

## Issues

These issues have been derived by the working group and include those identified during the public consultation undertaken during the Phase 1 Environmental Assessment of the HRFMP.

### *Ecology*

- Preservation of the ecological values of rivers and their margins and the protection of them from inappropriate subdivision, use and development is a matter of national importance.
- Restoration of the Hutt River and its floodplain to a pre-urban condition is not feasible due to the irreversible nature of the development of the floodplain and the associated impacts.
- A range of suitable habitats is required for animal species to survive and flourish.
- Flooding is a natural process. The floodplain is an unstable environment. Plant and animal communities are adapted to this, and floods are crucial to the health of certain habitats or species.
- Flood protection works have the potential to adversely affect the ecology of the river and its banks.
- Large areas of the Hutt catchment are classified as having moderate to severe soil erosion potential. This could have significant implications for both water quality and flooding.

### *Landscape*

- The community places a high value on the perceived “natural” character of the river landscape.
- While the river provides a continuum of open space throughout the length of the valley, the quality of this space has often been ignored. Significant stretches of the riverside are bleak and featureless.
- Flood protection works can, and have in the past, masked the intrinsic landscape character of the river.
- Visual quality decreases downstream with increasing urban influence.
- Vandalism and littering decrease the visual quality of the river and its banks.

### *Recreation*

- Maintenance and enhancement of access to and along rivers is a matter of national importance. Ease of access to and along the Hutt River and its banks is crucial to its recreational value.

- The river's recreational potential has not yet been realised. While it does not appear necessary to introduce a wider range of recreation activity types, potential exists to create an environment that will attract more users to the many already popular activities.
- There is conflict between users, especially pedestrians, cyclists and motorised vehicles.

### ***Cultural and Heritage Values***

- The Hutt River was and is a major geographic landmark and reference point for Maori. It is an important symbol associated with tipuna (ancestors), food and sustenance. The banks are places where Maori once had settlements, gardens and burial grounds. The river itself is tapu because of its association with these features and qualities. There are a small number of places that have special significance to local Maori, including urupa, sites of old settlements and existing maraes.
- Kaitiakitanga needs more than just recognition.
- The Community regards the river as a precious resource in the valley.

### ***Governance***

- The Hutt River corridor is administered and managed by more than one authority. There are also a number of groups and individuals interested and involved in what happens in and around the Hutt River. Each of these parties has their own objectives for managing, protecting and enhancing the river environment.