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**WRC candidate name:** *Maxine Moana-Tuwhangai*

Please type in the space below each question, and use as much space as you require for each answer.

Please email your responses back to [info@sustainablewaikato.org.nz](mailto:info@sustainablewaikato.org.nz) not later than **Monday, September 5<sup>th</sup> 2016**.

**1. What do you think are the top three challenges facing the Waikato region that WRC could influence over the next five to ten years?**

- Allocation and quality of fresh water.
- Economic considerations, including the cost of implementing plan change requirements and transportation considerations.
- The current and projected effects of climate change

**2. Do you believe the Regional Council has a role in economic development and in what ways?**

Yes. WRC develops policies that protect productive resources such as land, minerals and marine spaces. The policies can affect the income of those who operate in industries aligned to these resources such as: farmers, horticulturalists, the mining industry (coal, aggregates, gold), fishermen, tourist operators etc.

WRC also has a responsibility for transport. The public bus service provides an option to get to work and thereby generate income for individuals and business. The public bus service also makes it possible to go places where we spend money and generate income for the suppliers of goods and services.

WRC issues resource consents to individuals and businesses to enable them to carry out their work, and monitors the consents to ensure that the rest of the community is not adversely affected by the work undertaken.

**3. What do you consider to be the main biodiversity and biosecurity issues within the Waikato region, and how can WRC best address them?**

What

Unwanted pests can enter New Zealand via a number of channels, including: ballast water, ship hulls, imported goods, mail order goods, or mixed in with seeds (eg velvet leaf). At a recent consultation meeting with representatives from MPI we learnt that boarder control checking occurs on a sample basis or where evidence suggests that there may be a risk. The representatives acknowledged that this practice has the opportunity for undetected pests to enter the country. The onus (and part of MPI's strategy) is on everyone being vigilant and informing MPI when things are found that probably shouldn't be there.

Where a pest has become established there is also the threat of it spreading.

The biodiversity of New Zealand's natural heritage should be protected and where possible strengthened.

How

By continuing to support the WRC staff who focus on biodiversity and biosecurity matters.

By working with land owners to protect special places.

By educating people of the possibility of insects etc stowing away in on line purchases and opening these purchases on a clear uncluttered surface to detect insects that might fall out of the package.

By reducing predator (rat) populations and increasing the food source for our indigenous biodiversity. For example, project Halo.

**4. What are the major challenges to improving freshwater quality in the Waikato region, and, as a councillor, what would be your priorities?**

Major challenges:

The cost of implementing land use practices that affect water quality.

The speed at which new land use practices are adopted and implemented.

Understanding the geography of an area and how it affects water quality. For example the Karapiro stream and Waipa River both discharge notable amounts of sediment into the Waikato River. Research is required to identify where and why the sediment discharge is occurring and decide on a way to mitigate or reduce the amount of sediment discharged into the water ways.

Gaining wide spread acceptance of the Healthy Rivers / Waiora proposed plan change by the farming and horticultural communities.

My priorities would be:

Build relationships with affected land owners.

Fencing waterways to exclude stock.

Educational opportunities for affected land owners and interested parties.

Financial support as appropriate and affordable.

Easily understood water quality measures;

**5. What are the priority coastal marine issues in the Waikato region, and what do you think WRC needs to do to address them more effectively?**

Priority Issues

- Sediment discharge into the coastal marine environment that can affect water quality which in turn could affect recreational activity, food gathering ability, commercial opportunities, aesthetic value, and marine life.
- Community infrastructure that supports the needs of coastal communities all year round. e.g. sewerage treatment facilities that operate effectively during the summer holiday break as well as the rest of the year.
- Acknowledging the projected effects of climate change in the coastal environment. For example, not having residential properties in places that may be effected by erosion or sea level changes.

Action suggested

- Continued support for Beachcare groups who focus on protecting and restoring the marine environment because these recognises groups take responsibility for their local beach area.
- Support the prosecution those who breach their resource consents and negatively impact on the environment and the people who use it.
- Support planning processes which protect individuals and the environment, especially where the locations are projected to be effected by climate change.

**6. Do you think WRC has a responsibility to have policies to mitigate climate change and manage its impacts? Could you please give some examples?**

Yes. When we can identify with events that have occurred as the result of climate change we better understand what we are dealing with. For example, the possibility that barn owls are getting injured because they have moved to new locations possibly in search of food. When I read that article the impact that climate may be having on these birds became more tangible and realistic to me.

[www.stuff.co.nz/environment.../blow-in-barn-owls-hit-hard-times](http://www.stuff.co.nz/environment/.../blow-in-barn-owls-hit-hard-times)

WRC's current policies that lessen the effect of climate change are:

- Waste Management Strategy – including, gases released when waste breaks down.
- Sustainable Agricultural Project – including, floods, landslides, weather events, drought.
- Biodiversity Strategy – including, making compost, looking after trees, reducing carbon dioxide.
- Transport Strategy – including, reducing carbon emissions in the air.

and

- Excerpts of the Regional Policy Statement.

Please refer to:  
<http://www.waikatoregion.govt.nz/Services/Regional-services/Regional-hazards-and-emergency-management/Weather-hazards/Climate-change/>

**7. What do you see as the priorities for transport in the Waikato region over the next five to ten years, and how could WRC bring about transportation improvements?**

Priorities

Affordable transport that meets the needs of the local communities.

Rail transport from Hamilton to Auckland.

Increased transport options at times when they are needed, e.g. more buses to Raglan during the New Year holiday break.

Transport options in the North Waikato area that link seamlessly with the other transport options available, e.g. in the future having buses that arrive in Pokeno in time to catch a train to Auckland.

Working with other organisations who have an interest in a transport offering to a particular destination, e.g. Waikato University.

Continued maintenance of cycleways and walk ways.

How

By delivering affordable levels of service. In rural communities where the income received does not cover the cost of the service, then the transport options may not be offered as often as in the urban community.

By collaborating with other organisations and territorial authorities to reach and outcome that meets the needs of the community and is affordable.

By monitoring the needs of the community and increasing or decreasing the level of service as appropriate.

**8. How do you think WRC can best assist community groups and individuals who undertake environmental initiatives?**

WRC region has 24 Beachcare groups and 47 Land care groups.

WRC can support these groups by providing: education, research, science, continued funding, advice, a forum for individuals to engage on local and environmental issues.

**9. What can WRC do to support businesses, schools, families and individuals to make more sustainable choices?**

People might make more sustainable choices if they know what the options are and what the outcome are from each choice. Therefore, education is important.

More sustainable choices will arise when people have opportunities to learn from one another. Therefore, opportunities to engage and learn are important.

Learn what people care about most because this then provides a basis for strategy and policy.

Support the EnviroSchools.

**10. What have been your most significant contributions to enhancing environmental, social, cultural and/or economic wellbeing in the Waikato region?**

*Sustainable Waikato questionnaire to Waikato Regional Council candidates 2016*

I contribute as the Chairman of the Central Waikato Catchment Committee and as a member of the Integrated Catchment Management Committee along with the other Catchment Committee Chairmen.

I contribute as an accredited Environmental Commissioner and sit on resource consent hearing panels when invited to do so.

I contribute as a past member of the NZ Maritime Authority through the knowledge I acquired during my term and therefore and aware of the responsibilities delegated to WRC from the Maritime Authority.

I contribute as a Chartered Accountant who understands the financial pressures that can affect organisations such as WRC.

I have contributed in the past as a member of the joint iwi/councillor forum that reviewed the Regional Policy Statement.

I contribute as a member of the Future Proof Implementation Committee which has a focus of ensure there a good links with land use and infrastructure.

I contribute by making small changes to my personal behaviour which when joined with the other people in my community together has a significant positive effect on the environment. For example recycling waste.

Thank you for inviting me to participate in the survey.

Kind regards

Maxine