



FACT SHEET 9: BIOSOLIDS & CULTURAL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

INTRODUCTION

Long-term, regional wide solutions for managing biosolids require the consideration of community and iwi views and values. Resource Management Act resource consents may be straightforward¹, but the process can become contentious when there are conflicting views or values; or when customary land users contest a decision that has not adequately identified their interests.

The relationship between local government and Iwi is especially important. As both Treaty partner and a key stakeholder, Iwi and rūnanga have a very keen interest in being involved in waste, water and environmental issues.

TE AO MĀORI WORLDVIEW

Important aspects to understand about the Te Ao Māori worldview is the interconnectedness of all things. A small shift in the life force (mauri) of any part of the environment can cause shifts in the mauri, which may affect the whole system.

For Iwi, runanga and hapū, involvement in the decision making process may be beneficial in terms of enhanced tino rangatiratanga, as well as greater confidence that culturally significant sites, habitats and ecosystems have been identified, and a greater assurance that cultural values will be recognised and upheld in identified solutions.

WHY CULTURAL HEALTH INDEX?

The challenge for both Māori and resource managers is to find meaningful ways of incorporating cultural perspectives and values into decision making.

Cultural Health Frameworks provide a means by which iwi can communicate in a way that can be understood and integrated into resource management processes.

Cultural Health Frameworks aim to achieve two main goals:

- 1. To provide a way for Māori to take an active role in managing resources** by providing a framework for Māori to apply traditional methods and perspectives in assessing the overall health of the environment in their area.
- 2. To provide an opportunity for resource management agencies to discuss and incorporate Māori perspectives and values in management decisions.** Frameworks recognise and express Māori values and aim to link this cultural knowledge to western scientific methods.

SUMMARY OF CULTURAL FRAMEWORKS²

Several cultural health frameworks exist in New Zealand, developed by academic researchers, scientists, Iwi and other individuals, both Māori and non-Māori. Each framework presents a unique guide for users to follow to better understand, gauge and determine the needs, values and cultural beliefs of Māori people.

Eight frameworks commonly used in New Zealand are shown in the table overleaf, it is important to note that more may exist, however, the following have been selected for their appropriateness to the topic of biosolids management.

Paramount to correct use of each framework is the need for consultation with tangata whenua, Iwi, and hapū groups alongside the frameworks. Each region, Iwi, hapū and individual may hold specific and unique views and understandings of their environment and concepts, which must be communicated to produce meaningful outcomes for all³.

It is likely that many concepts are translatable across groups such as the importance of mauri to a region and its people; however, other values may exist unique to a particular area or group. It should not be assumed that a single framework will meet the expectations of all Iwi and hapū groups; instead robust consultation and communication with tangata whenua needs to be maintained throughout the process to ensure the cultural relevance and responsiveness of the Cultural Impact Assessment Framework to Māori.

FRAMEWORK	DESIGNED BY	AVAILABLE AT
Using mātauranga Māori to inform freshwater management – Tikanga based	Garth Harmsworth, Shaun Awatere and Craig Pauling	https://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/74433/Policy-Brief-7-Using-Maori-to-inform-freshwater.pdf
Mauri-Ometer Indigenous Maori Knowledge and Perspectives of Ecosystems – mana whenua and tikanga based	Garth Harmsworth and Shaun Awatere	http://www.mauriometer.com
Mauri Compass – mana whenua and tikanga based	Ian Ruru and Dave Wilson	https://www.mauricompass.com
Nga Mahi: Kaupapa Māori Outcomes and Indicators Kete – mana whenua and tikanga based	Richard Jefferies and Nathan Kennedy	https://researchcommons.waikato.ac.nz/handle/10289/895
Cultural flows – mana whenua and tikanga based	Gail Tipa and Kyle Nelson	Tipa, G., & Nelson K. (2008) Introducing Cultural Opportunities: a Framework for Incorporating Cultural Perspectives in Contemporary Resource Management, Journal of Environmental Policy & Planning, 10:4, 313-337, DOI: 10.1080/15239080802529472
Treaty-Based Planning Framework - mana whenua and tikanga based	Sue Scheele, Fiona Carswell, Garth Harmsworth, Phil Lyver, Shaun Awatere, Mahuru Robb, Yvonne Taura, Steven Wilson	Auckland Transport. (2016, December 26). Auckland Transport Sustainability Framework. Retrieved November 22, 2018, from https://at.govt.nz/media/1971278/item-101-at-sustainability-framework.pdf
A Cultural Health Index for Streams and Waterways: a tool for nationwide use - mana whenua and tikanga based	Gail Tipa and Laurel Teirney	https://www.mfe.govt.nz/sites/default/files/c/hi-for-streams-and-waterways-feb06-full-colour.pdf

BACKGROUND

The Regional Biosolids Strategy – Lower North Island is a collaborative project funded by the Waste Minimisation Fund. Ten lower North Island Councils have worked in partnership with Lowe Environmental Impact and research partners to develop a biosolids strategy that includes the potential collective management of sludge, focussing on beneficial use.



This project was undertaken with the support of the Ministry for the Environment waste minimisation fund, however, the Ministry does not necessarily endorse or support the content of this publication in any way.

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1. Fact Sheet 7 of the Regional Biosolids Strategy: Regulation and Consenting
2. Report 8 of the Regional Biosolids Strategy: Cultural Framework Assessments
3. Report 9 of the Regional Biosolids Strategy: Composting Trial Report