. These technical publications provide an invaluable data analysis and reporting tool but tend to be highly specific and quite complex. Three reports on the efficiency and effectiveness of the Regional Policy Statement have been published in 2003, 2004 and 2007, each focusing on a different chapters of the RPS. The State of the Auckland Region report was last published in 2004.

It is proposed to align the State of the Environment and the Community Outcomes with the Auckland Sustainability Framework, using the eight goals as the overarching framework. Doing this leverages the consensus obtained during the development of ASF and avoids duplication of time, effort, and resources.

Further, the Auckland Regional Policy Statement (ARPS) is currently under review with a revised notification date proposed for the end of 2009. This revised timing provides an opportunity to align the production of both outcome reports with the review so that information on current social, economic and environmental conditions and trends in Auckland can inform the policy development and drafting stages, assist with identification of anticipated outcomes, shape the policy effectiveness monitoring requirements, and contribute to the issues and options analysis.

This project plan outlines the strategy and work-plan for conducting the review and achieving the key objectives outlined in the sections below.

2 Objectives

The key objectives of the proposed 2009 State of the Auckland Region report are:

- to provide access to scientifically credible, robust, timely and relevant information on the current environmental conditions and trends in Auckland;
- to identify driving forces and direct pressures influencing environmental change and quality of life in Auckland;
- to identify the possible implications of environmental trends;
- to evaluate where possible the effectiveness of current management responses to environmental issues;
- to assist decision-making in policy development, implementation and resource management;
- to raise public awareness and understanding of environmental issues in order to improve the way we use, manage and value the environment; and
- to make recommendations on specific actions and future directions required to advance Auckland's progress towards meeting objectives of the Auckland Sustainability Framework (ASF)

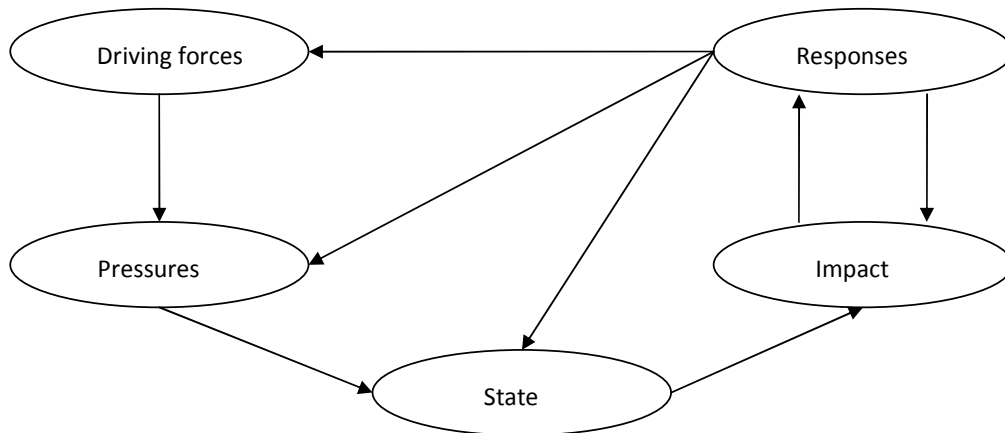
3 Proposed structure

A new approach to SoE reporting, both internationally and within New Zealand, is the Driving forces – Pressure – State – Impact – Response (DPSIR). This model provides a logical way to structure information by drawing linkages between causes of environmental pressures, their effects on environmental condition and societal responses. It recognises that human activities exert pressures on the environment which affects the functioning of natural ecosystems and changes the quality and quantity of natural resources. This results in a change in the state or condition of the environment. Society responds to this changed state by developing and implementing policies aimed at minimising the effects of those human activities on the environment.

The DPSIR framework assumes cause-effect relationships between interacting components of social, economic, and environmental systems, which are:

- Driving forces are a fundamental disturbance to a system that might result in changed ecological condition. (e.g. increasing urbanisation).
- Pressures are changes in (usually) physical and chemical conditions that arise from the disturbance. (e.g. increase in sedimentation due to land use development).
- State can be measures of environmental condition such abundance, diversity, or resilience (e.g. decline in sediment intolerant marine benthic species such as cockles).
- Impacts are changes to environmental condition or quality of life as a consequence of natural events and/or human activities (e.g. decrease availability of shellfish for traditional harvest).
- Response refers to the responses by society to the environmental situation (e.g. sediment control rules to reduce the loss of sediment from large scale developments).

Figure 1. The DPSIR Framework (EEA 1999)



The DPSIR approach is proposed as the basis for the 2009 State of the Auckland Region report as it represents a more comprehensive means to assessing the state of the environment through the

inclusion of the origins and consequences of environmental changes. Whilst no single model is capable of capturing the absolute complexity of the natural environment and its relationship with human activities, DPSIR does provide a framework through which to navigate the multiple casual relationships and linkages that emerge in complex system.

The SoE report will be divided into four main sections. Introductory and methodological elements will be addressed in Part 1. The socio-economic driving forces influencing environmental change in the Auckland region will be addressed in Part 2, followed by a more in-depth analysis of human activities driving natural resource consumption and waste generation in Part 3.

Part 4 captures the traditional elements of SoE reporting, identifying the present state of the regional environment and the direct pressures acting on it. This section will assess the impacts of current environmental pressures, condition and trends, utilising predictive modelling and landuse/population scenarios. The effectiveness of policy responses to environmental issues across a range of regulatory and non-regulatory methods will be quantitatively assessed where possible.

Consideration is given to dividing this section into 3 distinct themes: urban transformation, rural productivity and coastal management, to demonstrate that a healthy sustainable environment underpins desired outcomes in these three management areas. However this requires further exploration and debate.

Part 4 will be further structured on the basis of the key outcome areas in the ARC's LTCCP representing air & atmosphere (i.e. air quality, climate variability and change), land (i.e. land use and land use change, soil condition, hazards), freshwaters (i.e. quantity and ecosystem health), terrestrial biodiversity and heritage (i.e. loss, threats, resilience), and coastal marine (i.e. ecosystem health and coastal processes).

Part 5 will draw the various regional components from Part 4 together to report spatially at an individual catchment level. Report cards will be developed for each of the major marine receiving environments and their respective catchments (for example, Manukau, Waitemata, Mahurangi, Kaipara, others), and will highlight specific environmental impacts resulting from natural pressures and human activities. Part 5 will provide a local identity and relevance to regional results.

Recognising an objective of the SoE report is to make recommendations on specific actions and future directions required to advance Auckland's progress towards meeting the Auckland Sustainability Framework, the final section (Part 6) of the report will draw together the complex relationships and linkages between many of the issues raised in the preceding sections in order to highlight a path towards improving environmental sustainability and its impact on the quality of life for Aucklanders'.

This is a preliminary description of a proposed SoE framework. The breadth and scope of each part may vary as the SoE report develops and information sources and gaps are identified.

Reporting for outcome area

As described in the preceding section Part 4 describes the traditional elements SoE reporting, which is to identify the current condition and trends in the natural environment. In addition, the direct pressures acting on the environment, with reference to driving forces, and societal responses will be

reported. To assist interpretation, the broad outcome areas of the LTCCP will be used, each reported separately within Part 4. An introduction to each theme will include discussion of the relevant issues to be reported, reference to important linkages without outcome areas, and also an overview of the indicators to be used. This is a similar format to that used in the Ministry for the Environment's 2007 SoE report. Each outcome area will be assessed through discussion of the following key elements:

- Indicators(s)

The indicator(s) will be described with reference to their role as a measure of state, pressure, impact and response. Any underlying assumptions or limitations will be acknowledged, and the level of monitoring and quality of available data will be clearly identified.

- Status of the outcome area

The current state of the environment, including trends, will be assessed based on discussion of the indicators and other relevant and available data.

- Implications

The likely implications of the environmental conditions and trends will be discussed, including where available, scenarios.

- Response

The range of non-regulatory and regulatory responses will be identified and assessed against criteria based upon efficiency and effectiveness.

- Linkages

Specific reference will be made to other relevant issues.

Case studies will be used, where appropriate, to highlight risks, opportunities and challenges presented.

Development of regional indicators

The use of indicators is the fundamental basis of environmental reporting. The ARC cannot continuously measure every aspect of the environment. In the same way the gross domestic product is used as an indicator of economic activity, an environmental indicator provides information on a specific aspect of Auckland's environment. Sets of indicators can provide valuable information on the overall health of ecosystems in a cost-effective, practical and meaningful way. Indicators are also an important communication tool, aggregating complex information into a single reported indicator which has relevance to management.

Indicators are presently used in a number of statutory and non-statutory documents including the RLTS, ARED, and RGS. These tend to be weighted towards social and economic measures. A comprehensive set of environmental indicators is required to support existing reporting requirements as well as contributing to the implementation of ASF.

All indicators will be selected on the basis of criteria consistent with methodologies used nationally and internationally for sustainability reporting, and will meet the 'SMART' criteria– that is, that they are specific, measurable, accurate, reliable and time-bound

The ARC is fortunate to have a well established, comprehensive monitoring programme designed specifically to determine the extent and magnitude of changes in environmental state over time. It is anticipated that the majority of information will be drawn from these existing data sets.

3 Deliverables

The two stand-alone reports are envisaged:

- A **State of the Environment** report that will provide a rigorous and scientifically based analysis about the condition of Auckland's natural environment and pressures acting upon it in a form that is relatively simple and easy to understand.
- A **Community Outcomes** report on the wellbeing of Auckland's diverse communities and its people using the 20 outcomes identified in the 2006-16 Long Term Council Community Plan, such as health, safety, affordable housing, sense of community etc.

The production of the community outcomes report will be managed by the Regional Strategy Group in collaboration with other Policy & Planning groups, and is not included in this project plan.

4 Governance and reporting

The structure for governance and management of the Project is set out in Figure 2.

The Regional Strategy and Policy Committee (RSP) will maintain an overview of the development of the SoE report and will endorse the structure and content for publication by the Auckland Regional Council. Key dates for reporting to the RSP are identified in the project plan (see below, section 7).

The General Manager Policy and Planning will be the Project Sponsor, responsible for signing off reports and deliverables for presentation to the RSP, and for reporting to other political and officer committees as required.

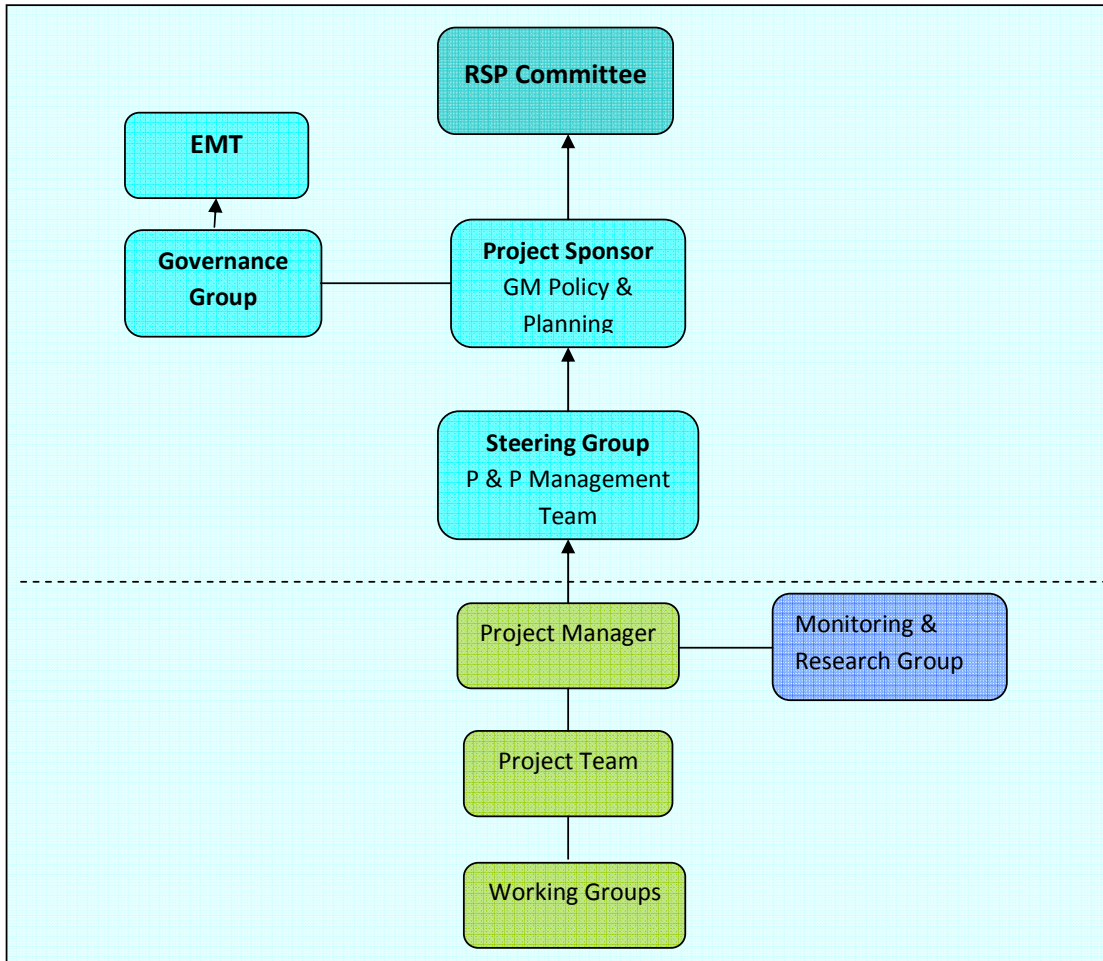
A Governance Group consisting of EMT members: Peter Winder, Lesley Baddon, Louise Mason, Janine Bell and John Smith, has been established to oversee the review of the ARPS. The group provides a responsive forum for signing off reports and deliverables within the tight timeframes, and for obtaining decisions on aligned projects such as the SoE report.

The Policy and Planning Management Team will be the steering group, responsible for monitoring progress and reviewing content. This group will ensure the integration of the SoE report with the ARPS review workstreams in Policy and Planning, and will be responsible for managing risk and addressing resourcing issues, escalating to the Governance Group through the Project Sponsor where necessary.

The Project Leader, Grant Barnes, will be responsible for managing the work to produce the project deliverables and will report fortnightly to the Policy and Planning Management Team and Project Sponsor, and monthly to the Governance Group. A project manager will be engaged to support the Project Leader with planning, monitoring and reporting.

A core project team has been set up. Each member of the team has been assigned responsibility for a portfolio of topic areas and will lead a working group in the development of content.

Figure 2 – Governance for SoE Report



Team members have been assigned to a portfolio as shown in Figure 3 below. The corresponding ARPS team member has been identified too to ensure alignment and ongoing dialogue.

As well as the topic-based workstreams, the detailed project plan will include generic workstreams for project management, communication, political engagement and production of the SoE.

Figure 3: Lead person(s) for each working group:

Working Group Tasks	MS ¹	MN	AT	MB	KM	NW	JO	GW	SG	AR	MD	GK
ARPS team equivalent	JW	AB	LW	JF	LW	JF	LW	MT	DTV /AB	DTV	AB	DTV
Socio-economic driving forces <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population growth and demographic change Transport 									X	X		
Ecological footprint <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural resource consumption Waste generation, hazardous substances, contaminated sites 									X			
Air Quality					X							
Climate Change												X
Land <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soil quality Soil Conservation 			X									
Natural Hazards							X					
Freshwaters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water quantity Water quality Ecological health 		X										
Stormwater												
Coastal & Marine <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water quality Contaminant fate Ecological health 	X											
Ecosystems and Biodiversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Native flora & fauna, loss, threat,& resilience Biosecurity – animal and plant pests, impacts, control 				X								
Matters of Significance to Iwi <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulatory & Non-regulatory methods Efficiency and effectiveness 								X				
Spatial based report cards	X	X	X	X								

¹ MS = Megan Stewart, MN = Martin Neale, AT = Amy Taylor, MB = Matt Baber, KM = Kevin Mahon, NW = Nick Waipara, JO = Jane Olsen, SG = Shaun Gamble, AR = Alison Reid, GW = Gerard Willis, MD = Matthew Davis, GK = Gerda Kuschel

SoE Project Plan

Each leader has the responsibility to:

- Lead the work for the topic area.
- Undertake stocktake, ensure information is collated.
- Ensure project is appropriately scoped at the outset and risks adequately identified.
- Maintain regular meetings and keep project moving along.
- Keep the team and project leader/manager updated on progress.
- Be the liaison point for the rest of the organisation and external agencies.

The approach for developing each topic is summarised in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4: Task Breakdown for topic workstreams

Task	Task Breakdown	Duration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stocktake existing data or information held within the ARC or by outside entities. • Determine technical reporting requirements. 	Jul 08
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on task 1, ensure technical reports already commissioned will be completed in time to input to the SoE report. • Commission new reports where appropriate and where delivery to SoE report requirements are assured. • Co-ordinate/carry out the work to deliver the technical programme 	Aug 08
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compilation reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission compilation reports under each main topic area (driving forces, air & atmosphere, land, freshwater, stormwater, coastal & marine, natural hazards, ecosystems and biodiversity) with the following objectives; <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Support drafting a development of ARPS, including assisting with ID of anticipated outcomes, issues & options analysis, and method development b. Provide a narrative for the SoE report and support development of regional indicators and guide spatial based report cards where required. 	Sept – Dec 08
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional indicator development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine core set of indicators using DPSIR framework : • Establish metadata, obtain raw data, commence analysis • Report findings 	Aug- Dec 08
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report cards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine format, scope, boundaries, analytical and reporting method • populate 	Oct – Dec 08
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SoE Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write draft report • Production – design document & produce maps, tables & figures. 	Nov – Jun 09 Jul – Nov 09

Appendix 2 provides a detailed breakdown of the project workstreams, tasks, deliverables, milestones, interdependencies and timing. This information will be used as the baseline for project monitoring and reporting.

Comment [G1]: To be completed

5 Political engagement

A framework has been developed for engagement with ARC councillors. This will ensure that the views of councillors are taken into account in determining the scope and structure of the SoE report. These points have been identified in the project plan as:

12 August 2008	Sign off on the proposed scope and structure
2 December 2008	Report progress on SoE development
March 2009	Report on SoE draft
August 2009	Sign off of final draft for final amendment and submission to the full Council
November 2009	SoE Report published

Councillors will have an opportunity to be involved through regular briefings and through participation in the extraordinary RSP meetings that have been scheduled for 2008 (and potentially will continue in 2009). As the draft progresses, it is envisaged that draft sections will be put forward for review and feedback.

6 Interdependencies

It is important for the success of SoE project that it aligns with revised ARPS streams of work to produce a coherent product. In addition, specific SoE workstreams align with the production of the Community Outcomes report described above. These interdependencies have been established and it has been agreed that the ARPS will drive the timetable for both outcome reports, culminating in release of a suite documents in November 2009 which includes the ARPS, the RLTS, the State of the Environment and Community Outcomes reports.

Progress with integration across the projects, and any issues and risks involved, will be monitored and reported to the steering group (Policy and Planning Management Group) who are responsible for managing the integration process. The challenge for the integration process is to ensure ongoing dialogue between the leaders of the different workstreams to signal content and direction and to ensure that key dates identified in Appendix 1 for delivery of technical work and drafting are met.

7 Timeline

An overview of the project timetable and milestones is attached as Appendix 1. The critical dates to deliver the work programme are as follows (figure 5):

Figure 5: Critical Dates for Delivery of SoES

Date	Deliverable	Outcome
12 August 2008 RSP <i>(Scope & Structure)</i>	Agenda report Proposed scope and structure of SoE	Decision to align SoE report with Community Outcomes report and Auckland Sustainability Framework goals
August 2008	Technical reports received from services providers	Technical reporting up to date and timely provision of information to compilation reports.
September- November <i>(Compilation reports)</i>	Feed into drafting and development of ARPS	Accurate & timely technical information support ARPS review.
2 December 2008 RSP <i>(First draft)</i>	Agenda report Report progress on SoE report including regional indicators and spatial based report cards	Decision to confirm as much content as possible and direct next phase of drafting.
Mid December 2008 <i>(Compilation reports)</i>	Completed technical reports. Feed into ARPS s.32 process	All significant/priority tasks in technical work programme completed.
Early March 2009 <i>(regional indicators & report cards)</i>	Core set of indicators completed and reported. Spatial based report cards finalised.	Outputs support drafting of SoE report
November- May 2009 <i>(Phase 2 consultation)</i>	Drafting of SoE report	
June 2009 RSP	Agenda report Report draft SoE report	Endorsement of draft and constructive feedback provides direction for final draft
Mid July 2009 <i>(Final draft)</i>	Completion of revised SoE draft (text and maps)	Draft taking into account Councillor feedback
August 2009 RSP <i>(RSP sign off)</i>	Agenda report Final draft of SoE	Decision to sign off the SoE subject to amendments.
September ARC <i>(Final sign off)</i>	Agenda report Final draft of SoE with any amendments required by RSP	Resolution to adopt and publish the SoE report
Sept- Oct <i>(Production)</i>	Finalised draft SoE report	Professional design, edit, printing
11 November 2009 <i>(Notification)</i>	Publication of SoE report to coincide with notification of ARPS	Stakeholders notified, media release, website updated.

8 Project Resources

Delivery of the 2009 State of the Environment report in November 2009 involves an ambitious programme of work, not only for the members of the project team but also for managers and officers across the ARC. The integration of the SoE project along with the interdependencies identified above will impact on workloads across the council.

The core project team comprises officers from the Monitoring & Research Group and technical staff Policy & Planning and Programmes & Partnerships departments. The project teams involvement will impact significantly on their capacity to take on other work during the next 12 months. This has particular implications for the Environmental Research team and their ability to provide technical advice to Regulatory Services and Programmes & Partnerships. It is anticipated that in the interim external resources will be required to fill this gap.

In addition to the workload for the project team members there will be involvement by officers across the council in providing input, reviewing drafts and participating in working groups.

The resources assigned to the project will be supplemented by research providers brought in for specific purposes such as development of the stormwater and freshwater compilation reports. Provision for these external resources has been made in existing budgets.

A dedicated project manager will be retained to support the group manager Monitoring & Research. A technical writer will be contracted to assist with writing the SoE report. These costs will be met from the 8460 profit centre.

APPENDIX 1 –PROJECT TIMELINE AND INTEGRATION WITH ARPS

