

NATURAL HAZARDS MANAGEMENT STRATEGY



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

Our region is an outstanding place to live, work and play. The dynamic forces that have helped shape the natural beauty of the Wellington region also cause natural hazards that affect all our communities.

It is critical these risks are properly considered when making decisions which have long term implications for development in our region.

Local government is at the front line of natural hazards management and planning in our region. Councils across the region have been working together to develop a draft Natural Hazards Management Strategy to start resolving the difficult issues such as sea level rise, coastal erosion and liquefaction.

The draft Natural Hazards Management Strategy sets out a road map for council cooperation to deliver greater efficiency in hazards research and planning and greater consistency in the management of natural hazards. This document is a summary of what is in the strategy. A full copy of the strategy is available on our website and you can have your say.

WHO HAS BEEN INVOLVED WITH DEVELOPING THE STRATEGY?

Greater Wellington Regional Council is managing the development of the strategy in conjunction with Kāpiti Coast, Porirua, Wellington, Hutt City and Upper Hutt Councils and with the Wellington Region Emergency Management Office.

The draft strategy has also been developed in consultation with a group of over 70 key stakeholders along with input from the public. It's has been approved by the Coordinating Executive Group of the Wellington Region Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) Group. This group is made up of council chief executives, the regional controller for civil defence and emergency services representatives from around our region.

THE AIMS OF THE STRATEGY

The aim of the draft strategy is to provide a coherent regional framework to inform planning documents, such as city, district and regional plans, long term plans or asset management plans. It is paired with an implementation and action plan providing coherent actions designed to carry out the objectives in embodied in the strategy.

The strategy provides an opportunity to explain how we can work together with our partners to address shared goals related to risk reduction. It allows us to:

- Set priorities for co-funded hazards research
- Undertake joint investment in hazard mitigation and reduction activities
- Develop consistent hazard planning approaches
- Cooperate in community engagement.

PRINCIPLES OF THE STRATEGY

- Use the best available hazard information/science
- Identify and agree what is best practice for hazards management and reduction
- Identify and address what inhibits good practice hazards management
- Bring the community along on the journey
- Build on regular monitoring and review programmes.

VISION STATEMENT

- The communities of the Wellington region work together to understand and reduce risks from natural hazards - "to survive and thrive in a dynamic world".

BENEFITS FOR THE REGION

Benefits of having a strategy like this include:

- delivering greater consistency and efficiency in natural hazard research
- risk identification
- information management and co-ordinated hazard planning
- risk management.

It will set out the nature of the challenge our communities and our councils face. It outlines what good practice hazard management looks like and provides guidance for dealing with these issues and challenges we all face.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STRATEGY

OBJECTIVE 1: Knowledge and Understanding

Our natural hazards and risks are well understood

This will involve coordinating research into natural hazards and developing a hazards portal where the information is stored and shared. This will provide educational opportunities, a greater understanding of our risks and strengthen cross-council partnerships. By understanding the risks associated with natural hazards, we'll be in a better position to make well informed decisions.

OBJECTIVE 2: Planning

Our planning takes a long term risk-based approach

One of the biggest challenges is planning in the face of uncertainty and making sensible use of land today that may be unsustainable in the future. Best practice hazards management uses a risk-based approach to make decisions these situations. Not all hazards are the same. Applying a risk-based approach takes careful judgement. Agreeing on how to apply this approach, ensures sensible planning decisions provide for community needs today without locking in development that faces high risk in the future.

OBJECTIVE 3: Consistency

Consistent approaches are applied to natural hazard risk reduction

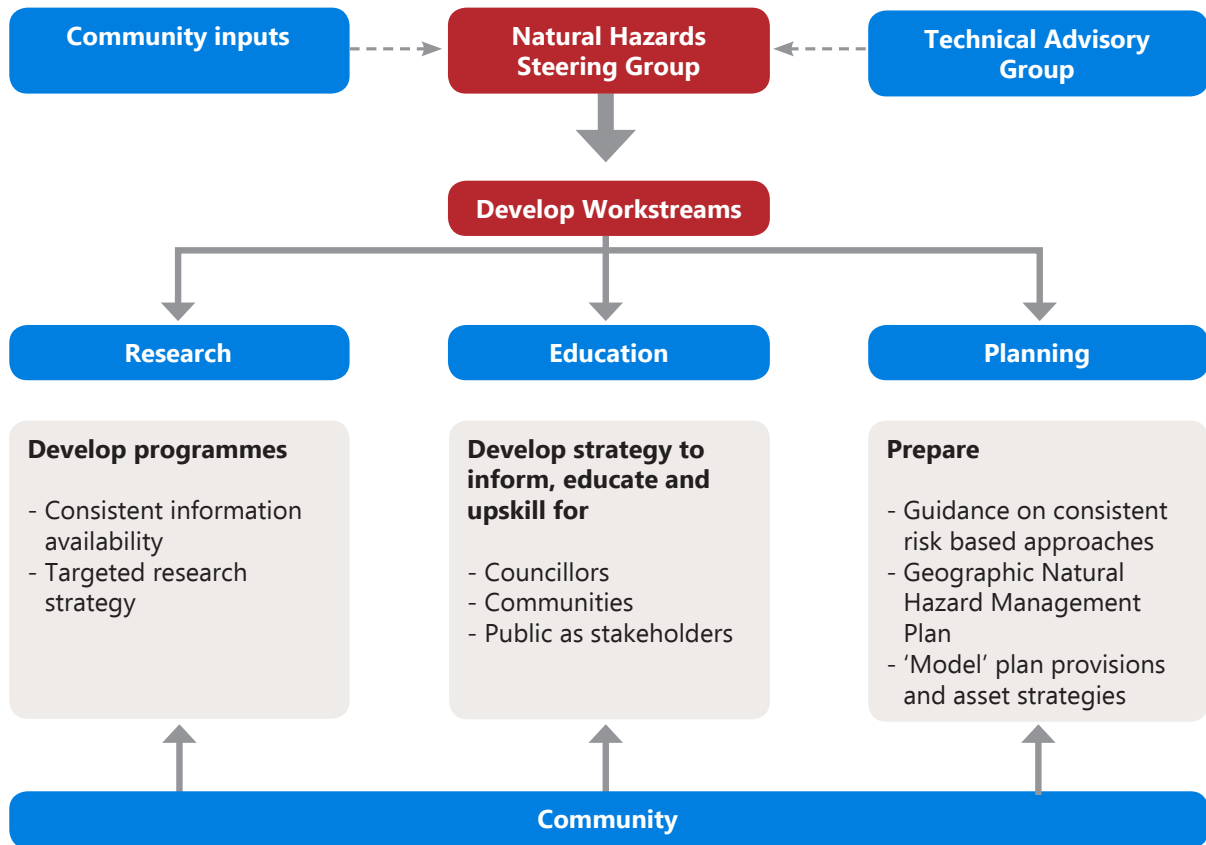
There are many different ways to classify and understand natural hazards and risk. There are many different pathways that can be taken to reducing impacts from hazard events. It is important that we develop a regionally consistent and coordinated series of approaches that we'll agree upon to help manage the unique challenges we face as a region. Cooperating on common and shared issues, depending on the hazard, will allow enough flexibility for locally tailored hazard planning solutions.

OBJECTIVE 4: Prioritisation

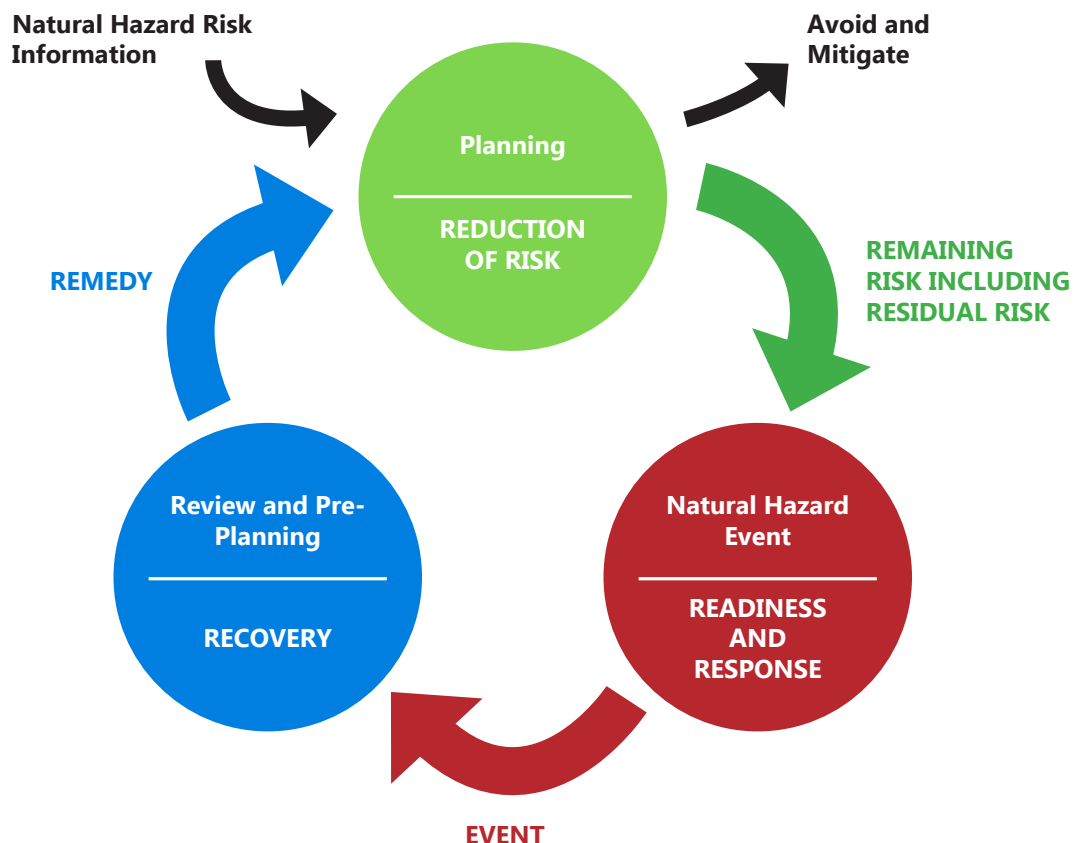
We have an agreed set of priorities to reduce the risk from natural hazards

There's a lot of work to do but we can't do it all at once. We need to recognise our existing capabilities and agree to a forward work programme in areas of research, education and planning for natural hazards. This will involve enhancing and developing working partnerships with related organisation, community groups and programmes focussed on community resilience. Working together, councils and communities will agree a set of priorities to reduce the effects of natural hazards.

Proposed implementation structure for the strategy

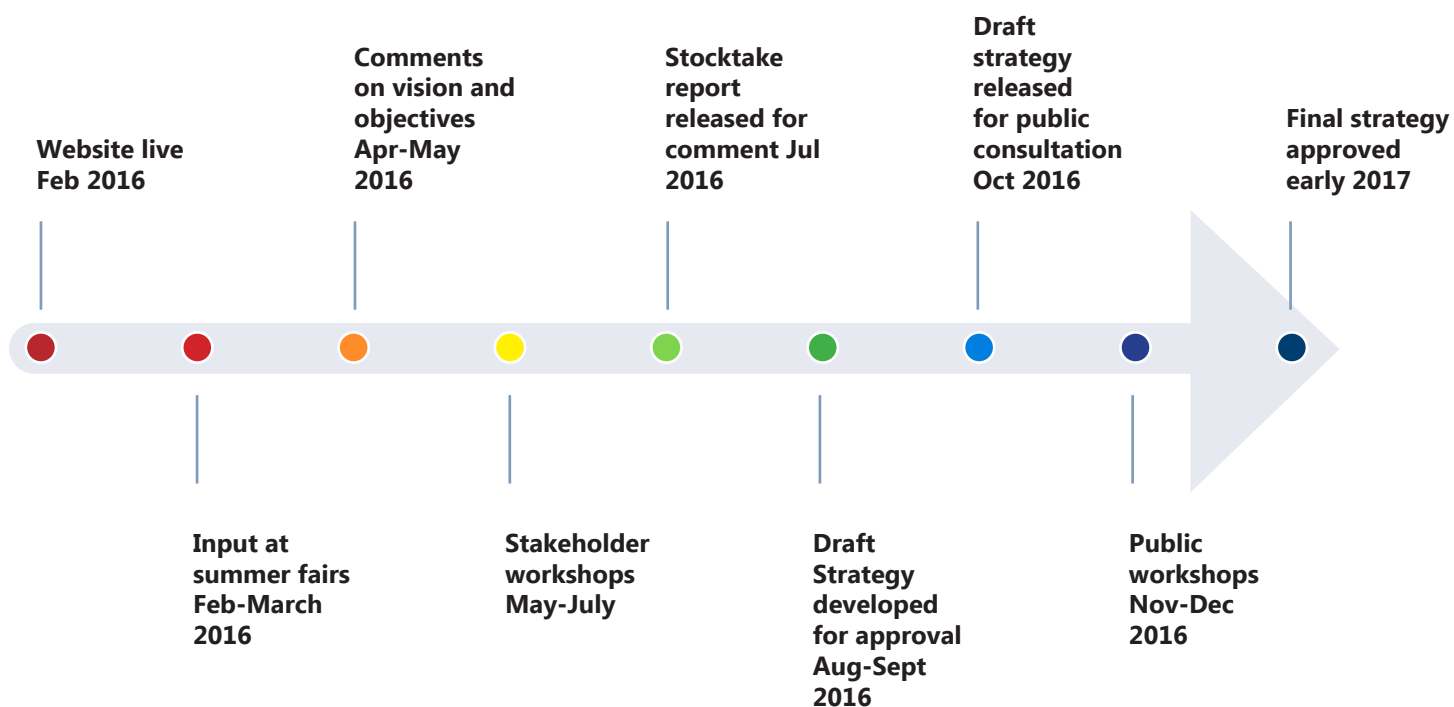


The strategy is aligned with the 4Rs of Civil Defence Emergency Management planning of Reduction, Readiness, Response and Recovery. It is focussed specifically on the 1st R – Reduction.



Next steps

Our consultation of the draft Natural Hazards Strategy is happening before the end of 2016. The timeline of next steps is as follows:



For more information:

<http://www.gw.govt.nz/natural-hazards-management-strategy/>