



Introduction

Kia ora koutou and welcome to Our Place: **Taranaki State of Environment 2022**.

Taranaki is blessed with a beautiful, unique and diverse natural environment. It's why we live here and why we love it. It's why people visit. But that environment is not always perfect, which is why we must work hard to protect and restore it. We all want to leave Taranaki better off for future generations. To achieve this, Taranaki Regional Council is working hard to understand where we are at and what we need to do next.

The Resource Management Act 1991 requires regional councils to monitor the state of the environment. Reports

like this can help us to answer important questions about the quality of our environment, the effectiveness of our programmes, and our future direction. This is our fifth State of Environment report since the first in 1996, and follows our last report in 2015.

Over the past few months, we have compiled and assessed a range of data and science collected by the Council and others. This State of Environment report covers different aspects of Taranaki climate and air, land and water. We assess the current state of our environment against a range of environmental health measures, as well as how things have changed over time.

This report covers three major environmental domains. In 'Climate and Air' we look at our climate and the impacts of climate change on Taranaki, and report on the region's air quality. The 'Land' chapter includes productive land and soils and explains how our efforts to reduce hill country erosion are reducing sedimentation in rivers and streams. We also report on contaminated land and solid waste management, and provide an update on efforts to protect and enhance our region's ecosystems. We address the pressures of pest animals and plants in the biodiversity and biosecurity section and recognise the work being done to protect and restore native habitats. 'Water' covers a range of topics including Māori freshwater values, water quality, water availability and its use. In addition to covering groundwater, rivers, aquatic ecosystems, lakes and wetlands, estuaries and the coast, we also provide an overview of recreational use of water.

In each chapter we take stock of 'What we know', looking at the current state of the environment and drawing on the data and information we hold. In 'What we're doing' we reflect on work undertaken and the impact of our efforts. 'Where we're heading' takes a look at the world around us, the changing expectations and requirements of councils and communities, and the important role that iwi and hapū have in ensuring we are caring for te taiao (the environment).

Aspects of our environment are in good condition and there has been good progress in some areas. For example, reduced soil loss through erosion and improved habitat for native species is evident in the monitoring we have undertaken. However, areas such as soil health and possum control require further attention. As outlined in the report, climate change is already affecting the region in a range of ways - and further changes are expected.

Freshwater improvement remains a significant focus for Taranaki, particularly in regard to sediment and bacteria levels in freshwater and coastal environments. We are experiencing a significant step-change in environmental policy and legislation, with new requirements and

expectations of councils and communities. The role of iwi and hapū in decision-making is also changing. The Council is committed to responding to these changes and adapting our approach to accommodate new ways of working.

Throughout the report, we take the opportunity to celebrate just some of the many contributions made by our community, schools, businesses, landowners and iwi and hapū. Much of this work to protect and improve our environment is voluntary, often supported by the Council through funding and in-kind support.


We trust you will find this report informative and that the findings will prompt constructive discussion. Certainly, the challenges before us are complex, but they are not insurmountable. By drawing on our knowledge and experience, and ensuring decisions are informed by science and mātauranga Māori, we will be well placed to guide decision-making and ensure Taranaki remains one of the best regions to live, work and play.



Taranaki at a glance


Average annual sunshine hours

2,500 1972
2,300 2016



Population as at 2018



117,561 
↑10.3% increase between 1999 and 2018


5,947 mm 
Mean annual rainfall on Taranaki Maunga 1933-2021 

5,457 km² 
Marine area extending 12 nautical miles into the territorial sea

295 km
Coastline 

Land area
93% Rural 
7% Urban 

723,610 ha 
Total land area of Taranaki 

2 Marine reserves 

530 Named rivers and streams 

Over **5,000** 
identified and mapped wetlands

28.6%
Land used for dairy production 

1,889 
Archaeological sites of significance

19 Large lakes 




 **Top three industries** by GDP (\$m)


\$1,750
Forestry, fishing and mining


\$980
Primary manufacturing


\$817
Agriculture

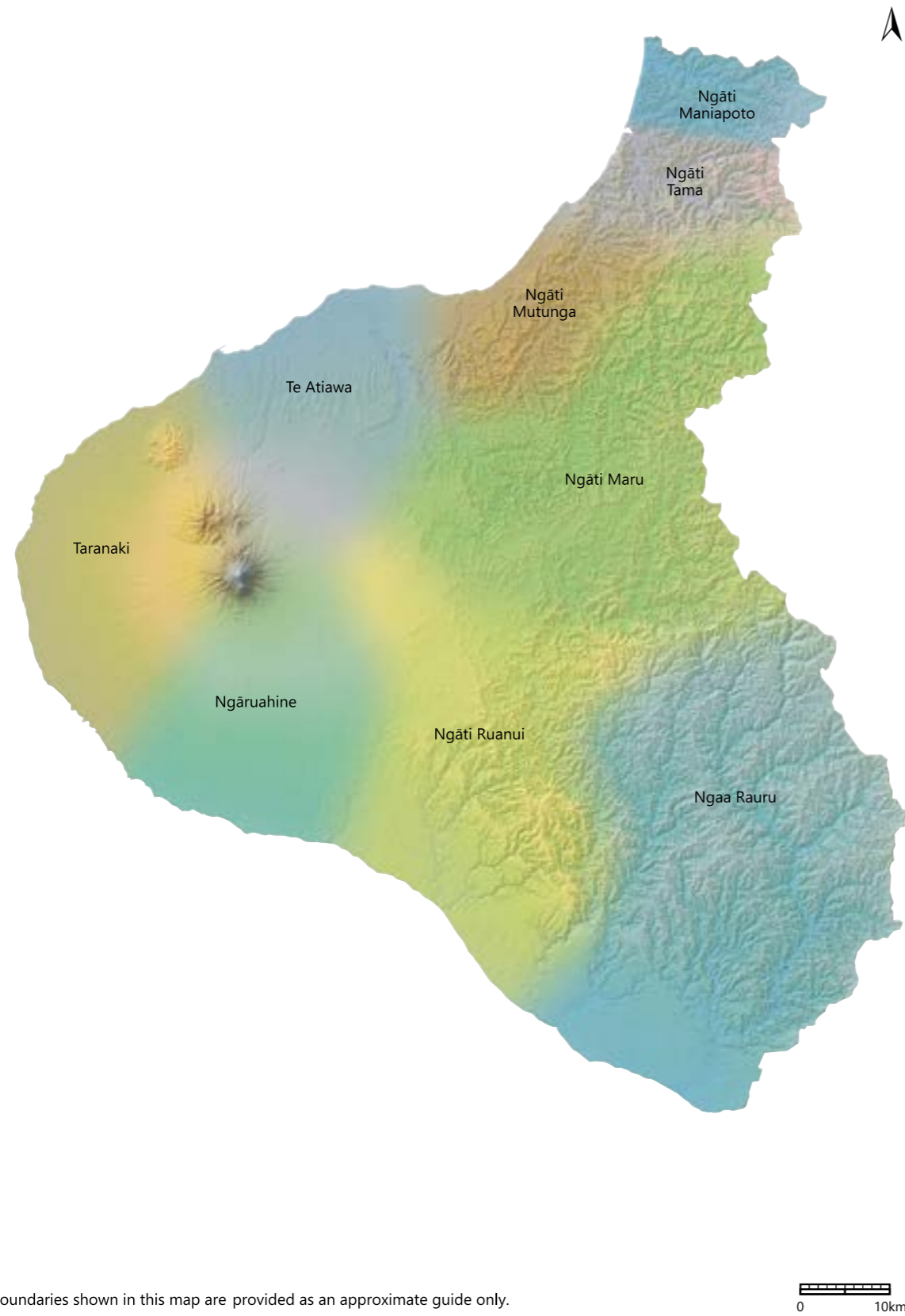
Gross Domestic Product per capita as at 2020

\$75,874 Taranaki
 **\$64,626** New Zealand

9 Iwi in Taranaki 



Iwi boundaries



The iwi boundaries shown in this map are provided as an approximate guide only.

Taranaki region

