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Sea Change – Tai Timu Tai Pari: Creating a marine spatial plan for the Hauraki Gulf

Sea Change – Tai Timu Tai Pari: Creating a marine spatial plan for the Hauraki Gulf

34% of New Zealanders live in the Auckland region

37% of all recreational fishers are located within the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park

169 boat ramps
more than **11,000** moorings and marina berths

1.2 million hectares of ocean

more than **50** islands — including Kawau, Aotea / Great Barrier, Waiheke, and Ahuahu / Great Mercury Islands

There are over **1.4 million** people currently living in the Auckland region

... this is expected to exceed **2 million** by 2033

An additional **2.6 million people** visited Auckland in 2017

... and in the Auckland and Waikato regions around the Hauraki Gulf, there are likely to be **about 100,000 visitors on any given day**

Population growth is driving demand for urban development around the Hauraki Gulf, leading to urban sprawl and intensification

Between 2013 and 2016, an extra **813 hectares** of greenfield land were converted for urban use and **123 hectares** of new roads were built

Tikapa Moana Te Moananui a Toi
Hauraki Gulf Marine Park

Mangawhai
NORTHLAND

Aotea / Great Barrier Island

Little Barrier Island

Rangitoto
Waiheke Island

Ahuahu / Great Mercury Island

TĀMAKI MAKAURAU / AUCKLAND

Auckland City

Thames

Waihi

WAIKATO

Tauranga

Hamilton

BAY OF PLENTY

The state of the **Hauraki Gulf**

- In the Auckland region, beach water quality for recreational contact is unsuitable **at least once every 3 years**

- The conservation status of four species of seabirds that breed in the Gulf has improved since 2014, but there are serious concerns for another four

- Heavy metal concentrations in the Auckland region remain elevated. Man-made litter is an ongoing problem

Contents

Overview

E ngā mana, e ngā reo, e ngā karangarangatanga maha o te motu, tēnā koutou.

The Hauraki Gulf/Tīkapa Moana is a significant marine environment and one of the most highly used marine areas in the country. It is used for boating and recreational, commercial, and customary fishing. It is important to people living in the region, is of significance to mana whenua, and contributes to a large part of the region's tourism industry. Each year, the Hauraki Gulf/Tīkapa Moana generates more than $2.7 billion in economic activity.

Protecting and conserving the marine ecosystems while balancing the competing interest groups in the region is challenging. Several councils and government departments are responsible for managing the various interest groups that use the Gulf, which includes the Crown's Treaty of Waitangi obligations. The Hauraki Gulf Forum has reported that, since 2011, there has been a decline in the state of the Gulf.

In 2013, the Hauraki Gulf Forum, Auckland Council, and Waikato Regional Council established the Sea Change – Tai Timu Tai Pari project. They were joined by the Department of Conservation and the Ministry for Primary Industries. The objective of the project was to create New Zealand's first marine spatial plan, which would create a healthy, productive, and sustainable future for the Hauraki Gulf/Tīkapa Moana. The plan was developed by a stakeholder-led collaborative group rather than by the central and local government agencies. The plan, which is non-statutory and non-binding, was finalised in December 2016.

Main findings

The Sea Change – Tai Timu Tai Pari project was a large and ambitious undertaking aimed at addressing a complex problem that involved many overlapping interests. A collaborative approach can be useful for solving these kinds of problems. The project required significant commitment from local and central government agencies and representatives of the stakeholder-led collaborative group.

In many ways, the project was a successful example of a stakeholder-led collaborative approach. It resulted in a completed plan with general support from those who prepared it.

However, the plan is not easy for the central and local government agencies to implement, and those involved in the project are frustrated at the lack of progress in implementing the plan. We have identified aspects of the Sea Change – Tai Timu Tai Pari project that, if done better, would have made implementing the plan easier:

- The agencies were not as involved in developing the marine spatial plan as they could have been. There needed to be a balance between giving the stakeholder-led collaborative group enough independence while still having the right amount of involvement from the agencies.

- There needed to be more communication and discussion of the plan with stakeholders as it neared completion. Because there was not as much engagement as there could have been, not all of the stakeholder groups agreed with the final plan.
- Towards the end of the project, and when the plan had been finished, there was little discussion with the community about it. The plan could have benefited from wider communication and, from that, gained wider support from the community.
- When the project was set up, certain matters, such as setting an appropriate scope, needed to be considered so the central and local government agencies could easily implement the plan.
- The agencies could also have prepared for how they would implement the plan, including how they would work together with other organisations and stakeholders, and what the role of mana whenua would be.

Looking ahead

Collaborative approaches are increasingly used to prepare plans for protecting natural resources. We encourage all agencies that are setting up collaborative planning projects to consider the lessons in our report and the questions posed in the Appendix.

This project's success will ultimately depend on how the marine spatial plan is used and whether its recommendations are incorporated into local and central government's decision-making.

The Government has recently announced the establishment of a Ministerial Advisory Committee to consider the implementation of the plan. It is important for the agencies to consider how they will work together to progress implementing the plan and get support from affected stakeholder groups, such as commercial and recreational fishing groups. There is a risk that if there is no further consideration of the recommendations in the marine spatial plan, the money and effort spent on the project will largely be wasted.

I thank all the stakeholders, staff from the agencies, and project representatives for their co-operation and openness as we carried out our audit of the project.

Nāku noa, nā,

Greg Schollum
Deputy Controller and Auditor-General

5 December 2018

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Introduction

1.1　The Hauraki Gulf/Tīkapa Moana covers 1.2 million hectares. It reaches from Mangawhai in Northland to Waihi on the Coromandel Peninsula. The Gulf includes five marine reserves, multiple nature sanctuaries, and more than 50 islands.

1.2　Because of its national significance, the Hauraki Gulf/Tīkapa Moana was designated as New Zealand's first marine park under the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park Act 2000.

1.3　There are many different interests that use the Hauraki Gulf/Tīkapa Moana, including aquaculture, fishing, tourism, shipping, and ferry transport industries. Each year, the Hauraki Gulf/Tīkapa Moana generates more than $2.7 billion in economic activity.

1.4　The Hauraki Gulf Forum, established under the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park Act 2000, is responsible for facilitating integrated management of the Hauraki Gulf/Tīkapa Moana.[1] Since being formed in 2000, it has released a report every three years on the state of the Hauraki Gulf/Tīkapa Moana called *State of our Gulf*.

1.5　The 2011 *State of our Gulf* report showed an overall decline in the Hauraki Gulf/Tīkapa Moana and stated that better management of its resources was needed. This report led to the "marine spatial plan" project. The Hauraki Gulf Forum supported the project.

1.6　The two *State of the Gulf* reports completed since 2011 continue to show an overall decline in the state of the Hauraki Gulf/Tīkapa Moana. For example, the 2017 report noted that litter is a pervasive problem for beaches in the Hauraki Gulf/Tīkapa Moana, and that crayfish and edible cockle numbers are in decline.

1.7　The 2017 report also notes there has been an increase in non-indigenous marine pest species, and toxic metals have been recorded at levels above sediment quality guidelines.

Marine spatial planning

1.8　Marine spatial planning is increasingly used internationally to manage marine areas. This approach aims to balance demands and reduce conflicts about how the marine area is used, while also protecting marine ecosystems. It has been described as:

> *… a practical way to create and establish a more rational organisation of the use of marine space and the interaction between its uses, to balance the demands for*

1　Hauraki Gulf Forum members include representatives from the Ministry of Conservation, Ministry of Fisheries, and Te Puni Kōkiri; elected representatives of Auckland Council, Waikato Regional Council, Thames-Coromandel, Hauraki, Waikato, and Matamata-Piako District Councils; and representatives of the tangata whenua of the Hauraki Gulf/Tīkapa Moana and its islands.

development with the need to protect marine ecosystems, and to achieve social and economic objectives in an open and planned way.[2]

1.9　Marine spatial planning generally results in a comprehensive spatial management plan for the marine area, which includes priorities and their future implications.

The Sea Change – Tai Timu Tai Pari project

1.10　In 2013, Auckland Council and Waikato Regional Council started the Sea Change – Tai Timu Tai Pari project (the project). They were joined by the Department of Conservation and the Ministry for Primary Industries. The Hauraki Gulf Forum also supported the work. The objective of the project was to create New Zealand's first marine spatial plan (the plan) and secure a healthy, productive, and sustainable future for the Hauraki Gulf/Tīkapa Moana.[3] The plan was to be a non-statutory and non-binding document.

1.11　The project governance arrangements for the project included councils from the region, mana whenua, relevant government departments, and stakeholder groups. Figure 1 shows the project's structure.

1.12　The project was a "stakeholder-led collaborative project". This means that the plan was prepared by a working group made up of representatives from the community instead of the agencies. A stakeholder-led approach is one type of collaborative approach. In this report, we also talk about collaborative approaches more generally.

2　Ehler, C and Douvere, F (2009), *Marine Spatial Planning – A Step-by-Step Approach toward Ecosystem-based Management*, UNESCO, page 18.

3　See the Sea Change website at www.seachange.org.nz.

Figure 1
Structure of the Sea Change – Tai Timu Tai Pari project

Arrangements for the project included many different groups and stakeholders.

Project Board
Auckland Council, Waikato Regional Council, mana whenua, Department of Conservation, Ministry for Primary Industries, Hauraki Gulf Forum.

Project Steering Group
Eight representatives from **local and central government.**
Eight mana whenua representatives.

Mātauranga Māori Reference Group*
Mana whenua representatives from the Project Steering Group and Stakeholder Working Group.
Initially started as a roundtable.

Public meetings
For community members and stakeholders with interests in the Hauraki Gulf.

Stakeholder Working Group
14 representatives of the different interests in the Hauraki Gulf.
Led by the **independent chairperson**.

Independent Review Panel
Five expert advisors and **technical experts**. They completed **three reports** for the Project Steering Group during the project.

Hauraki 100+
Members of the community who attended meetings for selection of the Stakeholder Working Group.

Roundtables
Seven roundtables were set up for stakeholders to discuss specific issues.

Project management and support
Auckland Council, Waikato Regional Council, Department of Conservation, and Ministry for Primary Industries (the agencies).

Sea Change – Tai Timu Tai Pari Marine Spatial Plan

Source: Office of the Auditor-General.

1.13 The **Project Board** was responsible for the administration and resourcing of the project within a set budget.

1.14 The **Project Steering Group**[4] took a co-governance approach. In a resource management context, the terms "co-governance" and "co-management" are negotiated arrangements between iwi, central government, local government, and/or local groups to effectively manage an environment or conservation resource.[5] The Project Steering Group had a strategic oversight function. Its role was to monitor progress and review and approve the marine spatial plan.

4   Representatives from Auckland Council, Waikato Regional Council, Thames Coromandel District Council, Hauraki District Council, Hauraki Gulf Forum, Department of Conservation, and the Ministry for Primary Industries and eight mana whenua members.

5   Controller and Auditor-General (2016), *Principles for effectively co-governing natural resources*, Wellington.

1.15   The **Stakeholder Working Group** was responsible for preparing the marine spatial plan. Initially, the Stakeholder Working Group had 18 months to prepare the plan. An independent chairperson was appointed to lead the Stakeholder Working Group.

1.16   The project had an **Independent Review Panel**. The panel was to provide assurance that the project followed good practice in marine spatial planning.

1.17   The **Mātauranga Māori Reference Group** was formed during the course of the project.

1.18   The project was officially launched in September 2013, with an initial deadline of June 2015 for completing the plan (see Figure 2).

1.19   Overall, the plan took just over three years to complete. This was 18 months longer than planned.

1.20   In May 2015, the project was put on hold for six months. When the project resumed, the Stakeholder Working Group had a new independent chairperson.

1.21   The project was put on hold in May 2015 because mana whenua representatives involved in the project felt that their input was not being adequately and accurately reflected in the plan. The issues were resolved and people involved in the project agreed that it worked better after the project resumed. The plan was completed in December 2016.
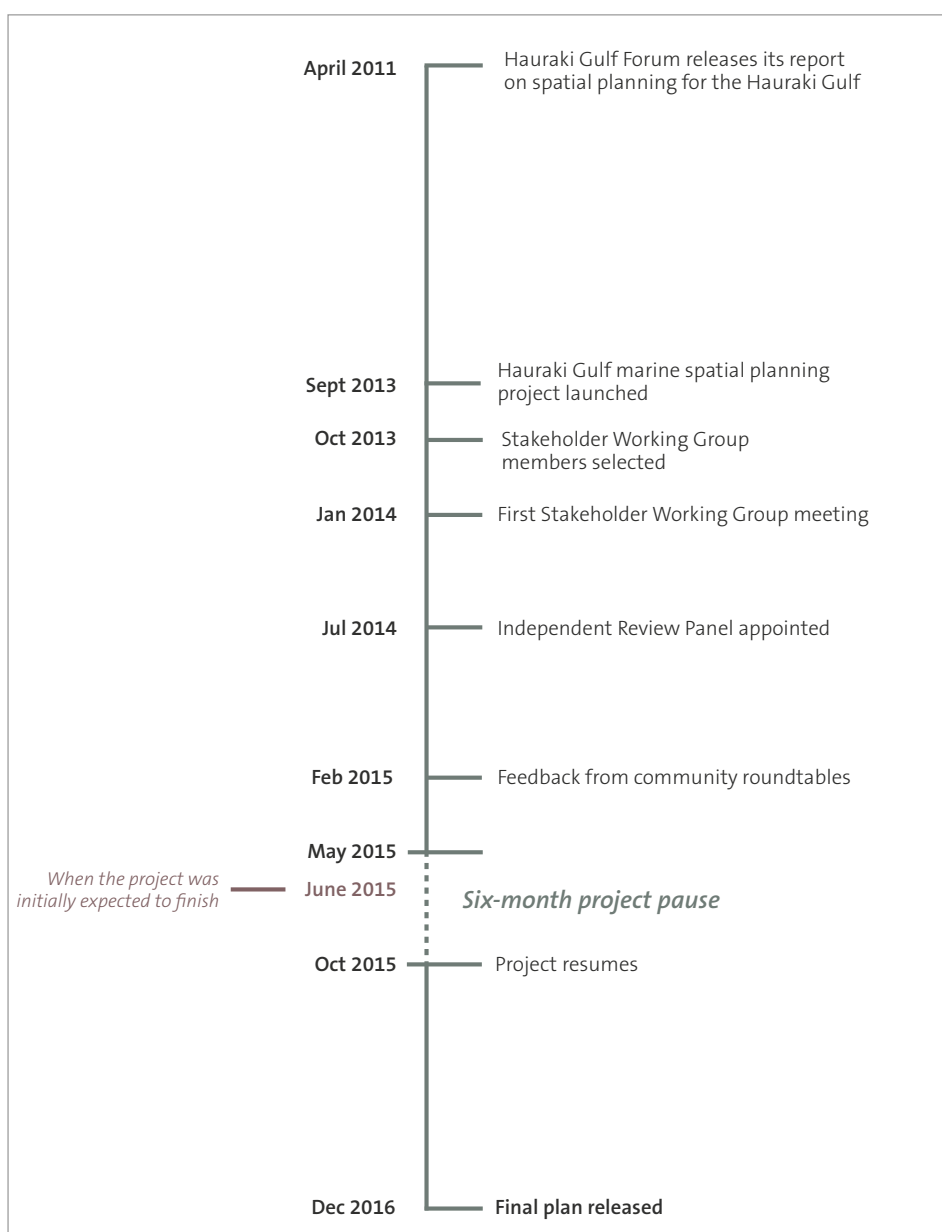
Resourcing

1.22   Auckland Council, Waikato Regional Council, the Department of Conservation, and the Ministry for Primary Industries (the agencies) resourced the project.

1.23   The overall budget was about $2.1 million, with Auckland Council and Waikato Regional Council agreeing to share the direct project costs. The total spending for the project has been estimated to be $6 million.[6] The Ministry for Primary Industries contributed $550,000 through the Aquaculture Planning Fund. The Department of Conservation also contributed a small amount and funded development of the marine spatial planning tool, Sea Sketch. The Department of Conservation put substantial resources into the tool and provided staff to use it.

1.24   The agencies all provided support staff, and there was a dedicated project manager for the duration of the project.

1.25   The agencies provided a significant amount of technical support, including geospatial work carried out by Auckland Council and Waikato Regional Council.

6   This does not include indirect costs, such as the time contributed by staff of the agencies.

Figure 2
Timeline of the Sea Change – Tai Timu Tai Pari project

The project was officially launched in September 2013, with an initial deadline of June 2015.
The final plan was released in December 2016.

April 2011	Hauraki Gulf Forum releases its report on spatial planning for the Hauraki Gulf
Sept 2013	Hauraki Gulf marine spatial planning project launched
Oct 2013	Stakeholder Working Group members selected
Jan 2014	First Stakeholder Working Group meeting
Jul 2014	Independent Review Panel appointed
Feb 2015	Feedback from community roundtables
May 2015	
When the project was initially expected to finish **June 2015**	*Six-month project pause*
Oct 2015	Project resumes
Dec 2016	**Final plan released**

Source: Office of the Auditor-General.

What we audited

1.26   We focused on the project to create the marine spatial plan. Specifically, our focus was on the agencies and how they set up the project and supported the Stakeholder Working Group and Project Steering Group. We also looked at how the agencies planned for implementation during the project.

1.27   We wanted to identify what other public agencies could learn from the project and could apply to other collaborative projects. Similar collaborative approaches are increasingly used for managing rivers, lakes, and streams (and other natural resources) in New Zealand and supporting councils' decision-making.[7]

What we did not audit

1.28   We have not assessed the quality of the final plan that was produced. The Independent Review Panel used the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) publication *Marine Spatial Planning: A Step-by-Step Approach toward Ecosystem-based Management* in their work as a guide for good practice in marine spatial planning.

1.29   We have also not considered the effectiveness of implementing the plan, because that has yet to happen.

How we did the audit

1.30   We carried out more than 60 interviews and reviewed more than 100 documents. These included interviews with many of the Stakeholder Working Group and Project Steering Group representatives, interested stakeholders, and a wide range of staff from the agencies. Interested stakeholders that we interviewed included people from the commercial fishing and aquaculture industries.

1.31   We have used the interviews to form a view of what worked well, what could have been improved, and lessons for future collaborative projects. Documented evidence provided supporting information to help support the interviews.

2 Planning for the Sea Change – Tai Timu Tai Pari project

2.1 In this Part, we consider how the Sea Change – Tai Timu Tai Pari project, was set up, including its governance structures and the collaborative working groups.

Summary of our findings

2.2 At the start of the project, the agencies put considerable effort into planning and putting in place the project's governance structures. They set out terms of reference for the Project Board, the Project Steering Group, and the Stakeholder Working Group. Clear governance structures, scope, resources, and considered selection of representatives of the collaborative working groups, are important.[8]

2.3 The trust between the representatives of the Stakeholder Working Group and the collaborative way they worked were strengths of the project. However, more clearly defined accountabilities between the Project Board, the Project Steering Group, and the Stakeholder Working Group could have helped them to work together more effectively at times.

2.4 There needs to be a balance between giving a collaborative working group a enough of a broad scope to come up with innovative solutions and having the boundaries and structures in place for the project (such as constraints to cost, scope, and legislative context) so that the final plan can be easily implemented by the agencies. This is not easy to do. In our view, the agencies could have made implementing the final plan easier by setting a more defined scope for the Stakeholder Working Group. For example, setting a more realistic time frame and implementing boundaries might have meant creating a plan that the agencies could more easily implement.[9] In implementing the plan, agencies also need to consider the plan's proposals against statutory considerations and central and local government priorities as well as other stakeholders who have an important role in implementation. Stakeholder expectations need to be managed in the light of this.

2.5 Some important sectors and interest groups did not have representatives on the Stakeholder Working Group. There needs to be consideration of how the process can incorporate unrepresented sectors and interests as the work is being carried out.

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8 Our 2016 report, *Principles for effectively co-governing natural resources*, identifies principles that are helpful in setting up and operating co-governance arrangements and also provides some lessons that could help to achieve successful co-governance. Another of our 2016 reports, *Reflections from our audits: Governance and accountability*, identifies the need for clarity of governance and management roles at a project level.

9 The need to define the scope well, and consider the costs and benefits in a plan, has also been identified as important for improving the effectiveness of a marine spatial plan by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. In particular, it identifies the need to set priorities and scope to ensure that the project is achievable, to consider costs and benefits and economic valuation, and to consider from the outset how a plan's proposals are going to be put into practice. See Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2017), *Issue paper Marine Spatial Planning, Assessing net benefits and improving effectiveness*, 2017 GGSD Forum, page 6.

How project governance structures were set up

Defining project governance roles and relationships

2.6   The structures set up for the project provided an effective basis for preparing the plan.

2.7   The agencies set up project governance structures at the beginning of the project. They also set out clear terms of reference for the Stakeholder Working Group, the Project Board, and the Project Steering Group.

2.8   The terms of reference for the Stakeholder Working Group stated that the group prepare a marine spatial plan for the Hauraki Gulf/Tīkapa Moana that the agencies would adopt and implement. The terms of reference stated that the plan must be:

  • supported by the agencies;

  • able to be formally adopted by the agencies;

  • implementable by the agencies; and

  • acceptable to stakeholder groups.

2.9   However, because of their different responsibilities, more consideration was needed of how the Project Steering Group and Stakeholder Working Group would work together. This might have helped the two groups have a closer relationship and the Project Steering Group have better oversight of the plan.

2.10   As the project progressed, it became apparent that the Project Steering Group did not work with the Stakeholder Working Group as closely as expected. Several Project Steering Group representatives indicated that they did not feel they had enough opportunity to provide input into the marine spatial plan's final proposals. This affected how confident they felt in approving the plan.

2.11   When there is a Project Board as well as a Project Steering Group, it is important for them to consider how to establish clear accountabilities between the different groups. At times during the project, the responsibilities of the Project Board and the Project Steering Group in directing the project could have been clearer.

The scope of the proposed plan

2.12   The scope of the Stakeholder Working Group's work was largely unconstrained. This meant that it was not restricted to a specified budget, particular legislation, or approach to marine management.

2.13   However, if the agencies had set more constraints at the start of the project about what should be considered in the plan – for example, the need for costed options or reducing the number of topics that the Stakeholder Working Group was

expected to address – it would have meant the final plan was easier for agencies to implement. This was also particularly important because of the short time frame the group had to complete the plan.

2.14   The final plan had gaps, which the Independent Review Panel noted, and did not cover several topics (such as biosecurity and infrastructure) in as much detail as others in the plan. There was also little integration of issues between the different sectors, and there was no cost–benefit nor socioeconomic analysis of the plan's proposals.

2.15   In our view, if the agencies had specified the expectations and constraints in cost, economic analysis, and legislation at the beginning of the project, the final plan might have been more straightforward for them to implement. However, there needs to be a balance – the Stakeholder Working Group needed to have enough independence and leeway to come up with innovative solutions.

Time frame for preparing the plan

2.16   The broad scope and the numerous interests that needed to be considered when preparing the plan meant that the 18-month time frame to complete it was ambitious.

2.17   In our view, it would have been better to have a longer time frame for the project from the beginning. Although a clear time frame is needed so that momentum can be maintained, there needs to be enough time allowed for the representatives of the Stakeholder Working Group to get to know each other, so that they can work together effectively and engage with their stakeholder groups. We consider three years might have been a more realistic time frame considering other international marine spatial planning projects.

2.18   With the project, the Stakeholder Working Group representatives established effective relationships that helped them to work together effectively.

2.19   Although the plan had an extended time frame, many representatives of the Stakeholder Working Group felt that the final stages of the project were rushed and that they needed more time. Other representatives also agreed that the end of the project was rushed. This affected the quality and cohesiveness of the final plan that was produced.

2.20   Others felt that the 18 month time frame would have been enough if discussions on difficult issues and negotiations between competing interests had started earlier. This would have provided more time to discuss and agree parts of the plan that were more complex and harder to resolve.

2.21   The original budget did not include funding for the extra time the project took. All funding for the extra time needed to be secured from the councils. Funding was limited at the end of the project. This meant that processes such as editing the final plan and communications for launching the final plan were not as well-resourced as they might have needed to be.

2.22   Participating in the Stakeholder Working Group required considerable time commitments from the representatives involved. The longer the process went on, the harder it was for them to remain on the project, particularly for those who were giving up their income to participate.

Choosing an independent chairperson with the right skills

2.23   The people we spoke to discussed the wide range of knowledge and skills needed by the independent chairperson. These included skills in facilitation, negotiation, and co-ordination, and an understanding of the Hauraki Gulf/Tīkapa Moana, resource management, marine spatial planning, co-governance, and Treaty settlement issues. They also needed an understanding of te ao Māori and experience in working with mana whenua.

2.24   In our view, the independent chairperson for a collaborative stakeholder group needs to have a broad range of skills. Having an independent chairperson with these skills is important for the success of any collaborative project.

How representatives for the Stakeholder Working Group were selected

Selection of mana whenua representatives for the Stakeholder Working Group

2.25   The four mana whenua representatives in the Stakeholder Working Group were selected at a hui, which 26 mana whenua groups from the region were invited to attend. This meant that there was clarity for iwi on how the representatives were chosen and a clear mandate for them to represent mana whenua interests in the Hauraki Gulf/Tīkapa Moana.

2.26   The mana whenua representatives told us they were mindful of not representing just their own iwi but all iwi in the Hauraki Gulf/Tīkapa Moana. To ensure that information was communicated to all iwi, the mana whenua representatives also set up hui-ā-iwi for wider iwi engagement as the project progressed.

2.27   The timing of the project was not ideal because there were many Treaty negotiations still under way. This was difficult at times for mana whenua

representatives and meant that they were often required to "walk a fine line" because they did not want project decisions to affect ongoing or future Treaty negotiations.

2.28   Because of this, the final plan also needed careful wording. This was led by the second independent chairperson of the Stakeholder Working Group.

Selection of other representatives for the Stakeholder Working Group

2.29   The Stakeholder Working Group selection process for the other representatives was designed to select people who could represent their particular interest groups (for example, recreational fishing) and were able to work collaboratively. The selection process used assumed that advocates find it harder to move from their fixed positions, particularly if they are paid representatives.

2.30   Rather than selecting people who have been nominated from particular interest groups, which is a common approach, representatives for the project were selected from those nominated at two public meetings. Representatives for each particular interest group were selected by those present at a third meeting.

2.31   This approach was used because it was assumed that if the people chosen were highly regarded in their community, the Stakeholder Working Group would be seen as having a broad mandate and support from the different communities or interest groups.

2.32   However, in practice, not all interest groups considered that their representative had a mandate. The selection process also meant the representative did not represent all affected groups within that interest, for example commercial fishing. This was made more difficult when discussing complex issues that affected this sector.

2.33   In our view, the process would have benefited from giving more clarity on how the Stakeholder Working Group representatives would represent all interests. This affected the credibility of the selection process.

2.34   Despite the agencies contacting a wide range of interested stakeholders about the project, the selection method used meant that any interest groups that did not come to the selection meetings could not be represented on the Stakeholder Working Group. Consequently, some interest groups, such as forestry and land development, were not involved in the project.

How did Stakeholder Working Group representatives represent their interest groups?

2.35 After being selected, the representatives of the Stakeholder Working Group were expected to provide the perspectives of the groups they were representing.

2.36 The Stakeholder Working Group representatives had differing levels of communication and support with their interest groups. The Stakeholder Working Group representatives were limited by their available time and by their connections. Some interest groups did take a more proactive role in working with their representative on the project – for example, DairyNZ helped set up meetings for the representative representing farming to talk with interested stakeholders when the plan was completed.

2.37 It was difficult for some Stakeholder Working Group representatives to represent all viewpoints of their interest, such as all aspects of commercial fishing. As a result, some groups felt that they did not have the input they would have liked into the project.

2.38 These interest groups would have liked to be able to comment on, or contribute to, the proposals being considered and the final recommendations in the plan. The lack of communication that some interest groups had with their representative, combined with their inability to be involved in the process, meant that some interested stakeholders considered that the Stakeholder Working Group representatives did not have a mandate to represent their interests. This lack of communication also contributed to some interest groups not supporting all the proposals in the marine spatial plan.

2.39 In our view, having more clarity for the Stakeholder Working Group on the expectations for engagement with their interests at the different stages of the project would have been useful. We saw little evidence of how representatives of the Stakeholder Working Group were expected to work with their interest groups, or what resources were made available for them to do this.

Costs of participation

2.40 The Stakeholder Working Group representatives came from a variety of different backgrounds. Although representatives were not compensated for a loss of earnings,[10] some representatives were able to participate as part of their paid employment. Other representatives took time away from their paid employment to be involved in the project, such as the commercial fishing representative.

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10 Costs to attend meetings, such as travel and accommodation, were paid for by the project. From late 2015, Stakeholder Working Group members who were not earning income while participating in the project were given a payment to attend and prepare for meetings.

2.41   The project demanded a substantial time commitment. The agencies could have given more consideration to the costs of participation so that the representatives viewed the process as fair.

2.42   Some Stakeholder Working Group representatives also told us that the value of their commitment was not recognised sufficiently. In particular, some noted that they were selected because of their in-depth knowledge of their sector but were expected to donate their time, while others like agency staff and scientific experts were being paid. This appeared inequitable.

2.43   The agencies also needed to consider how best to include and support mana whenua. Because of their skills and expertise, many of the mana whenua representatives were involved in other work for their iwi as well as the project. This meant that they had to manage significant demands on their time.

How different approaches might be needed when working collaboratively

2.44   Central and local government do not often use formalised stakeholder-led collaborative approaches when preparing their plans. We heard that one of the benefits of a collaborative project led by stakeholders is that a wider range of interest groups become involved, and this provides for better support and participation than an agency-led project.

2.45   Having wide-ranging support from project representatives, including mana whenua, means that agencies can be confident of support when planning for implementation.

2.46   If the agencies are carrying out a collaborative planning project, they might need to consider different approaches to setting up and managing the project. It is also important for agencies to consider what tools might be appropriate at the start of the project.

2.47   There are many models to consider when carrying out a collaborative project. The Sea Change – Tai Timu Tai Pari project was stakeholder-led, which meant the Stakeholder Working Group worked independently from the agencies and had responsibility for preparing the plan. This was at the "collaborative" end of the International Association for Public Participation Spectrum (IAP2) framework of collaboration, which involves a greater level of public participation. The collaborative end of the IAP2 sets a goal of partnering with the public to ensure that they are involved in decision-making and identifying a preferred solution.[11]

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11   The IAP2 is a spectrum of public participation with five points: inform, consult, involve, collaborate, and empower. The IAP2 is a useful framework for central and local agencies to consider when determining the appropriate level of public participation in a planning process. Through considering and selecting one of five points within the spectrum, central and local agencies can then determine what level of public participation is appropriate and the corresponding actions and tools that would support this.

2.48   There is guidance on collaborative projects on the Ministry for the Environment's website that could be helpful for agencies to consider.[12]

2.49   During our audit, we saw examples where different approaches were needed because it was an stakeholder-led collaborative approach rather than an agency-led approach:

- Securing a budget can be challenging for collaborative projects when the final product is harder to define and time frames need to be flexible. Flexibility was needed when the project went over time and budget. It required a significant commitment from the agencies involved to continue to give the project the time and budget needed to finish the plan.

- Several representatives said that the agencies were more conservative in their approach to media engagement and communication than the project might have needed. This was despite having a communications advisor on the project.

- The types of skills that agency staff need when working on a collaborative project might be different than for other planning processes. The agencies might need to have support, guidance, and training tools for their staff working in collaborative projects. We were told that, during the project, agency staff developed collaboration, negotiation, and facilitation skills.

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12   Cawthron Institute (2015), *Criteria for choosing collaboration*. Report No. 2708. Prepared for the Ministry for the Environment, Wellington. www.mfe.govt.nz.
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Learning from the Sea Change – Tai Timu Tai Pari project

We encourage all public agencies setting up collaborative projects to consider the following lessons:

- Clearly defined roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities between funding agencies, project governance groups, and collaborative working groups help support a project to work effectively.

- Funding agencies need to consider the scope of work they are asking the collaborative working group to do – in particular, whether there are constraints (such as cost, breadth of scope, and legislative context) that the group should work within when preparing the plan's proposals and recommendations. This will also help with managing the expectations of a working group. Setting a realistic scope can support the quality and ease of implementing the final plan.

- Collaborative projects take time and require the representatives to get to know each other so they can collaborate effectively. Allowing enough time for the working group to discuss, negotiate, and agree on complex issues is important.

- The selection process for representatives of a working group needs to ensure that all main interest groups are represented. If not, there needs to be consideration of how the process can incorporate these views as the work is carried out.

- From the outset of a project, the expectations for how and how extensively a collaborative working group will engage with interest groups at different stages of the project needs to be clear. Agencies need to consider how the wider interest groups will be kept involved in the project, particularly if there are diverse views within an interest group. The project needs to be agile enough to do this.

- The commitment required and participation costs for representatives on a collaborative working group can be significant. When putting in place a time frame for preparing a plan, agencies need to consider how much time a representative can reasonably be expected to devote to the project, and how their participation costs might be covered. For representatives who are not earning income during their time on the project, the length of the project is important.

- Selecting the independent chairperson is important to the success of a collaborative project. The role is a challenging one and requires a high level of skill in multiple areas.

Carrying out the Sea Change – Tai Timu Tai Pari project

<div style="text-align: right; font-size: 3em; color: gray;">3</div>

3.1 In this Part, we consider how the agencies managed the overall project. We also consider how the Stakeholder Working Group operated and interacted with other groups, such as the Project Steering group and the agencies, to prepare the marine spatial plan. These relationships are important in any collaborative project.

Summary of our findings

3.2 The agencies supported co-governance of the project by putting in place clear processes for selecting mana whenua representatives. This ensured support from iwi and enough flexibility in the process to create the Mātauranga Māori Reference Group.

3.3 One of the most positive benefits of the stakeholder-led aspect of the project was that the groups and individuals involved in the Stakeholder Working would not normally work together. The common goal of wanting to improve the state of the Hauraki Gulf/Tīkapa Moana provided the incentive for them to work well together to complete a plan that they all could support.

3.4 Overall, the Stakeholder Working Group did not have an effective working relationship with the Project Steering Group, which affected the project.

3.5 In our view, clearer definition of how the agencies could effectively provide input into the project, while allowing the Stakeholder Working Group enough independence, would have resulted in a more productive relationship. Trust needed to be built between the agencies and the Stakeholder Working Group. The agencies also needed to be able to contribute information on their current and planned work as well as provide information on the relevant legislative and regulatory context.

3.6 One of the strengths of the project was the independent review process, which ran throughout the duration of the project. However, there was an opportunity for the Stakeholder Working Group to benefit more from the experience and expertise of the Independent Review Panel.

How the agencies supported the project after it started

3.7 The project required a substantial commitment of resources from the agencies, particularly as the project took longer than expected.

3.8 A project management structure supported the Stakeholder Working Group. For example, a technical support group had a co-ordination role to provide the technical information the Stakeholder Working Group needed. In general, the Stakeholder Working Group was well-resourced and supported.

3.9   Representatives considered that some of the agencies were more involved in the project than others. Representatives perceived an agency's level of involvement as an indication of its commitment to the project and to implementing the plan. The agencies we spoke to agreed that, while their relationship with the Stakeholder Working Group was strained at times, it was not a reflection of their commitment to the project.

3.10   Although the agencies had staff who were champions of the project, it was challenging to create and maintain awareness of the work throughout the agencies for the project's duration. This was not just about awareness of the project within the agencies but also, for example, ways they could have more actively linked the project to their own work. This was particularly challenging because of staffing changes and the project taking longer than expected to finish. A lack of detail on the plan's development from the Stakeholder Working Group also contributed to the difficulty of keeping the agencies informed.

3.11   In a stakeholder-led project, the working group developing the plan is independent of the agencies. This is in contrast to an agency-led process. This can make it difficult to keep the relevant people within the agencies informed about and, as necessary, involved in developments.

3.12   In our view, the project would have benefited from senior managers from all the agencies demonstrating commitment to the project and to implementing the plan throughout the project's duration. This would have given the Stakeholder Working Group confidence in the importance and value of its work. It would also have helped staff in the agencies get internal support and continuing commitment to the work and the plan.

How the project governance structures worked in practice

3.13   In our view, the Project Steering Group had less influence on the work of the Stakeholder Working Group than was stated in the terms of reference. The main way the Project Steering Group was informed of the work of the Stakeholder Working Group was through reports from the Independent Chairperson.

3.14   Because the two groups did not have a close working relationship, the Project Steering Group did not have enough involvement in the plan or recommendations. This affected the ability of the Project Steering Group to support the plan after it was completed. It might also have affected the quality of the final plan.

3.15   In our view, the agencies could have had more influence on the direction of the project and how the Stakeholder Working Group and the Project Steering Group worked together.

How the agencies worked with the Stakeholder Working Group

3.16   In a stakeholder-led project, the collaborative working group works independently of the agencies so that it is not restricted by current policy thinking. The collaborative working group can then come up with solutions from a new perspective. The challenge for the agencies is to support this independence while still providing appropriate input, guidance, and project governance.

3.17   The Stakeholder Working Group representatives had effective working relationships with each other and took a high level of responsibility for preparing the plan. In its first report, the Independent Review Panel said that the project was unique because of the Stakeholder Working Group's high level of responsibility.

3.18   The Independent Review Panel supported this approach but noted that, because the agencies were responsible for implementing the plan, relationships between the Stakeholder Working Group and the agencies needed to be well defined. The Independent Review Panel reiterated this message in all three of its reports.

3.19   The way the project was run meant that the agencies were kept at an "arm's length", so there was less risk that the agencies would take over the project. The Stakeholder Working Group's approach was not overly influenced by the agencies' views or by current policy.

3.20   However, this way of working meant that the agencies were not as involved in the project as they could have been. Agency staff felt frustrated that their knowledge, experience, and expertise were not used, either in discussions about specific issues or in coming up with options. At times, the management of the Stakeholder Working Group also influenced how closely the various groups worked together.

3.21   Agency staff felt that information about work already being done, and planned work that related to the issues being discussed, should have been considered by the Stakeholder Working Group in developing the plan. The agencies also felt that the Stakeholder Working Group needed to consider the current relevant legislative and regulatory context when preparing the plan's proposals. Not considering these meant that there was a risk the agencies would not be able to implement the final plan easily.

3.22   Staff from all of the agencies also commented that having a structured process for the agencies to review proposals before the plan was finalised would have strengthened the project. This would have provided an opportunity to give feedback on proposals and options being discussed at various stages of the plan's development. For example, one council commented that it would have liked to have had a wider discussion with iwi and others at the council.

3.23   There was some improvement to agency involvement after the project was put on hold for six months. The agency representatives participated more actively in Stakeholder Working Group meetings, which the agencies acknowledged was an improvement.

3.24   In our view, clearer definition of how the agencies could provide input into the project while allowing the Stakeholder Working Group the independence it needed to work would have provided a clearer role for, and more effective input from, the agencies. There also needed to be more trust between the agencies and the Stakeholder Working Group.

3.25   The agencies needed to include more structured ways for them to contribute their expertise and knowledge to the options the Stakeholder Working Group considered. This would have made the implications for implementing the plan evident to the Stakeholder Working Group. This would also have helped the agencies to manage the Stakeholder Working Group's expectations for implementation.

How technical scientific information was provided

3.26   The range of high-quality scientific information collated for the project provides a useful set of information to help look at the main issues affecting the Hauraki Gulf/Tīkapa Moana.

3.27   The agencies were responsible for providing technical scientific information for the project. Representatives considered that this information was of a high quality.

3.28   The Stakeholder Working Group, in general, was satisfied with the quality of the information. However, some people felt, at times, that some of the Stakeholder Working Group representatives were overwhelmed with the information.

3.29   Instead of having scientists and technical specialists respond to requests for scientific information, project participants suggested that it might have been more effective to have them sit with the Stakeholder Working Group representatives and help frame and talk through the issues.

How the project was co-governed

3.30   The Sea Change – Tai Timu Tai Pari project was set up as a co-governance project, with half of the Project Steering Group being mana whenua representatives. This was considered an important part of the set-up of the project and a strength of the process.

3.31   The Project Board, Independent Review Panel, and the Stakeholder Working Group identified the need for more mana whenua involvement early in the project. As

a result, the Mātauranga Māori Roundtable Group was set up to provide a mana whenua perspective on the issues the Stakeholder Working Group was dealing with. After the roundtable process, the group continued as the Mātauranga Māori Reference Group.

3.32   The Mātauranga Māori Reference Group's meetings enabled the mana whenua representatives on the Project Steering Group to support the four mana whenua representatives of the Stakeholder Working Group and work through critical issues. Overall, interviewees considered that the Mātauranga Māori Reference Group's input was valuable to the project.

3.33   The Project Steering Group and the Mātauranga Māori Reference Group were important in ensuring effective co-governance of the project. The marine spatial plan can be considered an example of a successful inclusive project, where co-governance has worked effectively.

3.34   Creating the Mātauranga Māori Reference Group required a change to the overall project structure but was well supported in general. Although the group's role did not seem to cause confusion, there was some ambiguity in reporting lines because the Mātauranga Māori Reference Group had representatives from both the Project Steering Group and the Stakeholder Working Group.

3.35   The Mātauranga Māori Reference Group was well resourced, with its own technical officers.

3.36   Mana whenua representatives instigated the project pause because they felt that their views and information were not being acknowledged in the plan. These concerns were amplified by the speed at which drafts of the plan were being prepared. The Mātauranga Māori Reference Group helped to work on solutions to this issue.

3.37   Participants viewed putting the project on hold and the subsequent resetting of Stakeholder Working Group, mana whenua, stakeholder, and agency relationships as a sensible and necessary step that allowed the project to resume.

3.38   Subsequently, mana whenua and interested stakeholder opinions were incorporated into the final recommendations more cohesively. For example, the mātaraunga Māori perspective was woven into, and integrated throughout, the plan.

3.39   Mātaraunga Māori was considered in decision-making alongside Western science – that is, "knowledge, culture and world views [were to be] woven throughout the process. Woven so it maintains its integrity but also blended with the other science to be a strong report." This was considered to be a strength of the project.

3.40   Some mana whenua representatives had multiple roles in the project – for example, on the Mātauranga Māori Reference Group and the Project Steering Group or the Project Board. Although some people felt that these roles needed to be more separate, people in senior roles in the project were aware of these potential conflicts of interest, and carefully managed them.

3.41   The mana whenua representatives were generous in their willingness to educate the other representatives about mātauranga Māori and its significance for the Hauraki Gulf/Tīkapa Moana. The agencies also supported the process by providing adequate resources to support the Mātauranga Māori Reference Group.

How the project made effective use of the Independent Review Panel reports

3.42   One of the strengths of the project was the independent review process, which ran during the course of the project. The Independent Review Panel's role was to provide assurance to the Project Steering Group on the project's progress and to make recommendations that would support the creation of a high-quality plan.

3.43   The five-member Independent Review Panel brought together several experts, including Charles Ehler, one of the authors of UNESCO's *Marine Spatial Planning – A Step-by-Step Approach toward Ecosystem-based Management*.

3.44   The Independent Review Panel completed three reports for the Project Steering Group. The Independent Review Panel used the UNESCO's marine spatial planning document as the framework to assess the plan against. Each report made recommendations that were reviewed in subsequent reports.

3.45   Although the Project Steering Group and the Project Board representatives considered that the Independent Review Panel's reports were valuable, many representatives felt that the Stakeholder Working Group could have better used the Independent Review Panel's recommendations. Many representatives of the Stakeholder Working Group commented that they knew little about the Independent Review Panel process. Ensuring that the Stakeholder Working Group was more informed of the Independent Review Panel process, its reports, and its recommendations would have helped this.

3.46   In our view, there was an opportunity to ensure that the Stakeholder Working Group benefited more from the collective experience and expertise of the Independent Review Panel. It would also have been useful for the Project Steering Group to more closely review and ensure that the Independent Review Panel recommendations were considered and implemented.

Learning from the Sea Change – Tai Timu Tai Pari project

We encourage all public agencies setting up collaborative projects to consider the following lessons:

- In stakeholder-led collaborative projects, the agencies are not part of the working group but still need to be involved. The agencies need to ensure that the project is informing, and informed by, other related initiatives in the agencies, and their staff will have experience and expertise useful to the working group. How the agencies can comment on and review proposals also needs to be carefully considered.

- It is important that agencies demonstrate to the working group that they are committed to the project, including implementing the plan.

- Strong working relationships need to form between representatives on the working group. They become advocates and supporters of the plan.

- The agencies and the working group need to trust each other. The working group needs to be confident that the agencies will not overly influence the project and provide it freedom to come up with solutions in a collaborative way.

- Consideration needs to be given to how best to include scientific experts in the project.

- A co-governance approach can help to ensure involvement from mana whenua, and ensure that mātauranga Māori is considered alongside other approaches.

4

Working with stakeholders and the wider community

4.1   In this Part, we consider how the Stakeholder Working Group engaged with stakeholders (people with an interest in particular issues discussed in the marine spatial plan) and the community.

Summary of our findings

4.2   There was a range of engagement activities to promote the project and encourage involvement from different stakeholders who live in the region or use the Hauraki Gulf/Tīkapa Moana. These activities were particularly strong in the early stages of the project.

4.3   In the later stages of the project, stakeholders could have been better informed and more involved in the project, particularly when options for the plan were prepared and discussed. They need to be informed just as much as groups with detailed involvement in the development of the plan that were part of the project.

4.4   In our view, there was an opportunity as the plan neared completion to seek the views of stakeholders who had already been involved in groups such as the Roundtables and Hauraki 100+. This could have resulted in stronger support for the plan, and would have made it easier for the Stakeholder Working Group to keep stakeholders and the community informed.

4.5   There was no structured approach to communicate the final plan to the community before the project ended. In our view, informing the community about what was in the final plan should have been part of the last stages of the project. This would have helped the community understand the work that had been done.

How the community was involved

4.6   In the early stages of the project, various public engagement processes were used to involve communities around the Hauraki Gulf/Tīkapa Moana. Twenty-five "listening posts" were set up that the public could use to share their views with the Stakeholder Working Group and the project support team. This feedback was collated.

4.7   There were public meetings, several surveys, and a website where information was available. A "Love our Gulf" campaign involved promoting the project at various local events – for example, the Auckland Boat Show.

4.8   These processes meant that there were various ways for people to provide information and feedback for the project. Those involved in the project had different views on the value of this information. Although many felt that the information was useful to get a sense of the range of public opinion, others felt that the information was not detailed enough or representative of all the different people who lived in the Hauraki Gulf/Tīkapa Moana.

Hauraki 100+

4.9   The Hauraki 100+ was a group consisting of members of the community who had participated in the initial meetings where representatives for the Stakeholder Working Group were selected.

4.10   Meetings with the Hauraki 100+ took place during the project, to provide information on how the work was progressing. However, this group was not involved in discussions in the later stages of the project as the plan was being finalised.

4.11   There was a missed opportunity to involve the Hauraki 100+ and listening-post participants more and discuss the project's progress and detail of the plan in the later stages. Involving them could have been a way to communicate the final plan and gain broader support for it.

Roundtables

4.12   Seven groups called "roundtables" were set up for interested stakeholders to discuss and come up with solutions for seven specific issues facing the Hauraki Gulf/Tīkapa Moana that the Stakeholder Working Group had identified.[13] The groups met one day a month for six months, from mid-2014 to early 2015. Each roundtable had 12-16 members, including representatives from the Stakeholder Working Group and other stakeholders.

4.13   The roundtables were a useful way of involving more stakeholders, particularly because the Stakeholder Working Group could have only 14 representatives. The structures were well set up and the process ensured that each group fed its views back to the Stakeholder Working Group.

4.14   Although some of the roundtables worked effectively and came up with specific options for the issue they were discussing, others did not.

4.15   Some of the Stakeholder Working Group representatives felt that the roundtables should have continued for longer so more progress with the options and solutions could be made. The Independent Review Panel also considered that the roundtable reports included "a lot of valuable data but are lighter than they might have been on options and solutions".[14]

4.16   Some of the roundtable participants told us that they would have liked ongoing feedback on the proposals for the issue they were interested in. These

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13   The seven issues discussed at the roundtables were: water quality and catchments, Hauraki Gulf fish stocks, biodiversity and biosecurity, infrastructure for the economy and communities of the Gulf, aquaculture in the Hauraki Gulf, accessible Gulf, and mātauranga Māori. Each roundtable had three or more Stakeholder Working Group representatives and other invited participants who had specific knowledge of the topic under discussion.

14   Independent Review Panel (2015), *Second Review Report*.

stakeholders would have liked to provide input and comment on the plan as it progressed.

4.17   In our view, involving roundtable members in the project and considering their views as the plan progressed might have improved stakeholder support for the final plan.

How the marine spatial plan was communicated

4.18   Stakeholders who were not involved in the roundtables or Hauraki 100+ told us that they would have liked more regular information from the project or Stakeholder Working Group representatives. They would have also liked more opportunities, particularly in the later stages of the project, to work with the Stakeholder Working Group on the proposals being considered. The Independent Review Panel agreed with this view.

4.19   Although communication with the stakeholders could have been improved, we acknowledge that this might have been challenging for the Stakeholder Working Group. It might have been difficult towards the end of the project to discuss issues that were not resolved or were still being negotiated, and there was not always time for consultation between drafts of the plan.

4.20   Some of the perceived lack of communication between the Stakeholder Working Group representatives and stakeholders depended on how the Stakeholder Working Group representatives engaged with the interest groups they represented. More clarity on what representatives needed to do to communicate the plan with their stakeholders would have helped to keep them informed.

4.21   The commercial fishing sector, in particular, would have liked earlier involvement in preparing the proposals in the plan. In its view, by the time it was consulted, it was too late to have any influence because the proposals were finalised. Some stakeholders felt that the Stakeholder Working Group should not have been able to make proposals for their sector without consulting them first.

Communicating with the community on the final plan

4.22   In contrast to the start of the project, there was no engagement with the community later in the project, particularly when the plan was nearing completion. There was also no communication with the community after the plan was complete and the project was finished. The agencies have not engaged the community about the plan since it was launched.

4.23   In our view, there needed to be more communication with the community on the final plan. A structured approach should have been carried out. There is limited knowledge in the wider community about the proposals in the Sea Change – Tai Timu Tai Pari plan.

Learning from the Sea Change – Tai Timu Tai Pari project

We encourage all public agencies setting up collaborative projects to consider the following lessons:

- If a community is well informed about a project and a plan, people are more likely to support them during implementation. It is important to maintain communication throughout a project.

- Roundtable groups are a useful way to ensure that there is stakeholder involvement for specific issues. Experienced facilitators are needed to support these roundtables, along with guidance on a process to ensure that the outcomes needed can be achieved. The stakeholders should continue to be involved because they will be important supporters of the plan when it needs to be implemented. It is important to get a wider viewpoint, particularly when debating complex issues.

- Engagement with the wider community on a final plan provides an opportunity to get visibility and support from the community on the work a collaborative working group has done. This help ease of implementation.

5

Implementing the marine spatial plan

5.1   In December 2016, the Hauraki Gulf/Tīkapa Moana marine spatial plan was released. The plan is non-statutory and non-binding.

Summary of our findings

5.2   The Sea Change – Tai Timu Tai Pari project was successful in producing an aspirational and broad environmental plan. Although the final plan does not provide detailed spatial mapping, it does provide the basis for a range of management options and more detailed mapping.

5.3   The overall success of the project in the long term will be determined by the extent of implementation and use of the plan for decision-making. There is a risk that, if further work and consideration of the recommendations does not occur, the money and effort spent on the project will be wasted.

5.4   However, the plan is not straightforward for the agencies to implement. There are potentially large costs involved and legislative change needed. The recommendations also do not consider the agencies' existing work and statutory functions. Before the plan can be implemented, support from some significant stakeholder groups for the proposed recommendations needs to be gained – such as commercial and recreational fishing groups.

5.5   In our view, there needed to be more planning for implementing the final plan at an earlier stage in the project.

5.6   The Stakeholder Working Group and Project Steering Group were both disbanded when the plan was completed. There were no opportunities for discussions with the agencies on the plan and its implementation, which might have been helpful for the agencies.

How the agencies prepared for implementing the plan

5.7   The agencies were responsible for implementing the plan after it was completed by the Stakeholder Working Group. Although the details of a plan will not be clear in the early stages of a project, agencies can still consider plans for implementation during the project – for example, how implementation will be resourced and who will be responsible for overseeing it. In our view, the agencies might have made implementing the plan easier if they had considered earlier the processes, accountabilities, engagement with internal and external stakeholders and project governance structures that they would need to put in place or incorporate within existing priorities and work programmes.

5.8 An implementation plan was one option, which could have meant the agencies were able to respond more quickly to the plan produced by the Stakeholder Working Group.

5.9 An implementation plan would set out how the agencies would work together, how those affected by the plan would be involved, and describe the role of mana whenua. Many of the people we interviewed, including some agency staff, felt that for such a plan to be successfully implemented, one agency or "body" would need to manage it. Such a body would need to ensure that the agencies worked together, collate the work of the different agencies, and hold the agencies to account for progress.

5.10 Some Stakeholder Working Group representatives commented that their involvement in the project stopped when the plan was finished. They felt that the agencies could have continued to use their knowledge and detailed understanding of the final plan, and their particular expertise, when considering implementation.

5.11 Representatives of the Project Steering Group also felt that they should have continued to work together after the plan had been completed to provide some oversight or input into implementation and to help communicate the plan to the wider community.

5.12 When we interviewed the Stakeholder Working Group and Project Steering Group representatives between April and June 2018, they felt separated from the project since its completion. The lack of formal communication from the agencies since completion of the project has contributed to this. The agencies accept that there has been a lack of communication since the plan was completed, and that many stakeholders do not know what is happening with implementation.

How the agencies are working with the final plan

5.13 The agencies involved in the project each developed their own processes for considering how to implement the plan. There was a sense of frustration from many of the project's representatives that the agencies had not made more progress on implementation.

5.14 In November 2018, the Government announced that a "Ministerial Advisory Committee will be established to play a key role in implementing the Sea Change Plan."[15]

5.15 Auckland Council and Waikato Regional Council have taken different approaches to implementing the plan. Auckland Council has assessed the plan's recommendations from an objectives perspective to see how they relate to its current priorities. The Council has also created a reference group to oversee its

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activities and integrate those activities with other councils' and the Hauraki Gulf Forum's activities.

5.16   This means that Auckland Council will address some parts of the plan in some of the work that does have priority – for example, water quality and sedimentation. The Council is not considering implementing the plan as a whole at this stage.

5.17   Waikato Regional Council has considered the recommendations at a detailed level. The Council considers that it has a clear process for considering how the plan can be implemented and is "looking seriously at how Sea Change can be implemented". Waikato Regional Council is also "using [the plan] in a proactive way to inform statutory planning".

5.18   In terms of implementation, Waikato Regional Council has taken each recommendation in the plan and related them to its statutory functions and its current "business-as-usual" work, and budgeted its response. The Council then created a prioritisation process, while considering existing functions.

5.19   Waikato Regional Council staff are proactively talking about the plan, which has allowed other parts of the Council to consider it in their work. In contrast, the plan has less visibility throughout Auckland Council.

Learning from the Sea Change – Tai Timu Tai Pari project

We encourage all public agencies setting up collaborative projects to consider the following lessons:

- Planning for implementation should be considered during the project, not after.

- Each public agency should consider how it will look at the recommendations or proposals, embed them into its existing work and priorities, assess the resourcing required, work with other agencies and decide how to share accountability, and consider the role of mana whenua.

- The agencies should also consider how groups who prepared the plan, those affected by the plan, and the public can provide input to implementation.

Appendix
Setting up a stakeholder-led collaborative project

We suggest that public agencies look at our 2016 report, *Principles for effectively co-governing natural resources*, and guidance for collaborative projects on the Ministry for the Environment's website. The following questions are also useful to consider:

Does this project have achievable and measurable outcomes?

- What are the important issues this project needs to address?
- Are there financial, legislative, and regulatory boundaries the collaborative working group will need to work within? Is economic analysis of the proposals needed?
- Have you set a time frame that is adequate?

What governance or co-governance structures does this project need?

- Are roles, responsibilities, accountabilities for the agencies and the project groups, including co-governance groups, clear? Are leadership roles clearly defined?
- How will the groups communicate with each other?

How will the people participating in the project collaborate?

- How do you expect representatives of the working group/s to engage with their interest groups? Have you communicated this to them?
- How will you support representatives of the working group to participate in the project?

How will you, and any of the other agencies involved in the project, provide effective input to the collaborative stakeholder group?

- What can you learn from collaborative projects that have been done before?
- What resourcing is needed (for example, project support or scientific information)?
- Do you have related work that could help inform, or be integrated with, the project?
- Who will monitor and evaluate the project?

How will you keep the community and interested stakeholders informed about the project during and after the project's completion?

How will you, and any of the other agencies involved, plan to implement the project?

- How will you review the plan and work with any of the other agencies to implement it?

Questions to ask local and central government agencies

Before participating in a collaborative working group, it could be useful for people to ask the following questions:

- What time frame and resources will you give us to run the collaborative project? Are you confident that this is sufficient to collate all the scientific information that is needed to complete the project?

- Are the relevant Ministers supportive of this project?

- Who has autonomy and responsibility for the plan?

- To what extent do you expect to communicate with other interested people, such as the wider community or interest groups?

- How will you and we work with the community?

- How will the community's views be properly taken into account?

- What input will agencies have in implementation after the plan is completed?

- How have you committed to implementing the plan we produce? Do you have a time frame for implementation?

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