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Implementing landscape transformation: insights from the project management of Cape to City and Poutiri Ao ō Tāne

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Implementing landscape transformation: insights from the project management of Cape to City and Poutiri Ao ō Tāne

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At the initiation of Cape to City in 2015, John Hood (Aotearoa Foundation) suggested the implementation of Cape to City and insights gained by Te Matau-a-Māui (the oversight team) should be documented. He emphasised the importance of sharing lessons learned with others interested in managing similar initiatives in the future. Dr Alison Greenaway (Social Geographer) designed a project to fit the budget provided by Hawkes Bay Regional Council. The project gave the management team, plus those involved in the governance group, an opportunity to reflect each year and share insights as the programme developed. This report draws from annual interviews and reports to the Aotearoa Foundation. It does not evaluate Cape to City and Poutiri Ao ō Tāne outcomes nor the project management processes adopted. Only a partial view of steps taken, changes over time, and lessons learnt is presented, which is heavily biased, reflecting the perspectives of the people interviewed, and the time when they were interviewed. Nevertheless, the range of insights presented provides a useful suite of principles and practices to be considered when designing future landscape transformation initiatives.

Objectives

This report has two objectives: the first is to provide a synthesis (from a literature review) of key challenges typically navigated by initiatives attempting to achieve socio-ecological transformation; these challenges were also pertinent to the experiences of Cape to City and Poutiri Ao ō Tāne. The second objective is to provide reflections about navigating these challenges, which can also be thought of as important principles and practices, for those who wish to learn from the experiences of Cape to City and Poutiri Ao ō Tāne.

Results

Site-specific biophysical and social drivers, funding processes, and existing organisational procedures across the partners all influence how Cape to City and Poutiri Ao ō Tāne develop. However, it has been useful for the Te Matau-a-Māui project management team to keep in mind 8 principles and practices. A table of these principles and practices is provided to prompt future planning, as well as annual reflection and evaluation. Regular reflection supports landscape transformation by enabling A) adaptation and resilience; B) collaboration and partnering; C) responsiveness to context; D) leadership; E) long-term thinking; F) reflexivity; G) trust; and H) value pluralism.

Conclusions

Cape to City and Poutiri Ao ō Tāne are innovative landscape transformation programmes. They have succeeded in achieving many of their objectives and provided New Zealand with a pilot for similar initiatives being developed through other 'predator free' programmes. Much of the success of Cape to City and Poutiri Ao ō Tāne is because of strong leadership, clear vision and a focused work plan. The experiences of the project management team and governance members echoes those of other initiatives of this size

and ambition. This study reveals that an instruction manual is not helpful for these programmes. Responsiveness to existing organisational arrangements, biophysical and cultural context plus funding commitments means that only key principles and some practices can be transferred across sites, not the whole programme. Regular reflection on these principles and practices helps not only those involved but their networks to learn how to navigate and foster new governance for more sustainable landscapes.

Recommendations

The project management team for Cape to City and Poutiri Ao ō Tāne recommend that similar initiatives do the following:

- Add 30% to overall budget as preparation for the unknown.
- Set aside 25% of the budget for Māori engagement from the start, do not proceed until this part of the programme is well developed. Where appropriate fund hapū groups to be involved guiding the relationship building process.
- Choose the governance group very carefully. It's not a representative group but should be chosen for specific expertise, knowledge and networks. They need to be able to work strategically and for example be able to influence key organisations at a high level. This group needs to open doors and inform conversations with iwi, landowners, chief executives, and mayors.
- Design a structured way of reflecting regularly in the programme and provide an independent person to support this. Also meet as a large team at least once a year where you can be social and get to know each other well. Check you are on the best path, or whether you need to take a different tack.
- Start meetings with karakia, tautoko public speakers with waiata, and support people to speak in te reo Māori in meetings.
- Project management and communication need to be funded as separate workstreams on their own. Think through the work in detail from the start, have a strategy and action plan, then revise it regularly.
- Develop leaders who are agile and know how to work collaboratively by prioritising people who show interest to grow with the project. Make a clear intention to build capacity and capability by creating permanent jobs and employing people with a diverse set of skills This does mean accepting that people lead in different ways.
- Think carefully about geographical boundaries, make these relevant for all your partners (specifically hapū).
- Look for community leadership and invest in it, e.g. people in the community around you who support your vision and already have an activity proposed that aligns with your vision. Use your project resources to support them to achieve their vision. In the end you grow community support and additional leadership.

1   Introduction

Cape to City and Poutiri Ao ō Tāne are innovative restoration programmes in the Hawke's Bay area. They are governed by an overarching body, Te Matau-a-Māui, which works towards the vision of "native species thrive where we live, work, and play" (Department of Conservation 2016). Funded through a partnership between the Aotearoa Foundation, Hawke's Bay Regional Council, Department of Conservation, and Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research, this programme had an original budget of $6.3M over 5 years. due to increased investment from partners, by 2019, the 5-year budget had risen to $8.4M. These two joint programmes are innovative because they enable the development of new vertebrate trapping and monitoring techniques; use trapping as opposed to poisons over large areas of land; include private agricultural land as well as publicly owned land; and have long-term aspirations for social-ecological or otherwise termed landscape transformation.

Together, these programmes aim to deliver positive social, cultural, economic, and environmental benefits. The vision is to have substantial impact on the social-ecological system in Hawke's Bay and provide a model for similar initiatives around the country. These wide goals are reflected in the governance and management structure and design of the programme. Oversight is through Te Matau-a-Māui, which includes a core management team consisting primarily of Hawke's Bay Regional Council and Department of Conservation staff, a governance board with members from diverse backgrounds including hapū, business, and farming, and two community advisory groups with members chosen for their connections to various branches of the community. The work is undertaken through workstreams, which by 2019 had grown to six.

This report presents insights gained from annual interviews (2015–2018), with the core management team and members of the governance group. A case study is provided on lessons learned about implementing a large-scale landscape transformation initiative. Overall, it is clear that site-specific biophysical and social drivers, funding processes, and existing organisational procedures across the partners all influenced how Cape to City and Poutiri Ao ō Tāne developed. However, it remains useful to keep in mind 8 principles and practices that are key to socio-ecological transformation initiatives. Table 1 provides a prompt for planning future related initiatives, as well as on-going annual reflection and review.

2   Background

Poutiri Ao ō Tāne is an ecological restoration project established in 2011. It covers 8,800 hectares on the Maungaharuru Range, encompassing Boundary Stream Mainland Island and its surrounds (Fig. 1; Department of Conservation 2016). Cape to City is a 26,000-hectare ecological restoration project established in 2015. It is located between Cape Kidnappers and Hastings, encompassing Waimarama and forest remnants at Kahuranaki (Fig. 2; Department of Conservation 2016). Cape to City built on the successes of Poutiri Ao ō Tāne and Cape Sanctuary by facilitating the spread of native biodiversity from the sanctuary across a footprint of predominately private agricultural land and into Hawke's Bay urban areas.

At the initiation of Cape to City John Hood (Aotearoa Foundation) suggested that the implementation of Cape to City should be tracked to be able to share lessons learned along the way. Dr Alison Greenaway (Social Geographer) was enlisted and designed a project to give members of Te Matau-a-Māui an opportunity to reflect each year. In doing so she supported the team to share their learning about governing large-scale landscape change as the programme developed.

This report draws insights from annual interviews with Te Matau-a-Māui members plus programme reports to the Aotearoa Foundation. This report does not provide an evaluation of Cape to City outcomes nor the project management processes adopted. Only a partial view of steps taken, changes over time, and lessons learned is presented in this report.   There is a strong bias towards reflecting the perspectives of the people interviewed, and the time when they were interviewed. Nevertheless, the range of insights presented provides a useful suite of principles and practices to be considered when designing future landscape scale transformation initiatives. Direct quotes have been used, with very little commentary from the author, so the reader gains a sense of the variety of voices and perspectives involved.
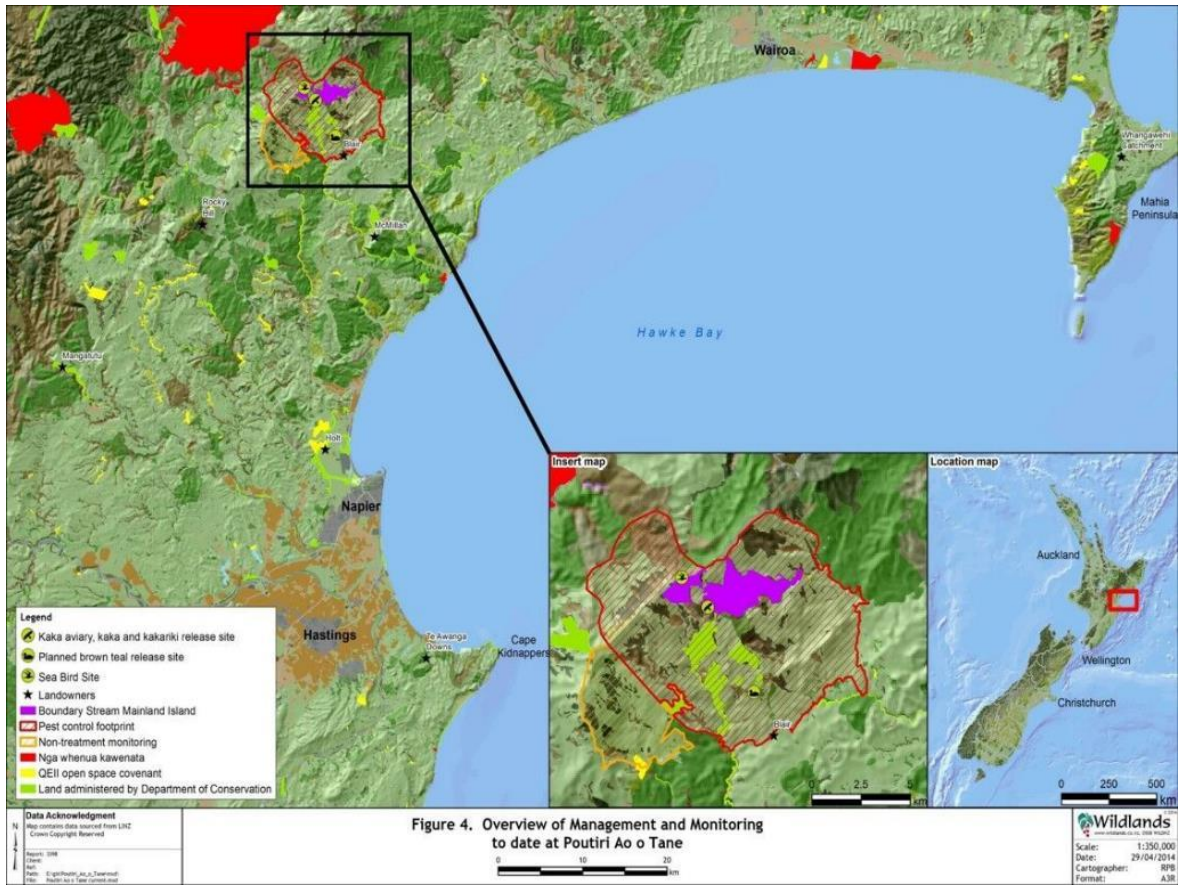
Figure 1. Location of Poutiri Ao ō Tāne.

Figure 2. Location of Cape to City.

2.1 Overview of Cape to City and Poutiri Ao ō Tāne achievements, 2015–2019

Through six workstreams significant achievements have been made in the Hawke's Bay. Titi and kōrurerure are returning, toutouwai are breeding successfully and self-sustaining, and kākā are breeding successfully. At the time of writing, just over 250,000 native plants had been planted and 38,000 ha were actively involved in predator suppression.

Knowledge of translocation techniques and considerations for seabirds has been shared more widely through community and hapū networks. Support from hapū and iwi is much stronger than when the programme began, and this is reflected in the new structure for Predator Free Hawke's Bay. Steps have also been taken to bring Mātauranga Maori and other knowledge systems closer together.

Fifty separate research outputs are available by contacting the team, expanding knowledge in the Hawke's Bay, across New Zealand (NZ) and internationally about restoration in the farmland context. In particular, motion-sensitive camera research and technological developments from these projects will enable wider use throughout NZ. Through the launch of Predator Free 2050 (and related initiatives), project management templates developed through this programme are being used by other projects and organisations.

The project team has also leveraged additional funding and partnerships including, mānuka trials with Trees for Bees, and an increase in the allocated budget and FTE's available from Hawke's Bay Regional Council. The Council's 2019 Regional Pest Management Plan now includes mechanisms for eradication, so the gains made can be embedded into on-going land management practices.

Remarkably, 90% of landowners engaged positively with the programme and this community support is being further developed through partnerships with the Eastern Institute of Technology and AirNZET (for teachers' programmes). Around 20 schools engaged in meaningful programmes, and five Hikoi Tutuki were run re-engaging tangata whenua and others living in the Hawke's Bay with the land.

Five years after it was initiated, the Cape to City and Poutiri Ao ō Tāne programmes have again been extended and now include the Māhia Peninsula; becoming the foundation for Predator Free Hawke's Bay.

3   Objectives

This report has two objectives: first, to provide a synthesis of key challenges typically navigated by initiatives attempting to achieve socio-ecological transformation. These challenges were also pertinent to the experiences of Cape to City and Poutiri Ao ō Tāne. Second, to provide reflections about navigating these challenges, which can also be thought of as important principles and practices for those who wish to learn from the experiences of Cape to City and Poutiri Ao ō Tāne.

4   Methods

Between June 2015 and October 2018 Alison Greenaway (Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research) undertook 40 interviews with members of the Te Matau-a-Māui, project management and governance groups and reviewed Te Matau-a-Māui reports. A 1–1.5-hour, semi-structured interview format was used to support critical and creative reflection on the context in which the Cape to City and Poutiri Ao ō Tāne projects are situated, the vision and rationale for these initiatives, as well as details about specific work strands. The interviews explored understanding of success, progress, and risks and how these were being managed. Interviews concluded by prompting reflection on key lessons learnt or insights others attempting similar initiatives might appreciate, and interviewees were also prompted to narrate a specific story or anecdote from their experiences with Cape to City and Poutiri Ao ō Tāne. The interviews were transcribed and thematically coded using the NVivo software along with the reports Te Matau-a-Māui give to their funder, the Aotearoa Foundation. These reports discuss the progress of the work streams as well as risks and opportunities being identified. Reports for 2015–2019 were examined for this study. Florence Reynolds and Dean Stronge (also from Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research) provided assistance by reviewing journal papers related to governance of social-ecological transformation, coding the interview transcripts and reports, and undertaking a hybrid deductive and inductive thematic analysis (Fereday & Muir-Cochran 2006; Glaser & Strauss 2009; Grbich 2012).

Drawing on techniques of co-learning for transformation (Mezirow 2009) the analysis was developed through dialogue with members of Te Matau-a-Māui. Insights from interviews and document reviews were shared with members of Te Matau-a-Māui through two team reflection sessions (October 2015 and April 2017), plus short presentations at the annual research hui. Alison also presented at the Transforming Biodiversity: Challenging Boundaries conference in 2017 with members of Te Matau-a-Māui. This report documents a few key insights explored through this series of reflections on the implementation of Cape to City and Poutiri Ao ō Tāne. Identifiers have not been used for the quotes presented. The quotes were selected to provide a sense of the range of topics and issues interviewees discussed.

5   Results

The challenges, principles, and practices below are frequently discussed in academic literature as critical to the governance and management of socio-ecological transformation initiatives. Reflections from across the interviewees are organised using these themes in order to show how practices and principles central to governing socio-ecological transformation were considered over the period 2015–2018.

Table 1. Principles and practices enabling landscape transformation

Theme	Summary	Key References
Adaptation and resilience	Accept surprises and change will occur, maintain flexibility to accommodate these by continually adjusting management and attempting to anticipate them	(Chaffin et al. 2016; Folke et al. 2005)
Collaboration and partnering	Utilising and increasing capacity of diverse organisations and diverse actors to work together at different levels in order to address complexity. Each partner organisation will change through the partnership	(Brechin et al. 2002; Folke et al. 2005; Luederitz et al. 2016)
Responsiveness to context	Position initiative within existing socio-political context and adapt to changes; requires trend analysis	(Loorbach & Rotmans 2006; Luederitz et al. 2016)
Leadership	*Primarily emphasised as:* visionary, entrepreneur, opinion leader, frontrunner. *Also mentioned:* charismatic, builds trust, mobilises support, communicates vision.	(Chaffin et al. 2016; Linnenluecke et al. 2017; Loorbach 2010; Moore et al. 2014; Patterson et al. 2016; Koontz et al. 2015; Lebel et al. 2006; Werbeloff et al. 2016))
Long-term thinking	Long-term vision and thinking as a framework to help shape short term actions and policy	(Ernst et al. 2016; Loorbach et al. 2015; Loorbach & Rotmans 2006)
Reflexive insight, learning and gauging success	Learning-by doing, ongoing appraisal at multiple levels, including processes, progress, and outcomes. Measurement against established goals to determine SES-T occurrence	(Loorbach & Rotmans 2006)
Trust	Building good informal and formal relationships is important to enable collaboration and legitimacy to create changes	(Eversole 2003; Folke et al. 2005; Stern & Coleman 2015; Werbeloff et al. 2016)
Value pluralism	Respecting and holding different values and visions of sustainability	(Dwyer & Hodge 2016; Martín-López & Montes 2015)

5.1   Adaptation and resilience

The Cape to City and Poutiri Ao ō Tāne programmes were designed as pilots and experiments. A culture of learning and adaptation has been strong right from the onset. Fairly quickly, identification of risks and potential surprises became regular practice for all themes through the formal reporting and meeting procedures. In 2015, it was noted:

> I don't think there is going to be a failure out of this project. If it stumbles and it falls over, we're going to learn a lot about how to do this sort of stuff in the future. It's all going to build into where we want to go into the future...because we don't know how to do this stuff. If we did, we would have kiwis running down the street, but we don't, so we are learning all the time. [Transcript #1]

By 2016, a good number of surprises had been navigated; here's one example:

> What I like about this project is that it's designed to try and anticipate surprises, and a good example of that is the backlash with catching domestic cats. And so, what's been done is they're offering a chipping service where you can chip your cat – you know, a microchip. So, if they catch a cat and they scan it and it's got a chip, they know to release it. [Transcript #18]

In 2018, it was noted that one of the weakest areas of work had been external communication and volunteer management. Here's how this weakness was addressed:

> So, comms is one of those things that unfortunately has been a real stop-start, and similar with our volunteer management system stuff, which has been all kind of linked in in a way. And so, we started off with the project not kind of realising the importance of communications, and it just being an add-on. So, it was just something that wasn't really properly led. We had people writing – we had consultants writing comms plans and comms strategies, and coms this and coms that, but we actually really didn't have a resource to actually put any of it into action. So, it was very haphazard and all over the place. Then I think, about a year into it maybe, DOC put in some resource, so our local team had to figure that out. And so, we created this role, which was kind of a 50/50 volunteers and comms person, that would do 50/50 DOC comms and 50/50 Cape to City Poutiri Ao o Tane stuff. [Transcript #29]

The interviews showed that the team are developing ways of working that accept surprises and change will occur. They maintain flexibility to accommodate these surprises by continually adjusting and attempting to anticipate them.

5.2   Collaboration and partnering

There was much excitement about collaborating in 2015 and some interviewees were aware they were creating a culture shift just by collaborating:

> The fun bits are the amount of collaboration particularly that is going on between ourselves (DOC) and the regional council – we've always had a good relationship with them, but it's come up another couple of notches. So that's

been really good and has really solidified the relationship between the two organisations and brought a lot of other people on board as well, like Landcare Research and Cape Sanctuary. Having them sitting in the same room as us around the table at that sort of level – that's been really good and it's nice to see. The challenges are keeping the communication going. and what happens if something's not quite going to plan. How you actually deal with it in such a way that there's no blame, it's just learning. The old-school approach of regional council and DOC staff was it's very easy to blame the other organisation. But we can't do it like that. We need to sit around the table and say, "Okay, something's not gone right. How do we fix it?" And all own the issue. [Transcript #10]

By 2017, the process of partnering with hapū had improved after a weak start and this was influencing how all the partners were working, including the researchers.

Firstly, I think they (Te Matau-a-Māui,) have a genuine culture and willingness to actually learn that stuff over time. There are personal things which are involved, in terms of values and views and stuff, but I genuinely think there's that willingness to do that. I think we've actually had a really open relationship. We've worked closely together in terms of project team and Landcare Research. We've co-designed, literally, research. And so, I think the actual process has really contributed to an open learning environment. I actually genuinely believe that, and it's reflected in how we've done it. But I also think, in part, what's really been important is that in the last two years, in particular, we have closely involved our hapū partners and had between two and four of them at those meetings. And that's quite an investment but, actually, it adds value well beyond the costs associated with getting them there. So, I think those three things have been key in that transition as well. [Transcript #28]

By 2018 the collaboration was clearly seen to influence how the researchers planned and presented their research:

I've been really impressed – and this is an interesting one. So, we took our hapū partners down [to the research meeting] – so it's been really interesting watching the change in Landcare Research staff over the last four or five years, the scientists. I've worked with Landcare Research for 25 years now. If I was to go back 20 years, the relationship was, you'd have a chat to someone, you'd say, "Oh, this is the science. We're thinking we need –" you'd sort of say, "Oh, yeah, that sounds like the thing". You'd agree that, they'd go away, and they'd come back after about 9 months out of the 12 with a completed report which might or might not be what you wanted. And, in reality, there were a bunch of reasons for that and it wasn't all their fault. But it was actually just the way things were operating. In the last two years, I have seen Landcare Research scientists stand up and present on their research, and as they're talking, you can see they actually understand the operational context and the big picture that their research is sitting within. Not all of them, but lots of them. Many of them do. And so that's been quite a significant change in terms of how they understand the context for their research and the impact of it. [Transcript #28]

However, it was still challenging for those who were not paid for their contributions:

> ...with one project team meeting a month it's really hard to kind of get back up to speed with all those things, they're not really being resourced to actually attend these meetings... And I guess it's not like you're getting paid lots. It's a recognition of your involvement as a part of a kaupapa. And I think for me, I'll make sure I read all the meeting minutes before I go and that I'm up to speed. Because you've got – they're koha-ing you something for your time so you feel a bit more obligated to be engaged as a part of the process. So, I think that really can help improve that, with having hapū and marae representatives there. [Transcript #32]

Also, looking back from 2018, the comment was made:

> We would have been much better served if right at the start, for example, we had had – this is just one example – but right at the start, our proposal went to the Aotearoa Foundation. $100k or whatever we had. $200k or whatever it was for habitat restoration, $100k for research, and it should have had $100k for Māori engagement because we should have had that right at the start and we should have been going out there and creating three or four roles, or at least a couple of full-time roles, across the marae that we were dealing with for those people to be right at the start, engaging with marae and hapū, but we didn't resource it and we didn't think about it that way. [Transcript #28]

The interviews suggest that the capacity of the main partner organisations to work together at different levels is increasing. However, it remains unclear whether enough is changing to address the complex interactions required for landscape transformation.

5.3   Responsiveness to context

Recognising the changing context of the programme in the Hawke's Bay and more widely across NZ was a key reflection point from the interviews in 2017.

Interviewees noted each year how Treaty Settlements in the region were developing and the implications this had for their engagements with hapū. The full range of influences shaping the context of the programme included: ongoing debate over water accessibility for the region (including the failed Ruataniwha dam proposal); growing inequality, poverty, and housing affordability; the creation of the Hawke's Bay Biodiversity Strategy, Predator Free 2050 initiatives nationally and in other regions; an apparent growth in environmental concern in the region and NZ more widely but which was limited by the decrease in numbers of children in the Hawke's Bay regularly accessing nature; the growth of art events in the region and apparent increased support for creative industries; the growth of tourism, and the investment in cycle trails in the region; the return of birds to Cape Kidnappers; poor quality of drinking water; and concern about nutrient management on farms.

It was apparent from the interviews that only a select few were engaged in processes of trend analysis, forecasting or strategic, long-term planning. The programme would benefit from more integrated attention to the changing context in which people are working.

5.4   Leadership

In 2015 the importance of role modelling by leaders was mentioned:

> Yeah, modelling behaviour is the big one. It's basically making sure if I am talking about a challenge that we've got, that I talk about it in such a way that it's, "We're looking for a solution here and we're all learning", because if we are all learning, that's the thing. None of us know how to do this. We've just got to help each other if we want to come out the other end. [Transcript #10]

In 2016, leadership through the governance group was described as very constructive:

> They bring very different perspectives to the business, and that's really important for a governance group. But in the filtered and distilled conversations that they're having, we get a whole lot more guidance...It took probably about 20 minutes to half an hour of conversation and going across different points of view and different aspects to actually get to where we did. Yeah, so they're actually acting as a very good governance group, which is great... So, one of things about the governance group is you absolutely have to have the right people on board. It's not rocket science, but it's not easy to do when these people are ultra-busy, and they choose carefully what they invest their time into. So, the first very strong lesson would be, right at the start, being crystal clear on the high value that they can drive in the project, they express in different ways that they want to. Yeah, so that then allows them to actually get involved and spend their time on it. The right people, though; we've got a really good mix of people.... Influence, ability to influence at a senior and political level, organisational and resource level. That's one thing. Political: being switched on politically. Also, depending on the context, being able to connect back into the fundamental things that drive success. So that's about farming community, because that's fundamentally – the idea doesn't work without them. [Transcript #13]

Looking back from 2018, one of the key leaders in the programme stated:

> Make very sure, right at the start, that you know what your resourcing requirements are and then add 30% because that's probably going to be the reality. Because there's actually so much you don't know and so much momentum that builds that what you think at the start are your resourcing requirements, you add at least 30% to that. But, yeah, it's a huge workload. [Transcript #28]

Leadership is a core strength of these programmes; it is visionary, entrepreneurial and charismatic. The leaders have worked hard to build trust, mobilise support, and strategically communicate the vision.

5.5   Long-term thinking

From the start of the interviews, while it was clear there was a long-term vision, for most interviewees the detailed planning was within the 1–3-year time-frame. In 2017 we reflected on a challenge posed to the team: to dream bigger and be more aspirational. This is how one interviewee was planning in 2015:

> We are trying to work across organisations that have got quite different cultures. That is not a criticism of either culture because a culture just is what it is, but we do have very different cultures in terms of how we are operating. So, we are trying to integrate that in the short term and get a project team with the right disciplines, financial management, reporting, project management. Simple basic stuff, but actually when you are talking about a project like this that is moving fast and across disciplines, across organisational teams of people, it is actually a real challenge and I am finding that to be really interesting. Watching that unfold and that conversation – and not just within the project team but in the next tier of people outside of that who are looking in directly and observing what is happening or making judgements or commenting or whatever. So that is the very, very short term. Medium term, what we need to do is we actually now need to deliver. We need to deliver an ultra-low-cost possum, feral cat, mustelid, hedgehog, and rat control. Without that, the whole concept just dies, so we need to deliver that. And the second thing, medium term, is we need to build the social awareness and buy into the whole concept we are talking about and the vision about native species being able to thrive day to day with whatever we do. So that is the medium term and the big picture, well there is some really important conversations that need to go on. So how do some of these things align that are happening? Like the National Science Challenge and like Predator Free New Zealand and like ZIP. How do we as a project team align to some of those and also understand what part of the picture that might hold and where our part is because we are working on the farmland side of things and that is a key part of the big picture, but it is not the only bit. There is a really important public conservation as well. So, the big picture is some conversations at a national level around how do these things actually align. [Transcript # 3]

While there is strong leadership with a clear long-term vision, the thinking and frameworks to help connect short-term actions and policy were not at first well developed. However, as the team has grown in capacity and matured in leadership, this focus on strategic long-term planning is developing.

5.6   Reflexive insight, learning and gauging success

Both this project and the annual research meeting (in Lincoln) provided space for reflection on accomplishments, and insights gained about implementing socio-ecological transformation. In 2017 it was noted:

> At our last get-together down in Lincoln, we took our four hapū members down there and we had a range of people across Landcare Research and the

project team there, and it was really interesting to see the penny drop in a number of researchers about the actual perspective of Māori and the value and importance of that in their research context. There were researchers there saying, "Oh, actually, I now understand a whole lot better. It's not about–" was the words one of them used. So, it's about, "How can what I do, as a Western researcher, actually contribute to what you want and your holistic view of research and the environment, mātauranga Māori", as opposed to, "I've got something to deliver and that's where it's at". And it was quite remarkable to sit there and look at the penny drop across four to six key people who've been involved for a number of years, and who, if you went back six years, probably were articulating, at the very least, a bit of a confusion as to how the two worlds met. So that was also both a surprise, but a really pleasant one, and a significant transition over a 5- or 6-year period for those scientists. [Transcript #28]

Another interviewee in 2018 expressed some doubt about what could be used as evidence for success:

It's hard. So, I kind of had a bit of an existential crisis after our last research meeting [laughter] because we were sitting there, particularly with the camera monitoring. And it sort of came to the, "Okay. So, we know we're taking out predators. We know there's predators left. What does that mean?" And it sort of boils down to what [X] was talking about with DIFs, the density-impact functions. So, what are we actually trying to achieve? And we couldn't answer that, and I still don't have an answer. And that's why I'm still not sure. So, I mean, yes, you can measure, as a whole, the bird life coming back but I suppose to know – but that's a bizarre thing, right? So, we were talking about translocating kiwi into Cape to City, so we said, "Okay. What level do we need the predators to be at for kiwi to survive?" And there's no data anywhere that says that. John, I think, said you need a 75% reduction or something. Yes. But that's still a – what if you had a huge number of predators then you reduced them by 75? And yeah. And it was just bizarre [laughter]. So, people say we collect data, and data, and data. And there's so many papers, and papers, and stuff. But it still feels like we know nothing. [Transcript #30]

As a pilot and proof of concept, the Cape to City programme embraced a learning-by-doing perspective. However, it did not fully develop its capacity for ongoing appraisal at multiple levels by including monitoring of processes, progress, and outcomes. Measurement against both project and internationally established goals is limited and therefore the ability to determine whether socio-ecological transformation is occurring has been reduced.

5.7 Trust

Consistent across the years has been people's commitment to building a team that trusts each other. In 2015 the following comments were made:

> *Freedom to just pick up the phone. Free will. Discuss things without any particular resolution immediately, but then to come back to them and make a decision later. Honesty, like if it's not going in a good direction, I have had instances where [X] has called me up and said, "I'm not happy with this direction. Can we resolve this?" and vice versa. Just transparency on both sides. If things are going off the rails from a timing point of view or from a delivery point of view, then just being really up front about that. Also having the right people engaged. In other words, people who are a bit more open-minded to other people's world views. This is not for everybody from a research point of view. You've got to be a bit open-minded to say, "Gee, it's really great having this person who's a modeller, or a social scientist, or people with different ways of coming at the world. It's really important". [Transcript #6].*

Another person spoke optimistically:

> *The collegial and open forum that we have is going to be really good because we're not going to just bottle things up [chuckles]. And that we all work together so we will have each other as support. And we, hopefully, have the systems set up to capture most of things before they become a problem, hopefully. That's the idea. [Transcript #2]*

However, in 2018 it was noted that the trust that had built up in the project team was not enough to counter the difference in perspective held within other parts of the partnering organisations:

> *So basically, you know how that mechanism for people to sign on to the Regional Pest Management Plan has kind of been pivotal. So, DOC have made a submission against that, saying that they don't think this is an appropriate vehicle for management, which is so counter-intuitive to the partnership, the funding. So, it's different parts of the organisation want different things. Yeah. So, I think at a personal level, the people working in DOC in the project want the same thing, but I think at an organisational level, they are a little bit at odds. [Transcript #30]*

The programme is building strong informal and formal relationships which have enabled collaboration. These relationships provide the legitimacy to create the changes in thinking and practice required.

5.8 Value pluralism

As well as these discrepancies among partners, there was also the diversity of values and the ways people enact these values, both in the team and through the wider network of people involved with the programmes. Thematic analysis of the interviews showed that

while the purpose and vision for Cape to City and Poutiri Ao ō Tāne might have been articulated variously by the people involved, there was each year strong agreement about the focus of the programme. The following quotes show how people were thinking through the diversity of perspectives with which they were working. In 2015, it was noted

> *The whole thing of us trying to work across all these different agencies is going well but it does need strengthening. Just like I was saying to you, we need to remember that we are talking about a bigger project and that it might be that other people within that project have really good ideas or different ideas. And so, to be as inclusive as possible at this stage, I think, is quite important and it could probably be better. But I think we're getting there. It's definitely way better than it was. [Transcript #2]*

The comment below, made in 2017, shows how the activities of Cape to City and Poutiri Ao ō Tāne were seen to hold the potential for resourcing wider values held by hapū in the Hawke's Bay:

> *I definitely see the Treaty Settlement entities and the hapū and the marae have been a key role in that. If you build a good relationship now, it only seems logical that it builds a good, solid foundation for the future, especially around Kaitiakitanga. That's what you want – all the pest control sort of things, and the water quality monitoring that's a core value of most marae and hapū. And with the resourcing and capacity building within the hapū and the marae and with the Treaty Settlements, it's going to be something that managers are going to be advocating even more of. So, if no one's in the space at the moment, it's got to be at the top of the list for managers to work on in the future. [Transcript #27]*

In 2017 the project management team were faced with the challenge of whether they would accept funding that could be connected to an oil company. One interviewee discussed it like this:

> *I suppose the values and the engagement along the way. Yeah. Good engagement. Good mana whenua engagement. Having good values along the way. And I think an example of that is a discussion around who funds Cape to City. There was an oil company that was looking at giving a bit of coin in there and just say, "No, well, I don't think too many people will like where that's coming from," so you can have that conversation and say, "Well, these are our values, and I think that it is in conflict with our values". [Transcript #27]*

In 2018 the slight differences in priorities across the partner organisations was noted:

> *It's just different, slightly different. A different way of looking at things. If I'm going to do a planting plan for an area, I tend to think back what would've been here two or three hundred years ago? How can we best replicate that? Whereas regional councils and other groups often tend to be looking more towards-- yeah, just different objectives. Native trees or for birds or potentially for honey is. The classic is probably tūtira with the honey – mānuka planting for honey. So, in the past, and I've swung both ways a wee bit, we tend to have*

advocate eco-sourcing plants. Now the mānuka honey, mānuka aren't eco-sourced. So, it's those sorts of thing that are sometimes – you have different objectives. [Transcript #36]

Through the interviews it was clear that a range of different values and visions of social and landscape change influence the workstreams. The team are largely aware of these differences and seek ways to learn from each other in order to navigate any tensions or misunderstandings that occur.

6 Recommendations

The project management team for Cape to City and Poutiri Ao ō Tāne recommend that similar initiatives do the following:

- Add 30 % to overall budget as preparation for the unknown.
- Set aside 25% of the budget for Māori engagement from the start, do not proceed until this part of the programme is well developed. Where appropriate, fund hapū groups to be involved guiding the relationship building process.
- Choose the governance group very carefully. It's not a representative group but should be chosen for specific expertise, knowledge, and networks. They need to be able to work strategically and, for example, be able to influence key organisations at a high level. This group needs to open doors and inform conversations with iwi, landowners, chief executives, and mayors.
- Design a structured way of reflecting regularly in the programme and provide an independent person to support this. Also, meet as a large team at least once a year to socialise and get to know each other well. Check you are on the best path, or whether you need to take a different tack.
- Start meetings with karakia, tautoko public speakers with waiata, and support people to speak in te reo Māori in meetings.
- Project management and communication need to be funded as separate workstreams. Think through the work in detail from the start, have a strategy and action plan, then revise it regularly.
- Develop leaders who are agile and know how to work collaboratively by prioritising people who show interest to grow with the project. Make a clear intention to build capacity and capability by creating permanent jobs and employing people with a diverse set of skills This means accepting that people lead in different ways.
- Think carefully about geographical boundaries, make these relevant for all your partners (specifically hapū).
- Look for community leadership and invest in it, e.g. people in the community around you who support your vision and already have an activity proposed that aligns with your vision. Use your project resources to support them to achieve their vision. In the end you grow community support and additional leadership.

7   Conclusion

Cape to City and Poutiri Ao ō Tāne are innovative landscape transformation programmes. They have succeeded in achieving many of their objectives and provided New Zealand with a pilot for similar initiatives restoration and predator free initiatives.

Much of the success of Cape to City and Poutiri Ao ō Tāne is the result of strong leadership, clear vision, and a focused work plan. The experiences of the project management team and governance members echo those of other international initiatives of this size and ambition.

A detailed instruction manual is not helpful for project managers initiating socio-ecological transformation programmes. Responsiveness to existing organisational arrangements, biophysical and cultural context and funding commitments mean that only key principles and some practices can be transferred across sites, not the whole programme. Regular reflection on these principles and practices helps both those involved and their networks to learn how to navigate and foster new governance for more sustainable landscapes.

To support reflection and regular review, it is necessary from the beginning to design in and budget for a process that runs the length of the programme. This will support learning across management and governance and create opportunities for more informed decision making as the programme progresses. As a result, it is more likely that the longevity of the work will be achieved because it will remain relevant to the ever-changing context and will be integrated into other emerging programmes as opposed to being sideswiped by them.

This case study reflection process helped those involved to re-chart, it allowed the team to step back and reflect. The team needed the prompt provided through the interview processes because they felt too busy to initiate this themselves. However, this case study would have benefited from more interviews, to include a broader perspective across project management, governance, hapū, and community liaison groups. Consideration should be given to the points in Table 1 as future programmes of this sort are planned and reviewed.

8   Acknowledgements

9   References

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