

# 1

## Introduction

## 1.1 Extent of Plan

Waste is any contaminant, whether liquid, solid, gaseous, or radioactive, which is: discharged, emitted or deposited in the environment in such volume, constituency or manner as to cause an adverse effect on the environment. The term waste includes all unwanted and economically unusable by-products at any given place and time, and any other matter which may be discharged, accidentally or otherwise, to the environment.

Waste management is the transportation, resource recovery, recycling, storage, treatment and disposal of wastes including management systems to ensure that environmental effects are avoided, remedied or mitigated. Waste management also encompasses measures to avoid waste generation.

Integrated waste management involves:

- avoidance or reduction in the amount of waste generated;
- reuse and recycling of wastes; and
- waste transportation, storage, treatment, and disposal.

Waste matter may break down quickly in the environment or it may persist for long periods, leading to an accumulation of products and by-products as it breaks down. Wastes may also have a cumulative effect on the environment in general and on human, plant, and animal health in particular.

This Plan seeks to implement a waste strategy dealing with all stages in the life cycle of waste. To the extent that it is practicable, this Plan considers cross-media effects on air, water and land. Other issues relating to liquid and gaseous wastes will be considered in other regional plans on Coast, Water, Air and Land, which the Otago Regional Council is preparing. During their preparation, consistency between them and this Plan will be ensured.

Common to all three types of waste (solid, liquid and gaseous) are issues associated with:

- (a) Waste minimisation and cleaner production - which relates to reducing the amount of waste that is generated, and the adoption of production methods that give rise to less adverse environmental effects.
- (b) Contaminated sites - sites at which hazardous substances occur at concentrations above background levels and where assessment indicates that they pose, or are likely to pose an immediate or long term hazard to human health or the environment.

- (c) Hazardous Substances and Hazardous Wastes - compounds, in their present form or after reaction to some other substance, which if used, stored, transported or disposed of in an inappropriate manner can pose a risk to human health or the environment.

As this is the first regional plan prepared in Otago on waste, it is desirable to also have regard to these issues, and to provide for their general consideration.

Waste issues include the production, collection, treatment and disposal of non-hazardous domestic, commercial, and industrial solid wastes (commonly referred to as “refuse”). This includes all forms of urban and rural waste which fall into this category. This type of waste is largely disposed of in landfills (designed as either large-scale public facilities or small-scale private facilities such as farm tips) and comprises such products as plastic, glass, metal, paper, packaging, and organic material.

The key issues with respect to waste management are waste minimisation, recycling/reuse, refuse collection services, refuse disposal techniques, litter control and illegal tipping. Refuse disposal techniques include the management of landfills in such a way that adverse environmental effects such as leachate discharges from the disposal site, smoke, and litter are minimised or prevented.

## **1.2 The need for this Plan**

The functions of the Otago Regional Council under the Resource Management Act 1991 include waste management. The Regional Policy Statement for Otago recognises waste as an issue of regional significance. The generation of waste, the opportunities for its reuse and recycling, and the need to dispose of waste, all give rise to resource management issues that require a regional overview and regional coordination.

Under Section 63 of the Resource Management Act, the Otago Regional Council may prepare a regional plan to assist it in carrying out its functions. Section 65 of the Resource Management Act requires the Otago Regional Council to consider whether it should have a regional plan to deal with waste issues. After consultation, and having regard to the purpose of the Resource Management Act, other methods available, the arguments for and against a regional plan dealing with waste, and after having carried out an evaluation of the likely benefits and costs of the principal alternative means, the Otago Regional Council is satisfied that such a regional plan is necessary to give effect to the purpose of the Resource Management Act, and the most appropriate means of dealing with regional waste issues.

### 1.3 Purpose of this Plan

The purposes of this Plan are to:

- reduce the quantity of waste that is produced in Otago;
- adopt a regionally coordinated approach to waste minimisation, contaminated sites, and the collection, storage, treatment and disposal of hazardous substances and hazardous wastes, and outline responsibilities for Otago’s waste management;
- encourage waste minimisation as a key strategy in the management of Otago’s wastes;
- ensure that waste which cannot be reused or recycled, is disposed of in such a way that adverse environmental and health impacts are minimised;
- recognise cultural values in the management of waste;
- increase public awareness of Otago’s waste issues; and
- encourage on-going monitoring of Otago’s waste issues and their management.

### 1.4 Operation of this Plan

This Plan will apply throughout the Otago region, excluding the coastal marine area. The Otago region was constituted under the “Local Government (Otago region) Reorganisation Order 1989”. It is shown in Figure 1, and comprises the districts of the:

- (a) Dunedin City Council
- (b) Central Otago District Council
- (c) Clutha District Council
- (d) Queenstown-Lakes District Council, and
- (e) Part of the district of the Waitaki District Council.

### 1.5 Contents of this Plan

This Plan has been divided into the following parts:

**Chapter 1** sets out the purpose of the document and provides background information relevant for its understanding.

**Chapter 2** acknowledges the statutory framework under which this Plan is prepared, referring to the relevant provisions of the Resource Management

Act, the relationship of this Plan to other resource management documents, the relevance of other legislation, and the roles of the statutory agencies involved with waste.

**Chapter 3** describes the Manawhenua perspective. Their concerns are identified, with overall objectives related to those concerns. Policies and methods flowing from those concerns and objectives are included in parts 4 - 7, where specific issues are dealt with.

**Chapter 4** considers waste minimisation, focusing on the means by which the level of waste generated within Otago can be reduced.

**Chapter 5** examines contaminated sites and the framework under which these will need to be managed.

**Chapter 6** discusses hazardous substances and hazardous wastes. Existing legislation dealing with these issues is presently being reviewed, but until that review is complete the Otago Regional Council is required to carry out its legislative responsibilities.

**Chapter 7** deals with landfills and the issues associated with that activity. In particular, this Plan seeks to ensure that the adverse effects from existing and future landfills are avoided, remedied or mitigated. This chapter covers farm landfills, offal pits, co-disposal landfills, cleanfill landfills, greenwaste landfills, and discharges from silage production and composting.

**Chapter 8** considers cross-boundary issues and the means by which these can be resolved.

**Chapter 9** provides for monitoring of resource consents, the environment and the policies in this Plan.

**Glossary** defines the terms used in this Plan.

### **Appendices**

Chapters 4 to 8 of the document identify relevant resource management issues, and contain objectives, policies, methods and, where appropriate, rules. In order to reflect the inter-related nature of parts of the Plan, a reference system has been used to provide linkages between parts and between issues, objectives, policies and methods within each part:

- Each issue, objective and policy is referenced to other relevant issues, objectives or policies in other parts of this Plan.
- Each of the issues is referenced through to the relevant objectives and policies within that chapter.
- Each of the objectives is referenced through to the relevant policies and methods within that chapter.
- Each of the policies is referenced through to the relevant methods within that chapter.

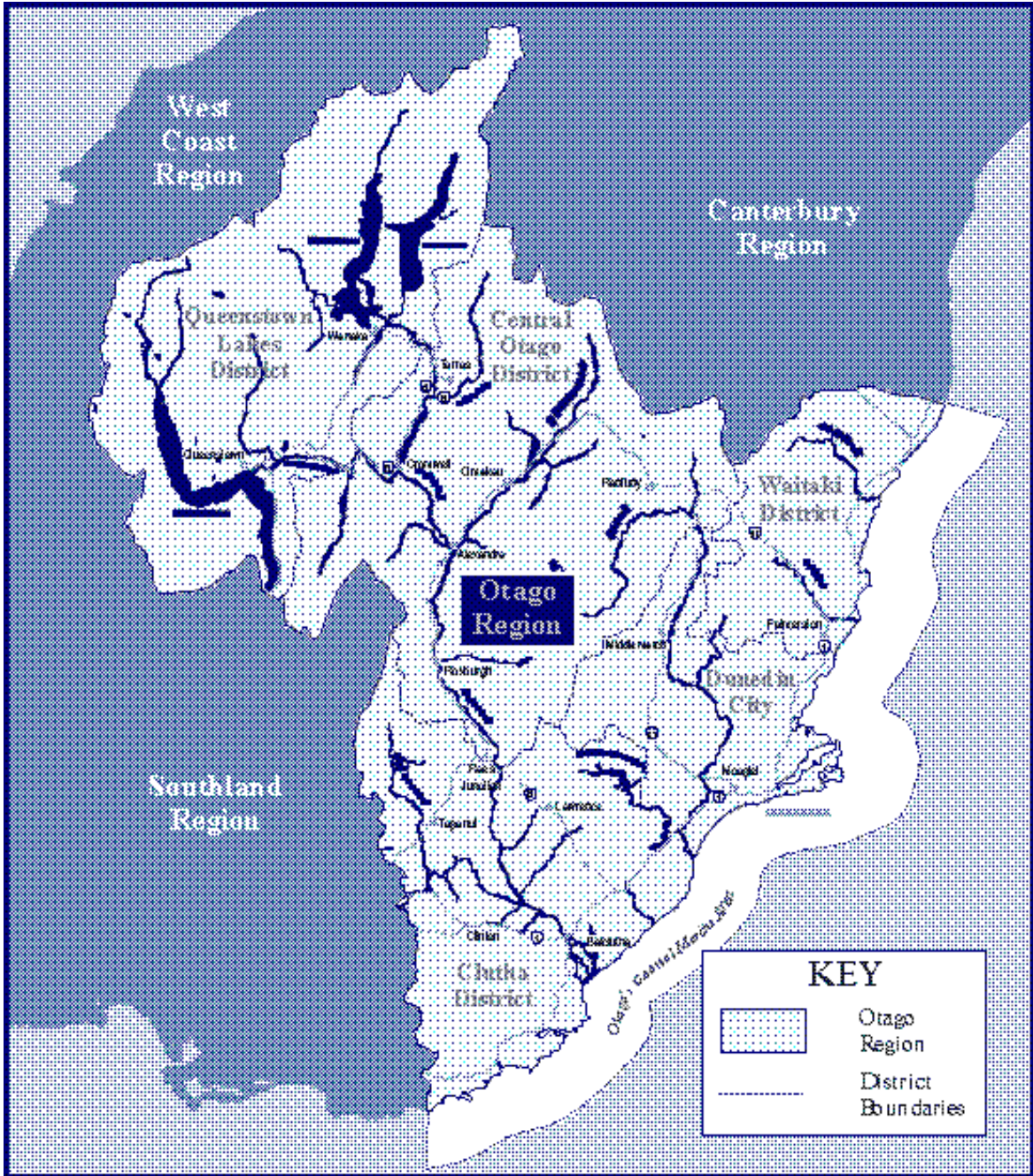


Figure 1: The Otago Region

## 1.6 Integrated management

The purpose of this Plan, like the Regional Policy Statement for Otago, is to promote sustainable management of the natural and physical resources of the region. This requires an integrated approach, taking an all-embracing, holistic view of resource management. It requires that decision-making about any particular resource take into account the likely effects on other natural and physical resources. It also requires an approach that meets the social, economic and cultural needs of the people and communities of Otago, now and in the future.

Integrated management includes:

- (a) Integration of management responses across management agencies - recognising that although different agencies have varying functions, powers and duties under the Resource Management Act, coordination of their actions is necessary to promote sustainable management in the region, particularly in areas of shared responsibility.
- (b) Integration toward shared environmental outcomes - recognising that the resolution of key resource management issues which will affect Otago's future will be more effective and efficient if management agencies work together for common goals.
- (c) Integration of management responses across resource systems - Recognising that natural and physical resources must be treated as parts of complex and inter-connected bio-physical systems affecting each other.
- (d) Integration of actions across a range of time scales - recognising that the effects of human activities in the environment can be temporary or permanent, may have already occurred, may be happening now, may happen some time in the future and may be cumulative over time.
- (e) Integration of decision-making with community participation - recognising that the values and beliefs of society, particularly those of Iwi, must play an important part in natural and physical resource management.
- (f) Integration of methods to be used to implement policies - recognising that there is usually more than one way of implementing policies in an efficient and effective way.
- (g) Integration across individual decisions - recognising that if each decision about the use of, or effects on, a resource is made in isolation, by the time that the accumulated effects are seen as a problem it may be too late to take remedial action.

This Plan seeks specifically to integrate management of:

- waste minimisation;
- contaminated sites;
- hazardous substances and hazardous wastes; and
- waste disposed to landfills.

Integration of air, water and land resources is only partly achieved by this Plan, being limited to the effects of waste management on those resources. Full integration will be achieved once the Otago Regional Council completes regional plans on air, water, coast and land. The provisions in this Plan are a necessary first stage in the integrated management of all waste in Otago.

## 1.7 Consultation

The preparation of this Plan is the culmination of work that has been carried out over a number of years.

Prior to the establishment of regional councils, the Coastal North Otago United Council and the Clutha Central Otago United Council both sought to coordinate waste management disposal within their respective areas. Both United Councils prepared Regional Solid Waste Management Plans in 1989. The plan for Clutha / Central Otago was completed but not adopted by the constituent authorities. The plan for Coastal North Otago was finalised and adopted by the constituent authorities.

In March 1992 the Otago Regional Council released the “**Waste Management Issues and Options Discussion Paper**” and in November 1992 the Council released a discussion document “**Visions for Otago**”, both of which promoted an integrated approach to waste management and waste minimisation. A workshop convened by the Otago Regional Council in April 1992 sought to identify Otago’s waste issues and to develop policies to address them. The proceedings of the workshop were summarised in the document “**Waste Management Project**” prepared by students of the Master of Regional and Resource Planning Programme, University of Otago, in July 1992.

The preparation of the Regional Policy Statement for Otago in October 1993 provided the opportunity to bring together all previous work carried out and to provide for the integrated management of waste within the regional resource management framework. This Plan implements the objectives and policies of the Regional Policy Statement for Otago within a more detailed framework.

As required by clause 3 of the First Schedule to the Resource Management Act, this Plan has been prepared in consultation with government agencies, territorial authorities and Manawhenua of Otago.

The focus of the consultation in preparing the Proposed Regional Plan: Waste was through the Otago Regional Council's Technical Waste Advisory Committee. This Committee was chaired by an Otago Regional Councillor, and comprised staff representatives of the territorial authorities of Otago, the Otago Regional Council, statutory government agencies and Manawhenua. The matters considered by that Committee, and the recommendations that it made were instrumental in determining the content of this Plan.

All of the above-mentioned reports, and reports and minutes of the Technical Waste Advisory Committee are available for inspection from the offices of the Otago Regional Council.

