

# Summary of presentations from the Citizens' Assembly Tairāwhiti

## Day 1 Hui (2 Nov 2024)

### Presenter:

Johnathan Boston

### Title:

Principles of distributive justice and just land use transitions.

### What's the question they're answering:

What do we mean by fairness?

What is a fair way to manage the proposed land use changes in Tairāwhiti?

What transitions are needed and how should the costs/burdens be distributed?

### Main points:

- Jonathan proposed a set of principles and considerations for developing a fair land use transition in Tairāwhiti.
- Explained that distributive justice is the just sharing of benefits and burdens/costs, but also the just sharing of rights and responsibilities.
- Discussed by fairness, or equity. Equity and equality are not the same – treating people equally may or may not be fair depending on the circumstances.
- He argued that there is a strong case for Central Government to make a substantial contribution to the costs of land use transition in Tairāwhiti.
  - On the grounds of distributive justice:
    1. Central government is partly responsible for the problems (due to policy decisions made in the past, a failure to regulate and provide adequate guidance)
    2. Per capita incomes in Tairāwhiti are below NZ average
    3. The Gisborne District Council is relatively under resourced and lacks the required financial resources
  - Other Relevant considerations:
    1. Remedial responsibility – the Crown has the means
    2. Reducing future harm and enhancing resilience will reduce the Crown's long term fiscal risk (prevention is better than cure)
    3. National solidarity with those who suffer losses
    4. Principles of Te Tiriti – partnership, protection, redress
    5. Compensation for enforced losses (potential case)

“And when we are thinking about who benefits – we need to be mindful of different benefits – health and wellbeing are important benefits. We also need to think about this in terms of the wider biodiversity, not just humans. There are benefits / costs to non-human species as well. We also need to think about the inter-generational point of view – we have a general obligation to leave the world a better place than a worse place.”

<https://youtu.be/zKicktAO9Ck>

**Presenter:**

Kent Duston

**Title:**

Ōhanga: A guide to the economics of Tairāwhiti (Presentation)

**What's the question they're answering:**

What is a better model (than purely focusing on GDP) for measuring land use and economy, balancing values and prices?

If there are external costs that aren't currently paid by forestry and farming (like environmental damage), who should be paying them in the future?

What is the future landscape of Tairāwhiti?

**Main points:**

The shape of our regional economy:

- NZ is changing away from primary industries (which has long driven GDP), but Tairāwhiti is still a region of primary industry. New jobs are in construction and healthcare as primary industry drops.
- Compared to NZ, the region has a higher % manual trades and therefore lower incomes.

Valuing our economy:

- GDP doesn't measure economic wellbeing as it misses value that isn't reflected by prices. Markets set prices but poorly set value.
- Externalities reflect the gap between value and price. External value factors include wellbeing of the land, wellbeing of people, pollution and other costs that may be passed onto other parties.
- We need to be viewing these issues through frameworks that include factors like wellbeing, and that reflect the many parties affected by e.g. forestry in Tairāwhiti.

Recloaking Vulnerable Land, and cost of transition (who should pay?):

- Regeneration of native forest or equivalent on the erosion-prone areas (the Land Overlay 3B land)
- Commercial forestry retained on land where the risks of operation are low and commercial returns are feasible
- Landowners and forestry should bear the costs (externalities) of their activities.

**Presenter:**  
Nora Lanari

**Title:**  
Going with the Grain: Changing land uses to fit a changing landscape

**What's the question they're answering:**

How do we respond to the environmental challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss and water quality while looking after the economic, social and cultural life of our regions?

- How is land use and climate change affecting the environment/land?
- What are a few strategies that can make a difference to the current damage being done?

**Main points:**

Nora stressed that a changing climate is re-dealing the cards - just keeping our current environmental problems at the same level will be difficult, let alone improving them.

- Four key drivers of change:
  - achieving goals for freshwater quality requires land-use change
  - climate change will amplify many of our existing environmental problems
  - overlapping rules and funding streams around the natural environment are confusing for land users
  - the same land use can have different impacts on different pieces of land.
- Four key elements for effective land use transition:
  1. Local collaboration is key (cheaper and more effective) - as opposed to blunt national environmental regulation that might not be appropriate to a particular catchment or region.
  2. Communities need data that is easily available, cheap and easily understandable
  3. We need to be up front and have an informed debate about costs for land use changes (who is going to pay / where does the responsibility lie)
  4. The PCE has been advocating for some time that carbon forestry should be phased out of the ETS. The ETS is incentivising pine plantations on inappropriate land.
    - PCE advocates for committing some of the proceeds from fossil NZ ETS auctions to plant erosion-prone land in native forest

**Presenter:**

John Hutchings

**Title:**

Responses to the Ministerial Inquiry into Tairāwhiti Land Use (MILU) (Presentation)

**What's the question they're answering:**

The Ministerial Inquiry into Land Use (MILU) report concluded that climate adaptation, transition, a diverse economy and local decision making was important for Tairāwhiti post cyclone. What did cabinet decide to do, and what are the best future scenarios for the region?

**Main points:**

Cyclone Gabrielle (Feb 2023) was the most significant of a series of recent extreme climate-change-influenced weather events affecting Tairāwhiti.

The MILU report responded to the cyclone with an approach adopting:

- climate adaptation,
- enhanced biodiversity awareness,
- jobs and prosperity,
- flourishing economy,
- rich relationships,
- strong leadership and governance,
- commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and a commitment to protection, participation and partnership

Cabinet parked a few issues raised by MILU but endorsed working harder to find way to manage the steeper land in Tairāwhiti – land use needs to change. The best-case scenarios have effective management of woody debris at the source, reducing cost of clean-up, public concern and the amount of woody debris in rivers and beaches.

**Summary MILU recommendations - as adopted by Cabinet****Gisborne District Council**

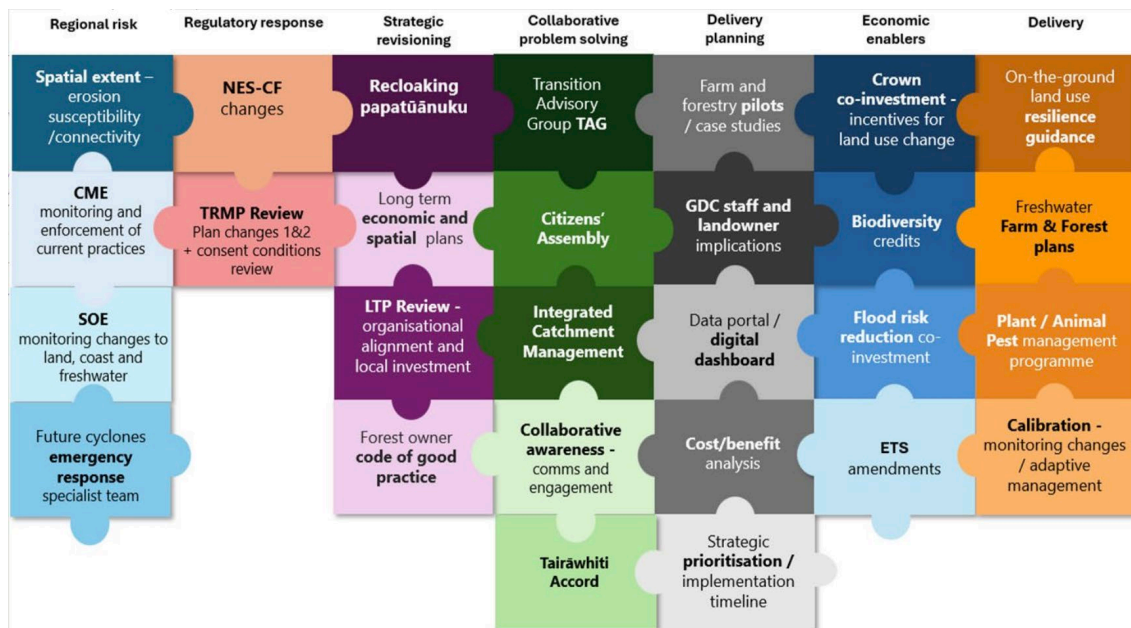
- Establish woody debris taskforce ✓
- Conduct flood capacity assessment ✓
- Review TRMP ✓
- Establish monitoring model to report on implementation of MILU recommendations ✓
- Include MILU actions in three-year LTP ✓
- Control location of permanent exotic forests ✓
- Accelerate roll-out of freshwater farm plans ✓
- Transition to high value land-uses ✓
- Address riparian management / sediment loss ✓
- Restrict large scale clear-felling ✓
- Review plantation forest resource consents ✓
- Procure high-resolution erosion susceptibility map ✓
- Strengthen CME ✓

**Central Government**

- Establish biodiversity credit arrangements ✓
- Agree on long-term funding model for waterway management ✓
- Provide co-investment capital ✓
- Prioritise Te Ture Whenua Māori Act governance issues ✓
- Amend ETS to incentivise indigenous planting ✓
- Re-establish a jobs-for-nature programme ✓
- Amend NES-CF ✓
- Approve a 'just transition' process ✓
- Confer legal personality on selected rivers ✓
- Develop a statutory vision for Tairāwhiti ✓
- Support recovery efforts ✓
- Provide central government expert help ✓
- Leverage Forest Stewardship company failures ✓

John presented on the mix of actors and strategies, including

- Regional risk assessment/monitoring/response
- Regulatory response – National Environmental Standard – Commercial Forestry (NES-CF)
- Strategic revisioning – Recloaking Papatūānuku, GDC Long-term plans (LTPs) and reviews, Forest owners code of practice
- Collaborative problem solving – TAG, Citizens' Assembly, Tairāwhiti Accord, Integrated Catchment Management
- Delivery planning
- Economic enablers
- Delivery



**Presenter:**

Kerry Hudson

**Title:**

Tairawhiti facts and land transition

**What's the question they're answering:**

What is unique about Tairawhiti in terms of: geography, geology, land use, vulnerable land, erosion, how to transition and mitigate.

- Where we are at now?
- What has worked?
- What hasn't worked?
- Transition of unsustainable existing land uses to permanent woody vegetation cover

**Main points:**

Our Underlying geology is:

- Recent soft rocks
- Naturally fertile
- Highly erodible

Climate:

- Excellent growing climate for trees, crops and grass
- Regular heavy intensive rainfall events
- Good tree, crop and grassland. Heavy rainfall events often.

Landuse:

- Indigenous 15.2 %
- Manuka/Broadleaf 16.1%
- Farming 41.4%
- Forestry 19.1%
- 90% hill county, and 75% of national Very High Risk commercial forestry land.

Council recognises vulnerable land based on:

- Gullying - Aerial Photography Assessments
- Slip Erosion - Landslide Susceptibility and Connectivity Modelling
- Slump Erosion - Aerial and walkover surveys
- Aggradation (deposition of materials in rivers) - Aerial assessment

LO3B developed by above assessment – this land will need to have permanent vegetation cover.

- Needs an alternative to clear-fell harvesting
- This does not need to preclude grazing stock, we are looking at assisting with vegetation cover

Transition Advisory Group (TAG) is further developing identification of LO3B land, how to assist farmers/participants in recognising and meeting the challenges of creating/protecting LO3B

**Presenter:**  
Shaun Awatere

**Title:**  
Towards a Maori Wellbeing Economy

**What's the question they're answering:**

What are the factors that have shaped Māori economies in contemporary capitalism?  
How can we integrate Māori ethic, ideas and principles to create healthier and more useful economies?

**Main points:**

Tairāwhiti has a lot of whenua Māori; we have to think carefully about what land-use transition means. Transition to a more **wellbeing-focused economy**

Dominant social paradigm is Neoliberalism, i.e our society focuses on private wealth growth, lowering taxes to allow companies more room to grow.

- Trickle down to whanau from large profit raising schemes.
- Resource extractive
- Limited government interference
- Profit maximalisation. Not accounting for externalities (or fairness).
- Focus on individualism over public good.
- Hinders changes towards alternative economies.

New Environmental Paradigm – Ohānga (Business) inside Hapori (community) inside Taiao (Environment).

Trying to find a just transition through colonisation and entrenched neoliberalism

“There is that real intimate connection between whanau, hapu and iwi and those local ecosystems. ... there is a real need to address the rebalancing of current land uses with what a future state might look like, that thinks intergenerationally and also considers the wellbeing of the wider environment and communities.”

Maori wellbeing economy is about shared prosperity, listening to the needs of whanau and hapu

Need to address rebalancing of land uses – thinking intergenerationally, considering the benefits and impacts on the wider community

- Maori leadership will be important – based on the concept of mana
- Reflects commitment to sustainable livelihood and collective wellbeing

Foundations for a Maori wellbeing economy:

- Participatory – whanau engaged in determining the solutions, relative to lived
- Collective approach
- Locally focused – one size fits all won't work,
- Shared vision
- Core capabilities
- Procurement approaches that align with values and ethical beliefs, that acknowledge diversity and a Te Tiriti based approach.

**Presenter:**

Transition Advisory Group (TAG) reps John Hutchings and Kerry Hudson

**Title:**

Exchange Café interview with Shannon Dowsing

TAG has a vision of sustained and resilient land use in Tairāwhiti.

Some of the key background research has been

- Landcare susceptibility research combined with
- Mike Marden and MPI gully erosion research

This research has enabled GDC to produce a Land Overlay 3B (LO3B) – a detailed map of land that needs permanent canopy cover to reduce soil erosion and the worst effects of plantation forestry. There is 60,000ha of this LO3B land in the region and it is currently in a variety of uses – mainly farming and forestry. This is the land that TAG is focused on.

There is a history of blanket incentives for land uses:

1. the region was quickly deforested for farming,
2. incentives for forestry after Hurricane Bola,
3. ETS incentives for pine

What do we need now, considering climate change and the impacts of cyclone Gabrielle?

1. We need strong incentives for permanent cover – but it needs to have flex in terms of right trees in the right place.
2. We need to remove the liability issues that the ETS presents for those wanting to transition plantation forestry to native vegetation (timeframes for replacing the coverage are currently too quick for native replanting) and shift to an ETS that incentivises native revegetation.
3. Mechanisms like biodiversity credits can play a role (where is the bank for natives) and should be explored [**see David Hall presentation**]
4. Regions need to be able to respond to the uniqueness of their regions – one size fits all approaches from central government will not work.

TAG started in July, with good community stakeholder and local expertise representation, to look at land use transition solutions. The goal is to prepare land-use guidelines by April and a business case to take to government to request central government fund the transition needed.

Costings in the business case will consider the different topography within the LO3B – and will look at the existing productivity of the land and costs like:

- Replanting costs (including potential need for additional nurseries)
- Plant and animal pests (including the massive issue of wilding pine)
- Workforce development challenges/opportunities

The TAG recognises the value of the Citizens' Assembly and its process, and Council supports and will take CA recommendations into account. TAG group will work collaboratively to support the recommendations of the CA (but CA is not beholden to the scope/recommendations of TAG).

Other notes:



- There is a critical role for freshwater planning / farm plans and wider catchment planning to support the transition.
- There was an agreed recognition that regional comms is critical to bring the community along on the journey – the changes will not happen over-night – there will be a long period where weather events will potentially bring down more native revegetation (before forestry and root cover can be established).
- Need for strong, united and sustained regional advocacy.
- There was no mention of the government's decision to put a hold on Council freshwater planning / and associated regulatory changes.
- MILU was mentioned but not in any great detail.

