

Environment Waikato – Choosing Regional Futures

Environment Waikato will next year begin new research intended to provide New Zealand with an integrated system that can be used by central government agencies and local authorities for long-term sustainable planning.

The research programme is to receive \$400,000 of government funding annually for the next four years, through investment by the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology.

The aim is to develop a system of scenario analysis which combines a raft of information, including planning and forecasting trends, using indicators that match social, environmental, economic and cultural proposals with sustainable, long-term goals.

The system will become an evaluation framework, providing alternative future scenarios and measuring regional development against community goals and requirements. It will aid the community consultation process and ensures future planning is based on creating sustainable regions.

The research team will be headed by Dr Beat Huser of Environment Waikato and Dr Daniel Rutledge, a Landcare Research ecologist, and draws on expertise from the spectrum of crown research institutes, the University of Waikato and the New Zealand Centre for Ecological Economics. International research from the Netherlands and France will be used in developing the processes and tools.

While the Waikato region will be used as the case study by researchers, the tools will be applicable nationally with the Auckland Regional Council and Environment Bay of Plenty already on board as end user collaborators.

Further Information:

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