

# Working Draft

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**To:** Board of Inquiry: Proposed NPS Renewable Electricity Generation  
**Subject:** **Summary DRAFT Waikato Regionally Significant Resource Management Issues for 2G RPS**

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## Regionally Significant Resource Management Issues

### 1. Continuing decline in the quality and availability of natural resources

The ongoing degradation in the quality of natural resources are failing to meet current expectations and needs for amenity, economic and for human health purposes. We are inefficient and wasteful in our use of our renewable natural resources and are unaware of the incremental loss of non-renewable resources. This has been as a consequence of *ad hoc* decision making resulting in an historic over allocation of natural resources.

If we do not change the way we use our natural resources, they will not be in a suitable state to meet the future economic and amenity needs of the future and are at severe risk of creating human health problems.

Unplanned expansion of some activities is relegating others to marginal land where the effects of the activity are beyond the capacity of the environment to absorb and there are unacceptable consequences. This results in increasing competition for our resources and without robust allocation tools will lead to increased litigation and conflict between users as well as missed future opportunities.

We need to make sure our resources are there when they are needed and not degraded to an extent that they are useless. An understanding of emerging pressures and requirement for individual resources will assist with this. See Part III Monitoring.

### 2. Effects of climate change

Our climate is changing and is predicted to change further in the medium and long term. This will change the quality and quantity characteristics of our natural resources and create significant increased risks for communities that have located and developed under past climatic regimes. Use and development of natural resources and the design and location of infrastructure to support communities will need to adapt to changing conditions. This will involve allocation of future space for active hazard zones eg river, landslide and coastal erosion, and also links to pest species incursions (Biosecurity) and biodiversity matters.

Economic signals in response to international greenhouse gas mitigation actions have the potential to significantly change the mix of land use within the region. Any land use change will have consequences some positive and some negative. Maximising the co-benefits to the regional community will be important.



### 3. Secure access to energy

Our modern lifestyle has developed at a time of abundant and cheap energy. These conditions have now ceased through increasing global demand and recognition of the climate changing role of fossil fuels. This will increase the price and volatility and availability of traditional (fossil fuels). Access to new renewable sources of energy will be needed to provide stability and for community wellbeing into the future.

The regional economy is inextricably linked through international trade to the rest of the world. The embodied energy and carbon footprint of regional exports will need to remain low in order to maintain competitiveness in the global market. This will require a transparent accounting of carbon management. We currently inefficiently use (waste) much of our energy resources. We need to address where are we going to get the energy (secure supply) to power our regional and national economy in a future carbon constrained world?

### 4. Regional form and development

*Ad hoc* and uncoordinated residential, industrial, commercial and infrastructural development is resulting in adverse environmental effects and effects on the ability for people and communities to provide for their social, economic and cultural wellbeing. This is resulting in:

- Inefficient use of resources to provide services – costly infrastructure
- Unsustainable energy demand and carbon use;
- Reduced options for use of high quality land as primary production is relegated to more marginal land unable to absorb impacts. This is compounded with intensification of primary production;
- Increased exposure now and in the future to active natural hazard areas;
- Effects on water quality, air quality, biodiversity, landscape character, amenity values, heritage resources, natural character;
- Reduced access to water bodies, mineral resources and potential energy development sites;
- Decreased efficiency and effectiveness of, and future options for, transport systems and other infrastructure
- Reverse sensitivity issues
- Conflicts between strategies of resource management agencies
- Unintended cross boundary effects

### 5. Incremental loss of amenity and of ecosystem services

A healthy and vibrant regional economy is dependant upon a healthy environment to provide unpaid ecosystem services. Loss of amenity decreases the quality of life to current and potentially future citizens of the region, as some changes are irreversible or very long term in effect. This issue includes matters such as the incremental loss of our natural infrastructure – natural character, rural character, landscape and heritage values, Values that we often only realise are gone, after the fact.