

CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

It gives me great pleasure to present the operative West Coast Regional Policy Statement.

This version of the Proposed West Coast Regional Policy Statement was publicly notified in 1996. Following the statutory process of submissions, hearings and appeals, this Regional Policy Statement became operative on 10 March 2000.

The Regional Policy Statement was the first major policy document that has been completed by the West Coast Regional Council under the Resource Management Act, 1991. It sets the framework for the sustainable management of the West Coast's natural and physical resources. More details are contained in a series of regional plans that are being prepared. These deal with management of resources such as land, the coastal environment and air.

Through the exercise of its role to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources, the Regional Council's vision is to maintain and improve the quality of our environment by achievement of the following.

1. The use, development and protection of:
 - natural and modified ecosystems,
 - land and soil resources,
 - surface water, groundwater and geothermal water, and
 - the coastal environment;being conducted in a manner that avoids, remedies or mitigates adverse environmental effects arising from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.
2. Management of air quality throughout the region in a manner that is consistent with national health and environmental standards.
3. Protection of the environment from the adverse effects of waste disposal and any effects resulting from the storage, use, transportation, treatment and disposal of hazardous substances.
4. Avoiding or mitigating the effects of natural hazards on the West Coast community.
5. A reduction of pest populations for the purposes of soil conservation and protection of indigenous ecosystems.

Over the years access to natural and physical resources on Crown land in the region has become restricted. Therefore careful consideration is required on how resources are used, developed or protected in order that the West Coast's social, economic and ecological goals are not further undermined. This Regional Policy Statement is intended to be a major vehicle for fulfilling the vision of improved quality of the environment, which includes people and communities.

On behalf of Council I would like to thank all of those who participated in the

submission and hearings process. Your contributions have assisted us greatly and resulted in meaningful changes in how we manage our natural and physical resources.

I look forward to continue to work with you toward a sustainable future.

John Clayton
CHAIRMAN