

Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora Collaborative Stakeholder Group evaluation – summative report

Draft report


29 August 2017

Prepared for: Ruth Buckingham - Waikato Regional Council



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group

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Acknowledgements

The Collaborative Stakeholder Group evaluation process could not have succeeded without the buy-in and engagement of those involved.

The evaluation team acknowledges members of the Collaborative Stakeholder Group and other key stakeholders, including five River iwi representatives, Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora Co-governance Committee members, Waikato Regional Council staff and management, and Technical Leaders Group members who willingly and openly answered questions and surveys and provided feedback and perspectives throughout the Collaborative Stakeholder Group process. We also acknowledge the commitment of Waikato Regional Council staff and management who advocated for evaluation as a necessary learning and knowledge support function for a new and developing process.

Evaluation team

The evaluation team comprised Kate McKegg, Judy Oakden and Debbie Goodwin.

4. Now that the CSG process is complete, the purpose of this evaluation report is to provide a form of learning for the CSG process: to understand the value of a new collaborative process from multiple perspectives. The perspectives included in this evaluation include those from Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora Co-governance Committee members, WRC management and staff, five River iwi staff and management, Te Rōpū Hautū, Technical Leaders Group (TLG) members, all CSG members and the CSG chair and facilitator.
5. The five key evaluation questions (KEQs) used to guide the evaluation are:
 - To what extent did we achieve what we set out to do?
 - How well did we do it?
 - What is the value of the CSG process? For WRC and for others?
 - How worthwhile is collaboration?
 - What did we learn that might be applied or adapted for future processes?
6. At the outset of the evaluation, three sets of evaluative criteria were developed to coincide with three phases of the CSG's development: an establishment phase; the 'doing the work of creating the policy mix' phase; and criteria for expected collaboration outcomes. More detail on these criteria can be found in Appendix 1.
7. At the end of the collaborative process, a further set of evaluation criteria was developed by the evaluation team to provide a framework for the final evaluation analysis, synthesis, and reporting. These were developed drawing from literature on collaboration, policy change and innovation, the criteria used during the CSG development, and themes emerging from the interviews with wider stakeholders.
8. Over the course of the evaluation, the evaluation team ran seven cycles of data collection that included online surveys, individual interviews, group feedback sessions, synthesis and sensemaking workshops, and observations of some meetings and engagement processes.
9. A brief summary of the evaluative findings is presented below with more detailed discussion of the evaluative evidence for each evaluation question presented later in the report. Information about the evaluation methodology and process can also be found on pages 19-26 of the report.












Findings in summary

10. The findings for the five KEQs are summarised briefly below. As a starting point, a CSG member summarised the challenge of the CSG process compared with more traditional approaches very succinctly saying:

'There is no easy way to do this, and processes that go on behind court room doors with a bunch of experts battling it out in court will never solve the problems in the real world with 15,000 landowners. Those processes will never solve those problems...You need to bring sectors, representatives of sectors, and individuals within those sectors along on that journey or your management of the issues will fail.' (CSG member).

11. In short, our findings are as follows:

Table 1. Overall ratings for each KEQ.

Key for ratings	Key evaluation questions	Rating
 Excellent  Very good  Good  Adequate  Emerging  Too early to tell	KEQ 1: To what extent did we achieve what we set out to do?	
	KEQ 2: How well did we do it?	
	KEQ 3: What is the value of the CSG process? For WRC and for others?	
	KEQ 4: How worthwhile is collaboration?	
		

12. The rationale for these ratings are summarised below.

KEQ 1. To what extent did we achieve what we set out to do?

13. The purpose of the Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora: He Rautaki Whakapaipai Project was to develop recommendations for a plan change that addresses the adverse effects of discharges in the Waikato River and Waipā River catchments.
14. WRC and River iwi designed and implemented a collaborative approach with an 'aspiration for the inclusion and engagement' of a broad range of stakeholders². The CSG began its work in early 2014.
15. The CSG achieved the task set for the group. The recommendations of the CSG were accepted by the Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora Co-governance Committee and jointly presented to WRC councillors where they were

² Russell, S., Frame, B., & Lennox, J. (eds) (2012). *Old Problems, New Solutions: Integrative research supporting natural resource governance*. Lincoln, New Zealand: Landcare Research.

passed eight votes to seven on 15 September 2016 in preparation for public notification of the proposed plan in October 2016.

16. Although CSG members were not able to reach unanimous agreement on all aspects of the plan change, they unanimously supported many aspects of the plan change. The five River iwi also agreed to the proposed plan change put forward by the CSG.
17. Given the complexity of the plan change process, many stakeholders felt strongly that this was a significant accomplishment.

KEQ 2: How well did we do it?

18. Overall, most stakeholders (including CSG members and the CSG chair and facilitator, Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora Co-governance Committee members, WRC management and staff, five River iwi staff and management, Te Rōpū Hautū, the Technical Leaders Group (TLG) members,) considered the CSG process was well implemented. Many expressed confidence in the collaborative process, acknowledging the ups and downs of any group process.







'I have a lot of confidence in collaborative processes...working with people you get better outcomes than fighting them.' (CSG member)




'We've done the very best job of making a collaborative process work that we could have done. And it's... time will tell how the community views that.' (CSG member)

'There's no other way to write a policy of this nature without a high level of collaboration and ownership by the sectors.' (Supporting stakeholder)

19. Table 2 below provides a snapshot of the ratings given by a range of stakeholders to each high-level evaluation criterion used to assess how well the CSG process was implemented.

Table 2. Dashboard of criteria and ratings for KEQ 2.

Key for ratings	Evaluation Criteria
 Excellent  Very good  Good  Adequate 	 Effective leadership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective governance including formation of strategy and direction • Operationalisation of strategy and direction • Effective management • Timeframes and progress towards recommendations
	 Effective participation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision-making • Commitment to, and engagement in the process • Expression of views • Being heard • Communication

<p>Emerging</p> <p> Too early to tell</p>	<p> Structural coherence and connection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ease of adoption and adaption to change process • Awareness – knowledge and understanding of collaborative processes • Buy in, ownership, support and engagement in collaborative processes • Relationships within and between different groups and stakeholders
	<p> Overall value:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation in policy and process • Valuing of diversity of knowledge and expertise including western science and Mātauranga Māori • Capability building • Impacts on farming practice, nutrients, water quality etc • Sustainability of change • Perceived costs (time, resources etc)

20. Overall, the leadership and management of the CSG process was rated highly by all stakeholders. While there were aspects of the process that some people felt could have been managed better, the evidence suggests that, given the size and complexity of the plan change, leadership responsibility was well distributed among WRC, iwi and the CSG members with many people contributing to an innovative, never before tried, policy process³ unfolding as best it could in the circumstances.
21. There is evidence that having Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato (Vision and Strategy), developed by River iwi and WRC, already in place greatly improved the chances for success of the plan change process. Several stakeholders believed that, without the river vision and strategy giving direction and anchoring the relationships that had been formed between the co-governing partners, the CSG process would have struggled to make headway. Further, the commitment and generosity of iwi handing over design and decision-making of the plan change to a collaborative process so soon after settlements had taken place is widely acknowledged, as is the need for ongoing development of the co-governance relationship.
22. The evaluation team found evidence that a feature of the CSG process was the high level of commitment to, and engagement in, the collaborative process by all the stakeholders involved: by iwi, by WRC staff and management, by CSG members and their sectors, and by those governors overseeing the process. Many people went 'above and beyond' to get the plan change recommendations over the line.

³ Kaine, G. (2012). A Primer on the Policy Choice Framework. Prepared for Waikato Regional Council.
https://www.waikatoregion.govt.nz/assets/PageFiles/29874/EWDOCS_n2288444_v2_FINAL_Policy_Choice_Primer_-_Dr_Geoff_Kaine_June_2012.pdf

23. Securing commitment by those less directly connected to the process was challenging at times, with some of these stakeholders expressing scepticism and even resistance to collaboration. It was acknowledged that in a high stakes political process such as the Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora Plan Change, there are risks associated with not keeping decision makers fully informed with the process and clear about their roles.
24. A strength of the process was the diversity of perspectives included. Key elements of the process that were considered a real strength are:
 - direct involvement of a wide diversity of perspectives around the CSG table representing the sectors impacted by the policy
 - thorough and extensive consultation with sectors and communities throughout the process.
25. Many stakeholders acknowledged WRC made considerable effort to provide an equitable process given the differences in resourcing of the various stakeholders and sectors. Even so, these differences in resourcing did affect people's ability to engage and participate. CGS members and WRC staff commented that these differences will always be there and are difficult to manage. Nevertheless WRC did attempt to bridge the gap.
26. The nature and extent of communication required in a collaborative process cannot be underestimated. A key part of the effectiveness of the process was the ability of those leading and managing the process to communicate and connect meaningfully with diverse sector groups, community members, iwi, as well with WRC staff and management. According to several stakeholders, the efforts of some key people to support productive relationships between and among the many diverse stakeholders was a key factor in getting the plan change completed and notified.
27. Many stakeholders commented on how tough the CSG process was, especially for CSG members and those WRC staff and management supporting the process. Most of the stakeholders felt the amount of time, energy and resources required to undertake this kind of process were underestimated at the outset. Furthermore, timing issues had compounding impacts. For example, there were delays in getting the technical reporting underway, and this shortened the time available for WRC staff to undertake important tasks later in the plan development process. This meant long hours and late nights over a sustained period for these staff.
28. Many stakeholders placed significant value on having an independent, trusted source of independent science available for the CSG to use in their deliberations. Most stakeholders agreed however, that the technical work should have started as much as a year earlier than it did.
29. Many stakeholders commented on the innovative nature of the CSG process. It required all parties involved to accept ambiguity and ongoing change and to adapt as the process unfolded and issues arose. It took

time for some stakeholders to understand their roles as everyone was feeling their way. This was not easy for everyone involved, with some not coping so well with the process. But, ultimately, participants put their trust in the process and those leading it.

30. Overall, the evaluation team found evidence that the CSG process prioritised relationship building and promoted it as a fundamental component of collaboration. The quality of relationships built over time between and among participating groups and stakeholders were a key feature of the plan change process. The evaluators found a diverse range and number of relationships within and surrounding the collaborative process developed with varying levels of comfort and trust.

KEQ 3: What is the value of this (CSG) process? For WRC and for others?

'...for the right issues, for issues where there is clearly high likelihood of there being quite different sector or community interests and viewpoints, there is value in collaboration.' (CSG member).

'...the ability to front end something...once you have the first schedule process, it becomes legal... the advantage [of collaboration] was that you could pretty much forget about the legal ramifications...and find a solution...what are our values, and what do we want to achieve? And then find a way to fit it into the legislative arrangements... It's the best way forward.' (CSG member).

31. Overall, most CSG stakeholders were supportive of a collaborative approach, and the value of the CSG process was expressed in the following ways:
- The process ensured meaningful participation and engagement by a range of sectors and groups in a deep conversation about water allocation. These conversations confronted and addressed the many unknowns and uncertainties ahead. Participants engaged to understand multiple perspectives and interests and then collectively made decisions about the policy direction.
 - The collaborative process ensured a range of expertise and knowledge was integrated into analysis and decision-making processes in ways that traditional policy-making processes don't.
 - The process built knowledge and capability among members of the group. Over time, the leadership capability of CSG members grew as they became more able to articulate the problem situation and possible solutions to their sectors and others. This increased the credibility of the CSG and the decisions it made.

- Sectors gained new understandings about the perspectives and interests of others around the table as well as learning more about the policy development process.
- For WRC, the development of new relationships and the deepening of existing relationships across the region were highly valued outcomes.
- CSG members placed high value on having quality, independent science and technical advice readily available. This advice helped mitigate many potential conflicts and ensured the group continued to develop the policy mix and plan change.
- CSG members and sector representatives also appreciated gaining a much deeper understanding of iwi and Māori perspectives. Iwi valued the more inclusive process and the chance for those affected by the changes to sit at the decision-making table.
- A range of stakeholders believed that one of the most important benefits of the collaborative process was the ability of collaboration to create buy-in and ownership to policy decisions. Many stakeholders believed the value of this wider understanding will be evident over the life of the policy and is demonstrated in the already articulated willingness of sectors to implement the policy.
- So, although people acknowledged the costs of the process and the time and personal and professional sacrifices made by many participants, most stakeholders believed the policy outcome achieved was worth it because it was an important first and realistic step towards the restoration of the river.

'[Without the CSG] there would be no multi-sector understanding of the issues on the table, no joint solution or approach to coming up with practical policies.' (CSG member)

KEQ 4: How worthwhile is collaboration?

Downstream, the investment will pay off. There are conversations out there... everyone around the table agrees with the high-level policy and what's being tried to achieve...' (CSG member)

32. Overall, most stakeholders considered the collaborative process was worthwhile because it helped find a way to navigate between uncertainty and high levels of disagreement. Many felt that without a collaborative process there would not have been the level and breadth of sector engagement, nor would a joint solution have been found that so many sectors were happy to buy into.
33. However, many stakeholders felt that the worth of the process will only become realised if the key sectors implementing the policy make the necessary changes to their practices. While it is too soon to be able to fully assess this, early signs are that key sectors have bought into the policy at a high level. All River iwi have endorsed the proposed plan change for consultation and the recent submissions suggest that many

sectors support the overall direction and values expressed in the vision and strategy.

KEQ 5: What did we learn that might be applied or adapted for future processes?

34. Stakeholder selection and membership: The process of stakeholder selection is important for sector buy in as is ensuring the equity and balance of representation to reflect the impact of future decisions.
35. Vision, values and commitment: The *Vision and Strategy/Te Ture Whaimana o te Awa o Waikato* anchored and informed all aspects of the CSG process. Having a clear purpose and shared values is necessary for commitment to a collaborative process.
36. Chairing and facilitation: Both roles were considered essential to achieving the outcome of the CSG. High levels of skill and expertise are required for the design and facilitation of high stakes collaboration.
37. Group forming and purpose: A collaborative group needs time to form and develop trusting relationships. Ensuring all members share and understand the group's purpose and role and have a reasonable level of understanding about the policy situation and context is important.
38. Roles and relationships: Collaboration depends on the quality of relationships between the stakeholders involved. Creating trust within and between groups is vital to the success of collaboration.
39. Equitable and fair representation and participation: Inequities in resourcing for collaborative group members impacts on the quality of member participation as well as their ability to communicate back to their sectors. Achieving equity and fairness is not easy, but needs to be carefully considered and resources should be available to support members where necessary.
40. Technical, scientific and policy input and expertise: Independent technical and scientific advice is thought to reduce conflict and help level the playing field in high stakes collaborative decision-making. Having independent technical and scientific advice and support was an important and innovative idea, and having access to this independent science as well as scientific expertise was valued highly by members of the CSG and others.
41. Support processes: Considerable resources are needed to lead and manage a collaborative process like the Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora Plan Change. Policy and process demands expand in surprising and not always predictable ways, and managing a new and emergent policy process can be challenging. Resourcing and managing this kind of policy process requires an adaptive disposition for those in its midst.
42. Timing: Ensuring sufficient time for each phase of a collaborative process, i.e., building the group, developing the policy mix, and testing and writing

the policy, is not easy to plan. Flexibility in the project timeframes will be needed to help a collaborative process effectively reach its objective.

43. Communication: For collaboration to be effective, there needs to be capacity and capability for communication to happen across and between all stakeholders involved, as well as with many other interested stakeholders, such as the wider community, other regions, and politicians at all levels of the political system.

In conclusion

44. The CSG process was widely considered by those stakeholders the evaluators spoke with or surveyed, to have successfully brought together a diverse range of perspectives and interests. It also supported CSG members and other stakeholders to iteratively question, learn, build knowledge, interact, and negotiate a consensus for which the sectors involved have indicated relatively high levels of buy-in and ownership.
45. The CSG collaborative process was observed as thorough, very well supported by WRC, and highly credible to most stakeholders. It took longer than expected, was arduous for many people, and not entirely equitable. But most stakeholders believe that the resulting policy recommendations are a better outcome for the rivers and for many stakeholder groups than would have been achieved without a collaborative process.
46. While there are those who acknowledge that the plan change recommendations could have been developed by WRC using a traditional policy process, many believe that it is unlikely that the recommendations would have been the same, nor would WRC have achieved the endorsement of the policy by all five River iwi or by key sector groups.
47. Collaboration is not a process to be taken lightly: it takes considerable resources, and it is not appropriate for all policy situations. But it is widely considered as valuable and worthwhile when the stakes are high, when stakeholders have many diverse and competing perspectives and views, and when there is uncertainty about what solutions might be needed.

1 Introduction

48. In 2014, Waikato Regional Council (WRC) and the five River iwi who share co-governance and co-management responsibility for the Waikato River initiated a process to guide the ongoing care and protection of the Waikato River - the Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora Plan Change. The main strategy used to develop the plan was called the Collaborative Stakeholder Group (CSG) process.
49. This report presents an evaluation of the CSG process as a model for ongoing collaboration in the governance and management of the Waikato River.
50. This section provides contextual information important to understanding the collaborative process, background information about the evaluation process, and information about the evaluation purpose and methodology, including the key evaluation questions (KEQs), evaluation criteria, and the performance framework used to make the evaluation judgements.

The context for collaboration – Waikato River vision and strategy

51. In 2008, *Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato (Vision and Strategy)* was published. This laid the platform for nearly a decade of work to restore and protect the Waikato River and Waipā River.

'Our vision is for a future where a healthy Waikato River sustains abundant life and prosperous communities who, in turn, are all responsible for restoring and protecting the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River and all it embraces, for generations to come⁴.'
52. A lament by Kīngi Tāwhiao (the second Māori King) foregrounds the vision and strategy document to inspire actions that will be necessary for the future restoration of the river.

*Tōku awa koiora me ōna pikonga he kura tangihia o te mātāmuri –
The river of life, each curve more beautiful than the last⁵*
53. The vision and strategy document sets out objectives considered necessary to achieve the vision, including the need for an integrated, holistic and coordinated approach to the management of the river's resources, restoration and protection of the relationship of Waikato River iwi with the river according to their tikanga and kawa, and a series of bottom lines regarding the state of the river now and into the future.
54. The Vision and Strategy has a legislative mandate, along with the Waikato-Tainui Raupatu Claims (Waikato River) Settlement Act 2010, the Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Raukawa, and Te Arawa River iwi Waikato River Act,

⁴ Waikato River Authority. (2008). Restoring and Protecting the Health and Wellbeing of the Waikato River. p 4. <http://www.waikatoriver.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/Vision-and-Strategy.pdf>

⁵ Ibid, p 5.

2010, and the Ngā Wai o Maniapoto (Waipā River) Act 2012. These Acts provide statutory obligations to restore and protect the health and wellbeing of the Waikato and Waipā Rivers for future generations, to restore and protect the relationship of River iwi and communities with the Waikato River, and to provide co-management arrangements with River iwi. These obligations and mandates, along with the agreed vision and objectives, provide an anchor point for many involved in the CSG process and emphasise the importance of maintaining the wellbeing of the river at the forefront of people's considerations.

Whatever decisions I make, or wherever I may go, the river must come first... my priority first is what's good for the river.' (CSG member)

55. River iwi produced an outcome statement as an extension of the Vision and Strategy to assist the CSG in understanding the aspirations of River iwi for the river⁶. This statement expresses what River iwi and the Waikato River Authority hoped to see expressed through the plan change.
56. The Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora Plan Change is a key piece of resource management policy that will contribute to achieving the overall outcomes sought by the Vision and Strategy.

Collaborative governance and management

*'Around Aotearoa New Zealand, water bodies are under growing pressure from farming, manufacturing, and urban development with declining water quality and over-allocation of water resources. The challenges facing regional councils, central government, the agriculture sector and others concern how best to manage water for current and future generations.'*⁷

57. Drawing on the collaborative literature, the governance and management of water, and policy development and implementation such as the Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora Plan Change takes place within a context characterised by complexity with nested systems of institutions, groups, and individuals all interacting and responding to each other in relatively unpredictable ways. Achieving long term, sustainable outcomes for water in this situation requires a systemic response that links 'ecological, social, economic, technical, legal, cultural and other aspects of the local, regional and national water system to assist understanding of the ubiquity and complexity of water resource challenges'⁸.
58. To achieve change, many jurisdictions are increasingly moving away from traditional, agency-led approaches to those that emphasise collaboration

⁶ Outcome statement and principles for implementing The *Vision and Strategy/Te Ture Whaimana o te Awa o Waikato*, July 2015.

⁷ Russell, S., Frame B., & Lennox, J. (eds.). (2012). *Old Problems, New Solutions: Integrative research supporting natural resource governance*. Lincoln, New Zealand: Landcare Research.

⁸ Eppel, E. (2014). Improving New Zealand Water Governance: Challenges and Recommendations, *Policy Quarterly* 10(3), 66-75.

and participation by multiple stakeholders who all want a voice in decision-making. This shift has occurred through an increasing understanding that there is no single solution 'out there' to be found. Rather, policy makers and others are recognising a need to mediate 'a course between many possible perspectives'⁹.

59. Those engaged in complex policy change increasingly recognise that meaningful policy action for sustainability occurs across the system in a distributed, self-organising way. Policy innovation aiming for social change requires ongoing interactions between those working to redefine and reconfigure interpretations of value and importance and, by implication, co-evolving and developing more effective and more sustainable, collective responses, technologies, structures, routines, knowledge and expectations¹⁰.
60. In New Zealand, Treaty of Waitangi settlements now require government agencies to provide iwi with a more active guardianship role in relation to river and water governance and management. And, even where there is not a legislative requirement, government policy processes sometimes recognise the need to involve iwi and hapū so that Māori values and interests are identified and incorporated into water management and decision-making. Collaborative co-management arrangements are emerging that have made reasonably strong efforts to involve and work with iwi and hapū to ensure tangata whenua values and interests are reflected in management and decision-making related to water policy development and implementation¹¹.
61. A collaborative approach to policy development and implementation involves building collective understanding in a complex context and valuing and acknowledging multiple sources and types of evidence. This often means bringing together scientific information and cultural knowledge and making it useful for decision-making among stakeholders who don't always have all the technical or scientific training and backgrounds or cultural knowledge and understanding required for the task. Collaborative approaches also involve complex social processes of engagement between people with diverse experiences and perspectives sharing their values and views in order to develop a common understanding and basis for ongoing actions¹².
62. The central challenge for collaborative management is not a technical one; rather, it's a social one – finding ways to 'facilitate processes by

⁹ Allen, W., Fenemor, A., Kilvington, M., Harmsworth, G., Younge, R.G., Deans, N., Horng, C., Phillipsh, C., Montes de Oca, O., Atariah, J, and Smith, R. (2011). Building collaboration and learning in integrated catchment management: the importance of social process and multiple engagement approaches, *New Zealand Journal of Marine and Freshwater Research*, Vol. 45, No. 3, September 2011, 525-539.

¹⁰ Shove, E. (2010). Beyond the ABC: climate change policy and theories of social change, *Environment and Planning*, Vol 42, 1273-1285.

¹¹ Eppel, E. (2014). Improving New Zealand Water Governance: Challenges and Recommendations, *Policy Quarterly* 10(3), 66-75.; Harmsworth, G. & Awatere, S. (n.d.) Māori values – Iwi Perspectives of Freshwater Management, Presentation by Landcare Research.

¹² Ibid

which a wider range of stakeholders can engage with complex problems on equal terms' when this kind of interrelationship and engagement has historically not been the case¹³. Ensuring meaningful participation by all members of a group is central to the legitimacy of collaboration; getting the breadth, scope and credibility of expertise and representation right for the context gives the process its authority¹⁴.

63. Tensions will always arise when trying to balance the contributions and returns to human and natural systems, such as those involved in this plan change. Collaborative approaches to policy change offer a mechanism for moving beyond oppositional positions to reach inclusive, sustainable solutions that recognise and incorporate the interdependence of natural, economic, social, political and cultural systems.¹⁵

Evaluation purpose

64. Evaluation was built into the CSG process from the outset and began in April 2014. The evaluation was designed to support the development of the CSG and provide cycles of feedback to support the group to adapt and respond to emerging needs and issues and to promote learning and continuous improvement.
65. More specifically, the evaluation had three broad purposes:
- For the CSG – **to inform the process of development and implementation of the CSG process**, using cycles of evaluative enquiry and feedback
 - For WRC and iwi partners (the Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora Co-governance Committee) – **to provide a form of accountability for the CSG process as well as an opportunity to learn about and understand the value of a new collaborative process from multiple perspectives**
 - For wider audiences, e.g., other councils and organisations interested in this type of collaborative process, **to ensure the learnings can be shared more widely** (i.e., a learning and knowledge dissemination purpose).

¹³ Allen, W., Fenemor, A., Kilvington, M., Harmsworth, G., Younge, R.G., Deans, N., Horng, C., Phillipsh, C., Montes de Oca, O., Atariah, J., & Smith, R. (2011). Building collaboration and learning in integrated catchment management: the importance of social process and multiple engagement approaches, *New Zealand Journal of Marine and Freshwater Research*. 45(3), 525-539.

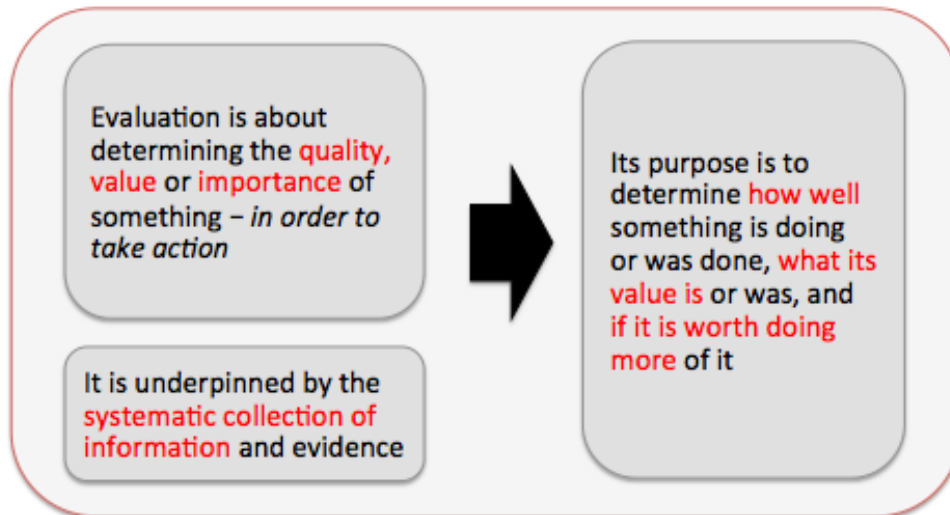
¹⁴ O'Brien, M. (2010). *Review of Collaborative Governance: Factors crucial to the internal workings of the collaborative process*, Research Report prepared for the Ministry for the Environment.

¹⁵ Rowe, A. (2014). Evaluation at the Nexus: Principles for Evaluating Sustainable Development Interventions, in *Evaluating Environment in International Development: Contributing to national Results Beyond Projects*, Uitto, J. I. (Ed), Routledge, Abingdon, Oxon.

Evaluation methodology

66. Evaluation is the systematic determination (reaching evaluative conclusions) of quality, value and importance¹⁶. Evaluation uses multiple kinds and forms of evidence framed around agreed criteria of quality, value and importance¹⁷. Good evaluation reaches defensible evaluative conclusions logically derived from a range of evidence about the quality, value and/or worth of something in order to take action¹⁸.

Figure 2. What is evaluation?



67. This evaluation used a developmental evaluation (DE) approach¹⁹ because it is ideally suited to a context where evaluative information and feedback is required to inform development of initiatives in complex dynamic environments²⁰. DE typically proceeds in cycles of data collection, analysis, synthesis and evaluative sensemaking – feeding into decision-making as processes evolve and develop.
68. Developmental evaluation is highly effective for use with new and emerging strategies that need the flexibility to develop and adapt to specific circumstances as they arise. Specifically, developmental evaluation seeks to understand a situation by using evaluative questioning, thinking, and feedback about what is emerging. Information from these processes is used to inform real-time decision-making and adaptation by those doing the design and development work.

¹⁶Aotearoa New Zealand Evaluation Association & Social Policy Evaluation and Research Unit (2015). Evaluation Standards for Aotearoa New Zealand.

¹⁷ Davidson, E. Jane. (2005). Evaluation Methodology Basics: The nuts and bolts of sound evaluation. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

¹⁸ Davidson, E. Jane. (2005). Evaluation Methodology Basics: The nuts and bolts of sound evaluation. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

¹⁹ Patton, M. Q. (2011). Developmental Evaluation: Applying complexity concepts to enhance innovation and use. New York: Guildford Press.

²⁰ Patton M. Q., McKeeg, K. & Wehipeihana, N (2015). Developmental Evaluation Exemplars, Principles in Practice. New York. Guildford Press.

69. The focus of this evaluation was to provide evaluative feedback to CSG members in a way that supported them to understand the quality and value of the CSG process as it was occurring. CSG members engaged in cycles of sensemaking to enable adjustment, adaptation, and improvement to the collaborative process in which they were engaged.
70. This evaluation process included seven evaluation cycles²¹. Five of these focused on the first purpose above, i.e., **to inform the process of development of the CSG**. These included:
1. development of a terms of reference and evaluation criteria for the evaluation; first round of data collection (online survey to all CSG members and interviews with a selection of CSG members²²); analysis, sensemaking, and reporting back to the CSG
 2. second round of data collection (online survey to all CSG members and interviews with a selection of CSG members); analysis, sensemaking, and reporting back to the CSG
 3. interviews with iwi staff and managers, WRC management and staff, iwi and WRC Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora Co-governance Committee members, and Technical Support Group members; analysis, sensemaking, and reporting back to the CSG
 4. third round of data collection (online survey to all CSG members and interviews with a selection of CSG members); analysis, sensemaking, and reporting back to the CSG
 5. in-depth interviews with the CSG chair and facilitator; preparation of a 'learnings on collaboration' brief for internal use and wider distribution; collation and synthesis of evaluation data in preparation for final analysis and reporting.
71. The sixth and seventh cycles focused on providing a form of accountability for the CSG process, and an opportunity to learn about and understand the value of a new collaborative process from the perspective of CSG members and delegates, WRC staff, management and leadership, Te Rōpū Hautū, and the Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora Co-governance Committee.
72. These final two cycles included undertaking a final online survey and individual interviews with most CSG members, the CSG chair and facilitator, and a wider group of 'supporting stakeholders' that included co-governors (councillors and iwi governors), WRC managers and staff (including policy and support staff), Technical Leaders Group (TLG) members, and River iwi managers and staff²³.

²¹ More detail about the cycles of data collection can be found in Appendix 3.

²² A rotational sampling process was used for the first three rounds of interviewing with CSG members, with one-third of members being interviewed during each round. The sample was selected by WRC and each round tried to ensure a range of views were represented.

²³ Quotes used throughout this report are ascribed to either CSG members, supporting stakeholders, or iwi members. Where the general term 'stakeholders' is used, e.g.,

73. Following the final two cycles, the evaluators conducted several rounds of analysis, synthesis, sensemaking and reporting to WRC and CSG members. The evaluators also produced two reports: the first was a summary of evaluative findings based on CSG perspectives only; the second is this final evaluation report.
74. The evaluation process was participatory with opportunities for CSG members, WRC staff and management, and co-governors to interrogate and make sense of the data as it was collected and analysed during each cycle. The process also provided an opportunity for all those involved in each cycle to offer feedback on the written reports.

Key evaluation questions

75. The evaluation was guided by the following key evaluation questions (KEQs):
- To what extent did we achieve what we set out to do?
 - How well did we do it?
 - What is the value of the CSG process? For WRC and for others?
 - How worthwhile is collaboration?
 - What did we learn that might be applied or adapted for future processes?

Evaluation criteria and performance rating

76. Evaluation criteria were developed in two phases for two purposes:
- to assess the quality and value of the establishment, ongoing development and outcomes of the CSG process
 - to provide a framework for a summative evaluation of the overall value and worth of the CSG process.

Criteria for the set up and development of collaboration

77. The evaluators (with the input of WRC staff and CSG members) established criteria for collaboration, referencing a range of literature on collaboration (See Appendix 2). High-level criteria developed for the set up and development of the collaborative process are summarised below.
78. Criteria were developed for three phases of collaboration:
1. forming and establishing the group
 2. doing the main work: developing limits, targets and the policy mix
 3. analysing the outcomes.

'most stakeholders felt...', or *'some stakeholders expressed the view...'*, we are referring to a mix of all those we have surveyed and interviewed for this evaluation.

79. A suite of more detailed or mid-level evaluation criteria was developed for each phase of the collaborative process. The evaluators used online surveys and phone interviews to track CSG members’ perspectives on these criteria throughout the process. The more detailed criteria are shown in Appendix 1.

Table 3. Phases of development and high-level evaluation criteria for the CSG process

Phase 1: Forming and establishing the group	Phase 2: Doing the main work: limits, targets, policy mix	Phase 3: Analysing outcomes
Voluntary participation and commitment: group members participate voluntarily and are committed to the process	Equal opportunity and resources: the process provides for equal and balanced opportunity for effective participation by all group members	Knowledge understanding and skills: group members gain knowledge, understanding and skills through participation in the collaborative process
Self-design: group members work together to design the process to suit the needs of the group	Principled negotiation and respect: the process operates according to the conditions of principled negotiation, including mutual respect, trust and understanding	Relationships and social capital: the process creates new personal and working relationships and raises social capital among participants
Clear ground rules: a comprehensive procedural framework is established that includes clear terms of reference, operating procedures, schedule and protocols	Accountability: the process and its participants are accountable to the broader public and their own constituencies	Information, innovation and creativity: The process produces innovative ideas
	Flexible, adaptive, creative: flexibility is designed into the process to allow for adaptation and creativity in problem solving	Agreement: the process helps the group reach an agreement accepted by all group members
	High-quality information: the process incorporates high-quality information into decision-making	Perceived as successful: the group, decision makers, and sector groups perceive the process and outcomes as successful
	Time limits: realistic deadlines and milestones are established and managed throughout the process	Public interest: the outcomes are regarded as meeting the common good, or larger public interest, and not just the interests of stakeholders involved; wider environmental, social, cultural and economic objectives are met
	Group commitment to monitoring and reflecting on the group process: the process includes formal commitments to	Conflict reduced: conflict is reduced following plan change recommendations and decisions

	implementation and monitoring	
	Effective process management: the process is managed and coordinated effectively	Second-order effects: the collaborative process produces a range of second-order effects, e.g., new partnerships, relationships, etc.
	Independent chairing and facilitation: the process uses an independent chair and facilitator throughout	Understanding and support of collaborative processes by sector groups and communities
	Decision-making: the decision-making process is transparent and accessible to the public	

80. The evaluation team reported findings to the CSG at strategic points along the collaborative process. At each of these points, a face to face workshop was held with the CSG, and members were given an opportunity to discuss, debate, and make their own sense of the data and findings.
81. At the conclusion of the collaborative process, an evaluative report was prepared for the CSG based largely on the CSG members’ perspectives and experiences. That report served as an important data source for this final summative evaluation report.

Criteria for the summative evaluation

82. Immediately following the completion of fieldwork for this summative phase of the evaluation, the evaluation team reviewed a range of literature on collaboration, policy change and innovation. The team also reviewed the criteria used during the development phase of the CSG and the themes that emerged from interviews with wider stakeholders. The following suite of evaluative dimensions and criteria were generated to provide a framework for the final evaluation analysis, synthesis and reporting. All data collected throughout the evaluation were mapped against the criteria and synthesised to form evaluative judgements.

Table 4. Evaluation dimensions and criteria for the summative evaluation of the CSG process.



Dimensions	Criteria
KEQ 1: To what extent did we achieve what we set out to do?	





KEQ 2: How well did we do it?	
1.0 Effective leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective governance, including formation of strategy and direction • Operationalisation of strategy and direction • Effective management • Time frames and progress towards recommendations • Decision-making
2.0 Effective participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to and engagement in the process • Expression of views • Being heard • Communication
3.0 Structural coherence and connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ease of adoption and adaption to change process • Awareness – knowledge and understanding of collaborative processes • Buy in, ownership, support for, and engagement in collaborative processes • Relationships within and between different groups and stakeholders
KEQ 3: What is the value of this (CSG) process? For WRC and for others?	
4.0 Overall value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation in policy and process • Valuing of diversity of knowledge and expertise including western science and mātauranga Māori • Capability building • Impacts on farming practice, nutrients, water quality, etc. • Perceived costs (time, resources, etc.) • Sustainability of change
KEQ 4: How worthwhile is collaboration?	
KEQ 5: What did we learn that might be applied or adapted for future processes?	

Evaluation performance / rating framework

83. The evaluation team used the following performance/rating framework to make transparent evaluative judgements. The framework was developed to suit a complex situation and the performance descriptors were designed to be a schema that would be useful across the development as well as in the final summative evaluation of the CSG.

Table 5. Levels of performance and expected patterns of performance at each level.

	Rating	Descriptor
	Excellent (always)	Clear example of exemplary performance or great practice; very few or no gaps or weaknesses identified
	Very good (almost always)	Very good performance on virtually all aspects; strong overall but not exemplary; no weaknesses of any real consequence and these are generally managed effectively

	Good (mostly, with some exceptions)	Generally strong performance overall; few gaps or weaknesses; gaps and weaknesses have some impact, but are mostly managed effectively
	Adequate (barely gets across the line)	Inconsistent performance overall; gaps or weaknesses have impact and are not being managed effectively; meets minimum expectations/requirements as far as can be determined
	Emerging (early signs but not yet across the line)	Fair performance given the expected stage of development; some capacity issues still to be worked through; early signs of progress; on track for most milestones with realistic timeframes
	Too early to tell (barely any signs of activity or progress, but no reason for concern)	No clear evidence has yet emerged that the element being assessed has been implemented and/or produced any effect, but also no evidence of unsatisfactory functioning

Strengths and limitations of the evaluation

84. The evaluation process has been systematic and thorough. This summative report has synthesised a mix of data collected over a considerable period of time gathering the views of CSG members and others at different stages of the CSG process as it developed.
85. Limitations: Data collected for this evaluation of the Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora CSG process was limited to CSG members and delegates, WRC managers and staff, iwi managers and staff, Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora Co-governance Committee members (iwi and councillors), Technical Leaders Group members and the CSG chair and facilitator. **We did not gather wider views and perspectives of sector groups** (other than those of representatives who had a seat at the CSG table), nor of sector groups not represented at the CSG table, and that is an acknowledged limitation of this report.

2 KEQ 1: To what extent did we achieve what we set out to do?

86. The purpose of the Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora Plan Change: He Rautaki Whakapaipai Project was to develop recommendations for a plan change to address the adverse effects of discharges into the Waikato River and Waipā River catchments.
87. The stated purpose of the CSG was to bring stakeholders together to seek a common path forward and to:
- act as the central channel for stakeholder and broader community involvement (broader community involvement and engagement occurred during the middle phase of the project where options and the policy mix was developed)
 - intensively review and understand the technical, social, cultural and economic complexity of the project
 - inform and guide decision makers.
88. The CSG was tasked with a range of activities including:
- to intensively review and synthesise technical and other material and information regarding social, cultural, economic and environmental values and impacts
 - to develop policy for WRC and for Waikato and Waipā River iwi
 - to make recommendations for the plan change to be jointly presented to WRC decision makers to notify a change to the Waikato Regional Plan.
89. At the outset, the benefits of the CSG process²⁴²⁵ were considered to be:
- increasing the credibility of the group by drawing its members from a range of stakeholders
 - including a wide range of voices to bring new ideas and innovations resulting in greater uptake of policy
 - having a group able to dedicate a significant amount of time to understanding the wide range of information and views as well as technical complexities of this task to support time-constrained decision makers
 - creating an opportunity for developing real solutions that can be implemented and lead to real outcomes.
90. The most important finding is that the CSG achieved the task set for the group. Plan change recommendations were developed, accepted by the

²⁴ Draft terms of reference - Collaborative Stakeholder Group Doc # 2194147

²⁵ Some sectors had additional delegates, so had more than one person representing the sector.

Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora Co-governance Committee, and jointly presented to WRC where they were passed 8 votes to 7 on 15 September 2016 in preparation for public notification in October 2016.

91. Given the complexity of the plan change process, there are strong feelings among many stakeholders that 'getting the job done' was a major achievement. In particular, securing agreement to the content of the plan from all five River iwi and all sectors bar one (and even this sector agreed to most of the plan) within the timeframe was seen as significant. International experience confirms that reaching agreement on these kinds of plan changes is tough and that the achievement is an important one²⁶.
92. Most sectors believe they made concessions to reach agreement on the plan change. Very few CSG members felt that their sector would have possibly or very likely made these concessions without the CSG process. The view that people went further than they ordinarily would have was also expressed by other stakeholders:

'People made compromises and went further than they might have in a traditional process.' (Iwi member)
93. Many stakeholders expressed disappointment that the group hadn't reached consensus across the board; however, others felt that the extent of agreement reached was extraordinary.
94. Stakeholders were broadly in agreement that the collaborative process was a credible one and that, although this has yet to play out, they believed policy uptake is more likely than with a traditional policy process because it was 'a more inclusive process' where more 'people could have their views considered and input into it'.
95. CSG members did not underestimate the task of implementing the policy changes, but felt that this would be achievable. In the final survey of CSG members, nearly half felt local communities would see the policy changes as achievable to a considerable or high degree.










'What we have got is implementable. It really is implementable. I can't name another region that has gone through this process that the final court position was implementable. They had to change it every time. Ours may go through court, and turn out not to be implementable. But what the CSG put up is certainly implementable.' (CSG group member)
96. However, only around a third of CSG members felt that the policy changes would be seen by local communities as practical (down from nearly two thirds in the Nov 2015 survey). Added to this, around a third of members felt it was too early to tell what the outcomes would be.

²⁶ Rowe, A. (2014) Evaluation at the Nexus: Principles for Evaluating Sustainable Development Interventions, in *Evaluating Environment in International Development: Contributing to national Results Beyond Projects*, Uitto, J. I. (Ed), Routledge, Abingdon, Oxon.

3 KEQ 2: How well did we do it?

97. The evaluation team assessed this question across three dimensions using 14 criteria. Table five below highlights the dimensions and criteria that apply to this key evaluation question and the ratings applied.

Table 6. Evaluation dimensions, criteria and ratings for KEQ 2: How well did we do it?

Key for ratings	Evaluation Criteria
 Excellent  Very good  Good  Adequate  Emerging  Too early to tell	 Effective leadership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective governance including formation of strategy and direction • Operationalisation of strategy and direction • Effective management • Timeframes and progress towards recommendations
	 Effective participation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision-making • Commitment to, and engagement in the process • Expression of views • Being heard • Communication
	 Structural coherence and connection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ease of adoption and adaption to change process • Awareness – knowledge and understanding of collaborative processes • Buy in, ownership, support for and engagement in collaborative processes • Relationships within and between different groups and stakeholders

1.0 Effective leadership

98. The summary of evidence gathered for each criterion that makes up the effective leadership dimension is presented below.

Effective governance including formation of strategy and direction

99. There is little doubt according to many stakeholders, that having the *Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River/Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato* contributed significantly to the success of the CSG process. Many are not sure the process would have worked without it, as it set the overall direction taken by the CSG and provided an anchor for governance. The vision and strategy carried the weight of being

mandated through the settlement process setting out '*...what needed to be achieved at a high level*'. (Supporting stakeholder)

100. Many stakeholders also considered the presence of iwi at the table – acting as advocates for the longer term – was crucial to the success of the process. This longer-term perspective was considered very helpful, as councils often find it difficult to think and plan beyond the length of the electoral cycle.
101. Several stakeholders acknowledged the generosity of iwi towards the process. Having waited a long time to be at the decision-making table, and having finally got there through the settlement process, they agreed to hand over the process to a group of stakeholders. This was described as a '*big call*' on their part. (Supporting stakeholder)
102. Feedback suggests iwi largely trusted the CSG process. Operationalising co-governance through the Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora Co-governance Committee appears to have been largely a positive experience for most iwi, although committee members acknowledged they still encountered some difficult periods. However, generally, iwi observed good relationships between themselves and councillors on the committee. Councillors, too, acknowledge high levels of engagement by all committee members throughout the CSG process.
103. However, some iwi representatives in the CSG felt that, at the broader governance level of council, the partnership between council and iwi didn't develop fully – that it wasn't ever completely '*trusting*'. Some representatives expressed feeling unsure as to whether council as a whole had confidence in the collaborative process, with the final vote being '*very disappointing*' given the amount of resource, time, people, and energy that had gone into getting the proposed plan change developed to that stage.
104. The experience of engaging with politicians towards the end of the CSG process was not very pleasant for some CSG members and WRC staff. One stakeholder commented that people needed a '*thick hide*' to deal with the politics. Another stakeholder recognised that the process of managing the politics of the final decision-making process '*certainly could have gone better*'
105. While another stakeholder commented, '*a lot of people worked very hard to keep the politics out of the process...so when it jumped back in, a lot of people were surprised*' (Supporting stakeholder).
106. WRC councillors who were not involved in the collaborative process were not as well versed on the CSG process and they had very little experience of working with iwi to call upon; and this lack of experience and awareness nearly disrupted the process.

Operationalisation of strategy and direction

107. Council leadership was widely acknowledged as a key factor in the success of the overall process. In the early stages, WRC staff had a leading role in the process, but moved into more of a support role over time allowing the CSG members to take more of a lead. Although WRC staff recognised that it was hard to let go of their traditional leadership role and give way to the CSG, this was considered by many stakeholders both within the CSG and wider stakeholder groups, to be one of the real successes of the collaborative process.
108. There is widespread agreement that having CSG members step up, take ownership and lead the process was critical to sector buy in and to the overall credibility of the process.

'I don't think that the CSG could have done any better...I don't think River iwi could have done any better.' (Supporting stakeholder)
109. Successful operationalisation of the strategy hinged on key stakeholders maintaining strong relationships with each other – building up trust, keeping each other informed, valuing each other's points of view, and working out differences over time. Both formal and informal communication channels and processes operated to make this a reality, and both were needed.
110. Many stakeholders acknowledge the senior leadership of WRC as providing essential links and channels of communication between councillors and the CSG. This senior leadership ensured that the CSG did not operate in a vacuum and that members were kept abreast of what was going on in the wider community as there was political interest in the process at local, regional and national levels. Senior leadership's role in problem solving, navigating issues as they arose, managing political tensions and disagreements within the WRC as well as with wider sector groups, and keeping national politicians and iwi informed was fundamental to the success of the CSG process.
111. Stakeholders also widely acknowledge the CSG facilitator and chair as playing a key role in managing relationships and helping people at all levels of the system to keep abreast of what was happening and to navigate issues and challenges as they arose.
112. Several stakeholders commented that having five River iwi able to agree on the plan change was a major achievement, and they spoke to the success of the strategies used to connect with, communicate with, and coordinate iwi. Although iwi coordination was a considerable challenge early on, this improved significantly when a coordinator (independent of iwi) was appointed. In the end, iwi perceived the way they were able to work with each other, retaining what was of importance to each iwi, as a real strength of the process.

Effective management

113. CSG members' perceptions of the management of the CSG process was positive overall. They consistently rated highly WRC's support and management of the CSG process.
114. However, other stakeholders, including WRC staff and management, in the process described the management of the CSG implementation as challenging. Co-governance and collaboration were new approaches for WRC managers and staff. WRC also implemented at least two major restructures during the time the CSG was in operation, along with the rollout of other internal processes, e.g., a new document management system. Several WRC stakeholders commented that WRC management and staff were on a steep learning trajectory throughout the CSG process. They acknowledged that many mistakes were made along the way and that it was the strength of relationships that got people through the CSG process.
115. The evaluators found that the CSG process was emergent requiring constant adaptation. Several stakeholders commented that the WRC staff supporting the CSG, the facilitator and the chair of the CSG had new things to deal with every day that had never been dealt with before. 'Work arounds' were used to deal with the ongoing adaptations needed, but these were not always completely satisfactory.
116. Some stakeholders expressed quite strong views that the chair and the wider Technical Leaders Group should have had much more of a hand in making key decisions about the expertise required and the process and timing around sourcing this scientific expertise. The outsourcing of the technical work was run by WRC, and although well intentioned, didn't run as smoothly as was intended. It also later transpired that the group selected couldn't do all of the work that was needed by the CSG, so the TLG had to look further afield to gain the expertise needed to answer key questions. Thus the outsourcing process was described as '*a bit of a handbrake on everything*', slowing down a process that was already running behind. The technical outsourcing process also affected the morale of WRC scientists, who felt '*left out*' of the process because they were not invited to be part of the TLG.
117. The WRC provided the CSG with a large and multi-skilled support team from within WRC in areas of administration, policy, and technical support. The CSG support process was time consuming and there was considerable pressure on staff to meet deadlines. Collaboration in this form and at this scale was a totally new process for WRC, requiring lots of readjustment. Not all staff felt they had the right tools, training or support to cope with the pressure of the process or the constant change required. Staff reported feeling physically and mentally exhausted long before the end of the process. While some staff adapted to this new way of working, others struggled.

'In general, WRC under-estimated the change from business as usual for staff.' (Supporting stakeholder)

118. Because the science input to the CSG ran much later than hoped, the CSG was later than planned in reaching important decisions on the plan change. This delayed the development of policy options and compressed the time available for the policy writing process. Both CSG members and WRC stakeholders believed the process for preparing Section 32 was far from ideal. The shortened timeframe created significant pressure for a few key policy and technical staff from WRC.
119. Additionally, some WRC stakeholders felt there wasn't enough time or emphasis put on testing what the sectors will actually need to do on the land to implement the policy. The policy implications for implementation were worrying for staff and others in WRC. Some CSG and iwi members also expressed concern about the implications of the short timeframe to write the policy detail; they were anxious about whether the integrity of the CSG recommendations were maintained in the rush to get the policy written.

'More time was probably needed to make sure the rules were completely sound and implementable.' (Supporting stakeholder)
120. Overall, although most stakeholders expressed support for collaboration, CSG members generally found participation in the process to be *'tough on the people involved.'* (Supporting stakeholder)
121. Many stakeholders felt that the chair and facilitator were essential roles in the CSG process. Several stakeholders commented on the connecting and diplomatic roles that the chair played. Many stakeholders also acknowledged the facilitator's expertise in providing the 'glue' between the different groups supporting the CSG process, making mention of the facilitator's impressive facilitation of very tough issues and politics.
122. Managing relationships between the five River iwi partners was also more complex than initially anticipated. In the earlier stages, Te Rōpū Hautū didn't function as effectively as was hoped with some iwi reporting early on that they couldn't see much value in the group. However, once a coordinating role was funded and someone suitable found to fill that role, iwi reported being able to better engage in the process. The coordinating role provided the structure and support that enabled iwi to properly prepare for meetings, come together and discuss issues, be more confident about the process, and communicate their views more successfully.

Time frames and progress towards recommendations

123. Initially, many stakeholders were critical of the length of time the CSG took to become fully functional. However, later in the process, many of these same stakeholders acknowledged that CSG members needed a good deal of time to build trust and confidence in each other and that this trust was what ultimately ensured the process was successful.
124. Many stakeholders also commented that early on CSG members didn't fully appreciate the size of the task ahead of them and therefore didn't

focus early enough on what would need to be produced at the end, nor on the amount of detailed analysis that would be needed for the policy process.

125. There is widespread agreement among all stakeholders that the science and technical work should have started as much as a year earlier than it did. The late start of this workstream compounded the pressures of an already complex and difficult process resulting in further time pressures and gaps in the information needed for the final policy writing process. Policy staff described an environment in which they were expected to have to do whatever they could to get the best product, regardless of how many additional hours it took to do so.
126. The time pressure in the final phase was considerable, and the impact of this fell not only on CSG members, but also in a much larger way on WRC policy staff. One CSG member suggested that *'80% of the work had to be done in 20% of the time'* (CSG member).

Decision-making

127. The recommendations of the CSG were accepted by the Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora Co-governance Committee and jointly presented to WRC councillors where they were passed eight votes to seven on 15 September 2016 in preparation for public notification in October 2016.
128. Many stakeholders reported feeling disappointed about the closeness of the vote. They also felt it was unfortunate that, in the end, some councillors voted against the plan change going forward to public notification given the effort and resources that WRC, sectors and iwi had invested in developing and socialising the plan change.
129. However, in general, most stakeholders felt that the decision-making process was transparent; most stakeholders who completed the final online survey indicated that they felt the decision-making process was considerably or highly transparent to those in their group. And many agreed that having affected stakeholders make decisions about where the policy should land was the right thing to do.
130. Many stakeholders indicated that, while the collaborative process wasn't perfect, they felt it was better than a traditional policy development process for such a complex plan change. International evidence suggests the achievement of reaching this kind of agreement should not be underestimated²⁷.

²⁷ Rowe, A. (2014). Evaluation at the Nexus: Principles for Evaluating Sustainable Development Interventions, in *Evaluating Environment in International Development: Contributing to national Results Beyond Projects*, Uitto, J. I. (Ed), Routledge, Abingdon, Oxon.

2.0 Effective participation

131. The summary of evidence gathered for each criterion that makes up the effective participation dimension is presented below.

Commitment to, and engagement in the process

132. Overall, stakeholders reported high levels of commitment of time and resources to the collaborative process. This commitment was notable among CSG members, with most in the group remaining dedicated to the process right to the end. Stakeholders outside the CSG described CSG members as engaged and close knit with strong bonds having developed between many within the group. CSG members made deep commitments to the process, giving a great deal of their personal time and forgoing significant amounts of income, as well as annual and sick leave entitlements, to stay engaged.

'CSG members made a huge commitment and lived up to it.' (Iwi member)

133. Between November 2014 and November 2015, CSG members who rated group members' commitment and engagement as 'considerable' to 'high' rose from around half to almost all members. Most CSG members invested personal time and resources in the process, some more than others, as members had different levels of support beyond that provided by the CSG process.
134. Several stakeholders reported that a vital step in the engagement process was getting clarity about the CSG's purpose. Several CSG members reported they were clear that their role was to reach consensus and work with their sectors to move them towards acceptance of the compromise needed for the river.

'Whatever decisions I make, or wherever I may go, the river must come first... my first priority is what's good for the river.' (CSG member)

135. However, not all members of the CSG felt this way. Some CSG members held firm to their sector positions. Others who started out more neutral felt the pressure to fall back into sector positions, particularly in the later stages. According to some CSG members, these different positions were deeply challenging in the final stages had the potential to derail the entire process.
136. Other stakeholders close to the CSG process also demonstrated high levels of commitment to the collaborative process, most notably WRC staff and management. Staff reported the experience as intense, requiring high levels of commitment to achieve the outcome. They reported working far beyond normal working hours and expectations with some staff reporting high personal costs.

'...they were finding their feet...but their primary goal was to support the CSG and make them successful.' (Supporting stakeholder)

137. CSG members deeply appreciated the level of support provided by WRC staff and management. From the outset, most CSG members recognised WRC staff commitment as 'considerable' or 'high'. By October 2015, all CSG members rated WRC management of the process as 'considerable' or 'high'.
138. However, WRC staff not close to the process reported quite different levels of commitment. Others held back or disengaged completely from the process. Past and recent feedback from WRC staff indicates varying levels of commitment to collaborative processes generally, with some reasonably sceptical about the benefit of collaboration indicating perhaps even some internal resistance that will need to be overcome prior to implementation of future collaborative processes.
139. Overall the commitment and engagement by all iwi was described by one WRC stakeholder as 'second to none', with iwi representatives engaging formally and informally in the collaborative process at many levels and in a number of ways. More than one stakeholder commented on the leap of faith the collaborative process asked of iwi. One stakeholder described iwi agreement to the collaborative process as a '*big confidence call to hand over the process to stakeholders, many of whom have helped to contribute to the degradation of the river.*' (Supporting stakeholder)
140. Iwi reported that engaging in the process was demanding given the spread of commitments they had across many other issues and projects. Early on, iwi struggled to engage as effectively as they wanted to for a number of reasons, but most notably, coordinating the perspectives and aspirations of five iwi had not been anticipated when the process was set up.²⁸ However, once the CSG and WRC acknowledged the importance and size of the task and provided resource and support for coordination, iwi participation became much more effective. Some stakeholders described the extent of coordination and collaboration between iwi as impressive
141. While the WRC councillors who sat on the Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora Co-governance Committee showed high levels of commitment, this was not so for councillors who were not on the committee. Feedback suggests it was tough to get commitment, engagement and understanding of the process from non-participating councillors and this very nearly upended the process. One stakeholder suggested the recommendations for the plan change was passed by councillors 'by the skin of its teeth'. Several stakeholders commented on the importance of engaging key decision makers throughout the journey to ensure the integrity of collaborative decision-making.

²⁸ The Māori representatives on the CSG were not directly representing iwi interests. They were not put there by iwi. Neither of the co-governing partners to the Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora Plan Change had seats at the CSG table.

142. In general, the collaborative process required a commitment of time and resources far beyond what many stakeholders expected at the outset. Yet, despite the large and unexpected commitment, most stakeholders remained involved to completion.

Expression of views

'I think as much as could be done in terms of involving the diversity of views was done...' (Supporting stakeholder)

143. WRC consulted sector and community groups about the makeup and parameters for the group in the establishment phase. WRC initially sought nominations for 20 seats from identified sectors (13), the community (4), and non-allocated seats (3). This selection process differed from other collaborative processes around the country where members were selected according to their expertise rather than being nominated by sectors.
144. WRC received sixty-five nominations from a wide range of sectors for the seven proposed community and non-allocated seats. The nominations were reported by WRC to be from high calibre candidates, and the process undertaken by Te Rōpū Hautū to narrow down nominations was reported by WRC to be considered, robust and thorough²⁹.
145. Feedback from CSG members on the set-up of the CSG process highlighted the importance of the CSG remaining connected to wider stakeholder and community networks. Following a very thorough selection process, the project steering group, Te Rōpū Hautū, recommended five additional seats to ensure a balance of members and perspectives. These additional seats provided representation from the central area, community (including youth), environment, Māori interests and rural professionals.
146. There was wide support reported among CSG members and other stakeholders for sectors to nominate their representatives; this was considered important for sector mandate.
147. Many stakeholders reported that the strength of the process was being able to include and engage with a diversity of perspectives, involving the range of sectors impacted by the policy directly in making policy.
148. One CSG member felt that the:
- 'CSG process enabled all representatives to express their views at any time. The CSG showed a good level of tolerance to hear a large range of views and the culture 'around the table' sought to incorporate solutions to issues that were contrary to the majority view around the table.'* (CSG member)
149. CSG meetings were intentionally designed, chaired and facilitated to ensure equity of expression of views. However, some CSG members and WRC stakeholders considered that some sectors had more opportunity to

²⁹ Report to Council 28 November 2013.

express their views because they had greater sector representation and support. The level of support and resource sitting behind the sectors appears to have had quite a strong influence on the extent to which people felt their views were able to influence the process. Some CSG members and WRC staff raised concerns about the number of sectors who appeared to have selected members with views aligned to the more powerful sector groups. Feedback suggested that it is important to have fair representation from those who will be and are significantly affected. One stakeholder commented that it comes down to *'being really careful about making sure that the group of people is a fair reflection of the basic problem you are trying to address.'* (Supporting stakeholder)

150. CSG members' perceptions of their own skills and capabilities and others' skills and capabilities to participate in the process dropped slightly after the initial phase. For many CSG members, even those with considerable experience of other planning processes, it wasn't until they got well into the process that they recognised how much they had to learn – about the process of collaboration, as well as developing policy using science.
151. Despite considerable work by WRC to manage obvious inequities, significant disparity remained in the resources available to CSG members, with some sectors well-resourced and others much less so. Some stakeholders felt this inequity affected how well some members were able to participate and contribute to the process and to the final policy mix outcome.
152. The CSG and WRC undertook a wide range of stakeholder forum meetings and other types of public engagement processes. There is broad agreement among all stakeholders that the community feedback processes were well run and meaningful. One stakeholder reported that the WRC reach out to community was *'really impressive...leading edge'*.
153. Both co-governance partners (WRC and iwi) expressed frustration as well as ambivalence about not having a seat at the CSG table. For WRC, the CSG process was unlike any other policy process, mainly because council only had the power of influence rather than decide on the outcome. WRC staff also indicated that they felt that their interests would have been better looked after if they'd had membership of the CSG.
154. Even though iwi decided to not have a seat at the CSG table, some reflected that they found this challenging, describing feeling as if they weren't able to contribute effectively to the process as it developed. Iwi expressed feeling uncomfortable with the final part of the process reporting that consultation and engagement on the substance of the change felt rushed.
155. Stakeholders outside the CSG expressed a variety of perspectives about the extent to which they felt able to share their views. In a final survey of other stakeholders, nearly two thirds felt they could express their views to a considerable or high degree. The remaining one-third felt they were provided with opportunities to express their views to only a limited or moderate degree.

Being heard

156. Most CSG members found the CSG process to be respectful with a climate of goodwill where trusted relationships were developed and where open, honest, and robust discussion could be had.

'Strengths were the way that the group worked together and the process of keeping the conversations within the room...there was the freedom to express views, tease out questions...' (CSG member).

157. Some CSG members were fully paid professionals who had significant organisational resources supporting them. Others had less capacity, with very little or no backing from their sectors. These differing levels of support affected some members' capacity to fulfil their roles as effectively as others, and to be heard. Members with fewer resources reported making personal and financial sacrifices to remain involved in the process, for example, some members reported their businesses and farms suffering while they juggled their work in the CSG process with their other commitments.

158. The evaluation found well-resourced and supported sectors felt heard and their ownership of the process was high. Some less well-resourced members described the larger sectors dominating the process with some even expressing the view that they sometimes *'found it quite intimidating to raise views contrary to those of the sectors with larger representation around the table'* (CSG member). Some CSG members observed that well-resourced sectors put forward well-researched arguments while others who did not have the ability to do this were limited in their ability to have their perspectives heard.

159. Some CSG members expressed appreciation for the stipend that was offered to them for participation in the process, but felt it wasn't enough to cover the significant contribution of time they had made.

'It's been huge, and I don't get a return from this.' (CSG member)

160. However, nearly all members considered they had received huge benefits from being involved in the process in terms of the knowledge and deep understanding of the issues they now had.

161. Overall, most CSG members felt that the process was fair and credible to a considerable or high degree. However, some members acknowledged that, while there was every intention for the process to be fair, it wasn't an *'even playing field'*.

162. Feedback from some WRC staff suggests that they also did not always see the CSG process as fair. Some staff expressed strong feelings about not being heard and not having their knowledge and experience recognised during the process.

'Those not seeing the day-to-day progress of the CSG...were concerned that they were not being heard.' (Supporting stakeholder)

'WRC staff had a huge knowledge and experience base that could have been much more effectively used by the process.' (Supporting stakeholder)

163. Iwi, too, expressed concerns and frustration at their inability to be heard throughout the process. For some, these issues were resolved, but for others less so. The expectation for iwi to make decisions at the Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora Co-governance Committee table, but to remain at arm's length from the development process was described as awkward and unwieldy at times.

Communication

164. A wide array of communication processes were used to keep all stakeholders informed and updated on progress. Stakeholders included those at governance level, as well as local, regional and national politicians, interested communities and wider stakeholder groups.
165. Many stakeholders described communication within the CSG as generally good with a climate of goodwill. Over a two-year period, CSG members rated the openness and honesty of discussion as considerable or high.
166. Feedback from CSG members indicates that the relationship between CSG members and other groups (i.e., Te Rōpū Hautū, the Technical Leaders Group and the Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora Co-governance Committee) improved over time. This was particularly so for the Technical Leaders Group with most CSG member survey respondents in September 2016 indicating the relationship was productive and credible to a considerable or high degree (rising from around a quarter in July 2014).
167. Those involved in supporting the collaborative process reported recognising the need to maintain regular, open, on-going communication with each other and many other stakeholders to ensure the collaborative process kept moving. Several stakeholders discussed the importance of productive relationships between different groups involved in the plan change. Feedback from a range of stakeholders indicates there were some key people responsible for ensuring communication processes supported these relationships. Both the chair and the facilitator were considered to be indispensable and greatly enhanced the quality of relationships and 'equity of conversation' across the collaborative process. These two people translated information between groups, often having to bridge the values-based work being done within the CSG with science and policy groups. Other key people included experienced and dedicated WRC managers and staff.
168. CSG members reported that the communication of complex scientific and technical information was done well, even though it was a major challenge. Many stakeholders felt that more resource should have been allocated to making this task easier, as a large load was placed on a few

individuals. And, while some sectors were able to translate this information for their own use, others really struggled to do so.

169. Several stakeholders talked about how important it was for CSG members to develop the confidence and ability to articulate the basis of the group's thinking and decisions to their own sectors and others. This was seen as a real strength of the CSG process and something that marked it apart from a traditional policy process. Many stakeholders felt that having sector people present the issues and decisions to their sectors increased the validity of the process and the likelihood of acceptance by those who will be required to implement the plan change.

'Stakeholder members [CSG members] did an excellent job of informing their sectors and did their best in engaging with them. Their level of success was dependent on the level at which their sector was already involved in enviro work.' (Supporting stakeholder)

170. However there were some stakeholders who felt that communication was not as effective as it could have been between different key stakeholder groups. In the final survey of supporting stakeholders, well over one-third of respondents felt that communication channels between different groups was only limited or moderately effective.
171. Some tensions and frustration were also expressed among iwi about communicating with senior WRC people, with some suggesting that they were not always able to see the co-governance partnership principles in action.

3.0 Structural coherence and connection

172. The summary of evidence gathered for each criterion that makes up the structural coherence and connection dimension is presented below.

Ease of adoption and adaption to change process

'Ownership is the key to adoption of change.' (Supporting stakeholder)

173. For WRC staff, management, and councillors, the collaborative process was a different way of working to the traditional way of forming policy. Adapting to the new way of working was challenging for some, as support structures, systems and resources weren't always as clear as in a 'business as usual' policy process. Feedback from a number of stakeholders suggests that preparation and transitioning to the new way of working could have been better supported internally. In general, it was believed that WRC under-estimated the change from business as usual for some staff.
174. Several stakeholders talked about how important it was to be continually learning and adapting during the process. Leadership by the chair, facilitator and WRC management was key in continually sensing and responding to the need to adapt. No precedent existed and consequently

some managers and staff within WRC expressed fairly high levels of discomfort. Some struggled with the process; some coped; others resisted.

175. However, the new process also began to 'attract' people within the organisation who filled the gaps when needed – people who were positive about this new way of working. Some WRC stakeholders felt that it is important going forward that those chosen to work in this way have the disposition for it. One stakeholder commented *'it's not for everybody.'* WRC staff and management recognised that those involved need to be comfortable with ambiguity. They also needed to value interpersonal relationships and see themselves as 'in support of' rather than 'an expert within' the collaborative process. The evaluation found that part of the 'glue' keeping the policy team together was the extent of coaching and mentoring provided to the team by the facilitator so the team could work and communicate with each other and support each other through the process.

Awareness – knowledge and understanding of collaborative processes

176. Given the lack of precedent as a guide, WRC and other stakeholders described their involvement in the process as very much having to feel their way. One stakeholder described the process as an audacious task – 'a leap of faith'. Feedback from WRC stakeholders indicates that it was tough moving from a space of having control over a plan change process to giving that control away to a group of affected sector stakeholders.
177. However many stakeholders also recognised the importance of involving key stakeholders to engender ownership of a complex problem. The WRC decision to support a collaborative process such as this was recognised as a huge step by many stakeholders. Placing trust in the leadership was considered a prerequisite by some stakeholders for the process to achieve success.
178. It took time for everyone from all sides to understand their role in the process as well as the role of others. One WRC stakeholder suggested that from the outset, it was a challenge *'getting everyone to understand that council was serious about handing over the process to the stakeholders'*. Some stakeholders suggested that because it was a new process, it was difficult for people to foresee how the process might unfold, and this created discomfort for some. There were also doubts expressed by one stakeholder about how a collaborative process could ever overcome conflicts of interest as expressed below:

'It is not clear to me how collaborative processes can overcome the inherent conflict of interest problem. This is not to say there is no value in collaborative processes - stakeholder involvement can bring information to the table that could produce better public policy outcomes.' (Supporting stakeholder)

179. Most CSG members felt their participation in the CSG process had contributed to significant new learning and knowledge about

collaboration. Most of those who completed the final supporting stakeholders' survey felt that the CSG process had increased understanding of collaborative processes by sector groups, communities, and by their own group, and there was increased support for collaborative processes.

Buy in, ownership, engagement in and support for collaborative processes

'The true value of the collaborative process is that everyone needs to be convinced of the value of the final approach. Sector self-interest will not create a durable solution.' (Iwi member)

180. As discussed earlier, the mandate set down by the co-governance arrangement and the vision and strategy previously developed for the river by iwi and WRC were critical success factors. The vision and strategy document provided clear, agreed values and direction that acted as anchors for the plan change process.
181. In the lead up to the collaborative process, earlier discussions between River iwi and WRC set the necessary background for the design and implementation of the CSG process. The establishment of iwi and WRC relationships was described by some stakeholders as essential to finding sufficient common ground and shared understandings to support the CSG process and its rollout.
182. River iwi described the collaborative process as 'a big deal' for them. Co-governance arrangements had only just given iwi the opportunity to sit at the governance table and then they were giving control of a policy process over to a collaborative group. However, they were committed to the CSG process.

'Highly supportive of the collaborative process – couldn't have done it any other way.' (Iwi member)

183. Feedback from Iwi suggests that WRC investment in a coordinating function to bring different iwi views and perspectives together before bringing these to the CSG was really important for iwi engagement and ownership of the process.

'I think a huge strength... was the way the River iwi worked together in that final phase. I think it was actually a brilliant thing to do. Each iwi brought something to the table in terms of offering up expertise and opinions and guidance, whilst individually retaining what was important to each individual member.' (Iwi member).

184. Feedback from CSG members over the two years indicates they developed strong ownership of the process and were committed to it. A key reason given by members for this was the strength of the relationships built between CSG members. CSG members also valued the collaborative process as a way to address complex issues where members held a wide range of perspectives about what should be done, although they were not uncritical of it.

185. Several stakeholders talked about the importance of sector's being able to nominate CSG representatives, particularly for achieving buy in, engagement, and ownership by CSG members and their sectors. However, it was acknowledged by some stakeholders, that it was still a real challenge for some sectors to put the river first, ahead of their respective sector interests, and to reach a position of consensus.
186. CSG members also expressed seeing real value in having lay people at the table, with one member suggesting. *'We don't want to professionalise the process'*.
187. For WRC, the picture was more varied. It took time for some WRC staff and management to understand what the collaborative process was trying to achieve. Some WRC staff developed a strong commitment to the process, evidenced by the large volume of work they did to support the CSG and the positive relationships they developed with CSG members. Other WRC stakeholders described feeling a deep discomfort and frustration with the time and resources taken up by the process and were more critical of it.
188. Several stakeholders discussed the lack of confidence those councillors not closely involved showed in the CSG process, expressing disappointment that they did not indicate or signal earlier on that they might dissent in the final vote. These stakeholders felt that not being part of the process affected councillor's ownership of it, and ultimately could have derailed the collaborative effort.
189. One stakeholder commented that *'mindset around change is important for a new process'*. Overall, while many stakeholders worked hard to support the process, some WRC managers, staff and councillors struggled to embrace a new mindset and way of doing things.

Relationships within and between different groups and stakeholders

190. The many stakeholders and people involved in the CSG process was described by one stakeholder as a 'cast of thousands' that depended on just a few key people to hold relationships together. Overall, the evaluation found that trust between key people and groups was vital to the collaborative process running its course. It took time for trust to develop; to understand different stakeholder perspectives and intentions, but where communication was strong, trust developed and stakeholders described having faith in the process.
191. Many stakeholders felt the CSG process resulted in deeper relationships between sectors and increased understanding of the values and issues that different people and sectors hold. Most CSG members also felt the collaborative process led to a greater willingness among those affected to compromise and make concessions. CSG members commented that these relationships were likely to contribute to sectors being more willing to deal with the key problems the plan change was trying to address.

192. Several iwi stakeholders commented that the relationship between the co-governing partners (WRC and River iwi) became trusting and strong over time, and that this trust in each other was essential to their on-going commitment to the process.
193. Most stakeholders commented that the CSG's relationship and communication with the Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora Co-governance Committee was good. Communication was described as open, robust and productive. Engagement between River iwi and the Māori interest representatives on the CSG was also felt to be good overall, but some stakeholders felt engagement should have started earlier in the process.
194. CSG members and those WRC staff supporting the process describe developing good working relationships with each other over time. Both parties commented that with time, they came to understand and appreciate and value the roles, skills and experience of each other.
195. The TLG was brought together after formation of the CSG and was kept at arms-length in the early phase of the project while the CSG was forming its own internal relationships. Many stakeholders commented that it would have been beneficial if there had been closer links, made earlier, between the CSG and the TLG. Having independent scientific information and independent review of the information was an important and innovative idea, and CSG members and other WRC stakeholders valued having access to this information as well as scientific expertise. Several stakeholders reported that having a trusted source of independent information and science helped level the playing field among different interests and perspectives during the CSG deliberations.
196. The relationships between the CSG and TRH took some time to develop, with some CSG members reporting that they never really understood the role of TRH. Some stakeholders commented that clarity around TRH's role didn't really develop until iwi were more co-ordinated and engaged in the process.

4 KEQ 3: What is the value of this (CSG) process? For council and for others?

197. The criteria used to assess the value of the CSG process are shown below in Table 7.

Table 7. Evaluation criteria for assessing KEQ 3: What is the value of this (CSG) process? For WRC and for others?

Dimension	Criteria
4.0 Overall value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation in policy and process • Valuing diversity of knowledge and expertise including Western science and mātauranga Māori • Capability building • Impacts on farming practice, nutrients, water quality, etc. • Perceived costs (time, resources, etc.) • Sustainability of change

4.0 Overall value

198. The summary of evidence gathered for each criterion that makes up the Overall value dimension is presented below.

Innovation in policy and process

*‘Collaboration is needed to manage technical uncertainty and community disagreement. No solution ‘out there’ is to be found. Rather, there is a need to find a way to mediate ‘a course between many possible perspectives’. Meaningful policy action for sustainability occurs across the system in a distributed, self-organising way.’
(Supporting stakeholder)*

199. Collaborative policy-making is not business as usual – it is an innovative policy approach that is still be tried in many places³⁰. Some WRC stakeholders commented on how tough it was to do things differently, with one suggesting ‘we won’t be doing that again’. These sentiments indicate the discomfort some felt about the magnitude of change that collaborative processes bring with them. Serving a collaborative process, rather than leading it, was a totally new way of doing things for most WRC staff and they found it challenging, especially because current systems and culture support traditional ways of doing things. The evidence suggests the process was difficult for WRC policy staff. Some were separated from the process, particularly in the early phases, and

³⁰ Allen, W., Fenemorb, A., Kilvingtonc, M., Harmsworth, G., Younge, R.G., Deans, N., Horng, C., Phillipsh, C., Montes de Ocai,O., Atariah, J., and Smith, R. (2011). Building collaboration and learning in integrated catchment management: the importance of social process and multiple engagement approaches. *New Zealand Journal of Marine and Freshwater Research*, 45(3), 525 539.

they felt under considerable pressure working 'outrageous hours' for long periods of time.

*'It [the process] was extremely difficult to work with as a WRC staff member due to the separation of staff from the process...'
(Supporting stakeholder)*

200. Implementing and supporting the CSG process demanded a larger volume of work than WRC staff and management had anticipated at the outset. Although WRC staff were critical of a variety of aspects of the process, many also saw value in collaboration. Most staff indicated that the CSG plan changerecommendations, while not 'super innovative', was different to anything councillors or WRC would have come up with. Added to this, staff acknowledged that the plan change probably has more credibility than it would have if it had been developed by staff. They also acknowledge that the plan change is likely to be more practical and workable.
201. The central challenge for collaborative management is not a technical one; rather, it's a social one – finding ways to 'facilitate processes by which a wider range of stakeholders can engage with complex problems on equal terms' when this kind of interrelationship has historically not been the case³¹. Ensuring meaningful participation is central to the legitimacy of collaboration; getting the breadth, scope and credibility of expertise and representation right for the context gives the process its authority³².
202. Stakeholder feedback suggests that WRC managed this challenge well. Most stakeholders consider, with some minor caveats, that WRC got the mix of expertise and representation around the table about right. Many stakeholders expressed confidence in the members around the CSG table. They also suggested that the CSG was effective in teasing out the perspectives and issues of a complex and high-stakes situation because of the strong mix of skills, experience, and knowledge that members had. Several CSG members commented that they didn't feel they would have reached the agreements they did without this.

'...the calibre of people at the table, with in-depth knowledge of sectors was the most valuable part of the exercise. Having people explain why things could or couldn't work in practice... having practitioners who understood their industry and were able to explain how it worked in reality, not in theory... The greatest strength of the group was the calibre of people at the table.' (CSG member)

203. The CSG developed the plan change iteratively with an understanding that they didn't have it all figured out in advance and that they would have to work together towards a solution. Several stakeholders commented on

³¹ Ibid

³² O'Brien, M. (2010). *Review of Collaborative Governance: Factors crucial to the internal workings of the collaborative process*. Wellington, New Zealand: Ministry for the Environment.

the ability of the collaborative group to cope with the many uncertainties they confronted as they learned about the issues facing the river.

'They have been given all the uncertainties, and they have decided that even though there are uncertainties, that's what they want to do.' (Supporting stakeholder)

204. As discussed earlier, many stakeholders commented that CSG members, sector stakeholders and community showed authentic participation and engagement throughout the process.

'There were heaps of ways for people to be engaged and put their views forward... way, way, way more than any other process.' (Supporting stakeholder)

205. Another feature of the process that many stakeholders commented on as being highly innovative was the set up and use of the Technical Leaders Group.

'They had done things which in other countries are unheard of. And that is why I think there was courage there... I thought they did their best to bring in science in a credible and effective way that was impartial as well. They did a really good job.' (Supporting stakeholder)

206. A number of stakeholders commented on the importance of having credible, independent evidence that stakeholders can trust to support decision-making within collaborative processes. Although some sectors developed their own research, this had to go through the independent review of the TLG. This greatly improved the quality of discussions the collaborative group could have. CSG members felt no need to challenge the quality or legitimacy of the evidence. Also, unlike traditional processes, this technical and cultural evidence was widely available to all the sectors, and a great deal of effort was put into making it as accessible as possible.

207. The research undertaken by the TLG is publicly available on the WRC website and is considered by some stakeholders to be an important resource for all those with a stake in the plan change process.

Valuing diversity of knowledge and expertise including Western science and mātauranga Māori

208. Collaborative approaches to policy development and implementation involve building collective understandings about complex situations by bringing together and valuing multiple sources and types of evidence, e.g., scientific information and cultural knowledge, for decision-making among stakeholders, many of whom do not have technical or scientific training or backgrounds. Success in these endeavours involves managing complex social processes of engagement between people with diverse experiences and perspectives and enabling them to share their values and

views in order to develop a common understanding and basis for ongoing actions³³.

'Policy innovation aiming for social change requires ongoing interaction of those in the system, working to redefine and reconfigure interpretations of value and importance, and by implication co-evolving and developing more effective and more sustainable responses, technologies, structures, routines, knowledge and expectations³⁴.'

209. Evidence from the evaluation shows that many people involved and connected to the CSG process gained a variety of new knowledge and understandings. One of the features of the collaborative process was the ongoing learning CSG members and other stakeholders engaged in as they built an understanding about the issues from different perspectives.

'I think we all learnt a lot.' (Supporting stakeholder)

210. Furthermore, several stakeholders noted that the CSG process has created a much wider grasp of the Waikato River vision and strategy across the region than otherwise would have been the case. One stakeholder commented:

'Whereas before you might have had iwi and council supporting the river vision and strategy, now you have dairy sectors and others supporting the vision and strategy for the Waikato River.' (Supporting stakeholder)

211. Several CSG members talked of the value of the process in raising the group's awareness and understanding of diverse knowledge bases, including that of science as well as mātauranga Māori, Māori cultural knowledge, values and perspectives, and the importance of recognising and integrating different worldviews into complex policy decision-making.
212. Importantly, many more people across the region grew to understand how the collaborative process and plan were giving effect to the settlement and co-management agreements between iwi on the Waikato and Waipā rivers and the Crown.
213. People also commented on the much deeper understanding many CSG members and others gained of the science needed to develop this kind of policy and its implications.

'We also developed that real understanding of the science. We had a lot of science put in front of us, and quite complex science, and, although it took a lot of work to actually understand, that was immensely powerful.' (CSG group member)

214. Although it was challenging to communicate the science in ways that could be understood by lay people, this was a very important aspect of

³³ Ibid

³⁴ Shove, E. (2010). Beyond the ABC: climate change policy and theories of social change. *Environment and Planning*, 42, 1273-1285.

the process. Over time, CSG members' confidence to discuss and present the science with their own sectors and with others, such as the wider public, grew with the payoff being the CSG's higher levels of credibility and acceptability with sectors and the wider public.

215. The CSG process was also valued for raising members' and their sectors' levels of understanding and knowledge about the complex socio-political and cultural history leading to the current situation and the contemporary issues facing Waikato waterways. Many people felt they gained a much deeper understanding of the issues faced by different sectors through the collaborative process.

'I learnt a lot from other sectors and the challenges they face, which I did not perhaps appreciate before.' (CSG group member)

'I think the main thing really was getting a better understanding of where the different sectors were coming from. And you start to formulate thoughts about where compromises might be possible.' (CSG member)

'The learning was a greater understanding of all the issues.' (CSG member)

216. Time spent getting to know the different sectors' perspectives and contexts was considered extremely valuable by many stakeholders for working towards a compromised solution. CSG members felt a collaborative process gave voice to diverse sectors, heightening each member's awareness of other perspectives and issues as well as recognising the difficulties of finding a solution that could be nominally acceptable to everyone.

'I think the challenge was getting across the complexity of the issues for our sector. And it's not just as simple as clean up your act. There is a whole lot of nuances and complications that make this a really big challenge.' (CSG member)

217. It should be noted that although several members commented on the weight that certain knowledge and expertise carried throughout the process, particularly from well-resourced and organised sectors, a much deeper value and appreciation of iwi and Māori perspectives was also developed over time, by many stakeholders. Some stakeholders argued that councils should include iwi perspectives in all policy changes – even where there is not a legislative requirement to do so.

218. Many non-Māori members indicated that they had learned a considerable amount from iwi about Māori perspectives on water and the rivers. They stated that, although it was still tough at times for the CSG to grapple with Māori issues in the policy development process, having a deeper understanding of mātauranga Māori and Māori perspectives hugely benefited the outcome. For Māori, there was satisfaction that the issues had been sufficiently well addressed. *'...Got there in the end...as far as we were concerned.'* (Iwi member)

Capability building

219. CSG members and councillors, Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora Co-governance Committee members, WRC management and staff, TLG, and TRH believe that the process has enhanced sector leadership in the Waikato and there is better goodwill between the sectors and WRC as a result of the collaborative process. Sectors have engaged in the plan process more than they would have in a traditional process and there is greater understanding of the planning process. WRC stakeholders suggested they also have evidence of collaboration around submissions to the hearing process that they regard as not usual.

'We are already talking to the big players about getting in the room to share submissions so the hearing process is easier.'
(Supporting stakeholder)

220. Another aspect of capability development attributed to the collaborative process mentioned and valued by stakeholders was the extent of learning that occurred among sectors. Sectors learned about the mechanisms of policy development that they didn't previously know much about. Iwi also commented on having developed some of this capability through their involvement in the CSG process.
221. Some stakeholders also talked about different examples of sectors developing their capacity and capability to communicate with and gather feedback from their members. CSG members and WRC stakeholders described examples of sectors setting up feedback mechanisms that had not been present prior to the CSG process, and that these have turned out to be much more valuable to the sectors than they anticipated.
222. WRC and iwi noted the value of the learning they got through the collaboration and co-governance processes; both stated that they built a level of 'on the ground' experience of what it takes to collaborate and co-govern effectively.

'Treaty of Waitangi settlements now require government to provide Māori with a more active guardianship role in relation to river and water governance and management³⁵.'

223. Since the CSG process was completed, a range of stakeholders have shown support for having Māori at the table regardless of legislative mandate. The value of having iwi perspectives bought into WRC processes was often talked about.

'Iwi perspective is very aligned with a long term view that probably councils want to take as well, but find it difficult given the political cycles.' (Supporting stakeholder)

³⁵ Eppel, E. (2014). Improving New Zealand Water Governance: Challenges and Recommendations, *Policy Quarterly*, 10(3), 66-75.; Harmsworth, G. & Awatere, S. (n.d.) Māori values – Iwi Perspectives of Freshwater Management. Presentation by Landcare Research.

224. Several people also talked about the value and benefits of relationships that were formed between WRC and a range of sectors as a result of the CSG process. WRC management and staff have a feeling that the process has created a real shift in the quality of these relationships for the future.
225. Some CSG members talked about the leadership capacity that has been built across the Waikato through participation and involvement in the collaborative process. By late September 2016, almost all CSG members felt that the collaborative process had built their capability for problem solving and dispute resolution.

Impacts on farming practice, nutrients, water quality etc

226. CSG members and councillors, Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora Co-governance Committee, WRC management and staff, the Technical Leaders Group, and Te Rōpū Hautū all had mixed views on the extent to which the CSG plan change recommendations are likely to impact on farming practice. Whilst some felt the plan change was strongly practical, others felt it would be difficult to implement; they argued that some aspects of the plan change are confusing and they are not sure that everyone will be able to work with it.
227. Some stakeholders observed that the various sectors are at different stages in their engagement with environmental issues.
228. On the one hand, there was general agreement among CSG members that the dairy sector had embraced the process and had been good at communicating with farmers. However, there was a sense expressed by some members that the sheep and beef sector was well behind in their ability to influence their members. There was also a view, expressed by several stakeholders that the arable sector was not at the table, and that, *'this was a big omission given the high risk of sediment loss to water that can occur from this sector.'* (CSG member)
229. Many stakeholders felt that a key value of the process in relation to 'on farm' practice was the extent to which the process contributed to developing buy-in and ownership of the policy thereby increasing sector preparedness to accept the change and implement it.

'There is much more ownership of the policy from the sectors - that is a highlight for me. Many more people generally know of the policy - thousands know something is happening. Otherwise, the only opportunity for engagement would have been through the formal submissions process and we would have only had input from those who are the most passionate. This process got more ordinary people involved. Would have been a huge loss if we didn't do this - the level of trust and co-operation in the sectors working on this is important.' (CSG member)

230. Feedback suggests most sectors made concessions as part of the process that they might otherwise not have made. In the September 2016 survey of CSG members, nearly two thirds of members maintained it was either

highly unlikely or unlikely their sector would have made these concessions without the CSG process.

Perceived costs (time, resources etc)

231. WRC staff and councillors are clear that plan changes are costly in time and resources regardless of whether a traditional or collaborative approach is taken. However, there was consensus that the CSG process was a big, new, audacious process, and that it was therefore likely to be time and resource intensive.

'This was one of the most challenging and difficult plan changes I think in the country. And so it did need a big process around it. But, man, it was a huge process.' (Supporting stakeholder)

'Could be landmark stuff. For Aotearoa. I think it is big picture visionary stuff here, of changing land use, inhibiting land use. Of really putting the environment in the mix whilst trying not to adversely affect economic return. So I think that's really important. And I do think the CSG process is the major driver of that.' (Supporting stakeholder)

232. Within this context, it is therefore not surprising that the process was considered costly both in terms of time and resources.

'It is not a process to be taken lightly; it takes considerable resources and it's not appropriate for all policy situations. But it is valuable and worthwhile when there are many diverse perspectives to take into account and when sector engagement is needed for successful implementation.' (Supporting stakeholder)

233. WRC management and staff made a range of assertions about the cost of the process. These ranged from the process costing twice as much to three times as much as a traditional process. However, there were some staff and management who stressed that these comparisons must be viewed cautiously. Some staff suggested it's simply not possible to do strict cost comparisons between the CSG process and other plan changes, because many of the estimates being compared are not the same.

234. WRC management and staff understood the conundrum presented in deciding whether the council should spend money upfront on the CSG process to mitigate later costs on litigation. That said, early hopes for reduced costs from legal challenges have been adjusted and WRC staff now believe there still will be legal costs and probably not the level of savings they initially envisaged.

235. It's debatable whether the WRC's early expectation of fewer submissions and legal challenges was realistic in the first place given the high levels of engagement and communication across the different sectors and out to iwi and communities in the Waikato.

236. There was consensus among stakeholders that the CSG process was more time consuming than initially anticipated.

'This process was incredibly resource intensive, particularly from a time perspective. However, it produced an output that policy staff on their own would never have reached, and I think for that alone it was a good outcome.' (Supporting stakeholder)

237. CSG members estimated the time they spent in addition to the meetings attended. This ranged considerably over the life of the process and varied depending on the support provided by their sector from a couple of days a month at the start to up to five days a week at the end for those with less sector support.
238. CSG members reported their sectors making large contributions to the process in a range of ways. Some were able to financially support their members to participate and financially support sector engagement and feedback processes. Other sectors provided in kind support to their members and relied on volunteers to undertake processes of wider sector engagement and feedback.
239. The process also took longer than any of the CSG members or others had anticipated at the outset. Early on, it was expected that the plan change would be publicly notified by November 2015. In fact, public notification of the plan change occurred in September 2016. And many also described it as arduous. On more than one occasion, CSG members talked about the personal toll that the process had on some members, particularly those representing sectors with strongly divided views. It is not clear to what extent CSG members were experienced or as well prepared and supported as they could have been to manage their own wellbeing through such a difficult process.
240. WRC management and staff made a significant contribution of time to the process, from those supporting the CSG meetings to those in other roles such as providing policy, technical, administrative, and communications support. Although WRC staff and management have mixed views about whether this process really was tougher on staff than a traditional plan change process, WRC staff indicated that the pressure of supporting the CSG process was unrelenting. WRC staff generally reflected the process was demanding for those there for the long haul. A number of staff ended up unwell for long periods of time due to having to keep up the pace of work for what was perceived by some as being too long a time.

'I am still waiting to see, was it worth all that pain and suffering?'
(Supporting stakeholder)

241. There was a hope expressed by some stakeholders that the cost of collaboration would be less than a traditional policy process when taking into account the life of implementing the policy.

'You could say in the life of implementing this policy, the upfront cost of collaboration will be less than the implementation cost of a traditional policy process.' (Supporting stakeholder)

242. In the final survey of the CSG, many members expected there would be lasting solutions generated through the collaborative process to a considerable or high degree, and nearly two-thirds of members felt the CSG process had been very or extremely worthwhile. There was a strong view among members of the CSG that the resulting policy recommendations are a better outcome for the river and for many stakeholder groups than would have been achieved without a collaborative process.
243. The evaluation recorded many views about the financial, human resource and personal costs and trade-offs of the CSG process. Consistently stakeholders referred to the value of the process as exceeding the costs. The main driver of collaboration for most stakeholders was a deep concern about the restoration of the river.
244. Overall, most stakeholders had a general expectation that, in the life of implementing this plan change, the upfront cost of collaboration will be less than the long-term implementation cost of a traditional policy process, and that the agreement reached was an important first step in a long, 80-year journey towards restoration of the rivers.

Sustainability of change

245. From a CSG member's perspective, the worth of the process will become evident through the ability of key sectors to implement the policy and the level of ownership and buy-in different sectors have towards making necessary changes to their practices. While members acknowledge it is probably too soon to be able to fully assess this, early signs show that key sectors have bought into the policy at a high level. And with all iwi endorsing the plan change, there may be reason to think the downstream impacts of the plan change may create real changes in practice that benefit the rivers.
246. Some WRC staff were more sceptical; there are those who maintain adoption of the plan change will depend on how implementable the change turns out to be. One WRC staff member illustrates this doubt:

'Not sure that collaboration is the right approach to find solutions for resource management problems - this is complex, requires a level of independence and expertise - the group did an amazing job understanding all the information, but the task is giant. There will always be and should be disagreement because you are managing a natural resource that is over allocated, so someone has to change their behaviour. Using collaboration does not change this tension. When you have a process that allows everyone in the community or with a stake in the outcome to have a say on the plan change (Schedule 1), and a council elected by the population - why would this process reduce litigation or be more democratic? Schedule 1 is a starting avenue for people to have a say - collaboration asks these people to give this up.' (Supporting stakeholder)

247. Among wider supporting stakeholders, nearly two thirds of those surveyed in December 2016 thought lasting solutions were being generated. Just over half thought positive changes will occur in sector behaviours.
248. Stakeholders also held a general view that overall the CSG was a fair process, with nearly all stakeholders advocating for use of the collaborative process again, particularly when the situation has high stakes, many competing perspectives and interests, and uncertain solutions.

The collaborative process appears to have created some major shifts in the way people in the region think about the river and about water allocation with many now recognising we need to make fundamental changes to the way different interests achieve their needs and aspirations. There appears to be an emerging realisation among stakeholders that there does need to be new regulations, technologies, infrastructure, routines, and practices if we are to restore and revitalise our waterways.

5 KEQ 4: How worthwhile is collaboration?

249. Most stakeholders reported that they considered the collaborative process to be worthwhile, particularly for addressing complex policy changes such as the Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora Plan Change.

'Having been through it, I think it is a good process. I would certainly recommend it to government or to council... if the council had to do all of that on their own in the same time space... I think the CSG did a bloody sight better job.' (CSG member)

250. More than one stakeholder suggested that because of the complexity of the situation, collaboration was the appropriate thing to do, that collaboration *'is a robust methodology for resolving complexity'*. Given the lack of technical certainty and potentially high levels of disagreement about what the solutions might be for the rivers, the collaborative process allows these tensions to be managed. The combination of independent technical advice and a facilitated stakeholder process gave diverse interests and parties opportunities to grapple with the myriad issues and reach agreement on the plan change.

251. Despite the up-front financial cost of the process, as well as the other professional and personal costs to many of those involved, there was still a widespread view that collaboration was and would continue to be worthwhile.

'Financially out of pocket, financially, massively. But if we have actually done something good... It's one of the things you have got to think, yeah, that was worthwhile.' (CSG member)

'I guess the cons in a sense is time consuming and it's potentially more expensive than if the council just did it all on their own. The trade-off is I think you end up with a far better product.' (CSG member)

252. As discussed earlier, several stakeholders expressed an opinion that although the upfront cost of a collaborative process was more than a traditional policy process, in the life of implementing the policy, the overall cost of a collaborative policy process would be less. This stemmed largely from the view that ownership of the plan change by different sectors through their participation and engagement in the collaborative process meant they would be happier with the result.

253. Collaboration was considered worthwhile because the process created a 'mind shift' among key sectors, and there is a belief among several stakeholders that this has shifted attitudes to implementation. Many expressed hope that the plan change will be more effective because of this mind shift and attitude, both in the short and the longer-terms.

'If we have written a good plan change, it is worthwhile. And I think we have. I am not saying it's perfect. But I think we have written a

good one. And an effective one... And that's been worth it.' (CSG member)

'Major benefits... ownership of the policy by the sectors that are being asked to implement it.' (Supporting stakeholder)

254. Many stakeholders commented that they believed a traditional policy process was not likely to achieve the same kind of policy change, i.e., the outcomes being sought would not have been achieved in the broad-based way they are likely to be with the collaborative approach. Not only did some feel that council-led policy change would be less likely to be well implemented, some also felt that traditional processes had used a lot of time and energy and haven't resulted in improvements to the environment to date.

'I think some councils make decisions from an ivory tower, and policies they put out aren't implemented so well, and some of the outcomes they are driving for aren't achieved.' (CSG member)

'Seeing how people talking past each other in quasi legal and in legal processes soak up an enormous amount of effort and energy, resources and personal relationships, and it doesn't help the regional environmental boat go faster at all.' (CSG member)

255. Having the buy-in from sectors that must make the greatest changes in their practice was a critical reason for viewing collaboration as valuable.

'Gives the pen to the sectors to write... people affected by the land change are sitting around the decision table.' (Iwi member)

256. So, even though it is expected that there will be some challenges to the policy through the submissions process, many are hopeful this agreement will have a powerful effect on the depth and speed of the uptake of changes.

257. Many stakeholders expressed a reasonable level of conviction that collaboration is worthwhile because traditional processes have not been able to solve the kinds of problems that the CSG was addressing. To solve very complex problems that cut across economic, environmental, social and cultural spheres, many argued that it was important to bring diverse sectors together and go on a journey of change together.

'There is no easy way to do this, and processes that go on behind court room doors with a bunch of experts battling it out in court will never solve the problems in the real world with 15,000 landowners. Those processes will never solve those problems... You need to bring sectors, representatives of sectors and individuals within those sectors along on that journey or your management of the issues will fail.' (CSG member)

'A more inclusive process than a council centric process... a range of people could have their views considered.' (Iwi member)

258. CSG members saw key benefits resulting from the collaborative approach used in the CSG process, including:
- sectors being able to influence policy at an early stage
 - stakeholders' participation supporting understanding and ownership of the process and outcomes
 - sectors and individuals developing understandings of others' perspectives to create common ground and agreement and identify future possible leverage for longer term outcomes
 - sectors being better educated about the policy process overall
 - communities having enhanced understandings of the range of perspectives and stakes sectors have in the planning process
 - communities participating in the journey of decision-making
 - CSG, iwi, organisations and institutions building capacity and capability for collaborative work, including understanding of government planning processes
 - a policy solution that is fit for purpose with a more implementable approach
 - a chance for more sustainable outcomes
 - greater buy-in and commitment from sectors to supporting and contributing actively to implementation
 - the possibility of reduced costs due to shorter legal processes for hearings and increased willingness to implement.
259. Although the worth of the CSG process seemed clear to most stakeholders, some feedback questioned the future and on-going capacity of councils and stakeholder groups to be able to engage in collaborative processes such as the CSG. One stakeholder said, *'I don't think NZ can afford to have this level of collaboration going on all over the place'*. Another said, *'To me, the question would be the capacity of sectors to do it again and again'*. Iwi also commented on the high cost of participation, expressing concerns about managing the many competing demands they are required to fulfil in different processes.
260. Some WRC stakeholders also raised concerns about taxpayers' ability to bear the burden of costs associated with collaborative approaches. Suggestions included a national prioritisation of collaborative processes and the associated technical and science support.
261. Many of those interviewed said the worth of the process will become evident in the way key sectors implement the policy as well as the level of ownership and buy-in different sectors have in making the necessary changes. Early signs show that key sectors have bought into the policy at a high level. All iwi have endorsed the plan change, and recent media



releases suggest that dairy leaders support the overall policy direction. However, many stakeholders felt there is still a fair way to go before the overall worth of the collaborative process will become apparent, that is, it will be some years before it is known whether and to what extent the sectors involved have been able to implement the plan effectively, and that there are tangible impacts on the rivers.

6 KEQ 5: What did we learn that might be applied or adapted for future processes?

262. Some of the key learnings from CSG process interviews are summarised below.

Stakeholder selection and membership

263. Feedback indicates that there was a clear mandate for the selection process used by the WRC and Te Rōpū Hautū to select CSG members. Giving sectors the decision-making power to select their representatives was considered important for sector buy-in and trust in the collaborative process.
264. While most stakeholders were comfortable with the selection process, some commented on a need to carefully consider the balance of representation in light of the likely extent of impacts of plan changes for different stakeholders.
265. WRC staff and iwi voiced some discomfort about not having seats at the CSG table; however, feedback from other stakeholders did not provide a clear view as to whether governance partners should be provided a seat at the table. This is something that would need careful consideration for future collaborative processes.

Vision, values and commitment

266. Having an agreed vision and set of values anchored the collaborative process and gave the group something around which they could cohere and come back to when they were struggling or when the going got tough. For River iwi, having the Vision and Strategy incorporated into the CSG process increased their trust in the credibility of the process. This agreement (developed by the Waikato River Authority) anchored and informed all aspects of the policy development process.

Chairing and facilitation

267. Feedback from CSG members indicated that having both a chair and a facilitator was essential to the process. The roles of chair and facilitator were quite distinct, and stakeholders came to appreciate that, without one or the other, the process may not have achieved the outcome required by WRC. Several members were clear that this feature of the collaborative process was one of the keys to achieving a positive outcome.

'...the idea of having a facilitator and that independent chair is a good one. A necessity really. And at the end of the day we took a few months I guess for the group to warm up...but once that had happened then things went quite smoothly.' (CSG member)

268. Early in the process, CSG members expressed discomfort about having two leadership/facilitative roles with members being less clear about the importance or usefulness of the facilitation role. Later feedback showed that, without exception, CSG members had grown to recognise the importance of the facilitator. This view was also shared by other stakeholders outside the CSG.
269. Key roles played by the chair included liaising with and managing both internal and external relationships between a range of stakeholders both inside and outside the CSG. Examples of external relationship management include working with Te Rōpū Hautū, the Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora Co-governance Committee, the Waikato River Authority, industry groups, the media, etc.
270. Key roles undertaken by the facilitator included the process design for the entire CSG process as well as group facilitation. In the early and middle phases, the facilitator also liaised between the CSG and the TLG, bridging the values-based work being done in the CSG with the TLG to incorporate it into their modelling work. Later in the process, the facilitator also supported some of the CSG subcommittees to develop the detail needed for the plan change.
271. Designing and facilitating high stakes collaborative processes require significant skill and expertise in relationship-building, facilitation and conflict management³⁶. As Marg O'Brien says³⁷, a facilitator's role...
...involves determining the best methods and techniques, making sure that the process is easy to understand, clarifying and enforcing the steps for achieving agreement, and managing science and data proactively. They must also empower participants by making the process participant-friendly and ensuring that there is time for the consensus builder's political work. But, even so, facilitating negotiation can be difficult.
272. The evaluation evidence supports the importance of highly skilled, active facilitation in collaborative processes like the CSG process.

Group forming and purpose

273. A collaborative group needs time and support to form and develop trusting relationships, and it's important that all supporting stakeholders understand the need for allowing time for the group to develop. The group needs to be given the time to agree on their terms of reference and decision-making framework and to establish and agree on group operating guidelines and values. These formalities become the touchstone for the group as they negotiate their agreement.

³⁶ Allen et al (2011) Building collaboration and learning in integrated catchment management: the importance of social process and multiple engagement approaches, *New Zealand Journal of Marine and Freshwater Research*, Vol. 45, No. 3, September 2011, 525-539.

³⁷ O'Brien, M. (2010). *Review of Collaborative Governance: Factors crucial to the internal workings of the collaborative process*. Research Report prepared for the Ministry for the Environment.

'...those structures and that formality were worth their weight in gold.' (Supporting stakeholder)

274. Gaining clarity about the group's shared purpose, i.e., to reach compromise, is also vital to ensuring that members don't retreat into their sector positions when the going gets tough.
275. It's important to recognise that not everyone in a group will have the same level of understanding or knowledge of the area, and so allowances need to be made to bring people 'up to speed' on matters that are key to the success of the collaborative process.

Roles and relationships

276. Getting collaboration right relies on the quality of relationships between and among the different stakeholders. It is a highly relational process. When stakeholders involved in collaboration have potentially incompatible values, the process needs to find a way to skilfully create a willingness among stakeholders to come together, a commitment to take the time needed to understand each other and develop levels of trust and mutual respect between members ³⁸³⁹.
277. A considerable amount of effort in a collaborative process goes on 'doing the work'. However, there is a real need to sort out and support role clarification and relationships for all the stakeholders, including those who are on the periphery of the collaborative group, but who also have a role. This includes support and technical input teams, governing bodies, supporting iwi representatives, decision makers etc. Creating trust within the group and between different groups of supporting stakeholders is essential to the success of collaborative processes. This is challenging and requires skilled, experienced people and resources to manage.

'...One of the challenges was just creating that environment of trust...it look longer.' (Supporting stakeholder)

278. For example, for WRC staff, relinquishing decision-making on policy development marked a significant shift for business as usual. Added to this, staff members' new roles in supporting the CSG to lead the policy process was relatively unknown territory. Feedback from CSG members suggested that finding ways to involve WRC staff earlier in the process would have been beneficial. CSG members could also have made more use of WRC staff members' experience and perspectives as a useful addition in the group's deliberations.
279. Committees and groups that are supporting the process (such as Te Rōpū Hautū and the TLG) also need time to work through their roles and relationships with the collaborative group and others. Early involvement and engagement of key groups is important to the momentum of the process.

³⁸ Carcasson, M., & Sprain, L. (2015). Beyond Problem Solving: Reconceptualizing the Work of Public Deliberation as Deliberative Inquiry. *Communication Theory*, 26, 41-63

³⁹ Allen et al, 2011 Need the rest of this ref.

'There is a need to bring people (Te Rōpū Hautū/River iwi member groups with the CSG) together in the room to have the key discussions together rather than separately.' (CSG member)

280. Greater clarity and understanding for governors (especially councillors) was needed in the CSG process around how their role in a collaborative process differed from previous policy development processes. Several stakeholders commented on how important it is to set expectations with councillors and to maintain their interest, engagement, and trust throughout the process. With councillors being the ultimate decision makers, failing to bring them along and secure their buy-in posed a great risk to the success of the project.

'How do we go about socialising this process so that elected members don't unpick this work.' (CSG member)

Equitable and fair representation and participation

281. While WRC worked hard to ensure equal participation of members and sectors, each evaluation phase showed inequity of resourcing for members and exposed the impact this had on how members were able to participate in the CSG. Group members and supporting stakeholders will always experience varying levels of support to help them participate in such a process. Knowing this and monitoring the impact this has along the way is important to helping mitigate these inequities to the greatest extent possible.
282. While it is unrealistic to expect WRC to be responsible for trying to create a completely level playing field, the following examples of the kind of inequities found in the evaluation provide signals for future collaborative processes:
- Some CSG members undertook the CSG process in their professional paid capacity while others attended in a voluntary capacity. Thus, for some members, attending additional meetings was a change in employment task while for others it was a personal sacrifice.
 - Those attending the CSG in their professional capacity often had a greater understanding of their topic areas and/or had additional expert support.
 - Industry sectors did not come with equal resourcing to the CSG process. Initially, CSG members expected that all the science would come from the TLG, but increasingly it became apparent that sectors could also bring their own science to the table, even though this science had to go through the TLG for review. This meant that the better resourced and prepared sectors had an advantage over those that were less professionally organised and resourced.
 - Some sectors had paid and unpaid delegates to take their place while community members did not. Thus, for those without

delegates, there was a greater load to catch up if they could not attend.

- Some members had high levels of back office resourcing and other organisational support, including access to libraries for locating additional material, access to skills such as planners, people working behind the scenes to organise sector meetings, etc. Those without these resources were disadvantaged and had far greater workloads.
- Some members gave up many more voluntary hours than others to prepare and read material for the meetings or participate in other stakeholder events. For example, some members were spending an additional 30 hours a week at the end of the process preparing for meetings, while others were spending a lot less than this. This impacted on the group's overall understanding of issues, particularly towards the end, as well as having personal and financial impacts.
- Some members had significantly larger constituencies within their sectors (i.e., Māori and community) and this created some difficulties in representing these sectors. This was particularly so when representatives were voluntary and lacked the support of an organisational resource.

283. Resourcing effective participation by iwi is essential to iwi engagement and buy-in to any collaborative process in New Zealand. In the CSG's case, given the importance of the co-governance arrangements and agreements, this was fundamental. With five iwi partners to the CSG process, it became apparent that coordinating and liaising within and between iwi was an important function not considered at the outset. This was resolved to some extent by resourcing an iwi liaison role to support information flow between Te Rōpū Hautū, iwi and the CSG.

284. Feedback from a number of stakeholders indicates that upfront consultation with iwi and hapū prior to a collaborative process would be beneficial. Providing structures and support systems that ensure iwi governors and managers are up-skilled along the way should also be considered.

'One of the gaps at the moment is that CSG are being upskilled and taught a lot about the plan change process, background information. At the same time we have River iwi governors who also need that upskilling.' (CSG member)

285. Furthermore, time and resources are needed for iwi and other under-represented sectors to go back to their sectors and engage with them about issues arising in the collaborative process if they are to fairly represent the views and perspectives of their sectors.

Technical, scientific and policy input and expertise

286. Independent technical and scientific advice was thought by some stakeholders to have great potential to reduce conflict and assist in levelling the playing field in high stakes collaborative decision-making. Having independent technical and scientific advice and support was thought by some stakeholders to be an important and innovative idea; having access to independent science as well as scientific expertise was hugely valued by members of the CSG and others. CSG members thought that having a trusted source of science and expertise sped up the transfer of knowledge and learning within the group, helping members to understand complex ideas and policy processes.
287. However stakeholders broadly agreed that technical and scientific inputs needed for collaboration should start well ahead of the collaborative process and that the role of this expert advice in a collaborative process is to support the group's thinking, not to direct it. This shift in locus of control was acknowledged by some stakeholders as tricky ground to navigate.

Support processes

288. Considerable resources are needed to lead and manage a collaborative process like the Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora Plan Change. Policy and process demands expand in surprising and not always expected ways, and managing a new and emergent policy process can be challenging. Resourcing and managing for this kind of emergent policy process requires an adaptive disposition for those in its midst.
289. WRC invested significant resources in the management and operation of the CSG as did many other stakeholders. The overall cost of the support required across all stakeholders is not known, but the evidence available indicates it is substantial.
290. Some unexpected kinds of support that emerged during the collaborative process included the following:
- coaching and mentoring for staff involved in supporting the collaborative process
 - pastoral support for individuals involved in the collaborative group. (Some feedback indicates that members have to navigate the pressures from their own sectors during collaborative processes. These were described as 'brutal' by more than one CSG member and indicate that a level of pastoral care should be available if required.)
 - support for iwi liaison and coordination to ensure effective engagement and participation.

Timing

291. CSG members recognise the importance of having significant time up-front to establish trusting relationships. Time spent on site visits was

important to many CSG members to help them understand the different perspectives of a whole range of stakeholders. However, evidence suggests that the timing overall was not quite right. Some CSG members noted that the group needed less time in the early stages but more time in the later stages for debating, agreeing and writing policy recommendations.

'Recognise the length of time of process, plan backwards, suggest split process into equal thirds – eight months getting to know, eight months policy analysis, eight months detailed plan change.' (CSG member)

292. In addition, having time to take the detail of the plan change out to sectors may have assisted in broader understanding of the nature and scope of the change and reduced some of the feelings of surprise that some sectors voiced.
293. As indicated above, many stakeholders believe it is important to start the science early so that it is ready for members to consider. Having sufficient time to deliberate on and process significant volumes of technical and scientific information is necessary for an effective process. CSG members commented that having time to reflect on information helped them figure things out and often changed or softened their perspectives. Not 'cramming the process' was important for gaining this understanding. Time was also needed for further iterations and modelling and this was requested by the CSG.
294. Future endeavours should build some flexibility of timing into the planning. The CSG process was extended to ensure sufficient time to debate and consider the issues and write the final plan change recommendations. Without this flexibility, the process may have been less effective.

Communication

295. The evaluation evidence is clear that, for collaboration to be effective, capacity and capability for communication needs to be built across and between all stakeholders, including the wider community, other regions, and politicians at all levels of the political system.
296. Multiple types of formal and planned communication were needed throughout the process, from large public engagement forums to regular newsletters available on the WRC website. Furthermore, regular, less formal communication was also a feature of the CSG process. Many stakeholders commented on the essential nature of having ongoing meetings between the chair and facilitator and WRC staff, management, and councillors to keep the process moving.
297. Being prepared for surprises that require communication management was commented on by some stakeholders. As this kind of collaborative process becomes more high stakes and political towards the end, being

prepared for considerable political management and communication will be necessary. Based on evidence in the evaluation, being prepared to ramp up communication efforts at different times unexpectedly is suggested.

298. CSG members developed their own capabilities to communicate about the process and the progress of deliberations to their sectors over time. Many stakeholders felt that having CSG members able to communicate to their sectors was vital in the perceived credibility of the collaborative process by sectors.
299. Several CSG members commented on the importance of sharing information about the process in a transparent and open way to their sectors. WRC worked hard to make information available in a timely and transparent way, not always succeeding, but in the main CSG members felt mostly supported by WRC to communicate with their sectors.
300. Internal communication with staff, especially for those on the periphery, is an important consideration when taking on a new planning process such as the CSG. Evidence in the evaluation is clear about the need for better internal communication by WRC to ensure higher levels of understanding about the collaborative process among staff. Furthermore, the evaluation findings also suggest that communicating and keeping councillors informed about the progress of the policy and the nature of their roles are vital to ensuring political support in the final decision-making process.
301. Although Māori had seats on the CSG and iwi partners participating in TRH and the Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora Co-governance Committee, with five River iwi participating in the process, there needed to be additional communication efforts to support a coordinated approach to ensure iwi were kept informed about progress and could understand the implications. Furthermore, not all iwi had the same views and there needed to be a commitment of resource and expertise to coordinate and feedback the different iwi perspectives to the CSG.

7 Conclusion

302. The CSG process was widely considered to have successfully brought together a diverse range of perspectives and interests and supported participants to iteratively question, learn, build knowledge, interact, and negotiate a consensus for which the sectors involved have indicated relatively high levels of buy-in and ownership.
303. Without exception, those stakeholders interviewed indicated that the collaborative process was valuable and worthwhile, particularly given the complexity of the situation. Among the intangible benefits identified by stakeholders are the development of a constructive co-governance relationship between River iwi and WRC, deeper understanding of the policy planning process by a wider group of stakeholders and sectors than previously, more understanding and knowledge across different sectors of diverse perspectives in relation to the rivers, and development of leadership capabilities in the Waikato region across the participating sectors.
304. The CSG process was observed as thorough, very well supported by WRC, and highly credible to most stakeholders. It took longer than expected, was arduous for many people, and not entirely equitable. But most stakeholders believed that the resulting policy recommendations are a better outcome for the rivers and for many stakeholder groups than would have been achieved without a collaborative process.
305. While some stakeholders indicated that the plan change recommendations could have been developed by WRC using a traditional policy process, many believed that it is unlikely that the recommendations would have been the same, nor would WRC have achieved the endorsement of the policy by all five River iwi or by key sector groups.
306. Collaboration is not a process to be taken lightly: it takes considerable resources, and it is not appropriate for all policy situations. But it is widely considered as valuable and worthwhile when the stakes are high, when stakeholders have many diverse and competing perspectives and views, and when there is uncertainty about what solutions might be needed.

Appendix 1: Detailed evaluation criteria - developmental evaluation

The three tables below detail the high and mid-level evaluation criteria developed to evaluate the development of the CSG process.

Table 8: High and mid-level evaluation criteria used in phase one: the establishment phase

High-level criteria	Mid-level evaluation criteria
Voluntary participation and commitment: Group members participate voluntarily and are committed to the process	CSG members attend meetings
	CSG members are committed to being involved and engaged in the group
Self-design: The parties involved work together to design the process to suit the needs of the group members	Appropriate time and resource is spent on developing the group's culture and relationships
	There is an agreed process and mechanisms for inducting members (including new members) to the group
	All sectors are comfortable with the approach being taken
	There are agreed processes and mechanisms for decision-making in the group
	Members of the group feel they can influence the agenda
Clear ground rules: As the process is initiated, a comprehensive procedural framework is established that includes clear terms of reference, operating procedures, schedule and protocols	Group members have knowledge and clarity about their role/others role
	Role of the chair is defined
	Role of the facilitator is defined
	There is a shared purpose and protocols for the group
	The terms of reference are understood and agreed
	A code of conduct is agreed and adopted
	The project scope is clearly defined, agreed and adopted
	Group operating procedures, schedule and protocols are agreed
	Group operating guidelines are clear

Table 9: High and mid-level evaluation criteria used in phase two: doing the work of creating the policy mix

High-level criteria	Mid-level evaluation criteria
<p>Equal opportunity and resources: The process provides for equal and balanced opportunity for effective participation of all group members</p>	A safe and inclusive group process is established and maintained, i.e., CSG members feel they are able to 'have their say'
	Each CSG member has the capacity and skills required to be an effective group member
	The group process is perceived as credible and fair
	There is a desire and openness to working with diverse worldviews and aspirations
	CSG members are prepared to listen and develop an understanding of issues from all sides
<p>Principled negotiation and respect: The process operates according to the conditions of principled negotiation, including mutual respect, trust and understanding</p>	There is open/honest/authentic dialogue
	CSG members feel heard/understood
	CSG members feel they can enter robust discussion (not always agreement, but positive climate of debate)
	There is a climate of genuine goodwill between CSG members
	CSG members are prepared to work in mutual cooperation
	CSG members are prepared to compromise and strive for consensus
	CSG members can articulate issues from the CSG group member's perspective
	Internal decisions by the group are regarded by all CSG members as clear and transparent
<p>Accountability: The process and its participants are accountable to the broader public and their own constituencies</p>	Selection (of CSG members) is transparent and represents all interests
	Communication channels and processes between the CSG, TLG, Te Rōpū Hautū and the co-governance group are up and running and effective
	There are productive credible relationships between CSG, Te Rōpū Hautū, TLG and the decision makers (co-governance group)
<p>Flexible, adaptive, creative: Flexibility is designed into the process to allow for adaptation and creativity in problem solving</p>	The CSG is able to reach new common ground
	The collaborative process builds capacity of the CSG to solve problems and resolve disputes
	The CSG is able to respond and adapt to new and emerging issues and circumstances
	The CSG is comfortable about testing options against known theory, data and information
	The CSG develops a broader understanding of the issues faced by the different sectors
<p>High-quality information: The process incorporates high-quality information into decision-making.</p>	The CSG is able to determine important issues to address
	The CSG has access to appropriate information
	The CSG obtains information in a timely manner
	Common understanding of the information is sought from all CSG members' perspectives
	The group understands the consequences of its decision-making
	Information produced for the CSG is understood and

	<p>accepted by CSG members</p> <p>Information provided to the CSG supports informed decision-making</p>
<p>Time limits: Realistic deadlines and milestones are established and managed throughout the process</p>	<p>Deadlines are clear and well understood</p>
	<p>The CSG perceives there is progress being made against milestones</p>
	<p>CSG work is completed within a reasonable timeframe</p>
	<p>Timeframes for the process are perceived as achievable by the CSG</p>
<p>Group commitment to monitoring and reflecting on the group process: The process includes formal commitments to implementation and monitoring</p>	<p>There is a commitment by all members to reflect and review the group process</p>
	<p>Feedback loops are established</p>
	<p>CSG members assess, take on and act on feedback provided during the process</p>
<p>Effective process management: The collaborative process is managed and coordinated effectively</p>	<p>The CSG process is managed well by Waikato Regional Council staff</p>
	<p>The CSG process is coordinated effectively by Waikato Regional Council staff</p>
	<p>There is efficient and effective transfer of information between CSG members, Te Rōpū Hautū, the Technical Leaders Group and co-governance group</p>
	<p>There are effective and efficient channels for communication out to sector groups represented on the CSG</p>
<p>Independent chairing and facilitation: The process uses an independent chair & facilitator throughout the process</p>	<p>The chair fosters collaboration</p>
	<p>The chair is neutral in his approach</p>
	<p>The chair communicates effectively with outside parties</p>
	<p>The chair's style is appropriate for the project</p>
	<p>There is satisfaction with the chair</p>
	<p>CSG facilitation is perceived as fair, transparent and effective</p>
	<p>Facilitation style is appropriate for the project</p>
	<p>The facilitator fosters collaboration</p>
	<p>The facilitator is neutral in her approach</p>
	<p>There is satisfaction with the facilitator</p>
<p>Decision-making: the decision-making process is transparent, and accessible to the public. Decision-making process is designed in advance, but is flexible and can change if necessary.</p>	<p>All members have direct and genuine involvement</p>
	<p>The CSG is able to make pragmatic and realistic decisions</p>
	<p>Do they have a sense of how the group makes decisions? – there is an agreed process for decision-making</p>
	<p>The CSG is able to take context (everything that is going on, perspectives, constraints on time frames, political process) into account</p>
	<p>The CSG feels they are working well together and reaching consensus</p>
	<p>CSG members can articulate their basis for decisions</p>
	<p>CSG members are able to 'hold the line' in the face of external pressure</p>
	<p>The group is confident to keep moving forward</p>

Table 10: High and mid-level evaluation criteria used in phase three: collaboration outcomes

High-level criteria	Mid-level evaluation criteria
Knowledge understanding and skills	CSG members gain knowledge, understanding and skills through participation in the collaborative process
	Wider project group members gain knowledge, understanding and skills through participation in the process
Relationships and social capital: <i>The process creates new personal and working relationships, and raised social capital among participants</i>	Trusted relationships are developed within the CSG
	There are productive, credible relationships between CSG, Te Rōpū Hautū, Technical Alliance Group, and the decision makers (co-governance group)
	The CSG and wider project group members value and respect diverse knowledge and expertise, e.g., Western science and mātauranga Māori
Information, innovation and creativity: <i>The process produces innovative ideas</i>	The process produces innovative ideas
	Information produced by the collaborative process is widely understood and perceived as accurate by external stakeholders and communities
Agreement: The process reaches an agreement accepted by all group members	The group is able to reach a consensus about recommendations
	Sectors are able to make concessions to reach a consensus
	The group is able to make recommendations
	Group members can articulate their basis for recommendations
Perceived as successful: The group, decision makers and sector groups perceive the process and outcomes as successful	Recommendations from the group are considered seriously by external decision makers
	The advice and recommendations of the group are regarded as technically sound by decision makers and give effect to policy
	The group contributes to pragmatic solutions being agreed to by decision makers on water quality
Public interest: The outcomes are regarded as meeting the common good or larger public interest, and not just the interests of stakeholders involved. Wider environmental, social, cultural, and economic objectives met	Process and outcomes are perceived by external decision makers and stakeholders as credible and fair
	Policy changes are seen as practical and achievable by local communities
	Lasting solutions are generated
Conflict reduced following plan change recommendations and decisions	The process reduces follow up legal proceedings and challenges to recommended plan changes
Second-order effects: The collaborative process produces a range of second-order effects	Group participants work together on issues and projects outside the collaborative project
	Positive changes in sector behaviours are evident
	There is evidence of increased collaborative



	activities between sector groups and communities (Spin off) new partnerships occur
<i>Understanding and support of Collaborative Processes</i>	There is increased understanding of, and support for, collaborative processes by CSG participants (as a result of participation in CSG) There is increased understanding of, and support for collaborative processes by sector groups and communities (get a judgment about their sector)

Appendix 2: Resources used to develop evaluation criteria

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- Margerum, R. D. (2002). Collaborative Planning: Building Consensus and Building a Distinct Model for Practice *Journal of Planning Education and Research*. 21: 237-253.
- O'Brien, M. (2010). *Review of Collaborative Governance: Factors crucial to the internal workings of the collaborative process*, Research Report prepared for the Ministry for the Environment.
- Twyford, V., Waters, S., Hardy, M. & Dengate J. (2012). *The Power of Co: The Smart Leaders Guide to Collaborative Governance*. Wollongong. Vivien Twyford Communication Pty Limited.

Appendix 3: Data collection cycles and activities

307. The table below sets out the data activities and collection undertaken as part of the evaluation process from April 2014 – July 2017.

Table 11: Cycles of data collection activities

Evaluation cycle	Data activities and collection
Cycle one: April-August 2014	<p>Establish evaluation purpose, questions and criteria with CSG group and WRC</p> <hr/> <p>Development and piloting of online survey and interview questionnaire. Rotational sample for interviews⁴⁰ developed and agreed with WRC</p> <hr/> <p>Survey implemented with 19/23 responding</p> <hr/> <p>3 pilot interviews 6 interviews with CSG members</p> <hr/> <p>Report to CSG August 2014</p>
Cycle two: October-November 2014	<p>Development and piloting of online survey and interview questionnaire. Rotational sample for interviews developed and agreed</p> <hr/> <p>Survey implemented in October 2014 with 17/23 responding</p> <hr/> <p>7 interviews with CSG members October 2014</p> <hr/> <p>Reporting to CSG November 2014</p>
Cycle three: March-June 2015	<p>Interview guide for wider CSG stakeholders developed and tested</p> <hr/> <p>Interview sample agreed with WRC</p> <hr/> <p>16 interviews conducted in April and May 2015, mix of phone and face to face with a sample of people from the following stakeholder groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waikato Regional Council Project Staff • The Technical Leaders Group (TLG) • The CSG Chair and Facilitator • Te Rōpū Hautū – River iwi and Waikato Regional Council Executive Staff • Healthy Rivers Wai Ora Co-Governance Committee members <hr/> <p>Report to CSG – June 2015</p>
Cycle four: October – November 2015	<p>Development and piloting of online survey and interview questionnaire. Rotational sample for interviews developed and agreed</p>

⁴⁰ A rotational sample was used for the first three cycles of interviews with CSG members. One third of members were interviewed in each cycle. The sample was selected by WRC staff and sought to ensure a diversity of sector representation.

	<p>Survey implemented in October 2015 with 16/23 responding</p> <hr/> <p>8 interviews with CSG members in October 2015</p> <hr/> <p>Reporting to CSG November 2015</p>
Cycle five: February-June 2016	<p>In depth phone and face to face interviews with the CSG Chair and CSG Facilitator in February 2016</p> <p>Preparation of a 'Learnings so far' brief for internal WRC use</p> <p>Collation and synthesis of evaluation data to date in preparation for final phase of data collection, analysis and reporting.</p>
Cycle six: August – September 2016	<p>Development and piloting of online survey and interview questionnaire for final interviews with CSG members.</p> <hr/> <p>Survey implemented September 2016 with 20/23 responding</p> <hr/> <p>23 in-depth phone and face to face interviews conducted (17 CSG members, 4 delegates, CSG chair and CSG facilitator)</p> <hr/> <p>CSG only report prepared.</p>
Cycle seven: November 2016 – June 2017	<p>Development and piloting of online survey interview questionnaire for final interviews with wider CSG supporting stakeholders (WRC staff and management, Te Rōpū Hautū members, Iwi staff and management, Technical Leaders Group, Co-governance Committee)</p> <hr/> <p>Survey implemented with 17/37 responding</p> <hr/> <p>21 in depth phone interviews conducted (WRC staff and management, Iwi staff and management, Technical Leaders Group, Co-governance committee)</p> <hr/> <p>Analysis and review of all data collected 2014-2017 Synthesis of all data collected 2014 - 2017 Deliberative sensemaking process with WRC staff and management, Co-governance Committee members, Technical Leaders Group Chair, CSG Chair and CSG Facilitator</p> <p>Final evaluation report prepared.</p>