



WHERE WE LIVE

Famed for its distinctive mountain and black sand beaches, the Taranaki region lies on the west coast of the North Island of New Zealand. Predominantly an agricultural region, Taranaki is also a leader in New Zealand's hydrocarbon industry.

Taranaki's rich landscapes, abundant natural resources and moderate climate all contribute to a flourishing economy and a range of lifestyle opportunities that mean a growing number of people choose to call Taranaki home.

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The Taranaki region

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Regional economy

- Agriculture and forestry
- Oil and gas
- Manufacturing
- Wholesale and retail trade
- Construction
- Tourism and events

Tangata whenua

Our vision for the future



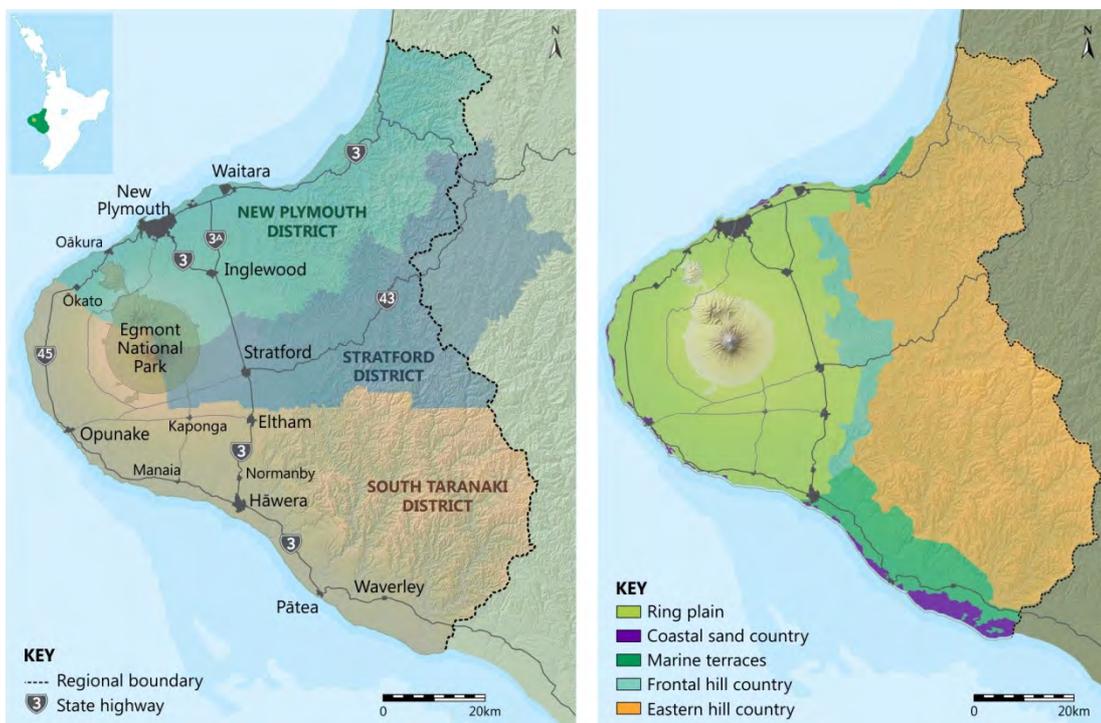
*'Taranaki ... an attractive
place to live, work and play.'*

The Taranaki region

Taranaki's distinctive landforms, rivers and streams, and temperate climate are all part of what makes the Taranaki region an attractive place to live, work and play.

Regional boundaries

The Taranaki region extends across 723,610 hectares. It stretches from the Mōhakatino catchment in the north to the Waitōtara catchment in the south. Inland, its boundary is the Whanganui catchment. The region reaches 12 nautical miles (approximately 22 kilometres) into the territorial sea. There are three district councils within the region: New Plymouth, Stratford, and South Taranaki district councils.



The Taranaki region comprises several units of local government (left) and a variety of landforms (right).

Landforms

Taranaki has four distinctive landforms, each requiring a different type of environmental management.

Ring plain

Centred on Mount Taranaki, the Taranaki ring plain has fertile and free-draining soils that are well suited to pastoral farming. Dairying is the most common land use here and it is more intensive on the flatter lands of South Taranaki.

Frontal and eastern hill country

The hill country to the east of the ring plain is made up of older rock including siltstone, mudstone and sandstone—known locally as papa. This country is steep, and prone to soil erosion and slipping. Managed properly, the hill country can support both pastoral farming and commercial forestry.

Marine terraces

The marine terraces that run along the Taranaki coastline in the north and south contain some of the most versatile and productive soils in the region. However, the combination of light, sandy soils and strong winds in some areas make the terraces susceptible to wind erosion if vegetation cover is lost.

Coastal sand country

The coastal and marine environment is exposed to the west. The land here is subject to erosion from waves and wind. There are few areas of sheltered water beyond the major estuaries and the confines of Port Taranaki. In both the north and south, erosion has resulted in a coastline of almost continuous papa cliffs; to the west, volcanic activity has produced boulder reefs and the region's famous black sand beaches.

Rivers

Many rivers and streams flow across the Taranaki region. Over 300 radiate in a distinctive pattern from the flanks of Mount Taranaki and across the ring plain. Ringplain rivers are usually short, small and fast-moving, supplying a steady flow of water, even during long, dry periods. In the hill country, the drainage pattern is different. Hillcountry rivers have short tributaries contained by narrow valleys and generally carry high-sediment loads.

Taranaki's rivers and streams are used extensively throughout the region for agriculture, for industry, for community water supplies and for a wide range of recreational activities.

'Taranaki's rivers and streams are used extensively throughout the region ...'

Find out more

 [Sharing the Waiwhakahiho website
tinyurl.com/TRC3a](https://www.taranaki.govt.nz/website-sharing)

 [Sharing the Waiwhakahiho tinyurl.com/TRC3b](https://www.taranaki.govt.nz/website-sharing)



The Stony (Hangatahua) River is one of hundreds of rivers stemming from the flanks of Mount Taranaki.



South Taranaki can get very dry in the summer months.

Climate of varying extremes

Taranaki may enjoy a temperate climate but extremes are not unknown. In the past five years these have included extraordinary snowfalls blanketing the region to very low altitudes, and a devastating windstorm that caused severe damage in the Pātea area.

After near-record high temperatures early in 2011, July brought a polar blast and two snow dumps that turned Taranaki into a giant Christmas-card scene. Even coastal areas were affected, prompting the *Taranaki Daily News* to declare it a once in a generation event. With pastures covered and power out in many areas, it was a challenging time for farmers and some were forced to move stock indoors. Even moving along roads became difficult, with police temporarily closing SH3 between Stratford and New Plymouth.

In early March 2012, severe winds caused widespread damage in South Taranaki. Houses and commercial buildings in

Hāwera and Pātea and other small towns were damaged, and a welfare centre was opened in Pātea for residents who could not stay in their homes. The winds damaged about 600 overhead lines or poles, cutting off power to many in South Taranaki, some for several days. Later the same month it was the north's turn to be buffeted.

Other weather fluctuations over the past five years have included:

- Wildly see-sawing temperatures in 2009 and a hot dry summer in 2009–2010 with drought in South Taranaki in April 2010.
- A swarm of tornadoes in north Taranaki in June 2011, which caused power outage and damage to property (but not to the same extent as the Oākura storm in 2007).
- Gale force winds in January 2012, causing New Plymouth Airport to cancel eight flights and the Todd Energy Aquatic Centre to close its doors.

Ex-tropical cyclone Evan dragged warm and humid air over the country in December 2012, delivering stifling heat and humidity on Christmas and Boxing Day and through the rest of summer. New Plymouth experienced the sunniest year since records began, but very low rainfall caused region-wide drought by March 2013. Useful rain fell in April but the official drought status lingered until September.

2014 was the warmest winter since records began. However, heavy spring hailstorms cost many retailers in the New Plymouth CBD thousand of dollars when spouting was blocked and the heavy rain that followed flooded many buildings.



Mount Taranaki snow dump in July 2011.