



**Review of the
*Monitoring Progress Towards a
Sustainable New Zealand*
Report**

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Statistics New Zealand

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Executive Summary

The report, *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand*, was designed as a first step to report on sustainable development in New Zealand.

The review of *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand* outlines the findings from the consultation process that was carried out in October–December 2002, with the key findings reported in a Cabinet paper due early 2003.

Overall, the findings suggested that *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand* adds value as a national resource, raising public awareness and providing an overview of the issues involved in sustainable development. The review found that an overarching framework to show the place and role of each of the indicator reports was important and would help to make any successor to *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand*, and other reports, more useful.

The findings also indicated that the framework for *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand* needed further development to ensure an integrated approach across environmental, social, economic and cultural sectors. The review also confirmed the view that there was insufficient Māori perspective in the report.

There was some strong support for one number indicators, although there was concern that they could lead to misinterpretation of the data.

Some of those consulted were interested in a summary report with the key indicators and/or a web version of the report. There was no consensus on how often the report should be published with support shown for every year, every three years and every five years.

Introduction

Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand was designed as a first step to report on sustainable development. The report was designed as a prototype by a working group of officials from Statistics New Zealand, Ministry for the Environment, Ministry of Economic Development, Ministry of Social Development and other Government departments.

The report was designed to allow users to assess New Zealand's progress towards sustainable development, with the selection and analysis of the indicators intended to be independent of any particular sector's viewpoint.

The report was made available prior to the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg from 26 August–4 September 2002. After its publication, Statistics New Zealand held public seminars around the country to discuss the report and review its usefulness. Further consultation with government departments and other key non-government stakeholders was carried out throughout November and December 2002.

Purpose of this report

This report outlines the findings from the consultation process carried out throughout October, November and December 2002. The results from this report will be used to prepare a Cabinet paper by April 2003.

The Cabinet paper will report on:

- (a) the value added by a sustainable development indicators report
- (b) the ability of a sustainable development indicators report to distinguish itself from and avoid duplication of effort and public confusion with other indicator reports, and
- (c) the case for producing future sustainable development indicator reports.

In addition to reporting on the findings from the consultation process, the report makes some initial recommendations. These recommendations are based on an initial review of the consultation findings and are in no way meant to be final. Further consultation will be required to finalise any future directions. Future directions are discussed below.

Process of consultation

Statistics New Zealand carried out the consultation using an independent staff member who had not been involved in the development of the report.

During October and November 2002, public seminars were held in Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin. A wide range of individuals and groups took part. Of the 348 people who registered for the seminars, 96 were from local government, 65 were from central government, 52 were from universities and polytechnics, and 112 were from communities and business organisations. The public seminars involved a 40-minute talk on the content of the report and 40 minutes for questions, answers and general comments from the public.

Throughout November, further consultation took place with government departments, including the Ministry of Economic Development, Ministry of Social Development, Ministry for the Environment and Te Puni Kōkiri. Efforts were made to contact a wide range of those interested, and this report includes all views expressed. The meetings were generally small, with one to six people and lasted between one and two hours. These meetings focussed on the three issues: the value of the report, whether it was distinguishable from other reports and whether a future report should be developed. Refer to Appendix 2 for a full list of government and non-government stakeholders that were consulted.

As well as the seminars and group meetings, a questionnaire was provided on the Statistics New Zealand website and in the back of the printed copy of the report. Stakeholders were encouraged to fill in the questionnaire and the results were incorporated into this review. See Appendix 3 for a copy of the questionnaire.

Structure of this report

The report is set out in four sections. Sections 1, 2 and 3 outline the key findings from the written questionnaires, seminars and written and verbal feedback from

consultation with key stakeholders. At the end of the discussion on each issue, key points have been provided. No attempt to reply to the comments or analyse the results is included in these sections.

Section 4 outlines some initial recommendations, based on the findings outlined in Sections 1, 2 and 3. These recommendations are not final and further consultation will be required to decide on future directions.

Appendix 1 outlines the detailed requests for further indicators and/or information in *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand*. These comments are from the written questionnaires, seminars, and written and verbal feedback from consultation with key stakeholders. These comments will need to be considered during any further development of *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand*.

Future directions

Depending on the outcome of future funding, it is proposed that further consultation be carried out to develop a structure for the successor to *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand*. Further work will also be required to identify indicator changes. If funding is successful, it is proposed that the work will start in July 2003.

1. Value Added by a Sustainable Development Indicators Report

This section discusses the feedback from the written questionnaires, seminars, and written and verbal feedback from the consultation with key government and non-government stakeholders.

Overall, it was suggested that *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand* was a significant step in the development of sustainable indicators for reporting and monitoring. In particular the report was thought to add value:

- in providing an overview of the issues involved in sustainability
- as a national level report which provides top level information across environmental, social, economic and cultural sections
- as a first attempt to monitor progress towards sustainability
- in identifying what the right things to measure are
- in identifying gaps in reporting, and
- in providing all the information in one place.

Key areas where it was thought the report could be made more useful are discussed below. The key areas include:

- the approach to indicator reporting
- the structure of the report
- analysis in the report
- one number indicators
- the use of regional data versus national data, and
- SNZ's role.

1.1 Approach

Key Points

- An overarching framework to show the place and role of each of the indicator reports was important and would help to make future editions of *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand* and other reports more useful.
- Top-down and bottom-up approaches are both important and should be considered when developing an overarching framework to indicator reporting and the value added by the report.
- A range of indicators that councils and communities can consider when addressing the issues of sustainable development in their local area would be useful, and *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand* could link to this.
- Work on sustainable development indicators fits well with the Growth and Innovation Framework (GIF).
- People appreciated the consultation on *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand*. It was considered important to continue with consultation and coordination for any further development of indicators or the *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand* report.
- Further work on Māori views in relation to indicator reporting is needed.

General

It was generally commented that an overarching framework to indicator reporting would have made *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand* more useful. It was suggested that the framework be developed in conjunction with the producers of other indicator reports. Some issues related to the overarching framework are discussed below.

Top-down or bottom-up approach to indicator reporting

There were some comments that there are two approaches that can be taken with indicator reporting: the top-down approach and the bottom-up approach. It was commented that both of these approaches are important and that it would be useful to see a link between the two when considering an approach to indicator reporting, and also when considering the value of the *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand* report.

The bottom-up approach, involving communities, was considered important, as changes are likely to actually happen at a community level. Communities would like to be able to see local measures and progress in their local area and to see how this fits in to a national strategy. Seeing their own communities progress helps with motivation and interest.

The top-down approach was also seen to be important. It was suggested that the key users of *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand* are bureaucrats and ministers. It was suggested that other users at a top level are the media, who can help to educate by highlighting aspects of the report, and placing a ‘media spin’ on the report. It was thought that the media could be a powerful force in encouraging public

awareness, which cannot be achieved through a formal report. Other top-level users mentioned were community groups and NGOs, who have an influence through lobbying.

Develop range of indicators – used in national report and at local levels

Councils mentioned that they were keen to see coordination between regional reporting and top-level national reporting.

The creation of a range of indicators that councils and communities could consider when addressing the issues of sustainable development in their local area was seen to be useful. It was suggested that this range of indicators could be contained within future reports. It was commented that it would be useful to build the national level picture from this regional data.

One comment was: “In reviewing the report in future, we ask that consideration be given to how the indicators might be used at different levels of government (as well as the private sector).”

Growth and Innovation Framework (GIF)

Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand has a broader economic perspective than the GIF. The GIF focuses on innovation and a simple measure of economic growth, while the report is broader. It was considered important to ensure that any over-arching framework for indicator reporting includes the GIF indicators. It was suggested that further discussions and clear communication should be maintained to ensure that indicator reporting and the GIF continue to fit together.

Consultation / coordination

People appreciated the coordinated approach that was used in the development of *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand*. Comments were made that further coordination and consultation with agencies is needed in the development of an overarching framework for indicator reporting and any further development of the report.

There was some discussion about the Local Government Bill, currently before Parliament, and its impact on the collection processes for regional councils in relation to sustainable development reporting. This was seen to highlight the importance of coordination between regional and central government, both in what indicators are being collected and the reports that are produced.

Māori perspective

The report acknowledged a gap in the Māori perspective, which was also picked up in people’s comments on the report. It was thought that a better job of assessing Māori interests in relation to indicator reporting was needed. It was commented that: “the current government approach to sustainable development does not fully consider the implications of sustainable development for Māori or the position of the Treaty of Waitangi relative to sustainable development”.

Discussions with relevant Māori authorities to identify and establish Māori views on sustainability were thought to be necessary. It was commented that Māori partnerships were needed before further development on the indicators.

1.2 Structure for the report

To add value to any future *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand* report, the structure could be improved, as discussed in the suggestions and comments below.

1.2.1 Framework

Key Points

- The framework for any future *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand* report needs further development.
- It was suggested that further work on ‘weak’ versus ‘strong’ definitions of sustainability is needed.
- The report would have been more useful with better linkages between different sectors.
- A cultural perspective was generally considered to be lacking in the report. It was suggested that a cultural perspective could be incorporated into the report by linking cultural indicators with environmental, social and economic indicators which are relevant to a particular topic, or by giving ‘culture’ a separate chapter, which includes culture-related indicators.
- The capital stock approach needs to be reviewed and some important capital measurements that are not currently well represented need to be considered.
- The title implies progress towards goals and targets, while the report does not actually indicate any progress or direction.

General

The framework used for *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand* was quite simplistic and needs to be developed to make future reports more useful. Development of the framework for a future *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand* report could help to:

- clarify the purpose and role of the report
- better integrate and organise the content of the report/indicators
- direct the report towards linkages between sections (currently the sections are separated out)
- clarify the criteria for having sustainable development indicators and contextual indicators
- ensure that the topic areas and the indicators included remain stable over time, so that progress can be monitored
- make the report more useful to departments in developing a more sustainable approach to policy within their sectors and in cross-sectoral sustainable development approaches.

The framework needs to be flexible so that relevant issues can be picked up and new indicators can be included as they are developed or refined. It was suggested that non-government experts be used to help develop the framework.

Sustainability definition

There were some comments that the definition of sustainability needed further work. ‘Weak’ versus ‘strong’ definitions were raised, and it was suggested that the definition used in *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand* was ‘weak’. There was also the view expressed that the current definition indicates a direction for indicator reporting and that “any move in that direction is a good thing”. It was suggested that further work on the definition of sustainability would be needed when developing an approach to indicator reporting.

Links between different sectors of the report

There was a general view that linkages between different sectors in the report would have made the report more useful and also distinguish it from other indicator reports. Analysis on the drivers and the relationships between indicators was seen to be where the real value could be added to the report.

It was thought that the framework for a future version of *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand* needs to reflect the linkages. One suggestion was to have sections or chapters on selected issues (such as transport) that include social, economic, cultural and environmental indicators. This would provide a broader perspective and illustrate linkages between sectors.

Comments received suggested that further integration of the indicators would make future editions of the report more useful to departments in developing cross-sectoral sustainable development approaches.

Including culture and heritage into framework

It was generally thought that the inclusion of culture and heritage into the report was limited and that the report had been developed with limited consultation with TPK or with Māori. It was suggested that the framework developed for a future report should better incorporate cultural perspectives along with the economic, social and environmental perspectives. Comments were made that this would bring the report into line with the government’s support for the inclusion of cultural perspectives in reporting. It was considered important that culture is approached from its broadest meaning.

It was acknowledged that the lack of integration of culture and heritage indicators into the report is partly due to a lack of quality statistical information. It was suggested that the report could have acknowledged the contribution of culture, and the information gaps could be identified and noted.

It was suggested that the integration of cultural perspectives into future reports could be achieved in two ways. Firstly it could be done by linking cultural indicators with the environmental, social and economic indicators that are relevant to a particular issue or topic. Secondly it could be done by giving ‘culture’ a separate chapter, which includes culture-related indicators.

The advantage of adopting the first option was thought to be the integration of culture with other facets of New Zealand life. The contribution that culture plays in many areas would be clear. However, it was suggested that there was a risk of excluding or overlooking some culture-related indicators that are relevant to other aspects of

sustainable development until “quadruple bottom line reporting becomes second nature”.

The advantage of the second option, giving culture a separate chapter, was thought to be that it gives clear acknowledgement of the importance of culture and the indicators associated with it, without the risk of excluding indicators. It was also suggested that the information gaps could also be clearly outlined in the chapter.

There was also the suggestion that a section be included in the report, which monitors the government’s Treaty obligations towards Māori people and their culture. These obligations include:

- the strength and vitality of Māori culture
- the responsiveness of the Government to Māori self-determination
- the effectiveness of Government services for Māori as citizens.

An example of the lack of Māori perspective in the report was given. It was thought that the Living Standards and Health section was approached from a western cultural perspective, with monitoring focussing on material well-being. It was noted that page 63 begins with the sentence “Income enables individuals and households to purchase the goods and services that contribute to their overall well-being”. The following comment was made about this: “The report should recognise that a Māori perspective would place a far greater importance on community and cultural well-being and would have standards that are very different to western norms. Income would not necessarily be viewed as the primary measure of living standards”.

Capital Stock Approach

It was noted that a capital stock approach was used for the report. It was thought that if this approach is to be used, there are other important capital measurements that are not well represented, for example institutional capital: the ability to manage to do things in a system sense; and spiritual capital (also described as ‘wairua’). It was suggested that these be considered in any further development of the report to make it more useful.

It was suggested that the capital theory-based model and summary of other approaches to considering sustainability would be a useful resource for councils and others looking at sustainability issues. It was suggested that these could be included in the appendices or as a reference in the report.

A further comment on the capital stock approach was that: “A substantial literature review and evaluation of the ‘capital model’ approach” needs to be carried out. “One of the implicit components of this approach is that the resources must be ‘productive’ to be considered capital. This raises the question: productive to what purpose? What is the productive value of preserving or building stocks of a particular resource? Moreover, are the resources currently considered productive or do they have potential productive value that makes them of value or worth monitoring? These questions are crucial because they guide the choice of indicators.”

Title of the report

There were some queries about the title *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand*. It was thought that the title implies progress towards goals and targets

but the report itself does not actually indicate progress or a direction for any of the indicators.

1.2.2 Selection of indicators

Key Points

- People were interested to see how decoupling indicators might be approached.
- People generally appreciated having the data gaps identified in the report.
- People wanted indicators of high quality; however, for very important indicators it was suggested that imperfect data was better than no data.
- There was some discussion around the inclusion of UN or OECD indicators. It was suggested that indicators that are relevant to New Zealanders were considered more important than indicators to which New Zealand contributes very little. There was debate about whether international comparability is important.
- It was suggested that it could be clearer how the indicators presented relate to the issue of sustainability.
- It was suggested that indicators should be kept to as few as possible.

There was some discussion around the selection of indicators for any future reports. These are discussed below. Comments on specific indicators are documented in appendix 1.

Decoupling indicators

There was support for more work on decoupling indicators, which could be incorporated in future sustainable development indicator reporting.

Data gaps/new data

Overall, people appreciated having the data gaps identified in the report. There were some queries around the data gaps that are identified in the report, these included:

- What happens with the data gaps? Who will ensure that the data gaps are dealt with?
- What determines a data gap – data collection or the data quality?

Quality of the data

There were a few comments about the quality of the indicators. Comments were made that indicators need to have “at least 10 years of data already collected” to make them useful.

A further comment that was made was: “The lack of suitable data to represent the indicator should mean, in most cases, the abandonment of that indicator. But in some highly important indicators (eg fish stocks on p 35) imperfect data will have to be accepted until better data is found.”

International comparisons and comparability

There were some comments that the inclusion of the UN or OECD recommendation criteria for selecting indicators was not appropriate because they do not necessarily represent issues that are relevant to New Zealand. One comment on this was that:

“The indicators should be about what the citizens of Aotearoa/New Zealand consider to have productive importance to them, their whanau, their communities and their country.”

Alternatively, some individuals expressed the view that the report should have international comparability. It was thought to be important that a report at a national level is able to report on the OECD indicators.

There were mixed views on whether further comparisons with overseas countries were needed in the report. A comment was made that the role of New Zealand in an international context was not discussed in any depth.

Further time-based comparisons were also suggested.

It was suggested that, in order to make the report useful, it needed to be made clear how the data/information provided was relevant to the issue of sustainable development. One comment made was: “simply measuring our place on the OECD league table is not a measure of anything related to sustainability”.

Preference for fewer indicators

The preference for fewer indicators was expressed. One comment: “We have applied the general rule that the number of indicators should be kept to as few as possible. In general we do not advocate having more than one indicator per topic area”.

1.3 Analysis

Key Points

- People appreciated that it is not Statistics New Zealand’s role to make judgements. However, there was a general view that further analysis and interpretation of the data was needed in the report.
 - Further analysis could help to avoid the data being misinterpreted.
 - Further analysis may assist the general public, as they may have difficulty drawing their own conclusions from the data.
- People wanted clarity on what the goals or targets for sustainable development are, and clarity on whether these goals or targets are being met. A set of national thresholds that record what is acceptable and not acceptable were suggested.

Issues relating to the analysis in the report were raised during the seminars and consultation process. These are discussed below.

More analysis

People thought that there could be more analysis of what the data in the report implies for sustainable development. It was appreciated that the report was attempting to avoid drawing conclusions; however, some further analysis that would have been appreciated included:

- a summary of each chapter, and a conclusion for each chapter
- more links between the indicators and how they impact on each other.

It was suggested that further analysis was important to ensure that data was not misinterpreted. One comment on this was that: “for statistical series to have relevance, they need to be put in context, in terms of the total economic, environmental and social environment in which New Zealand operates. Simply promoting a particular series without full explanation of the context in which trends have arisen is misleading.”

Analysis – to make report useful to the general public

The report was regarded as “useful as a tool to raise public awareness of sustainable development issues”. Further analysis may help increase public awareness of sustainable development issues, especially for the casual reader.

It was thought that it was difficult for casual readers to draw their own conclusions from the data in the report and that the authors or data experts needed to express a view on the current status of initiating sustainable development in various areas.

Readers commented that for real progress in sustainability to occur, the “ordinary person” needed to be committed to making it happen. To help achieve this it was thought that the report should include a subset of indicators that are particularly relevant to the general public. These included:

- domestic energy used
- use of renewable energy domestically
- recycling/waste minimisation, and
- motor car use/use of public transport.

While the view that the report needs to be made more accessible to the general public was expressed, the view that it is unrealistic to expect the general public to use the report and that this should not be the purpose of the report was also expressed.

Discuss policy implications – goals and targets

People wanted clarity on what the goals or targets for sustainable development are, and whether we are reaching them. People commented that it is not clear from this report how far we have come in terms of sustainability and how well we are doing. One comment on this was: “You need to understand what we are aiming for, to be able to determine indicators that will measure progress towards goals/outcomes of sustainability”.

A further comment: “In my opinion, state of the environment reports are worth nothing unless there are goals or measurable targets which are put in place as a basis for changing behaviour”.

It was suggested that there should be “a comprehensive but concise set of national thresholds (say 20) that would record what is acceptable or not acceptable, in order for organisations to report against a national standard. For example, what are three key water quality indicators that can be measured in a consistent and meaningful manner and what threshold, being a statistical figure would be considered nationally acceptable or not acceptable”.

1.4 One number indicators

Key Points

- There was some strong support for the use of one number indicators, but also concern that they could lead to misinterpretation of the data.

There was some strong support for the use of one number indicators in the report; however, there was also concern that the data may end up being misinterpreted. Trying to simplify the indicators was thought to risk confusing complex systems and processes. It was thought that by combining indicators, information may be lost, with the only advantage being that they could grab people's attention.

1.5 Regional data versus national data

Key Points

- Generally people considered that it would be useful to have more regional data in the report. This would enable district trends to be monitored, highlight regional growth patterns that may not be identified at a national level, and be more meaningful and accessible to the general public.
- While regional data was thought to be both useful and necessary, there was also a strong view that the role or purpose of this report was not to provide local level reporting.
- It was suggested that, as an alternative to providing further detailed information in the report, more links to the detailed information could be provided.

Regional data – to measure trends at a detailed level

Councils in particular commented that the report needed to provide information at local, regional and city level. It was suggested that this would help to enable district trends to be monitored and interdistrict comparisons to be made.

It was commented that the regional population growth patterns may be extremely important if one region is becoming 'over populated' and another 'under populated', while population growth at a national level may not be all that important.

Comments were made that from a business perspective, it would be useful to have data disaggregated at an industry level. A comment on this was: "If it is possible to break down any of the statistics by sector, etc this would be valuable for businesses to 'benchmark' their performance for example: CO2 emissions per dollar of turnover for given sectors".

Regional data – to make the report more accessible to general public

Feedback suggested that the report would be made more accessible to the general public if access to regional data was provided. One comment was that: "The national

level may be too broad to grab people's attention, the information becomes more meaningful at regional level".

National data - Use of links in the report to regional data

While there was significant interest in regional data, there was also a strong view that the purpose of this report should be as a top-level report, providing information at a national level.

It was also suggested that, rather than providing regional data, links to regional data and regional reports could be included in the report. The Canadian website (http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/report/govrev/01/cp-rc1_e.html#_Toc530286184) was discussed, which gives an example of where 16 indicators are given at the top level which can be drilled down into for more detailed information on areas of interest.

The report currently gives the source of the data in the graphs. It was suggested that website contacts on the graphs would also be useful.

It was also suggested that different indicators could be focussed on in detail for each report publication.

1.6 Statistics New Zealand's role

Key Points

- Generally Statistics New Zealand was seen to be appropriately involved in the development of indicator reporting and the report *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand*. This was largely because Statistics New Zealand is seen to be impartial and can assist with methodological issues and data quality considerations. However, there was one view that Statistics New Zealand had compromised its impartiality this with the report.

Statistics New Zealand's impartial role

Generally Statistics New Zealand was seen to be neutral in its presentation of the material in the report, and for this reason was seen to be a useful body that was appropriate to be pulling together a report such as *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand*. It was seen as important that the report should contain an authoritative list of indicators, which will stabilise over time, and not be influenced by any particular political framework of the time.

There was, however, one comment that by being involved in *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand* "Statistics New Zealand had adopted a view on what qualifies as sustainable development" and that "such advocacy should not be entertained by Statistics New Zealand". It was also thought that Statistics New Zealand was risking its credibility as the country's official statistics provider through the use of data sourced from outside Statistics New Zealand in the report.

Other roles of Statistics New Zealand

Statistics New Zealand was seen as mainly providing a base for statistics, helping to clarify what are robust indicators, and assisting with methodologies rather than working on links to policy areas.

Statistics New Zealand was also seen as having the aim of providing information to the public, rather than keeping information for internal use only.

It was also suggested that Statistics New Zealand could provide a brokerage role, to help resolve issues where there were conflicts and could attempt to gain a unified set of outcome indicators.

There was also strong support for Statistics New Zealand being involved in not only the development of consistent and accurate measurements, but also in developing a consensus on thresholds that indicate whether a measure is a pass or a fail.

2. Ability of the Report to Distinguish Itself

Section 2 discusses feedback from the seminars and written and verbal feedback through the consultation with key government and non-government stakeholders. The section includes the feedback given on:

- the risk of duplication
- the role or purpose of the report, and
- the use of linkages in the report.

Key Points

- There was some confusion over the role or purpose of *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand*. It was thought that the development of an overarching framework for indicator reporting would help to outline the purpose of the report.
- An overarching framework for indicator reporting would help to minimise the risk of confusion and duplication between *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand* and the numerous other indicator reports that exist.
- There was thought to be insufficient clarity around who the users of the report were. Numerous possible users were suggested.
- It was thought that linkages between the sectors outlined in the report would help to distinguish it from other indicator reports.

2.1 Risk of duplication

It was generally thought that there is some risk of confusion and duplication between the various indicator reporting programmes. There were several queries about where the report fitted in with the Sustainable Development Strategy, and how this report fitted in with *The Social Report* and *The State of New Zealand's Environment Report*.

New Zealand currently has a number of indicator reports and reporting programmes in addition to *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand*. The major ones include *The Social Report*, *Quality of Life in Big Cities of New Zealand*, *Environmental Performance Indicators* and reporting by The Treasury and Ministry of Economic Development. It was considered important that *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand* fits into an overarching framework for indicator reporting, together with these other reports.

2.2 Role or purpose of the report

Confusion over the role or purpose of the report

There was some confusion about the role or purpose of the report. While the report was generally viewed as providing a national overview on sustainable development, some people expected the role of the report to be providing regional/local data

It was suggested that the development of an overarching framework for indicator reporting would help to outline the role and purpose of each of the indicator reports and help resolve who are the key users of *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand*.

Possible users of the report

There was thought to be insufficient clarity around the audience for this report. Possible users mentioned included the general public, schools, State sector officials, politicians, policy-makers and management. Visitors coming to New Zealand were also thought to be a possible audience.

It was suggested that the report would help to ensure evidence-based decision making and policy. It was also suggested that the report would help to raise the awareness of sustainable development reporting.

A comment was made that accountants and other organisations in the business of reporting on the economic, social and environmental performance of entities would also be users of this report. It was suggested that accountants could use the information in this report as a framework when considering what information is relevant to companies. Accountants also thought they could use the information contained in this report for benchmarking (ie comparing an entity against a national average).

General public use of the report

There was the view that the report was pitched at a level that would appeal to both the general public and decision-makers. Alternatively there was the view that it would be unrealistic to expect the general public to use the report, and that ultimately public use of the report would be through the regional councils.

One person's comments: "It is mentioned in the report (p 16) that it is intended to inform and educate the public. Why this audience? How is it intended to meet their needs and how did the authors determine what those needs were?"

2.3 Linking sectors within the report

Generally, there was the view that linkages between different sectors in *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand* would also help to distinguish it from other indicator reports. It was thought that the framework for future reports needs to better show the linkages.

3. Should the Report be Produced Again?

Section 3 discusses feedback from the written questionnaires, seminars, and written and verbal feedback through the consultation with key government and non-government stakeholders. The section includes feedback on:

- the benefits of producing another report
- the timeframe for future reports.

Key Points

- While it was considered worthwhile to produce the report again, it was suggested that there would need to be ‘evolutionary’ changes to make it worthwhile.
- It was suggested that there would be a number of benefits in producing a further report. Including helping:
 - decision-makers identify problem areas
 - evidence-based decision making
 - to reduce coordination costs between departments by reducing the proliferation of independent indicators and enabling departments to identify their links with other agencies better.
- A short report was suggested.
- There was interest in the report being published every year, every three years and every five years. There was no consensus on which of these alternatives would be best.

3.1 General

It was widely thought that the report should be produced again, but there would need to be ‘evolutionary’ changes to make it worthwhile.

Eighteen of the 24 people who gave written responses thought that the report should be produced again. The rest did not respond to this question.

3.2 Benefits of producing another report

There was the view that the report had limited value as a “single one-off venture”, and that for maximum benefit, these, or any indicators, must be regularly updated to maintain relevance.

It was considered that once the audience is clearly established this may impact on the indicators that are covered, and help determine the benefits of producing another report.

It was suggested that some of the benefits of producing a further report could be to:

- help decision-makers to identify problem areas
- help in evidence-based decision-making
- help in reducing coordination costs between departments by reducing the proliferation of independent indicators and enabling departments to identify their links with other agencies better.

3.3 Timeframe for future reports

Report every three to five years

There was some interest in the publication of the report every three to five years. A five-yearly report was seen to have the benefit of being able to coincide with the census. It was considered that other sector indicator reports could be produced more frequently (one to two years) and ad hoc reports on events or issues could also be produced as needed.

It was thought that an annual publication of *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand* could lead to confusion and a lack of distinction between this report and others. It was also thought that a timeframe of three years or less would not allow significant trends or changes in indicators to emerge.

Yearly report

There was some suggestion that it would be useful to have the report produced yearly. Obviously this was thought to depend on the amount of change in the indicators that are covered in the report. Several government departments suggested that they would like to be able to use the report to update their own department reports, and a yearly publication would assist in this. For example the Growth and Innovation Framework (GIF) report will be published annually; therefore, *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand* will need to be published regularly, as the GIF relies on it for an overall picture of sustainable growth. It was also suggested that the update of the report *Creating our Future* (2002), published by PCE would benefit from a regularly updated *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand*.

Shorter 10-page report, update website

There was some interest in the idea of producing a shorter report (eg 10 pages) with some of the key indicators. This could be produced on a more regular timeframe. It was also suggested that the website could be kept regularly updated, as an alternative to publishing the report every year

4. Where To From Here?

Section 4 outlines a suggested approach for further sustainable development indicator reporting, based on the consultation reported in sections 1, 2 and 3. These

recommendations are presented for comment at this stage. It should also be noted that progress on these will depend on funding.

4.1 Value added by a sustainable development indicators report

Overall, it was suggested that the report was valuable as a picture of progress towards sustainable development in New Zealand and would raise awareness and contribute to an understanding of sustainable development. However, it was considered that more value could be achieved if a number of improvements were made.

Role or purpose of the report

- It was intended that the report be a national report providing top level information across environmental, social, economic and cultural sectors, summarising other detailed reporting.
- However, the role or purpose of the report needs to be more explicit. It was suggested that the report's target should be the general public rather than focussing on evidence-based policy or decision-making, as that requires significantly more information. It should, however, be able to be used in the identification of priority areas.
- The role of Statistics New Zealand in producing the report is to ensure the integrity of the data and to provide independence from any particular advocacy.
- Continued consultation and coordination with key users and stakeholders is needed to confirm this.

Framework

- Significant work on the framework that was used for *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand* is needed. The framework should allow users to think through the data and come to a conclusion.
- There is, however, currently no well-established international framework to work from, so it is proposed that a group of experts be asked to advise on any frameworks and definitions developed for New Zealand.

Māori perspective

- Significant work is required to ensure that Māori interests in relation to indicator reporting are incorporated into any overarching framework for indicator reporting.
- It is proposed that Māori identify and be partners in the group of experts, establishing the framework for sustainable development indicators, to establish Māori views on sustainability and ensure their inclusion in future.

Goals and targets

- Views expressed during the consultation indicated that there is a need for goals or targets when considering sustainable development indicators. People thought that goals and targets helped to clarify whether there was progress in a particular area.
- The report *Sustainable Development for New Zealand Programme of Action* includes a set of principles to guide policy development. While not actually specifying specific target measures, it helps to clarify directions and priorities.
- It is not considered appropriate for a statistical report to include commentary against politically set targets or goals.

- It is proposed that the report identify/provide links to targets and commentary on progress (eg through the MFE website) but not explicitly comment within the report.
- For further information on the report *Sustainable Development for New Zealand Programme of Action* go to:
<http://www.beehive.govt.nz/ViewDocument.cfm?DocumentID=15944>

Cultural perspective

- *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand* should incorporate cultural perspectives more extensively.

Analysis in the report

- Reporting on outcomes and better linking relevant information from social, environmental, economic and cultural sections is something that needs to be considered for any future *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand* report.
- The report was not intended to provide in-depth analysis, as that is the role of lower-level indicator reports.
- In-depth analysis will not be included in any future *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand* reports.
- Caution will need to be taken to help ensure that the data is not open to misinterpretation.

One number indicators

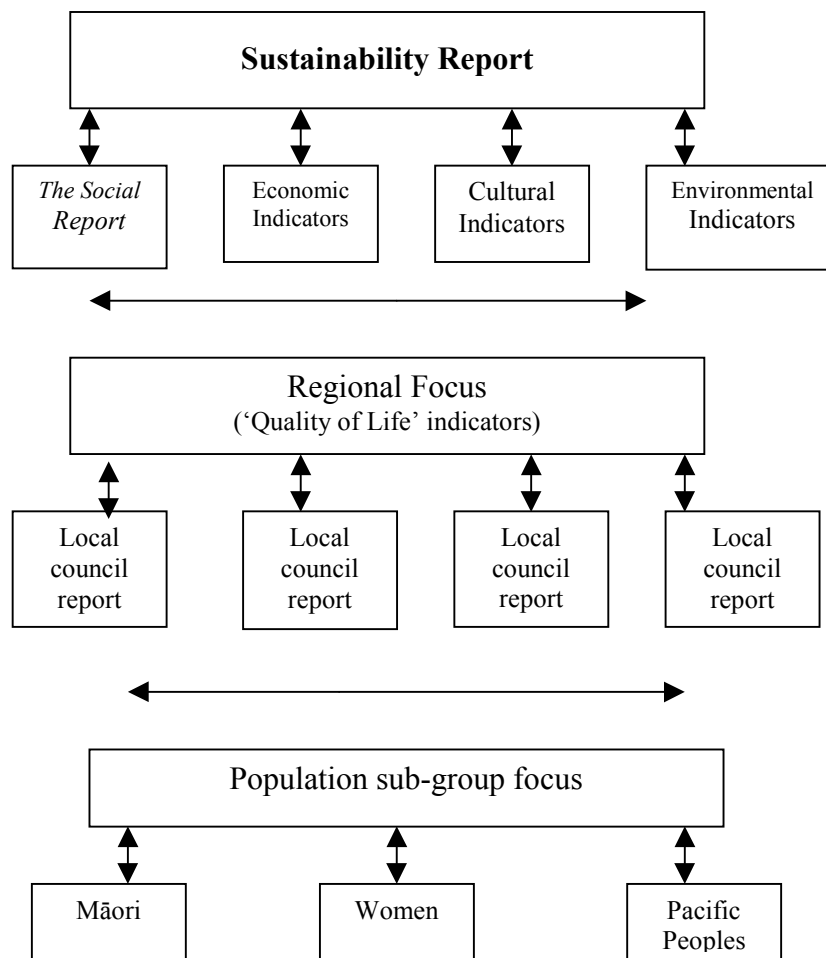
- There has been some interest in one number indicators. Statistics New Zealand is not planning to develop these.
- However, further work on one number indicators is encouraged, and any future *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand* report may be able to incorporate them.

4.2 The ability of the report to distinguish itself

It was agreed that the report needed to better distinguish itself from other indicator reports, in particular the environmental performance indicators and *The Social Report 2001* by providing an overarching framework for indicator reporting.

- An over-arching framework for indicator reporting would help to outline the focus and purpose of each of the indicator reports and help to clarify the key users of the *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand* report.
- This framework needs to be developed in conjunction with the producers of other indicator reports.
- It is suggested that the framework would consist of a top-level national report, which would cover a range of economic, social, environmental and cultural indicators, and the links between these. Detailed information on particular indicators could be referred to in the relevant detailed reports. Local council reports would focus on the issues relevant at a local area, but would be within the framework of indicators covered at a national level. Figure 1 outlines the suggested framework.

Figure 1.



- Any development of an overarching framework for indicator reporting needs to consider the coordination between regional reporting and top level national reporting. This will help to ensure that information collected and reported on is relevant at both levels.
- It is important that a framework of indicators is established, that councils and communities can choose from to monitor their area. This local data would then be able to feed into top level national reporting.
- The framework will need to link the reports and indicator work.

4.3 The case for producing future reports

There was support for the report to be produced again if the improvements to the value of the report were made. Consultation on the potential timing did not reach a consensus. Statistics New Zealand suggests that a three to five year cycle would be sufficient to reflect changes in most of the indicators measured, given that the report is a summary and that the detailed indicator reports should pick up areas where urgent action is needed. Consideration will be given to investing in the web version of the report to keep it 'live', as well as investing in a summary report.

Appendix 1: Detailed Comments

This appendix outlines detailed requests for further indicators and/or information in the *Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand* report. Note that some of these comments suggest things that are already in the report. Also, conflicting views are expressed.

General

- Need more comparisons over time.
- More international comparisons, in particular comparisons with other OECD countries.
- Need composite indicators.
- A table to show a complete list of the indicators included in the report would be useful.
- It would be useful to have the Pressure/State/Response framework diagram in the appendix.
- Need information on key ‘linking indicators’ or ‘de-coupling indicators’.
- The report should make a distinction between ‘indicators’ and ‘indices’.
- More information on the various sustainable development models used around the world was requested, for example what is happening in leading countries like Germany, Netherlands, etc.
- It would be useful to consider the following issues in the report:
 - global effects
 - averages and worst cases
 - personal as well as group (community) aspects.
- Information on people’s attitudes was requested, for example, what do New Zealanders think about in the area of sustainability. Business confidence surveys could also be included.
- Need further links to support statistical information.
- Information on institutional indicators was requested, for example, cultural aspects (governance).
- Work on institutional indicators was needed. One comment on this was: “In the urban water field, the existing regulations, rules, etc are designed for piped solutions and water being disposed as waste. Even if you want to disconnect from the mains wastewater system and treat/reuse all your own wastewater you still have to pay the wastewater company fees”.
- More detailed information be provided in the report, or alternatively access to detailed information be provided. This included:
 - more internet links
 - other policy reports linked to this report/accessible from this report.
- The report should distinguish between rural and urban issues. One person said they would particularly like to see this distinction in relation to environmental issues.
- The report could add more qualitative information, for example that it use information from the values survey.
- Indicators to assess the amount of public knowledge of sustainability issues be included in the report.

- More details about science and management indicators was requested.
- An indicator for the sustainability of tourism development was suggested.
- A forward-looking-model approach could be considered for the report. It was agreed that while this report may not actually produce forward modelling, the report could provide a base for forward modelling if wanted.
- The notion of “sustainable development” and the management of core materials was considered to be a contradiction of terms. Core materials are finite while “development” suggests continued/ongoing progress. This conflict causes difficulties for organisations that are trying to manage finite core materials.

Chapter 3: Population

- A single indicator for population was considered appropriate and sufficient. A suggestion for a possible second indicator was a map showing the population density across the country, or the rate of change of population density.
- Population shifts from the country to cities were desirable.
- While the age structure of the population was considered a useful indicator, there was thought to be too much emphasis on the ageing population and the impact on health and social services. It was considered important to note the social contribution made by the retired to society.
- Age structure of the population by region was also considered important.
- Ethnic diversity was considered an important topic area. The actual numbers/percentages of particular ethnic groups or nationalities resident in given areas should be included.
- An indicator measuring internal migration and regional population changes would be useful.
- Information on the impact of immigration was requested.
- It would be useful to have more on the differences within New Zealand, in particular around population subgroups.
- More complete demographic information was required, particularly on a regional level. This information could be linked with economic resource use, so that the risk of the ‘boom-bust’ cycle could be measured.
- There was a query about the use of population growth as an indicator.
- An indicator measuring inhabitant makeup of households would be useful.

Chapter 4: Environment and Ecosystem Resilience

- More biodiversity and vegetation data was required.
- Land and biodiversity indicators could be combined, as biodiversity depends on how well the land is.
- The little spotted kiwi was not considered to be a good indicator to measure biodiversity. One person's comment: “1 species, and a very iconic one, is not a good index of the whole subject.”
- A framework for long-term ecological monitoring needs to be developed. One comment concluded that: “the information being provided on losses of native vegetation and on a kiwi species does little to put in place the kind of monitoring that would be required”.
- Biosecurity should not be included in the environment section.

- More representative national data (especially environment and eco-system resilience) was required.
- Sustainable forest management indicators were desirable.
- Environmental education would be a useful addition to the report.
- Planted forest be broken down to show how much is being cut down now compared with past years, and how much is now being replanted.
- Information on land use was required.
- Information on the current expansion of cities into productive farm lands both past and present should be included.
- The impact of dairy farms on the environment should be recorded.
- Information on agriculture was needed.
- It was commented that “Only the annual greenhouse gas emission is needed in the atmosphere topic area. This graph should show the source of the emissions (fig 4.2) and the total emissions (the total line in fig 4.1). It isn’t necessary to include various types of greenhouse gases.”
- Estuaries could be considered as ‘link ecosystems’. It was considered that estuaries would be indicative of the health of both the rivers and the sea.
- Only issues largely relating to New Zealand should be included. One comment as an example: “Carbon dioxide concentrations and the ozone hole are more of a worldwide phenomenon. NZ’s contribution to both is small, as is our ability to improve matters.”
- A new topic dealing with the relationship between the environment and health be added to this section. One comment: “Indicators be included to measure pesticide residues in food and the soil as well as chemical contamination of the land and waterways”.
- Indicators to monitor the progress of renewable energy use and changes in the efficient use of transport fuel were needed.
- Information on the incidence of natural hazards was requested. This was seen as being important in relation to climate change.
- Information on protected areas, and their continued state is needed.

Marine environment/water quality

- There needs to be more information on the impact of ocean policies.
One comment: “I would be interested to know which of the 26 fish species are at or below the desired level and which of the remaining 14 stocks are below the desired level”.
A second comment: “Treasury sets targets for the Ministry of Fisheries, which in turn drives how the TACC is controlled through the fish management companies. I would like to know if the TACC for these 40 species has been reduced and by how much. Then knowing that when they estimate the stock will have recovered, should be in graph form”.
- A third comment: “Correct statistics will show a marine reserve in an international shipping channel that includes fast ferries and the government endorsing a ship to be sunk in the middle, combined with extremely fast currents will produce very damaging environmental results.”
- It would be useful to have a map or graph to show where there was access to marine resources 10 or 20 years ago, and a map of today’s restricted access.
- More details about the modification of the marine ecological system, and the impact on fishing not just fish stocks was required.

- Fish stocks are considered to be useful indicators.
One comment: “Fish stocks are a good indicator of the oceans, better than beach bathing quality (could be affected by natural phenomenon like algal bloom). If the quality of fish stock data is below the ‘normal’ statistical standard, perhaps an exception could be made – imperfect data is better than no data.”
- The report should include further information on the ocean, seas and coast. This includes information on the impact of the marine environment on the environment and access or links to NIWA and MoF sites.
- The report should include information on the extensive erosion silt on the bed of the sea.
- Information on the loss of wetlands and inter tidal systems over the years should be included.
- There was some discussion on the water quality indicators.
One comment suggested that “NIWA’s river water quality is better than drinking water as an indicator. Unsure if water clarity should be part of indicator as clarity could naturally be cloudy.”
A second comment was that “In addition to measuring river water quality and the quality of drinking water...water quality of lakes should also be measured”. Water quality of lakes was considered important for two reasons, firstly because lakes are an important recreational source, and secondly because of the pressures of the agricultural and energy sectors on this resource.
- The report should included information on giardia because it is an important measure of water quality.

Chapter 5: Economic Growth and Innovation

- It would be useful to include the percentage of New Zealanders who own their own land compared with overseas.
- Information on how much overseas investment has increased New Zealand productivity and jobs was requested.
- A breakdown of capital investment would be useful.
- A breakdown of industry contribution to GDP was needed.
- It would be useful to develop something around “green” GDP – a single measure that takes into account quality of life.
- An alternative indicator to GDP should be included in the report. The Genuine Progress Indicator should be considered. This is referred to in the background paper by the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment (PCE): *Background Paper: Creating our Future. Sustainable Development for New Zealand (June 2002)*. This is available on the PCE website.
- One comment on GDP was: “Is it a relevant and meaningful measure and are there other more appropriate ways of measuring activity? For example cleaning up oil spills and the downstream impacts of road accidents”.
- A further comment on GDP was: “There is a need for a closer look as to what measure better reflects ‘positive’ economic growth which complements other environmental and social measures. The best way to get economic growth up is to have a war or major environmental disaster, neither of which is really that positive”.

- It would be useful to include in the report the production and consumption of organic food and medicines.
- Information on NZ power generation capacity and residential and commercial use in the past and present was requested.
- Information on the spread of the workforce was needed, eg primary and secondary; farming, fishing, agriculture, forestry, industrial, commercial, infrastructure and Governments, central, local and regional.
- Information should be included in the report on sustainability in the primary production sector, eg sustainability of pastoral land use.
- Some considered there were too many topics in this section. These people suggested only keeping fig 5.1 (real GDP per capita), fig 5.5 (current account balance) and maybe fig 5.9 (savings).
- There needs to be more in this chapter about the positive impact of economic growth on the environment. “The first paragraph states that the impact of economic growth is negative on the environment. This is simply not true and is a major flaw. All the evidence is that as prosperity increases so does environmental quality. Higher income economies tend to have better environmental quality than undeveloped or developing countries.”
- It is important to include in the report the effect of Government itself in the country’s economic, social and environmental performance.
- Indicators that measure the levels of savings and debt be included in the report. One comment on this was “page 50 of the report depicts a line graph of New Zealand’s overseas debt as a percentage of Gross National Income which is described as around 120 percent. With national debt around \$124 billion, it is questionable as to whether servicing such debt leads to a sustainable economy”.
- An additional indicator should be added to the report that measures the distribution of capital ownership and related indebtedness.
- There is very little in the report on the role that Government plays, more specifically in the economy, and the expanded role of the Government needs to be taken into consideration to make this report balanced.

Chapter 6: People’s Skills and Knowledge

- Further information on early childhood education was requested.
- Information be included in the report on literacy and numeracy. In particular that there are the resources available to assist people who want to improve their levels. It was commented that education is not a good measure of literacy.
- Further work on skills and knowledge was needed.
- Information be included in the report on education and knowledge that is being produced with a focus towards sustainable goals.
- An indicator relating to training by age be included in the report because as the population ages, people will need retraining.
- It would be interesting to look at “net wealth of a life-time”. This may include considering returns on education qualifications.
- The only indicator required in the skills and knowledge section is fig 6.1 (educational attainment).
- Research needs to be done to find out what sort of educational attainment is needed currently, and in the future. Alternatively, the report should include an

index to show how close the population educational level is to the 'ideal' so that growth is not constrained.

- Qualifications are not in themselves a very accurate indicator of skill levels. The report needs to include figures from comparable overseas countries, so that the New Zealand figures can be 'benchmarked' against the overseas figures.
- Indicators involving measurements of early childhood education, school achievement and tertiary education were important.
- The report should include a further indicator that measures opportunities to learn life skills outside the classroom. One comment on this: "Some skills necessary for life are gained outside the area of formal education and therefore relevant indicators of learning should acknowledge this.
- The report places a lot of prominence on education and training at university level, and could also include further information on training at the trades and technical levels.
- An additional indicator measuring the distribution of education resources to schools throughout New Zealand was suggested. One comment on this: "Events such as the significant increase in overseas students and the income this represents to some schools are important influences on the quality of education provided in New Zealand. In addition, the disparity of resources between South Auckland and other urban zones and the recently reduced decile funding for many schools are important issues."

Chapter 7: Living Standards and Health

- More work on sustainable health was requested.
- The report should include information on cases of meningococcal disease and tuberculosis, and on physical activity. Rates of GPs and other essential occupations per capita were also requested.
- More of a holistic view was required.
- Further work on mental health measurements was needed. It was commented that suicide rates are not indicative.
- Well-being and quality of life measurements need to be developed.
- Rather than a 'raw' income indicator, the indicator should be referenced to a 'physical asset' that most people can relate to, for example, the median house price. One comment was: "the indicator could be the number of weeks for the average household salary to purchase the median price house. This is a less trivial example of the 'Big Mac' index of the *Economist* magazine".
- Figure 7.2 could be made simpler, to aid comprehension.
- It was suggested that: "the left hand scale of fig 7.4 on employment should better explain that it is not 'raw percentage' of unemployed but percentage of ethnic population".
- It was noted that "figs 7.3, 7.5 and 7.11 all measure degrees of poverty. Possibly unnecessary to have three – one will do."
- It was suggested that "Given your misgivings on 'crowdability' (pg. 66, col 2, para 1), it should not be included."
- One comment was that "there are too many health indicators, and those like child mortality and suicide are too narrow to serve as general indicators. On the other hand, life expectancy is almost too broad."

- Research should be done for a ‘population wellness’ index.
- Motor vehicle crash injuries are too narrow and should be left out.
- It was considered important to include an indicator to show the pay equity between men and women. “Wages are the most direct expression of economic value and status in any society where workers sell their labour for money. Unequal pay remains an abiding characteristic of New Zealand society and neither formal equality nor changes in education outcomes have made much difference.”
- The following additional health indicators that are linked to lifestyle and environmental factors should be included:
 - alcohol and drug consumption and abuse
 - accessibility and affordability of rural health services
 - accessibility and affordability of dental care
 - availability of disability support services
 - extent of cancer, diabetes, obesity and cardiovascular diseases.
- Information on Government expenditure on education, environment management, health primary care and prevention was requested.
- The report should include information on access to and affordability of health services, industrial accidents, disease and deaths.
- There was some concern about the use of the term ‘benchmark’. A comment on this was: “on page 71, when discussing households, the term ‘benchmark’ was used to indicate the number of households that would pass or fail. The use of benchmarks in this manner, may be confusing to accountants in that the term ‘benchmark’ indicates a point of reference for comparison purposes. For example benchmarking from one year to the next, or from one company to another.”

Housing

- Further information on sustainable housing (low energy requirement housing) was requested.
- An additional sustainability indicator should be included in the report that measures different types of heating, particularly for purposes of determining energy efficient heating.

Chapter 8: Consumption and Resource Use

- There was some interest in the ecological footprint, and whether this is being measured over time.
- The ‘ecological footprint’ was considered the best overall indicator of consumption. “When you incorporate the ‘ecological footprint’, we think you can drop most of the other indicators.” “Do retain fig 8.4 (sector energy use) and include in it the line for non-renewable energy use.” “Also retain fig 8.6.”
- One comment was that a further relevant solid waste indicator was required, concerning the leaching of materials from landfills in particular.
- Information on household consumption of water should be included. An additional indicator measuring recycled water was recommended. “New Zealanders often take water for granted with the exception of individuals living in rural communities who have to purchase water. The proliferation of watering systems

for domestic gardens and the impact these have on water consumption is one good example.”

- Further indicators on water use and/or a water cycle approach were requested. Indicators suggested included: water used per household and water re-used such as stormwater or grey water.
- A change to consumer energy use indicators was suggested.

Transport

- Information on mode of transport to work and public transport was requested.
- Information on the changes in transport from rail to road, and maintenance costs of rail against road was considered desirable.
- The report should include information on tonnage shifted through NZ ports and primary produce shifted by air.
- Information on airport use, passenger and freight descriptions was requested. One comment was: “If you comment on vehicle use (page 77) why not comment on aircraft travel or changes in shipping methods?”

Chapter 9: Social Cohesion

- The indicators that are covered, including voting percentages, crime rates, and access to communications are standard measures that reveal very little about the actual cohesion of a society. One comment was: “They may provide useful trends that are indicative of deeper issues, but as stand alone concepts they are inadequate.”
- The social cohesion chapter needs more “meat” to it, “especially the safety and security section”. One comment was: “Child abuse and neglect are important, but domestic violence is equally important due to the social cost of this crime. It has an impact on peoples social ability to interact with others and it has an impact on women’s ability to participate in the workforce.”
- Information on ‘corruption’, ‘transparency’ and ‘human rights’ was requested.
- Information on less ‘hard’ data, things like skills, social cohesion and innovation would be useful.
- Include information in the report on the number of food banks and food parcels distributed.
- The report should include information on how people are spending their time, eg work, leisure, family unemployment, underemployment.
- Gender issues should be included in the report.
- The report should include indicators measuring family leisure, hours working and that these be compared with crime figures.
- The report should include something on human activity and its impact on psychological well-being. It was commented that suicide is an unpleasant indicator.
- Human rights indicators should be included in the report eg objections to environment risk management authority and whether the approval process is changed. There was one comment that the human rights indicators used have a very narrow perspective.
- The report needs to include more on unpaid work and volunteering in the community.

- Along with the indicator measuring participation in unpaid work outside the home, an additional indicator measuring the extent of government financial support for voluntary organisations was needed. It was suggested that in order to provide assistance, volunteers may need to travel, requiring the purchase of petrol. These costs may prevent or limit participation by some individuals.
- Information on governance measures was requested.
- Information on the number of people overseas was considered desirable.
- The indicators for social connectedness or human rights were considered too narrow or did not have a ‘sustainability’ level. It was suggested that further social policy research is done to work out better indicators for both of these topics.
- One comment was: “Fig 9.4 (fluency in te reo Māori) could be expanded to become fluency in ethnic language. That would cover the burgeoning population of non-Anglo Saxon peoples.”
- Figure 9.5 was considered useful.
- It would be worthwhile to include more ‘softer’ indicators eg attitudes towards the environment, and attitudes towards quality of life. It was considered data was available on these things.
- It would be useful to have more about the workplace in the report, for example, what makes a sustainable workplace?
- The social connectedness indicator is not useful in its current form. One comment on this was: “Firstly, whanau and friends are only two groupings whom people have social contact with. Many others exist where this social connectedness may be more, less or equally valuable depending on what we consider to be a productive resource. For example, neighbours, acquaintances, work mates or co-members of a local club. The key question is what makes these networks productive and valuable and how can we measure them. Not only can we not assume that productive networks are limited to whanau or friends, but we can't also assume that just because a network exists where people share meals from time-to-time that the network is productive or maximising its productive value. I realise the problems these suggestions/comments present, but as the indicator is currently specified, it tells us nothing of value and publishing it may in fact direct policy even if unintentionally.”
- The abuse and neglect of older people are important indicators of social dysfunctional and should be included in the report.
- Indicators measuring religious belief should be developed. These beliefs and values help to define the degree of social cohesion in New Zealand.
- While it was acknowledged that aspects to social cohesion are extremely difficult to measure, information on spirituality, ethics and sense of belonging was requested.
- The report should include information on student loan debt, increasing age of first marriage, ‘young’ people who also need to look after elderly parents, declining numbers of male teachers in schools and the impacts of one-parent families on caregivers and wider families.

Poverty

- Information and indicators relating to beneficiaries and low-income earners would be useful. One comment was that: “the report did not address directly, the substantial amount of poverty in New Zealand. Low family income affects health directly by precluding the purchase of adequate basic necessities such as adequate

shelter, food and warmth and limiting people's ability to participate in society. Families on low income often experience high levels of mental stress which may manifest as domestic violence. Low income may also put people at greater risk of depression by limiting choices and reducing their ability to gain social support."

Leisure and recreation

- Information and indicators to measure leisure and recreation activities and participation would be useful.

Media

- Information on the media and its impact on society would also be useful.

Safety indicators

- Safety indicators are being used in various reports by various agencies. It was commented that these need to be worked together so that they fit with the indicators developed by the Ministry of Justice for their purposes in relation for example to the Crime Reduction Strategy.

Cultural Focus

- It was stated that: "Given the New Zealand context this section should include a great deal of research into Māori – Pakeha interaction and cohesion as this is a fundamental part of the social dynamic of the country."
- One comment on the cultural focus in the report was that: "While it is useful to research the levels of te reo Māori being spoken, the research needs to look at other fundamental elements of the Māori culture to assess whether they are continuing to decline or are being safeguarded and developed."
- Another comment was that: "The culture of New Zealand's other communities should also have a place in the document. This could include research into the strength of local art and culture groups and how well these groups are supported."
- A cultural section should be included in the report. This could be pulled together from other sections eg ethnic diversity, fluency in te reo Māori and other indicators, marae attendance, church attendance.
- Culture should be woven through the social, economic and environmental framework.
- More work on the role of culture in sustainability was needed.
- More detail on creativity levels was needed in the report. In particular the use of leisure and interactive facilities and cultural trends, not just Māori language.

Format

Layout

- The report was thought to be well laid out, logical in its development and relevant with lots of graphs to support the statistical findings.
- The plain use of English and the lack of jargon was appreciated.
- The document was thought to be user friendly.

- To ensure its use, some indicators could be produced more frequently, while others are produced alongside the census.
- The format was thought to be clear.
- The use of the Internet and other media were recommended.
- The printing job was considered to be excellent.
- Only core information be included in hard copy, and the rest of the information be on the Internet
- One comment was that the layout was a bit confusing, with topics covered in several different places in the report.
- One comment on the format was that: “In general the format is excellent. Well laid out, covers a wide range of relevant topics. Simple to understand measures. Not too large a document. Not overly analytical, the presentation of the figures is what counts at this stage.”

Headings

- One comment was that: “The pale green coloured headings made it hard to find headings in the reflection from the card used when looking for a point. It would have looked better if it used blue or black ink.”
- Another comment was: “the text did not have a code, so referring to a section, as regional council documents would do, in producing their documents was not helpful either”.

Graphs / maps / colours

- Clearer bullet points accompanying each graph explaining what is happening and more data and tables were needed.
- The map on page 39 was thought to have too many colours.
- The graph on page 38 required a date on it.
- One comment on the graphs was that: “While these graphs may look very pretty to those who like a lot of colour, if you cannot have access to the figures then how would a person who is writing a submission use them? If you were targeting an intermediate school person then how would they describe for example the changing land cover classification in figure 4.12?”
- A further comment was that: “The map in fig 4.16 is excellent. The benefits and value of monitoring sustainability would multiply greatly if maps like this were priorities for as many indicators as possible.” “Use one map for each indicator.”
- The indicators graphed should show the ‘asymptotic sustainable’ value. “Sustainability as a concept is less meaningful if there is no ‘safe’ value that we should aim for. If such a value is not immediately apparent or implicit, the value should be graphed.”
- One comment was that the graphs could be easier to read.

What Was Not Considered Necessary in the Report?

- The waste indicator might not be a useful indicator. Dips in waste data may be due to waste being transported out of the Auckland area rather than waste actually decreasing.
- GDP might not be a useful indicator as it includes costs such as health expenditure, waste disposal. Therefore, how useful is it as an indicator?

Appendix 2: List of Key Government and Non-Government Stakeholders who Gave Feedback

Government

- DPMC and Prime Minister
- Ministry of Social Development
- Ministry of Economic Development
- Ministry for the Environment
- Te Puni Kōkiri
- The Treasury
- Housing New Zealand Corporation
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Education
- Department of Justice
- State Services Commission
- Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
- MRST
- Ministry of Culture and Heritage
- Landcare
- Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Department of Internal Affairs

Councils

- Manukau City Council
- North Shore City Council
- Waitakere City Council
- Quality of life – 6 cities team

Government departments which were contacted but chose not to give comments

- Ministry of Transport
- Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs
- Ministry of Women's Affairs
- Local Government New Zealand
- Fisheries
- Department of Conservation

Non-Government stakeholders

- Federated Farmers of New Zealand
- New Zealand Business Council for Sustainable Development
- New Zealand Council of Trade Unions
- National Council of Women of New Zealand
- Business New Zealand
- Sustainability Working Group
- NZ Fish and Game Council

Appendix 3: Copy of the Questionnaire

Which parts of the report did you read?

- Introductory sections
- Population
- Environment and Ecosystem resilience
- Economic Growth and Innovation
- Skills and Knowledge
- Living Standards and Health
- Consumption and Resource Use
- Social Cohesion

Have you found this report useful?

- Yes
- No

What information did you find most useful?

What other information areas relevant to sustainable development would you like included?

Are there any other indicators you would like to see in this report?

Are there any indicators in this report that you think are not relevant?

Would you recommend this report to others?

- Yes
- No

Should the report be produced again?

- Yes
- No

Do you have any other comments on *Measuring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand*?

If you would like to be contacted for further discussion on sustainable development indicators, please supply:

Name:

Postal Address:

Appendix 4: List of OECD Indicators

Preliminary consensual proposals for sustainable development indicators

Greenhouse gases

Global

Global mean surface temperature

Sea surface temperature

National

Greenhouse gas emissions (Total)

Greenhouse gas emissions (Per unit of GDP)

Sectoral

GHG emissions electricity (Per kWh)

GHG emissions industry (Per unit of production)

Carbon dioxide emissions transport (per vehicle)

Renewable share of total electricity

Air pollution

Sulphur dioxide concentrations

Sulphur emissions

Nitrogen dioxide concentrations

Nitrogen dioxide emissions

Volatile organic compounds concentrations

Volatile organic compounds emissions

Carbon monoxide concentrations

Carbon monoxide emissions

Particulates concentrations

Particulates emissions

Particulates (Number of days exceeding guidelines)

Ozone concentrations

Ozone (Number of days exceeding guidelines)

Water pollution

Biochemical oxygen demand

Phosphate concentrations

Nitrate concentrations

Nitrogen balance

Phosphate balance

Cadmium concentrations

Chrome concentrations

Lead concentrations

Pesticide concentrations

Natural resource management

Resource consumption

Fish sustainable yield

Intensity of forest resources

Water withdrawals

Soil erosion

Land use

Waste management

Municipal waste (Total and relative to consumption)

Total waste (Total and relative to GDP)

Hazardous waste (Total)

Nuclear waste (Total)

Sustainable retirement incomes

Projections of public pensions outlays
Average age of withdrawal from labour market
Proportion of over 55s employed
Personal retirement accounts and public pension fund assets

Living standards in developing countries

Extreme poverty
Imports from least developed countries
Imports from low income countries

Country concentration OECD imports

Share of untied ODA
Total ODA
Average partnership ratings of aid recipients

Growth of average incomes
Average tariff
Population with adequate water supplies in developing countries
Proportion of population with adequate sanitation in developing countries
Infant mortality in developing countries
Life expectancy in developing countries
Illiteracy rates in developing countries

Appendix 5: General Comments from the Written Questionnaire

The following comments are collated from the written responses to the questionnaire that was included on the website and at the back of the report. There were a total of 24 written responses to the questionnaire. These included people who had attended the seminars and the general public who accessed Statistics New Zealand's website.

Most of the 24 people who chose to give written response to the questionnaire, read all the chapters in the report. Five people chose to only read the chapters of particular interest to them.

Twenty-two of the 24 people who gave written responses commented that they found the report useful. It was thought to be particularly useful to have all the information relevant to sustainability in one place, and as "a quick facts reference guide". It was thought that the report complemented other recent sustainable development publications and helped to provide a "solid first base to future sustainable development reporting and monitoring".

Two of the people who gave written responses did not find the report useful. These people commented that they thought the report had been "padded out with information that does not answer the question that is in the title of the report". Further comments indicated that "a considerable amount of development needs to occur before the report is anything other than of notional value".

While the report was considered to be useful in areas where a person is not an expert, it was thought to be insufficiently detailed in areas of expertise.

Seventeen of the 24 people who gave written responses said that they would recommend the report to others. The rest did not respond to this question. One person commented that they would recommend it as a resource for schools, but otherwise they would not recommend it.

Website visits

In January 2003, there were a total of 259 visits to the website.

In February 2003, there were a total of 216 visits to the website.