

Is there value in national direction?

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The New Zealand government has a strong programme for developing national direction under the Resource Management Act through National Policy Statements and National Environmental Standards. What value does the national direction add? Have the benefits and costs estimated in the Section 32 evaluations for this national direction been realised since it has been implemented? How has the value of one piece national direction been impacted by other national direction?

In this presentation the authors consider what actual benefits and costs have arisen through the introduction of national direction. It compares the benefits and costs predicted in the s32 evaluation and Cost Benefit Analysis for these instruments with evidence of the benefits and costs that have occurred since their introduction.

The s32 for the NPSET concluded that its benefits would arise largely from cost savings for Transpower in relation to plan advocacy and in the longer term, due to reduced conflicts with other activities. Costs were expected to arise as councils were required to change their plans to recognise the NPS, and due to landowner activities being curtailed.

Anecdotal evidence from planning processes casts some doubt on whether the expected benefits have eventuated. Is this the case? What can be learned for other national direction?

In considering the actual costs and benefits of the NPSET the authors will review evidence from recent planning processes and re-canvas stakeholders engaged during the original s32 / CBA processes.

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