



Hamilton City Council – Staff Feedback

**The Future of Eco-Nomics:
Integrating Environmental and
Economic Measurement in
Aotearoa New Zealand (August
2024)**

Stats NZ

2 October 2024



**Hamilton
City Council**
Te kaunihera o Kirikiriroa

Improving the Wellbeing of Hamiltonians

Hamilton City Council is focused on improving the wellbeing of Hamiltonians through delivering to our five priorities of shaping:

- **A city that's easy to live in**
- **A city where our people thrive**
- **A central city where our people love to be**
- **A fun city with lots to do**
- **A green city**

The topic of this staff feedback is aligned to all of Hamilton City Council's five priorities.

Council Approval and Reference

This staff feedback was approved by Hamilton City Council's Chief Executive on 2 October 2024.

Feedback # 774

It should be noted that the following feedback is from staff at Hamilton City Council and does not therefore necessarily represent the views of the Council itself.

Introduction

1. Hamilton City Council staff welcome the opportunity to provide feedback to Stats NZ on **The Future of Eco-Nomics: Integrating Environmental and Economic Measurement in Aotearoa New Zealand (August 2024)**.
2. This feedback was developed by Hamilton City Council staff in the Commercial and Analytics Unit with input from the Sustainability and Climate Change Team – Strategy, Growth and Planning Group.
3. The Commercial and Analytics Unit is primarily responsible for the funding and financing of Hamilton City Council’s growth-related infrastructure, commercial property and economic development, and also being the organisational centre of excellence for growth modelling and data analytics.
4. The Sustainability and Climate Change Team is responsible for the implementation of the Council’s Climate Change Strategy, **Our Climate Future: Te Pae Tawhiti o Kirikiriroa** ([refer here](#)), and supporting the organisation to embed climate change into decision-making.

Key Messages and Recommendations

5. Integration of New Environmental Indicators with GDP

6. We would like to see new environmental indicators integrated into New Zealand’s GDP measurement, especially quantifying environmental impacts from various aspects.
7. Hamilton City Council staff would definitely make use of this type of data in our modelling environment e.g., the impacts of the depletion of land use on land supply and price.
8. This information would also support our climate change work programmes, including understanding the financial impacts of climate change for our organisation and city, and ensuring that the environment and ‘whole of life’ costs are considered in our decision-making.
9. It would be useful to have Territorial Authority (TA) level measures to explain regional competitiveness beyond just economic perspectives.
10. For future trends, regional growth driven by plan changes and exogenous factors, such as population growth, can play important roles in projecting both economic and environmental impacts. We recommend measuring this multivariate relationship within a regional context.
11. It is interesting to see environmental quality integrated into GDP calculations. However, there are two-way causalities here, noting that GDP can also impact environmental quality. We suggest examining the implications of this paradoxical relationship, such as identifying the GDP growth rate that can improve or maintain environmental quality.
12. It is also important to consider any interactions between the environmental topics and indicators and ensuring that we are able to look at them holistically. For example, being able to look at the relationship between climate change and biodiversity loss and degradation, and how these are affecting/compounding one another (as opposed to only looking at these indicators in isolation).
13. There could also be benefit in aligning the environmental indicators with the [Planetary Boundaries framework](#), such as including the impacts of ocean acidification and freshwater change.
14. Including other transition impacts (alongside the circular economy measures) may also be beneficial, for example by measuring the impacts of/for other low-carbon industries, the costs of continuing to operate fossil-fueled assets, etc., to highlight opportunities that the transition to a low-carbon future may bring for Aotearoa New Zealand.

15. On an international level, New Zealand's GDP is relatively small compared to other countries, such as those countries in the OECD. However, New Zealand's environmental quality may also be higher than some OECD countries. It is therefore important to standardise measures that can be used for cross-national comparisons.

Further Information and Opportunity to Discuss our Feedback

16. Should Stats NZ require clarification of the feedback from Hamilton City Council staff, or additional information, please contact **Greg Carstens** (Unit Director – Commercial and Analytics Unit) on **021 029 49228**, or email greg.carstens@hcc.govt.nz in the first instance.
17. Hamilton City Council representatives would welcome the opportunity to discuss the content of this feedback in more detail with Stats NZ.

Yours faithfully



Lance Vervoort
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

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