

Job Description

Position Title: *Science Adviser – Mātauranga Māori*

Responsible to: Science Manager

Responsible for: n/a

Relationships: Tangata Whenua and Māori organisations
Environmental Quality Team
Councillors
All Taranaki Regional Council staff
Community groups, ratepayers and the general public
Peers from other regional/District councils and technical advisory groups
Environment Court

Salary: A market salary for the position will be negotiated, depending on experience, qualifications and aptitude.

Location: Stratford, although travel throughout the region may be required as part your daily duties

Job Context: Permanent Full Time

Position Number: TBC

Holder: Vacant

Role of Science Adviser – Mātauranga Māori

The role of a Science Adviser – Mātauranga Māori is to provide the science delivery and interpretation requirements that give effect to the Regional Council's functions, plans, strategies and policies. This includes developing and undertaking research projects, the implementation and management of monitoring projects for state of the environment reporting, and providing specialist technical advice. Specially, this role is intended to support aspects of the Council's recognition and expression of Mātauranga Māori, to ensure that Council staff are equipped to value and recognise Mātauranga Māori within their work, and to enable the Council to better give effect to its obligations under RMA instruments and te Tiriti o Waitangi. This is a core role to build trust and effective relationships with tangata whenua in the field of environmental management.

Key Skills

Qualification

- Required: a tertiary qualification in a relevant scientific field or study towards a qualification

Knowledge

- A minimum of three years' relevant post-qualification experience involving a range of environmental practice (although consideration may be given to a more recent graduate)
- Skilled in oral and written presentation of scientific information to lay-people
- Specialist knowledge in some of the following areas: coastal or fresh water quality, air quality, hydrology, groundwater resources, ecology, microbiology, toxicology or coastal processes.

Skills / Experience

- Experience in working with Māori groups, hapu and iwi.
- Familiarity with Mātauranga Māori and with tools or methodologies by which it is given effect to in environmental monitoring and assessments
- Familiarity with tikanga
- Familiarity with te reo to at least a basic level
- Effective communication skills
- Project management skills or experiences
- Sound analytical and problem solving skills
- Ability to relate to a diverse workforce
- Excellent interpersonal skills, including the ability to train others
- Ability to think laterally, multitask and self-manage
- Experience in designing and delivering field-based scientific studies and programmes
- Familiarity with the Resource Management Act
- Experience of council processes

Personal Attributes

- Strong communication and inter-personal skills, including experience in leading groups and delivering presentations within a variety of settings
- Team player
- Practical problem solver
- Finely tuned attention to detail and time management
- Innovative and self-motivated
- Willingness to adapt
- A reasonable level of physical fitness

Tasks

As a Science Adviser, you will:

- Provide specialist environmental, scientific and technical advice, for the effective management of the natural and physical resources within the Taranaki region.
- Regularly present complex reports on technical environmental issues to Council committees, staff, public hearings, hui and wānanga, the public, industry groups, and other stakeholders, in a variety of settings.
- Collect, analyse and maintain data for regional and state of the environment reporting, environmental projects, and consent and compliance monitoring.
- Review and incorporate scientific developments in respective disciplines.
- Manage the design, implementation, budgeting, reporting and monitoring of a wide variety of complex and specialist environmental investigation projects.
- Provide leadership and direction to projects ensuring contributors know what they are required to do and by when.
- Establish and maintain close working relationships with internal and external contacts including Local Authorities, iwi, ratepayers, landowners, suppliers, consultants, and contractors.
- Act as a representative to Council at appropriate local and central government conferences and seminars, and other events held within the region.
- Monitor external contracts, ensuring satisfactory performance.
- Any other task and duties as required by any of the Science Managers, Director – Environmental Quality or Chief Executive

Specific to this role, and to support the Council's recognition of Mātauranga Māori, you will also be responsible for:

1. Improve understanding of Te Taiao

- a. Build and maintain relationships and active communications with iwi and hapū, and foster and facilitate relationships between iwi/hapū and scientific staff of the Council, including proactive identification of opportunities for consultation, co-development, assistance, and collaboration
- b. The position holder will work with internal staff (primarily science, but also policy) and with tangata whenua to design and develop environmental monitoring programmes that are in accordance with the requirements of the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (2020), in particular those NPS provisions giving expression to Mātauranga Māori and to recognition of mahinga kai and Māori values.
- c. The position holder will foster the integration of Mātauranga Māori into or alongside the design and implementation of other existing and new regional state of the environment monitoring programmes, including across coastal, groundwater, soil, and air quality domains as well as surface freshwater.
- d. Work with scientific and other Council staff to improve awareness, understanding, and appreciation of Te Taiao.
- e. Work with submitters, and scientific, policy, consenting, and other Council staff to provide recognition of Māori values and Mātauranga Māori during policy and plan development, consenting processes, and in the design, implementation, and reporting of consent compliance programmes.

On a day to day basis, this would involve;

- Facilitating opportunities for staff to engage with iwi and hapū and visit areas of significance.
- Identifying and working with section managers and programme managers to lead by example and share experiences and understandings.
- Working with the Council's Māori Policy Advisor, the Director-Environmental Quality, and managers to identify training and familiarisation requirements.
- Advocating for the use and recognition of Mātauranga Māori to help articulate and incorporate cultural values into the development of consent conditions, monitoring programme design, the setting of environmental or consent limits (e.g. for water quality and quantity), and within the policy and plan framework.

2. Find ways to bridge the gap

- a. The position holder would work with our science and policy teams to broaden understanding of the interpretation and value of Mātauranga Māori, to identify complementary environmental indicators, such as the Mauri compass and conversely, to provide interpretation to iwi/hapū of the measures and attributes utilised by western-based science.

On a day to day basis, this would involve;

- Collaborating with internal scientists and external Mātauranga Māori specialists on the identification and development of indicators, site selection, participatory monitoring and reporting, and complementary reporting.
- Pursuing opportunities to work collaboratively with tangata whenua, including developing methods for familiarising iwi/hapū with western-based science through options such as wānanga, field work collaboration, training workshops, or internships.
- Identify and implement ways of making western-based science and its findings more accessible to iwi/hapu, including re-interpreting technical reports into a form that tangata whenua can relate to, and ensuring ready access to information.
- Ensuring technical reports include specific recognition of Mātauranga Māori and Māori values, and where appropriate acknowledging the significance of locations and methodologies used by tangata whenua for monitoring and its interpretation

3. Protect and respect Mātauranga Māori

- a. The position holder would work to ensure that Mātauranga Māori is communicated and made available to relevant internal staff, and that it is used appropriately (including respecting confidentiality where the information is sensitive). Feedback loops back to tangata whenua will also need to be established to communicate what has happened with the information provided.

On a day to day basis this would involve;

- Collaborating with tangata whenua on Mātauranga Māori research or with academics working in this area.
- Establishing and maintaining a protocol where sensitive information provided by tangata whenua is protected.
- Implementing or following protocols for protection of sensitive information within Council systems.
- Maintaining feedback loops to those providing Mātauranga Māori.

Special requirements

- May be required to work outside normal working hours, including on weekends
- May require frequent travel within Taranaki region
- Must be able to undertake the physical requirements of the position
- May be required to work with hazardous and toxic materials
- May be expected to work under conditions in which personal risk may be incurred and safety procedures must be adhered to in accordance with the Council's Policies and Procedures

Health and Safety

The Taranaki Regional Council is committed to a process of continuous improvement in order to achieve excellence in the management of health and safety at all of our workplaces. We recognise the positive impact that the values and benefits of enhanced health and safety bring to the organisation, our employees and our communities. There are two key points to health and safety:

- The safety of our people and the communities in which we operate always comes first.
- We are all empowered and expected to challenge any unsafe situation at work.

We will achieve these by:

- Building culture
- Aiming for zero harm
- Taking reasonable practicable steps
- Managing contractors
- Communicate
- Develop knowledge
- Investigate and learn
- Ensure competence to do the job

Mission and Key Messages

Our Mission:

To work for a thriving and prosperous Taranaki by:

- Promoting the sustainable use, development and protections of our natural and physical resources
- Safeguarding Taranaki's people and resources from natural and other hazards
- Promoting and providing for significant services, amenities and infrastructure
- Representing Taranaki's interests and contributions to the regionally, nationally and internationally community

We will do this by leading with responsibility, working cooperatively, encouraging community participation, and taking into account the Treaty of Waitangi.

Our Key Messages:

The Taranaki Regional Council works with the Taranaki community:

- Improving lifestyles
- Supporting livelihoods
- Taking Taranaki forward

Values:

We are committed to:

- Public service
- Service First
- Improving the quality of our performance
- Working safely
- Effective communication and teamwork
- Initiative and the right to make mistakes

- Accountability and results
- Presentation, respect and care
- Job satisfaction