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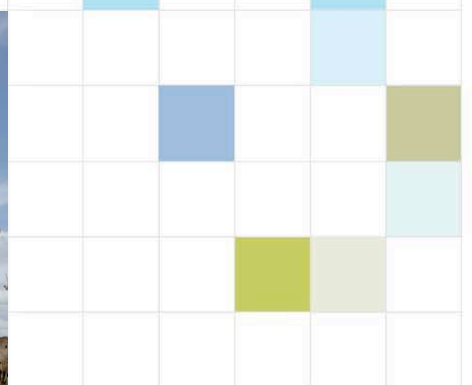
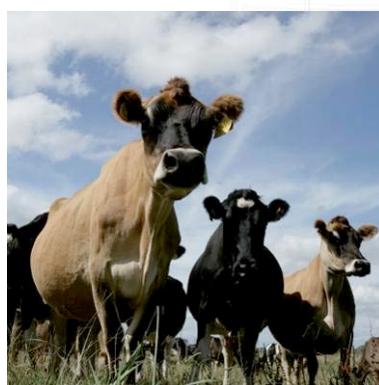
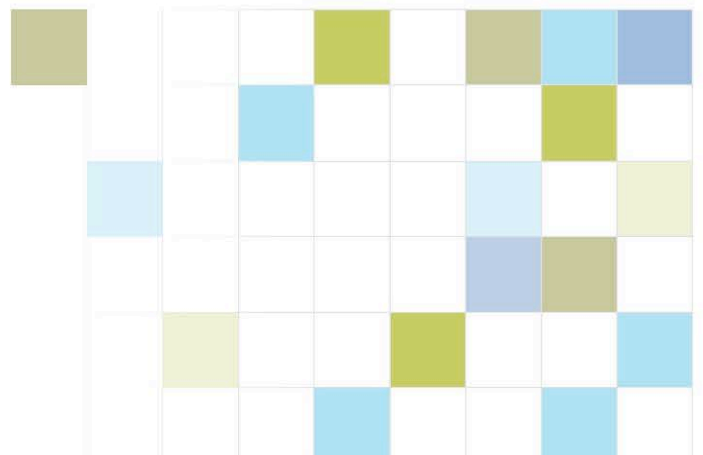
# Horizons Regional Council Environmental Education - Green RIG Review

October 2008



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**October 2008**

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# 1. Executive Summary

Horizons Regional Council has been operating its current environmental education programme for the better part of two years. The primary audiences for this programme are students, general public and the rural/farming community. The principle engagement tool in the environmental education programme is the Green RIG mobile education facility.

The purpose of this particular study was to review prescribed aspects of the RIG's performance by interviewing six different groups of people from the Horizons' region who had had differing levels of involvement and contact with the RIG during its first year of operation.

The main findings from the survey were that:

- The concept of a mobile environmental education and information sharing forum which goes out to its target audiences is well accepted.
- The RIG should be intended for student and adult and rural and urban audiences.
- A critical success factor of the RIG's first year of operation has been the choice of educators.
- The 3-4 themes of the environmental messages conveyed through the RIG are evident to most audiences.
- The themes on the RIG do not receive the same amount of attention/ exposure with there appearing to be a bias towards the bio-diversity theme.
- Some of the messages, particularly the messages pertaining to farming practices, do not present a balanced view of the subject.
- There is little information supplied about what people can or should do to mitigate the environmental impacts.
- The exhibits and presentations are generally of a very high standard.
- The exhibits and activities are geared primarily for younger student (yrs 1-8) audiences.
- The learning value of some of the student activities is very low.
- There is of lack of information about the work Horizons does on environmental issues.
- Adult audiences are not currently well catered for in terms of content, exhibits and activities.
- The current branding on the outside RIG does not clearly convey that the RIG is concerned with environmental matters, that it is from Horizons and that the messages pertain primarily to the Horizons' region.

## **Recommendations**

The survey findings identified a large number of recommendations which are presented throughout the report and then collated into section 7 Recommendations. The recommendations are grouped around the following main points. That:

- The purpose of the RIG be clarified to show who the intended audiences are and the form and level of education each group is to receive. In particular, the question of the form and content of adult audience awareness raising and/or learning be clarified.
- The relative important of each of the environmental themes be reconsidered and then exhibits and activities be made to reflect this importance.
- Consideration be given to ensuring environmental messages tell both sides of the story with particular regard to farming practices.
- Consideration be given to including more information about the positive aspects of farming and what farming contributes to the Horizons' region.
- Consideration be given to supplying more information about what people can do to mitigate the environmental impacts.
- Consideration be given to providing more information about the work of Horizons on environmental issues.
- The learning value of some of the activities and exhibits be reconsidered.
- If adults are to be a target audience then consideration be given to supplying more appropriate, adult level exhibits, presentations and activities.

## **2. Introduction**

Horizons Regional Council has been operating its current environmental education programme for the better part of two years. The primary audiences for this programme are students, general public and the rural/farming community. Horizons has invested heavily in this programme as a means of raising the communities' awareness of the environmental issues facing the Region and the role of the Council in addressing them and how this will be achieved. The education programme has been a critical component in raising awareness about, and the need for, such organisational projects as the One Plan and the Sustainable Land Use Initiative (SLUI).

The principle engagement tool in the environmental education programme is the Green RIG mobile education facility. Since its launch in May 2007 the RIG has successfully engaged with a wide range of people and communities from throughout the Region. However, during this time, the RIG content and the education programmes it delivers have been criticised by some as not presenting a balanced view on a number of issues, in particular the impacts (positive and negative) of the Region's agricultural sector. As such, a review of the RIG and wider environmental education programme is appropriate to ensure the programme remains relevant

to the intended audiences and achieves its objectives. Lessons learned about the RIG's packaging and delivery of environmental issues will have direct implications for how the other programmes within the wider environmental education programme are managed and delivered into the future.

"Launched in May 2007, the Green RIG is a giant educational tool-box-on wheels aimed at raising public awareness of regional environmental issues. By providing learning programmes tailored to different audiences, the Green RIG promotes the connections between our work and our communities. This is a high-spec mobile environmental education facility designed to be used as an exhibition, classroom and meeting space. On-board interactive exhibits and displays centre on the key themes of WATER, LAND and HABITATS...Its teaching focus is the four main environmental issues facing our region:

- declining water quality
- increasingly scarce water sources
- eroding land
- declining biodiversity (native habitats)".

(<http://www.horizons.govt.nz/default.aspx?pageid=88>)

According to the Green RIG Operational Plan, a secondary objective of the Green RIG is "to ensure regional ratepayers have access to a Horizons experience that:

- generates awareness of the work that Horizons undertakes for the environment
- supports productive community partnerships and
- underscores the fact that Horizons is a positive presence in regional communities".

The Green RIG has now completed its first year of operation. During this time it has had more than 20,000 visitors, visited and been visited by 40 schools, received a number of awards, and generally been endorsed by the wider community. However, there have been a handful of detractors both within and outside Horizons who have criticised elements of the Green RIG programme as being too green and unbalanced in its portrayal of the farming sector.

Accordingly, Margaret Brown from AgResearch Limited was contracted to review the first year of the Green RIG's operation.

## **2.1 Review Purpose**

The parameters of the review set by Horizons were: -

To undertake a review of, and make recommendations on improvements to ;

- The Green RIG's goal of raising awareness of the region's environment and the threats to it
- The Green RIG programmes – key messages, delivery, content, usefulness to the intended audience, and if an individual or school changed as a result

- The Green RIG facility, exhibits, and in/out board activities
- The Green RIG educators
- The Green RIG brand

As there was no one definitive statement on the purpose of the Green RIG or articulated goals or outcomes for the first year of the RIG's operation, the review was based on the two purpose statements from Horizons' website site and the Green RIG Operational Plan (Presented on page 2).

### 3. Method

Interviews, both face-to-face and via phone were chosen as the most appropriate methodology to use for gathering information from the various target groups in this study. Interviews were used as they offer an effective way to obtain rich in-depth data. A list of survey participants was identified by Horizons with input from the contractor.

Table 1: Survey Participants

Survey Groups	Participants
1. Horizons Staff (x4)	* M. McCartney, G Carlyon, C.Mitchell, C.Webb
2. Funders and Sponsors (x3) (1 Representative from each organisation)	Genesis MAF-SFF ECCT
3. Knowledge Partners (x3) (1 Representative from each organisation)	AgResearch HortResearch DoC
4. Community Partners/ Leaders and E.Heroes	Partners (x5) Fed. Farmers Massey University Journalist Forest and Bird Mayor E.Heroes (x3)
5. Schools	Rural (x2) - Staff and students - Parents Urban (x2) - Staff and students - Parents

6. Public	Visitors to a public event (15)
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\*Horizons staff said they would like their names attributed to their responses in this report. All other participants are anonymous and are only referred to through the participant group they belonged to.

NB- The term student is used in this report to refer to school aged children, that is, from years 1-13. All other participants are classed as adults.

A base set of interview questions was developed by the research team and reviewed by two AgResearch colleagues. This set of questions covered the following broad streams of enquiry: purpose of the Green RIG; environmental messages; exhibits and activities; educator role; branding; and Green RIG as an education and information sharing forum. This base set of questions was adapted and tailored to the role and involvement of each particular group of participants and also for the method of interview being used. In particular, the length and depth of the questioning was changed according to interviewee level of involvement with the Green RIG and interview approach being used. See interview schedules in Section 8 Appendices.

#### Horizons Regional Council Councillor Green Rig Survey

It should be noted that the Horizons Regional Council councillors were also asked questions about the performance of the Green Rig. This survey was carried out by a member of Horizons staff, not by Margaret Brown. The results of this survey are included as an appendix to this report (see appendix 9) so that the reader may take into account and compare the findings from the councillor survey with the findings of this report. However, the findings from the councillor survey are not considered in either the analysis or discussion in this report.

#### Review Limitations

A limitation of this review is the small number of participants that were surveyed. Therefore, all findings should be treated as a 'snap shot' of the situation rather than being able to be generalised to all members of the Horizons region.

## 4. Survey Findings

Survey findings are presented in 6 sections:

### 4.1 Horizons staff members



- 4.2 Funders and sponsors
- 4.3 Knowledge partners
- 4.4 Community partners/ leaders and E.Heroes
- 4.5 Schools
- 4.6 General public.

The majority of the six sections contain the findings presented under the six main enquiry streams: Green RIG purpose; environmental messages; exhibits and activities; educator role; branding; and Green RIG as an education and information sharing forum. As the question scope and depth varied slightly according to the nature of the group and mode of the interview, some of the groups were not asked to comment on all six enquiry streams.

#### **4.1 Horizons Staff Members**

The reviewer was asked to interview Mike McCartney, Craig Mitchell, Greg Carlyon and Carol Webb. Three of the staff members were interviewed as a group and the fourth member was interviewed separately as he was unable to attend the group interview. See appendix 1 for interview questions.

##### **4.1.1 Visits to the RIG**

The four staff members had all made a number of visits to the RIG and therefore as a group they had seen the RIG operating in all of its different modes, that is, school visits, community events and civil defence workshop.

##### **4.1.2 Purpose of the RIG**

The four staff members saw the overarching purpose of the RIG as being to raise awareness and understanding of the main environmental issues that affect the Horizons' region. They reported the areas of focus to be bio-diversity, water quality and sustainable land management.

G. Carlyon commented further that the purpose of the RIG was to “take its’ [Horizons]’ business and the core issues it is trying to deal with, the four big issues to the community rather than having the community come to us”. He added that for students, the purpose was “about influencing the next generation” about environmental issues in the region. He also stated that for farmers in particular, the main purpose of the RIG was “to start conversations” and to talk and engage with some people from Horizons. He added that “I think it’s completely failed to do that [engage with farmers] because we’ve lost our courage as an organisation to use it for that purpose”.

G. Carlyon inferred that there may be some misunderstanding over the purpose of the RIG when he said that “it’s an environmental classroom, so it’s not the promoting sustainable agriculture rig, it’s not the future farming thing that FRST and others have supported”. M. McCartney also raised the issue of the purpose of the RIG when he said that if the purpose of the RIG is to convey regional environmental issues then “that is fine, but if it is to be a Horizons’ information rig then there needs to be some changes”.

#### **4.1.3 Environmental messages**

The four staff members agreed that, in general, the RIG does a good job of conveying most of the environmental messages around the key focus areas, but that it does not adequately convey messages pertaining to the work of Horizons with its communities. Three members of the group felt that currently the messages on the RIG are geared mainly towards students rather than adult audiences. The fourth member of the group, G. Carlyon, stated that the RIG “demonstrates the messages beautifully well and in particular that the messages have been crafted to reach both the intended student and adult audiences”.

Two staff members said that the messages contain a strong bias towards bio-diversity with M. McCartney saying that visitors could well feel the RIG had “a DOC orientation on walking into the RIG” because people see the bio-diversity display first while the other displays are further down the RIG. M. McCartney added that he felt the other issues were portrayed as ranking below bio-diversity when it could be argued that they were more important.

M. McCartney stated that he considers the RIG conveys the main issues accurately but that “what it doesn’t necessarily do very well is explain why action needs to be taken. So in terms of the sustainable land use initiative and things, there’s a bit of a disconnect in terms of the land use and why we need to do something about it”.

With regards to extending environmental messages for both students and adult audiences, the group generally agreed that the messages on the Green RIG are being conveyed very well to younger students, that is students up to year 8. It was felt that the Green RIG has yet to reach students from years 9-13. G. Carlyon stated that the RIG had never intended “to be everything to everyone”. He added that he would be very disappointed if councillors decided that “we have to redesign it and rebuild it [the RIG] so that it appeals to kids and adults because that’s a challenge that the Green RIG can’t meet. Te Papa can’t meet it, so it’s not going to delivery on that. It has to deliver in different ways to those audiences”. M. McCartney reiterated the point that the RIG was geared towards students because “that’s what it was designed to do”. C. Webb added that it can’t do both [engage student and adult audiences].

When asked whether the group felt the RIG should aim to educate adult audiences, M. McCartney replied that part of him said yes but that the other part asked the question “is there a demand out there?”, to which he answered “probably not”. M. McCartney and C. Mitchell added that for the RIG to appeal to adult audiences more it would probably have to “change its demeanour to the audience you might be dealing with”. They suggested that displays and activities would need to be changed for each adult audience. M. McCartney said that another way to appeal to adult audiences might be through providing services such as aerial maps, payment of rates and provision of bus timetables.

With regards to the stated purpose of the Green RIG messages being intended for both urban and rural adult audiences, G. Carlyon stated that the main purpose of the RIG for farmers was as a focal point for conversations rather than containing specific messages for this target audience. He added that farmers are a “tougher audience” requiring different approaches. He said that the educators may need support in the form of Horizons staff being present at events to engage with and explain matters to farmers. C. Mitchell stated that while it has been said that the visual presentations in the RIG contain messages that some have seen as anti-farming, he said the other side of these points is given orally by the educators, so unfortunately if you “don’t have the oral presentation [as well as the visual presentation] the balance is lost somewhat”. G. Carlyon said that he feels some of the criticism the RIG is receiving from farmers is not directed purely towards the Green RIG but rather, that it is all part of the “tension people are feeling around everything we’re doing whether it’s the One Plan or the Green RIG”.

When asked whether the messages on the RIG are reaching urban audiences, G. Carlyon stated that he wasn’t sure that the RIG had “particularly targeted urban audiences and that’s one of the criticisms again”. But he added that maybe the urban people who would be interested in environmental issues, that is mainly the white middle class, are “largely on board with those messages anyway”.

As stated in the Green RIG website purpose statement, the RIG was also intended to promote the connections between Horizons work and our communities. On being asked whether the messages conveyed by the RIG currently do this, M. McCartney replied “no, I don’t think you can have both. There are two competing objectives here”. C. Mitchell replied to this point saying that the purpose of the RIG was to raise awareness of environmental issues rather than being a long-term community plan rig. M. McCartney added that it is difficult to say that the RIG is “purely and simply environmental because people see it as a Horizons’ facility and it needs to have a greater breadth, I think anyway”. In G. Carlyon’s opinion the RIG is raising people’s awareness of the work of Horizons through its attention to the main themes on the

RIG. He stated that the themes on the RIG raises awareness of the main issues Horizons work is centred around rather than looking at the work of individuals within Horizons.

Suggested changes

- Clarify the central purpose of the RIG.
- Clarify who the intended audiences for the RIG are.

#### **4.1.4 Exhibits and activities**

The Horizons staff members said that, in general, the presentation of the exhibits was of a high standard for students. Three of the members said they thought the streamulator was a very engaging activity for students which taught them important lessons about flooding and erosion. These members also considered the Environmental Scene Investigators to be both informative and engaging for students. M. McCartney commented that he felt the outdoor activities, especially the native fish activity, have a “DOC type focus”. He went on to say that he was not sure what type of meaningful activity you could have for students “around balance and the need to have farming being important in the region”. But he said that it is important to consider this because if the RIG is going to convey the message that rivers are being polluted by farming then the other perspective, that is the importance of farming to the region and the good things that farmers are doing for the environment, also needs to be conveyed to the students.

G. Mitchell said that he considers the activity which tells the story of Mr Smith and his brussell sprouts to be one activity which clearly shows the good and bad consequences of farmers’ actions. M. McCartney made the point that he considers that in some of the activities, and in particular the space invaders game, “it was hard to see the connections between what the students were doing and what they were learning”.

Suggested changes

- Develop an activity along the lines of the streamulator but around the Fonterra Clean Streams Accord, whereby a “dairy farmer that’s milking lots of cows puts on another 100 cows and the stream starts to go quite green”. The participants would consider options to clean up the water like planting riparian strips. M.McCartney said that as long as the language used in the activity was “neutral and temperate” he felt farmers would not find cause for complaint. (M. McCartney)
- Develop an activity along the lines of Monopoly where the participants have to make decisions and tradeoffs e.g. the price of lambs is very high this year, will you put on more fertiliser to raise more animals and if so what are the likely impacts on the environment? (C. Webb)

- Provide more informative videos for adult audiences. Suggest smaller five minute documentaries about issues and perhaps also a documentary about the economic importance of farming to the region. (M. McCartney)
- Provide short videos like a “mini country calendar” with someone like Alec McKay talking about his work and/or a local community leader talking about issues such as flood protection and possum control. (C. Mitchell)
- Develop an activity built along the lines of Sim City but pertaining to land management. It should demonstrate cause and effect by showing, how for example if you put more cows on the land, that may result in degradation of a stream. The activity would have to offer participants suggestions and solutions to consider. (M. McCartney)
- C. Mitchell said that he would like to see at least one more exhibit with the ‘wow’ factor because he considers that some of the activities, in particular the space invaders games, does not engage the students. To this end he made the suggestion that a new activity might be centred on the concept of the Sale of the Century.
- Make a small number of the exhibits “a little more professional”. In particular, the card about who killed the kiwi needs to be made larger. (C. Mitchell)

#### **4.1.5 Educator role**

The four staff members were of the opinion that the educators do a very good job with their student audiences. In particular, they commented that the educators interact particular well with student audiences, that they have the ability to pitch the lessons to the level of each group and also to enthuse and engage children in the presentations. Only two of the staff members had seen the educators working at adult events and they reported that the presentations were appropriate and showed a good understanding of the audience.

The four staff members were also of the opinion that the educators are very knowledgeable about the issues they share with the student audiences. However, M. McCartney was of the view that there are probably gaps in their knowledge with regards to information for adults. He said that this was “not a criticism of the people” but rather that it would be difficult to find educators who were knowledgeable on all subjects for all possible audiences”. C. Webb added that “the breadth of the work done by Horizons is so broad that it would be very difficult for any educator to be knowledgeable on all topics”. G. Carlyon said that he was of the opinion that when the RIG visited rural communities, the educators should be accompanied by Horizons staff who could provide the detail on the subject matter.

Suggested change

- For adult audiences, particularly farmers, the educators be accompanied by a Horizons staff member.(G. Carlyon)

#### **4.1.6 Branding of the RIG**

The general opinion of the group was that the RIG is “attractive”, “eye catching” and “impressive”. There was mixed opinion over the messages the branding of the Green RIG portrays to people. C. Webb stated that her impression is that the RIG is about “people, the way they live and the effects they have on the environment”. C. Mitchell said that looking at the RIG “you don’t really know what it is about”. M.McCartney affirmed this point and added that he believes there isn’t “a strong impression of what the thing’s about when you look at it”. But rather he said, the branding of the RIG creates interest, “what’s this thing about?” and that that was important.

G. Carlyon said that a lot of effort had gone into researching and developing the current branding and that maybe for a small group of people it hasn’t worked. However, he added that he did not think it wise to change the branding yet as it would be very expensive, so there would have to be a good reason to modify it at this stage. Rather, G. Carlyon said that Horizons need to “stand a little taller when we are out with the Green RIG and have some pride in it.

#### Suggested change

- Make the branding more overt e.g. THE RIG- Regional information on the go. (C. Mitchell)

#### **4.1.7 Green RIG as an education and information sharing forum**

The Horizons staff were asked their opinion on the value of the Green RIG as a learning forum as opposed to other learning and information sharing approaches. C. Webb responded that as a learning approach for students “it is marvellous, it’s the right vehicle”. She was not so sure that it was the best approach for informing adult audiences. C. Mitchell said that it is a good concept that needs more advertising about what it does so that adults better understand its’ purpose and therefore book it for community events. He said that the advertising should focus on a more “middle ground” approach so as not to be seen as “green extremist”. M. McCartney closed the interview saying that “it’s [the Green RIG] a wonderful initiative that’s ideal for this region given our geography, our remoteness of communities and the fact that we have been in the business of environmental education for a long time and we have struggled to connect with schools let alone anyone else and in the space of a year we’ve had major advancement in connecting with schools as a first step...I think the concept is spot on for this region.” G. Carlyon concluded his interview by saying “it’s a proven concept out on the road with some minor exceptions”.

Suggested change

- Increase advertising to raise awareness of the existence and purpose of the RIG.

## **4.2 Funders and Sponsors**

The contractor was asked to interview representatives of the three main Green RIG funding organisations; Genesis Power, MAF- SFF and the Eastern and Central Community Trust. These interviews took the form of individual phone interviews with the three representatives. See appendix 2 for interview questions.

### **4.2.1 Visits to the RIG**

One of the funders had visited the RIG on several occasions and had seen it operating both at a school and at the Field Days. The other two funders had made one and two visits respectively to the RIG and all of these visits had been public occasions rather than school events.

### **4.2.2 Purpose of the RIG**

The three funders all said they saw the main purpose of the RIG as being a mobile environmental educator which went out to the people rather than expecting people to come into it. As one funder reported “the purpose of the RIG is to educate people about environmental impacts and how their own actions affect their own environment”. The three funders also said that the intention of the RIG was to educate rural and urban communities and students and adults. However, two of the funders added that they think the RIG is mainly reaching younger students at this stage.

### **4.2.3 Environmental messages**

All three funders said that the main messages the RIG is raising awareness about are bio-diversity, water quality and management of the land in the Horizon’s region. In particular, they reported that the messages are about the environmental challenges facing our own region, “our impact on our own environment”, flooding and erosion and how it affects all people in the region, water quality and contaminants, the need to reduce our carbon footprint, the need to eliminate predators and that “what happens in the country affects the towns”.

One funder raised the issue that he saw some of the messages conveyed by the RIG as being “biased towards the environment” and as being “too green”. He said he was concerned that some of the messages did not “show a balance between what is happening and the importance of farming [to the region]”. He said that at the moment the messages on the RIG give the impression that “farming is causing all the problems”. He added that it is very

important that there be more messages about the benefits farming provides to the whole region.

Another funder said that the messages are not anti-farmer as has been said by some media reports, but rather that “they are accurate”. However, he said that in future, to avoid any tension, some of the messages might “need to be repackaged” to get the messages across in a way “that is palatable to all audiences”.

All three funders responded that they saw little evidence of messages, on or in the RIG, about the work Horizons do in relation to these environmental issues.

#### Suggested changes

- Provide handouts on the RIG which contain the main environmental messages and that these handouts contain website links to related environmental websites.
- Provide more messages about the benefits farming provides to the region.
- Provide more messages balancing environment impacts with sustainability.

#### **4.2.4 Exhibits and activities**

The general feeling of the group was that the exhibits and activities are of a very high standard in design and presentation. In particular, the interviewees mentioned the streamulator and carbon foot printing activities are being of high value in showing environmental impacts.

#### Suggested changes

- Provide information on farming processes and the positive aspects of the primary industry i.e. nutrient budgets, direct drilling and precision fertiliser applications.
- Provide activities/ exhibits showing the work Horizons are doing on environmental impacts. In particular, have more evidence of the One Plan.
- Give attention to keeping exhibits and activities “new and fresh” over time so that repeat visits provide new, topical material.

#### **4.2.5 Educator role**

As only one of the funders had seen the educators in operation they were unable to make much comment on the educator’s role except to say that from what they had seen and from comments they had heard the educators do “an excellent” job with school students.

#### **4.2.6 RIG Branding**

Two of the funders reported that the RIG branding is “eye catching” and “well done”. One funder said that the branding clearly conveys that the RIG is about the environment, but added



that it is not very evident that the RIG is from Horizons. One funder could recall little detail of the branding except to say that they had noted the MAF-SFF branding on the back of the RIG.

Suggested change

- Make branding of the name Horizons more prominent on the RIG.

#### **4.2.7 Green RIG as an education and information sharing forum**

The general opinion of the funders was that the RIG is “excellent” as an educational forum for students, but that the challenge now is to “sustain the momentum from here onwards”. One funder felt that the RIG is a “very positive way of getting interest and engagement” while the other two funders said that while the RIG has potential as a tool for raising adult awareness, it is currently not doing that and that it will be a challenge to engage adults in this manner.

### **4.3 Knowledge Partners**

The contractor was asked by Horizons to interview one nominated representative from each of the knowledge partners, AgResearch, HortResearch and the Department of Conservation. These interviews took either the form of individual face-to-face or phone interviews See appendix 3 for interview questions.

#### **4.3.1 Visits to the RIG**

Two of the knowledge partners had been to the Rig on more than one occasion. One of the partners had visited the RIG four times. These visits included the opening and 20,000 visitor celebration events and also specific science events such as a conference at Massey University.

#### **4.3.2 Purpose of the RIG**

The knowledge partners said that the RIG is designed for environmental education, “to highlight issues and promote care of the environment”. One partner specifically said that the purpose of the RIG is “to engage rate payers through their children”, as he understood the power children have to influence their parents. One partner said philosophically that they didn’t know why they [Horizons] were doing it but he supposed that they were trying to capture the younger children.

#### **4.3.3 Environment messages**

This group understood and could clearly articulate what the main environmental messages were. One knowledge partner said that the messages are the 4 big ideas from the One Plan. Another said that the messages were also about sustainable resource use. “People are part of the landscape and if we don’t get it right it is going to beat us up”. In general, they thought the

messages were balanced, but one respondent admitted they hadn't assessed the content from other people's perspective. He felt that someone wearing a range of "different hats" might answer this question more fully. Another partner thought the approach had a "bloke-ish" feel which should appeal to the kiwi psyche.

All three knowledge partners were aware of anti-farmer criticism. However, they either didn't agree with the sentiments or felt that the issues around the "dirty little secrets" needed to be addressed and that debate on them needed to happen. One knowledge partner discredited the arguments from some organisations (like Federated Farmers) that some of the messages are anti-farmer because he felt their [the farmers] approach was politically driven and not rational or balanced. Another knowledge partner thought the messages may have been "dumbed down" but said somewhat ruefully that "50% of the population has a reading age of 14 anyway".

#### **4.3.4 Exhibits and activities**

The knowledge partners offered many positive comments about the presentation of the content in the RIG. They used words and terms like "glossy", "robust", "eye catching", "fantastic", "impressive", and "quite a vision". One knowledge partner thought that the information delivered "breaks the ice" or captures the imagination of the "townies" and has educational value for country people. One interviewee was slightly more reticent. They thought the RIG was just scratching the surface but assumed that more learning occurred in the school setting than could be obtained from just looking at the displays.

In terms of the content presented in the exhibits and activities, one partner said that the RIG content doesn't have the right feel, and that it needs to get buy in from farmers. Another said that in general adults feel nervous or suspicious of regional government and therefore the context of the material presented. Despite their concerns they said that society needs to have this debate and there is a need to understand the trade-offs between protecting and using resources in terms of resource degradation or depletion and economic outcomes. "People need to be aware that some environmental damage is very difficult to fix".

#### Suggested changes

- Provide a landscape/land use integrated activity that allows the public to test a range of land use options (including intensification) to see the consequences of their choices.
- Articulate clearly financial and environmental bottom lines. "It's not about blame, we all live in the landscape together".
- Provide more in-depth exploration of some issues with a change in focus from time to time to keep the programme fresh and encourage on-going connections with communities.

- Engage with students between 9 and 12 years old whilst they are forming their world-views as this influences their career choices and behaviour as adults in the future.
- Look to the Enviro-Schools programme as a good model to emulate.

#### **4.3.5 Educator role**

The knowledge partners had only limited exposure to the educators in action, but felt that they had a positive attitude and did a good job.

#### **4.3.6 Branding**

All three knowledge partners gave extremely positive responses and reported that they liked the images which show the connection between the people and the landscape.

#### **4.3.7 Additional comments**

One partner said he knew the RIG had been busy but he felt there was not enough penetration of towns. With regard to knowledge partners' perceptions of other peoples reactions to the RIG, one reviewer thought the "farmers are a bit precious...they are a major influence". Another partner said that people need to move from "being passive victims to being environmental warriors". The third partner expressed a degree of disappointment that originally there was the possibility that their agency would work quite closely with Horizons on the RIG but this had never eventuated. They felt there was the potential for more involvement with other agencies and that better relationships could develop from this involvement.

### **4.4 Community Partners, Leaders and E.Heroes**

The contractor was asked by Horizons to interview five nominated community partners and three nominated E.Heroes. These interviews all took the form of phone interviews. See appendix 4 for interview questions.

#### **4.4.1 Visits to the RIG**

The community partners, leaders and E.Heros had a wide range of personal experience with the RIG. Some of them had seen it in action several times in a range of situations including the opening event and at schools. One of the leaders had looked at it in great detail while another had only seen it in passing at a conference.

#### **4.4.2 Purpose of the Rig**

All of the community leaders and the E.Heroes understood that the purpose of the RIG was to educate and raise environmental awareness. They were of the opinion that the RIG was mainly intended to raise the awareness of young people. One interviewee commented that the younger generations were easier to influence but that even the older generations could

change. Two of the interviewees specifically said that the Rig is designed to demonstrate and articulate Horizons' concerns and they thought the RIG was trying to reach a wide range of people, including everyone involved in the land.

#### **4.4.3 Environmental messages**

Collectively the community leaders thought the messages were about the serious problems of water quality and quantity and biodiversity. One person added land sustainability, emergency management of things like floods and volcanic eruptions to the list of messages he could recall. Another person included the need to reforest.

The E.Heros were less able to recall the main messages. They said the main message was that "everyone is responsible" [for the environment] and that it [the RIG] was about best practice to save the land.

The community leaders had contrasting views as to whether the messages were balanced and accurate. One community leader responded forcefully saying that the RIG "screamed that dairy is bad..." discharging nutrients into waterways and that biodiversity is being "screwed" by farming. This person also said that the messages do not say what farmers are already doing to avoid damaging the environment. He further added that "old photographs" were used in the RIG presentation. A second interviewee responded that he felt that although the RIG is not specifically anti-farmer, the messages presented need to include the trade offs against how people achieve a "nice city lifestyle" and the costs of their desire for a perfect environment.

The other community leaders found the messages to be fair or didn't comment. Two of the interviewees thought that in some cases the messages were superficial but understood that Horizons needed to "boil down" the ideas to convey the messages effectively. These two and one other leader were of the opinion that the messages were not anti-farmer as such but rather that many of the issues raised by Horizons are related to agricultural practises and that all of society is collectively involved. One leader said that we hear enough about farmers' opinions and that it's good to get an alternative point of view.

One community leader felt that the messages give a very bad impression of both science and farmers to children. The interviewee said it will turn the children off both these activities just when there is a shortage of new entrants to these professions because no one wants to work in a job with such a negative image. This interviewee also said that this cohort of primary school children are the people who need to engage in the environmental concerns that Horizons is addressing.

Two of the E.Heroes said that the messages were too negative. In particular, they commented that the messages were not balanced, fair or realistic for farmers and that “the RIG was scolding the farming public”, or “kicking butt” rather than saying what can be done to change the situation. According to one of the E.Heroes, it is acceptable to say that everyone would like clean streams, but it is misleading to suggest that this could be achieved 100% of the time. People are not aware of the costs or the feasibility of achieving a perfect environment.

#### Suggested changes

- Include messages about the environmentally friendly things farmers are already doing.
- Include messages about the positive things farmers can do in the future.
- Show the benefits of farming to society, especially the economic benefits.
- Put the challenges of managing the environment in a positive light, with a call for action by the people involved.
- Make people more aware of the tradeoffs between all aspects of agriculture including economic and social, as well as the environmental aspects.

#### **4.4.4 Exhibits and activities**

General impressions of the presentation of the exhibits were favourable from both the E.Heros and the community leaders. One interviewee said she saw children enjoying the activities and actually fighting over the streamulator. Several of the interviewees commented that the RIG needs more detailed content for adults.

All of the community leaders said that the exhibits raised student’s awareness of environmental issues, but whether they made the connection to Horizons was unclear. One community leader said there was evidence in the RIG of the links to the “One Plan” and the policy role of Horizons, while another leader felt there was not much focus on Horizons’ activities and that Horizons seemed to be promoting DoC work. This person questioned whether “that is what the rate-payers money is for?” Other criticisms included such comments as: the water quantity issues were only a problem for a short time of the year; didn’t like all the handy hint cards, for example they felt that global warming was not a regional (or even a national) concern; and buying local food was not correct or scientific and it was straight off a “greenie website”.

Only one of the E.Heroes saw the RIG as a positive way to influence people about the Horizons issues. In general, the E-heroes had not engaged sufficiently with the exhibits to be able to comment whether the exhibits raised their own (or other’s) awareness of either the environmental issues or Horizons work in the region.

#### Suggested changes

- Place greater emphasis on bio-diversity and also highlight the value of species richness (including soil biodiversity) and healthy landscapes including fragmented or modified ecosystems.
- In-depth content to be delivered by 'experts' at appropriate times.
- Provide more sophisticated material for repeat visits to build on the learning experience.
- Make content more positive.
- Provide more content for adult audiences.

#### **4.4.5 Educator role**

A number of the community leaders and E.Heroes had not seen the educators in action. Those that had seen the educators in action had a very positive impression of their work. One community leader made the comment that the educators should increase the depth of the content at special interest adult events. Another community leader felt that the educator was simply "following the party line" as some of the ideas presented were less about science and more about Horizons' view of things.

Suggested change

- Increase the depth of content for adult audiences.

#### **4.4.6 Branding**

The majority of the community leaders thought the branding was "clever", "bright" and "attractive". They also said it matched the purpose of the RIG and that it gets your attention and therefore should not be changed. However, one leader disagreed about the branding conveying the RIG's purpose saying, "not from the outside".

One of the E.Heroes felt good to see his picture on the RIG. However, another E.Hero was less happy with his association with the RIG because people have said to him, "why did you put your face on that bastard thing?" Although he approves of the concept and the look of the RIG in general he commented that the messages inside are too negative for his comfort.

Suggested changes

- Change the catch phrases occasionally to keep people's interest up.
- Emphasize the message that education in agriculture and science will help with environmental sustainability.
- Use the phrase 'Green Fields, Blue Skies' to suggest good farming and science.

#### **4.4.7 Additional comments**

One reviewer liked the way the RIG is so easily booked and available for community events and another reviewer felt it should go to more general public gatherings such as Saturday Morning markets, or AMP shows.

### **4.5 Schools**

Staff members of 4 schools (2 rural and 2 urban) which had had a recent visit from the Green RIG were interviewed either in face-to-face interviews or by phone. All four schools were primary schools with either years 1-6 or years 1-8 students. It was not possible to include secondary schools in the review because none had had a recent RIG visit or were going to have a visit during the period of the review. The RIG visits to secondary schools had all taken place too long ago for staff and students to be able to recall sufficient information for the review. See appendix 5 for interview questions.

At 2 of the 4 primary schools, the principal and one or more teachers were interviewed. At the other two schools the principal was either not available or they had seen too little of the RIG to be able to make comment. At each of these schools either the Deputy Principal or one or two teachers were interviewed. Whereas, the intention had been to interview groups of up to 5 students at each school, it was not possible to do this. Instead 2 schools asked that rather than interviews we converse with the students as they were engaging in the activities. One school sent us student writings on what they had learnt and the fourth school asked us to talk to students who were visiting the RIG with parents after school. The students spoken to ranged in age from years 1-8. Where possible we also interviewed parents (x8) of the students who had visited the RIG.

#### **4.5.1 Purpose of the RIG**

##### **i) School Staff**

The majority of the school staff members were of the opinion that the purpose of the Green RIG was to “raise student awareness of environmental issues” and “the importance of looking after our environment”. Some of the school staff also mentioned that a large part of the purpose of the RIG was to educate students about the “part they have to play in looking after the environment”. One teacher said that another purpose of the RIG was to educate adults about the environment through their children.

##### **ii) Students**

The students all said that the purpose of the Green RIG was to educate them about the environment. This is not surprising as all of the students had been briefed by teachers about

the purpose of the RIG visit. The older students also said that the RIG taught them about what they could do to “help save the environment/ planet” while the younger students tended to say that the RIG taught them about such things as “saving animals” and “getting rid of possums”. None of the students said that the RIG had to do specifically with the environment in the Horizons’ region.

#### iii) Parents

The parents (8) were of the general opinion that the main purpose of the Green RIG is to educate students about the environment and what they need to do to save and improve the environment. One parent said that he thought the RIG was “trying to get kids interested in science”. It should be noted that while not asked directly, only one of the parents noted that the purpose of the RIG was to convey environmental messages about the Horizons’ region. The majority of the parents said that the RIG was intended for students and adults and both rural and urban communities. A minority said that the RIG was intended to educate students only.

### **4.5.2 Environmental messages**

#### i) School Staff

The general opinion of the staff members was that the messages conveyed by the RIG pertained mainly to bio-diversity and water quality and management. None of the staff members mentioned that the messages were also to do with land management other than in passing reference to the streamulator activity and flooding. In particular, the staff members said that the main messages pertained particularly to “protecting our endangered species”. Another teacher said that the main message was that “our country is very special” and that we must look after it. One teacher said that the messages “are somewhat superficial, just a snapshot of the issue”. Only one teacher said that the RIG contained messages that pertained directly to the Horizons’ region. One teacher also said that the ESI activity teaches students about possible jobs in science and the environment like DoC and how they can play a part in “saving the planet”.

A teacher of year 1-3 students said that there was too much information and too many messages for children of this age. She said it would have been better to concentrate on a few messages for the younger students, perhaps around bio-diversity and “spend more time on that”.

#### ii) Students

The older students (years 5-8) were able to recount much about what they had learnt from the RIG. The most frequently mentioned subjects were the effects of flooding, protecting the land, quality of water and endangered species. One older [urban] student said that he had learnt



about the “bad” things the farmers are doing to the land. The younger students (years 1-4) tended to mention the bio-diversity aspects of the RIG, frequently saying that they had learnt about such things as “stoats eat bird’s eggs”, and “possums are a nuisance”.

### iii) Parents

The parents reported that most of the messages on the RIG pertained to “saving endangered species”. To a lesser degree, they said that the messages were also about “understanding erosion better because most people don’t understand erosion”, understanding recycling, flooding and protecting streams from pollution. One parent said that she didn’t think there “were any messages for adults” but rather that they were all for students.

On being asked whether they had seen evidence of messages about Horizons’ work on environmental issues, all but one parent replied “no”. That parent said she “thought Helen (the educator) might have said something about that”. There were no clear differences of response noted between the rural and urban parents interviewed on the question of environmental messages conveyed by the RIG.

It was noted that when parents were interviewed about their views and opinions of the RIG they tended to respond with what their children had experienced, seen, or enjoyed rather than from their own adult point of view. This observation may mean that when parents visit the RIG they tend to engage with their children in the activities and do not see the higher level adult messages also contained in the RIG.

### Suggested change

- Cover fewer topics and messages with younger students.

## **4.5.3 Exhibits and activities**

### i) School Staff

In the main, the school staff members reported that the exhibits and activities were of a “very high standard” with respect to appropriateness to level and presentation quality. In particular, the teachers identified the streamulator, ESI and mountain to sea stories as being of very high value.

Three of the teachers questioned the level of learning taking place with some of the activities. In particular, they “questioned the value” of the space invaders activity, the kiwi saver game and the native fish game. However, one teacher did add that it didn’t “hurt to have some fun games” to get the students interested in the more “meaningful” games.

### ii) Students

The students all said they thought the exhibits and activities were “neat”, “fun to do” and “interesting”. When asked what they were learning from the activities they were playing approximately half of the students were unable to say anything in particular. However, when asked what they had learnt from the educators, all students were able to recount several pieces of information.

iii) Parents

The parents responded that their children had “really enjoyed”, “been interested” and “had lots to say about the exhibits”.

Suggested change

- Reconsider the learning value of some of the activities.

#### **4.5.4 Educator’s class programme**

i) School Staff

All of the teachers reported that the lessons presented had been well prepared and well delivered. They also spoke highly of the educators manner and approach with the students. “She [the educator] had a really great way with the kids”. [The educator] “knew exactly how to engage and keep them all interested, even some boys who I thought would be silly for her”. The majority of the teachers commented on how well the educator had tailoured the lessons for the age and learning needs of each group of students. The school staff liked that they had received information about the lesson, topics to be covered, curriculum links and possible follow-up activities before the visit. As one teacher commented, “you could do as little or as much preparation [of the students] before the visit as you liked” depending on whether you were going to use the lesson as a one-off lesson or as part of a larger study. In general, the teachers felt that the educators were sufficiently knowledgeable on the subject for the student audiences. The teachers also made several comments about the high standard of the organisation of the overall visit.

Suggested changes

- Supply teachers with a list of topics which they can select from before the visit. This would allow teachers to prepare students more thoroughly before the visit if they wished to, and also to tie in the topics to the school’s on-going science programmes.
- Reduce the number of foci presented in each lesson and go into them in more depth especially for older students.
- Reduce the number of foci for younger students and slow down the presentation.

- Go over the game instructions more slowly for younger students.
- Provide more follow-up units/activities as some of the ones currently provided are “rather trite time wasters”.
- Reinforce and build on the messages by returning the RIG to schools on a regular basis, ideally twice a year.

#### **4.5.5 Branding**

##### i) School Staff

The majority of the school staff members said that the branding of the RIG did not tell them that the RIG was about the environment. They said that the images portrayed messages about people, society and communities. “If I had not known that it was about the environment I certainly wouldn’t have picked up on that looking at it”. Three staff members said that the current branding raises curiosity as it is not immediately clear what it is about and that “is good as it might get people to look inside”.

##### ii) Parents

Those parents who were interviewed at the RIG reported that the branding of the RIG was “very pleasing”, “interesting”, “colourful”, but that it did not tell them that it was about environmental issues and environmental issues in our region in particular. The majority of the parents who were interviewed by phone could not recall the branding of the RIG. Most parents knew the RIG was from Horizons because they had received notice of the visit from their school and the notices had told them this.

##### Suggested changes

- Balance up the number of environmental images on the bus with the people images.
- Include more writing on the outside of the RIG to give people a little understanding of the environmental issues it is trying to address and raise awareness about.
- Make the Horizons’ signage more obvious.

#### **4.5.6 Green RIG as an educational and information sharing forum**

##### i) School Staff

The school staff all shared the opinion that the RIG was a very good means for delivering environmental information to schools. In particular, they liked that the RIG brought the whole educational experience out to the children. They also liked that the RIG is a “total learning package” and that the school does not have to provide or do anything in preparation for the visit if they do not wish to. As one teacher summed up the experience, “it was brilliant...I think my kids got more out of this than Life Ed”.

## Suggested changes

- Consideration be given to the number of educators employed as it was thought it is “a very big ask” to put the educators in this type of teaching situation “day in and day out”.

### **4.5.7 Changed practices or planned actions as a result of the RIG visit**

All of the staff members interviewed reported that, to date, none of them had made any change to practices or programmes as a result of the Green RIG visit. However, it must be noted that all of the surveyed schools had either been visited by the RIG within four weeks of the interviews or were interviewed on the day of the RIG visit.

When asked whether the schools planned to use the programme content in their science lessons or to make changes to any part of their practice in the future, three teachers replied that they would use the visit as a starting point for more work on topics to do with the environment. In particular one teacher said she was going to do a study on the importance of native trees to bird life. Another teacher was planning to do a unit on water pollution. One teacher said that she was going to start up a recycling system in her classroom as a consequence of the RIG programme.

## **4.6 General Public**

The majority of the public were interviewed as they finished looking through the RIG at the esplanade in Palmerston North during Conversation Week. Most (10) of the public were urban and three were rural. Two other members of the public who saw the RIG at Ashhurst were also interviewed. It was noted that over half of the people interviewed at the esplanade were there specifically to show their children the RIG. See appendix 6 for interview questions.

### **4.6.1 Purpose of the Rig**

All members of the public said that the purpose of the RIG was to educate and raise awareness about the environment. One member also said the RIG was a public relations exercise. All said that the messages were aimed primarily at school students, but over half also said the RIG offered something for everyone. The public generally thought the messages were pitched well for both urban and rural attendees although two urban members said that they thought rural people already knew about these issues so would not need to visit the RIG.

### **4.6.2 Environmental messages**

The members of the public gave a wide range of responses to the question of the main messages being conveyed through the RIG, but as individuals none of them were able to list all 4 of Horizons big ideas relating to water quality, quantity, biodiversity and erosion. They

offered general descriptions like; looking after the environment, look after native bush, sustainability or don't over use the environment. Or they listed one to two issues such as predator impacts, eco-footprints, pollution or the dairy situation. It appeared that the messages they found the most interesting tended to be related to their own personal interests, such as landscape design or the water messages because that particular person was building his own wetland.

#### **4.6.3 Exhibits and activities**

Three members of the public liked the predator diorama because it was three dimensional and life like. Two people liked the eco-tips and two others liked the water facts and lifting the flaps because they found the facts remarkable. The ecological footprint exercise was favoured because it offered a personalised approach. Many of the parents offered opinions about what their children liked, and the kiwi saver game was very popular. One of the fathers said he didn't look at anything because he wasn't that interested himself, he was there for his children. Two of the public who had seen the RIG at Ashhurst liked the streamulator because it was fun and creative.

There were a couple of comments about the computers; one person said the computers didn't appeal because they didn't have enough time and two people were disappointed because they couldn't get access to a computer. Their access was restricted either because there were too many people or the computer was broken. One person commented that the toadstool paddling pool looked pointless and that it made them feel uncomfortable because they didn't know how to react to it. They also said that they were confused by the kiwi saver game because it said 'thank you' for their donation but the money fell right through.

There were a range of responses with regard to the amount of information in the displays. One reviewer found the written down facts the least engaging because they looked at facts all day in their job. Another person wanted more detail because they were interested to learn more, while another person said her husband couldn't read and would be suspicious of the "Horizons' agenda anyway".

#### **4.6.4 Branding and mode of delivery**

All the members of the public interviewed like the truck concept and the novelty of the RIG going to the people to educate about environmental issues. "It's not demanding, it comes to you and you just step inside". All members also said they enjoyed the interactive exhibits. However, a few interviewees commented that the RIG had an empty feel to it and made "is this it?" type comments.

Suggested changes

- Provide a clearer message on the outside of the RIG to inform people what it is about.
- Provide more complex displays showing flow diagrams, more holistic explanations and detailed content.
- Place more emphasis on planting native trees and encouraging native birds.
- Provide more information about civil defence in relation to natural disasters.

## **5. Across group comparison**

The purpose of this section is to make a comparison of the most frequently stated responses across the six participant groups and across the six main enquiry streams. The most frequently stated responses are collated together in Table 2 for ease of reference. The following sub-sections provide analysis of the groups' responses across the enquiry streams.

Table 2. Across Group Comparison

	<b>Horizons Staff</b>	<b>Funders and Sponsors</b>	<b>Knowledge Partners</b>	<b>Community Partners and E.Heroes</b>	<b>Schools (Staff and students)</b>	<b>General Public (Including parents of school children)</b>
<b>1.RIG Purpose</b>	- To raise awareness & understanding of 3-4 main environmental issues affecting region i.e. bio-diversity, water quality and availability and sustainable land management	- To be a mobile environmental educator that goes out to the people to teach and raise awareness about regional issues and how people's actions affect their own environment	-To delivery environmental education which highlights issues and promotes care of the environment	- To educate and raise people's, particularly young people's, awareness of environmental issues	Staff -To raise student awareness of environmental issues and the importance of looking after our environment. Students - To educate them about the environment and what they can do to save/protect it.	- To educate and raise the awareness of mainly students about the environment.
<b>2. Messages</b>	- Messages are around 4 themes ( see above) - Messages are accurate - Bias towards bio-diversity - Messages mainly geared towards	- Messages are around 3 main issues facing region, bio-diversity, water quality and land management - Little evidence of messages about work of Horizons on	-Messages are around 4 themes from One Plan - Generally messages provide balanced account of the environmental issues	Community Partners -Messages mainly around issues of bio-diversity and water quality & quantity - Mixed views over balance and	Staff - Messages mainly about bio-diversity and water quality and management Students (Yrs.5-8) - Messages around flooding, water	Parents - Messages mainly about bio-diversity and to a lesser degree flooding, erosion, and recycling Public - Messages mainly

	<p>students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Little evidence of messages about work Horizons doing on environment</li> </ul>	<p>these issues</p>		<p>accuracy of messages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Some concern over anti-farming nature of some messages</li> </ul> <p>E.Heroes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Messages mainly around notion everyone is responsible for environment and best practice to save the land</li> <li>- Too negative, not balanced or fair to farmers</li> </ul>	<p>quality and bio-diversity (Yrs.1-4)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Messages mainly about bio-diversity</li> </ul>	<p>around bio-diversity and looking after the environment</p>
<p><b>3. Exhibits and Activities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Presentation standard very high</li> <li>- High value activities include streamulator, ESI</li> <li>- Need for more balanced messages in some activities</li> <li>- Learning value of some activities questioned</li> <li>- Lack of exhibits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Generally of very high standard in design and presentation</li> <li>- High value activities include streamulator, carbon footprinting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Generally of high standard</li> <li>- Lack of exhibits for adults</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Generally of high standard</li> <li>- Generally raise awareness of issues</li> <li>- Lack of exhibits for adults</li> </ul>	<p>Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Generally of very high standard</li> <li>- High value activities include streamulator, ESI, mountain to sea story</li> <li>- Activities appropriate to level of student</li> <li>- Learning value of some activities</li> </ul>	<p>Parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Their children had enjoyed the activities</li> </ul> <p>Public</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No clear patterns in the responses</li> </ul>



	and activities specifically for adults				questioned Students - Enjoyed activities - Not always aware what activities were teaching them	
<b>4. Educator Interaction with Audiences</b>	- Very good with students - Appropriate with adults - Knowledgeable about subject with students	- Very good with students	- Good job - Good attitude	- Positive impressions of their work	Staff -Well prepared and presentation of high standard - Very good manner with students - Lessons appropriate to student levels	- Good
<b>5. Branding</b>	- Eye catching and impressive, creates curiosity - Not clear what RIG about	- Eye catching, well done - Conveys that RIG about the environment - Horizons not very evident in branding	-Very good - Shows connections between people and landscapes	Bright, clever, attractive - Matches purpose of RIG	Staff - Not clear what RIG about - Creates curiosity	Parents - Colourful, interesting - Not clear what RIG about

<b>6. RIG as an Education and Information Sharing Forum</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Concept of taking education out to the different audiences very sound</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Excellent as education forum for students</li> <li>- Has potential to do the same for adult audiences if changes made to meet needs of adults</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Good, liked mobile units ability to reach people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Liked concept of mobile unit to go out to people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Excellent as means for delivering environmental education out to schools</li> <li>- Brings complete experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A good way to reach people</li> </ul>
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### **5.1 Purpose of the RIG**

Analysis of the responses across all participant groups shows that the interviewees shared a common understanding of the central purpose of the RIG saying that it is to provide environmental education and raise awareness about environmental issues. The question of who the education and awareness raising is intended for was less clear. There was mixed opinion on whether the RIG is intended for student only audiences or whether it is also intended for adult audiences. There was also mixed opinion on whether the RIG is or should even be, intended for adult audiences. The majority of the interviewees supported the notion that the RIG should be intended for adult audiences with the proviso that attention be given to changing some aspects of the content, exhibits and presentations in the RIG to better meet the needs of adult audiences.

While the interviewees were generally of the opinion that the RIG should be intended for both student and adult audiences there was some question as to whether the RIG is or should be intended for both rural and urban adult audiences. While the majority of the interviewees said that both rural and urban adults need to understand the consequences of their actions on the environment, a small group expressed the view that rural people do not need education on this as they are already aware of these matters.

The general opinion of the interviewees was that the RIG has done a very good job of reaching student audiences over the first year of its operation but that adult audiences have not been well catered for. A few interviewees commented that maybe the RIG had not tried to reach adult audiences in its first year of operation and rather that it may have concentrated its efforts on reaching student audiences in the hope that the students would educate their parents about the environmental issues facing this region and/or encourage their parents to visit the RIG.

### **5.2 Environmental messages**

Overall, members of the six interviewed groups, with the exception of the school students, saw that the environmental messages were grouped around 2-4 themes. The people who had the greatest association and involvement with the RIG, the Horizons staff, funders and sponsors, knowledge partners, the community leaders and E.Heroes, were able, as would be expected, to identify either the three or four main themes which the environmental messages are based around. The school staff and public were less able to do this.

Comments from all groups suggests that there is either a bias towards presenting messages on bio-diversity or that the bio-diversity exhibits and presentations are more engaging than the activities for the other themes. Two interviewees suggested that people remember the bio-

diversity messages because when you enter the RIG the first display you see is the bio-diversity dioramas and the very nature of the stuffed animals makes for graphic memorable messages.

There was a strong message from many adult interviewees that they saw the messages in the RIG as being geared primarily towards student audiences rather than adult audiences. There was also the perception from a small number of the interviewees that the environmental messages were generally aimed at a level for primary and intermediate school audiences, rather than secondary school audiences. However, it should be noted that none of the people interviewed had attended a secondary school presentation or visited the RIG with secondary aged students.

There were mixed messages from most groups about the balance and accuracy of the environmental messages. With the exception of the school staff that generally saw the messages as both balanced and accurate for student audiences, there were individuals across all other groups who felt quite strongly that the messages were neither balanced, that is, tell the full story, nor were they accurate.

The criticisms about the perceived lack of balance and accuracy in the environmental messages pertained mainly to the portrayal of farming practices and their impact on the environment. There were a number of very strong comments made about the conveyed messages being too negative about some farming practices, while failing to show the good things that farmers are doing to lessen environmental impacts. It was also felt that it is important to explain to all audiences, both student and adult, the financial importance of farming to the Horizons region.

With reference to balance in the messages conveyed by the RIG, the comment was made by a small number of interviewees that the messages told them what the situation is while failing to provide many explicit messages about what we can and should do to lessen environmental degradation. A small number of interviewees also said that the messages contained very little information about what Horizons are doing to rectify the situation and that it would be useful if more information was supplied about their involvement with communities and their work on environmental impacts. It was also noted that only a very small number of the interviewees realised that the messages on the RIG pertain to the Horizons region in particular.

### **5.3 Exhibits and activities**

The general feeling of the majority of interviewees was that the exhibits and activities were of a very high standard in presentation. In particular, the streamulator and ESI activities got very positive comments for both engagement and learning value for student audiences. The school

staff also commented that, in general, the activities were very well presented and of appropriate levels for the intended audiences. The comment was made that for younger students there were too many foci and activities and that it would have been of more educational value if they had less activities and more time to use the activities.

The learning value of some of the activities was questioned by both school and Horizons staff. It was commented that some of the activities (the kiwi saver, space invaders, fishing games in particular) were of limited learning value. When spoken with by the contractor, approximately half of the students were unable to explain what they had learnt from some of the activities. However, the comment was made by one teacher that it was acceptable to include a small number of activities that had limited educational value but which serve to engage and interest the students in the whole RIG experience.

There was much comment made by adults about the lack of activities which are suitable for adults. It was generally felt that there is currently little in and around the RIG to interest and engage adult audiences. This again brings up the question of who the RIG is intended for and whether it can be for all audiences, that is student and adult and rural and urban audiences.

#### **5.4 Educator role**

There was consensus of opinion that the educators do a very good job with student audiences. In particular, it was commented that the educators are well organised, are able to engage with and establish a good rapport with students, are knowledgeable about their subject area, and present lessons which are appropriate to the level of each group of students.

The comment was made that for younger students (years 1-4) it might be advisable to lessen the number of topics presented to them in order to slow down the pace of the lesson and therefore, allow for more time to be spent on each topic and on instructions for the activities.

Two teachers asked that they be supplied with a list of the possible topics prior to the visit so that they could select the topics that are most appropriate to their needs. Prior selection would also allow them to better prepare the students for the visit and follow-up activities. The suggestion was also made that more, higher learning value post-visit activities be supplied for teachers.

Very few of the interviewees had seen the educators presenting to adult audiences. The general view of these people was that the presentations were appropriate and showed a good understanding of the audience. However, the suggestion was made that for some adult audiences, and in particular farmer audiences, it might be useful to have an Horizons staff

member in attendance with the educator to provide in-depth information on the issues and, in particular, the work of Horizons.

### **5.5 Branding**

The general view across the six participant groups was that the current RIG branding is appealing and impressive. Three of the groups of interviewees were of the opinion that currently the branding does not clearly convey the message that the RIG is about the environment. The interviewees tended to either find it difficult to recall the branding or to report that the branding suggested that the RIG was about people and communities rather than the environment. To a lesser degree, the view was expressed that it is not clear that the RIG is from Horizons. However, the point was made that if the branding is designed to raise curiosity and interest rather than tell you what the RIG is about, then it achieves that end.

### **5.6 Green RIG as an education and information sharing forum**

The majority of the people who were asked this question were of the view that the concept of the RIG as a mobile environmental education and information forum which goes out to the target audiences is excellent. Schools particularly liked the concept because they said the RIG brings the complete experience, that is, the displays, the computers and the activities, to the school. However, the predominate opinion of the interviewees was that if the RIG is to serve as a mobile education and information sharing forum for adult audiences then significant changes need to be made.

## **6. Discussion**

It might have been anticipated that given the current debate in the Horizons' region over the One Plan and environmental impacts on the region, that the findings in this survey may have been divided into two distinct groups according to whether the participants were from urban or rural backgrounds. This was not the case. While there were some strong comments from individual participants particularly with regards to the messages about farming, overall, there were no significant differences in the nature of the responses given by rural and urban interviewees in this study. However, it should also be noted that more urban than rural people were interviewed in the course of this study, as thirteen of the fifteen members of the public who were interviewed at the Conservation Week event in the Esplanade were urban.

The findings from this survey indicate that for the majority of the participants in this study, the Green RIG is seen as a positive concept that they feel has generally had a successful first year of operation. From the comments of the participants it would appear that while they are of the opinion that the RIG has had a successful first year of operation, the experience has served to identify some areas of operation that need reconsideration and possible removal,

modification or addition to enhance the learning experience for some audiences. As several of the interviewees commented, we must remember that the RIG has only been in operation for a year and that you “can’t expect it to have got everything right for everyone in that time”.

One of the factors identified by the participants as being central to the success of the Green RIG to date, is the choice of educators. The general opinion of the participants was that the current educators bring a very high standard of education, engagement and enthusiasm to the role. The choice of educator is going to be critical to the on-going success of the RIG. The challenge moving forwards is going to be finding educators of a similar calibre to the current educators and then finding ways to support them in this very demanding role so that they do not burn out as was suggested by a few of the teacher participants.

The findings indicate that while there is general agreement over the central purpose of the RIG, that is to take environmental education and information sharing out to the people in the Horizons region, there is debate over who the RIG is intended for and/or should be intended for. The participants strongly supported the notion that the RIG is very suitable as a means for educating student audiences both urban and rural, but they also were generally of the opinion that currently it is failing to provide adults with the same level of service.

The whole issue of adult audiences raised a number of questions that need answering in order to plan and provide high standard service to these people, if that is the intention. The original intention of the Green RIG was to provide education to all members of the Horizons’ community, student and adult, urban and rural. The findings in this study indicate that the participants were generally of the opinion that adults, both urban and rural, would benefit from environmental education being delivered to them, but the form and scope of this education was less clear.

In order to be able to answer the question of the form and scope of adult education delivered by the RIG it is important to first clarify the exact purpose of the adult programme. The participants’ opinions on the purpose of adult education varied from the RIG providing a forum to start conversations and debate about environmental issues through to the RIG providing full education experiences along the lines of the school experiences. Clarity of the purpose and scope of the adult program would lay the foundations for the development, if necessary, of more adult appropriate in-depth materials to meet these goals.

The survey participants also raised the question of whether older students ( yrs. 9-13) and young adults (approximate 18-25 years of age) are also target RIG audiences. If they are, then the findings in this survey would suggest that consideration needs to be given to the exhibits

and activities for these age groups as the general opinion was that the current activities do not meet the particular learning and engagement needs of these groups.

If it is the intention of Horizons to include both older students, young adults and adults in their environmental programmes, then the educator role and the personnel for these roles should be revisited to ensure that the educators have the skills, experience, knowledge and rapport to communicate with older, possibly more demanding audiences.

While the participants were mainly in agreement over the general themes of the environmental messages conveyed by the RIG, their responses raised queries over the relative importance of each theme and the nature of the environmental messages contained in the themes. The findings show that a significant number of the participants perceived there to be a bias towards bio-diversity messages. If the intention of Horizons is to place emphasis and focus on some themes over other themes and for some audiences then this is being achieved. But if the intention is to expose audiences to messages around all four themes, then it appears that this may not be happening. A review of activities, placement of displays and lesson plans may be necessary to rectify this matter.

Much has already been said in this report about the feeling of a number of the participants towards the balance and accuracy of the land use messages in particular. It would be fair to say that a number of the participants with close associations to the land found some of the messages to be one-sided, unfair and anti-farming. We are aware that a number of the displays in the RIG have already been changed to lessen the possibility of these types of comments, but this survey would indicate that there is still some feeling that the issue has not been completely resolved. However, it should be kept in mind that some of the interviewed parties may have visited the RIG before the displays were changed. A way forward on this issue might be to involve, or re-engage if this has already taken place, with a cross section of farming groups to discuss how they would like to see their side of the story portrayed on these environmental issues.

Horizons staff member C.Mitchell made the comment that visitors to the RIG need to get both the educator presentation and use the interactive activities to get the “full story” on the issues. If this is indeed an intended design feature of the RIG learning programmes then it would be important to reconsider the design of the adult programmes in particular, to cater for adults who may either not attend the RIG at the time when the educators make their presentation or when there is not an educator presentation incorporated into the event.



The interview questions around the exhibits and activities elicited a large number of responses from the different interview groups. While the findings indicate that the participants generally found the exhibits and activities to be of a high standard and in particular, suitable for younger student audiences, that is years 1-8, the findings raise questions about the suitability of some of the current exhibits and activities for older audiences. If the RIG is intended for older audiences then it will be important to review the content and level of the current activities and also to ask the question whether there are sufficient activities provided to both get the required messages across while engaging and keeping audience interest.

The learning value of some of the activities used with the student audiences was questioned by the survey participants. Their comments raise the question of whether it was the intention to provide some activities in the RIG which have low learning value but which serve to engage the student audiences with their high entertainment value, or whether it would be better to have more activities with a high learning value to maximize the learning experience in the time the students have to visit the RIG.

The observations of the review team were that when adults attend the RIG with their children they tend to engage and see the RIG activities and exhibits through the eyes of their children. Perhaps this is only an issue when the parent is the mother. But it needs to be taken into consideration when planning adult learning events in order to ensure that adults are catered for in such a way for them to receive the more in-depth environmental messages while also engaging with the student level activities and messages.

The findings also highlight the point that while the RIG does a good job of telling visitors about the current environmental issues facing the region, it fails to provide much information about what people can do to mitigate these effects. This finding again raises the question of the purpose of the RIG. If the RIG is only to raise awareness of these issues, then it appears to be doing that at the moment. However, if the purpose of the RIG is to educate more fully both about the current situation and what people can do to reduce the environmental impacts, then consideration needs to be given to the content of presentations, activities and exhibits to ensure they convey this information. Consideration should also be given to which audiences need to, or should receive this information. Do student and adult, rural and urban audiences all need to be exposed to this information or should these messages be tailored for only some of these groups?

A significant number of the survey participants commented that there is currently a lack of information on the RIG about the work Horizons is doing to mitigate environmental impacts. If Horizons wish to better inform the people of the region about this work they need to provide more student and adult level information via activities, exhibits, presentations or handouts.

Finally, the findings of the survey indicate that for about half of the participants the environmental theme of the Green RIG was not obvious from the current branding on the outside of the RIG. A small group also commented that the Horizons branding on the RIG was not very evident. If it was the intent of Horizons to raise curiosity rather than overtly advertise that the RIG is from Horizons and is about the region's environment, then this small survey sample would indicate that they have achieved what they intended. But if Horizons wish for the environmental theme and their ownership to be more obvious, then they may need to reconsider the current branding.

## **7. Recommendations**

This section contains a compilation of the recommended changes made by all six participant groups across all six enquiry streams.

### **7.1 Purpose of the RIG**

- Clarify purpose of the RIG with particular reference to intended audiences. That is student/ adult and urban and rural.
- Update promotional materials and website to clearly articulate this purpose.

### **7.2 Environmental messages**

- Reconsider the relative importance of each theme and its associated messages. If all themes are of equal importance, reconsider the exhibits and activities associated with the themes to ensure all themes are portrayed equally.
- Reconsider the balance of environmental messages, especially the messages pertaining to farming practices. Do the messages tell the whole story about the issue/s?
- Include messages about the value of farming to the Horizons region and show what farmers are already doing to mitigate environmental impacts.
- Reconsider the level and nature of the messages for adult audiences.
- Clarify whether adult audiences need to receive both the educator presentation as well as use the interactive activities to get the full story on the issues. If this is the intention, consider ways to ensure all adult visitors have the opportunity to receive the educator presentation.
- Make it more obvious that the RIG is from Horizons and that the messages pertain to the Horizons region.

- If one of the purposes of the RIG is to show the work of Horizons and their connections to our communities, reconsider the messages and make this information more explicit.

### **7.3 Exhibits and activities**

- Decrease number of activities for young students (yrs 1-4) and slow down the presentation. This would allow the educators to take more time to better explain how to play the games and for student to discuss and share what they are learning in the activities.
- Reconsider the learning value of some of the activities. Consider the question, do all activities have to educate about environmental issues or is it acceptable to have some activities which provide primarily engagement and entertainment rather than learning about the environmental issues?
- Provide school student level exhibits and activities which illustrate the positive aspects of farming in the region.
- Clarify if the RIG is intended for young (approximately 18-25 years of age) and adult audiences; and if so
- Investigate ways to increase the learning challenge for young adults and adults.
- Provide more exhibits and activities specifically intended for adult audiences.
- Provide more in-depth, adult level exhibits and activities which illustrate the positive aspects of farming in the region.
- Provide exhibits and activities which illustrate the work of Horizons with their communities and their work on mitigating environmental impacts.
- Investigate ways to decrease the empty feel of the RIG.
- Consider ways to keep exhibits fresh and topical for repeat visitors.

### **7.4 Educator role**

- Consider having fewer foci in lessons for younger students (yrs 1-4)
- Provide teachers with a list of possible topics prior to the visit so that the teacher could select the topics they considered most suitable for their students and their class programmes.
- Reconsider the design of the supplied follow-up activities.
- Supply more full unit follow-up activities.
- Consider having an Horizons staff member in attendance at adult events, particular farmer events.

## **7.5 Branding**

- Be aware that there is some opinion that the RIG does not convey the message that it is about the environment.
- Be aware that a small group of people were of the view that the RIG does not clearly convey the message that it is from Horizons.

## **8. Appendices**

- Appendix 1- Horizons staff interview questions
- Appendix 2- Funders and sponsors interview questions
- Appendix 3- Knowledge partners interview questions
- Appendix 4- Community partner/ leaders and E.Heroes interview questions
- Appendix 5- School staff interview questions
- Appendix 6- Student interview questions
- Appendix 7- School parents and general public interview questions
- Appendix 8- Recommended changes and additions to exhibits and activities
- Appendix 9- Regional Council councillors survey findings

## APPENDIX 1

### **Horizons Staff- Interview Questions (40- 45 minutes as group)**

#### **1. Green RIG attendance**

- What Green RIG events have you attended?

Prompts:

- Opening visit and/or 20,000 visitor celebration
- Community Event
- Public Meeting
- School session

#### **2. Purpose of the RIG**

**The stated purpose of the Green RIG is to “raise public awareness of regional environmental issues, by providing learning programmes tailored to different audiences... promote to connections between our (Horizons) work and our communities.**

- What do you see as being the main purpose of the Green RIG?

#### **3. Environmental messages**

- What are the main environmental messages put forward on/in the Green Rig?
- Are the environmental messages presented, clear, balanced and accurate?

Prompts:

- balanced= tell both sides of the issue,
- appropriate for both urban and rural
- suitable for student and adult
- Do the messages on the RIG make visitors aware of the work of Horizons?
- What is your response to criticism that some of the messages are ‘anti farmer’, ‘dumb down the issues’ and are not appropriate for adult audiences?
- What changes or improvements might you suggest to improve the environmental messages conveyed through the RIG?

#### **4. Exhibits and activities**

- What are your general impressions of the standard/ appearance of the exhibits and activities?
- Are the exhibits and activities structured in such a way (content and delivery) as to raise awareness of the regional’s environmental issues for each of the intended audiences? That is- students, adult public – town and country
  - Do the exhibits and activities raise awareness of Horizons work and the connections between this work and the communities in the region as stated as a primary purpose of the RIG
- What changes or improvements might you suggest to improve the content and/or presentation of the exhibits and activities?

#### **5. Educator role**

- What are your general impressions of the educator’s interaction with students and adults?

Prompts:

- Did the educator/s interact/ relate well with all audiences?
- Did the educator/s enthuse/ interest their audiences in the environmental issues presented in the RIG?

- Were the educators knowledgeable about the subject?

#### **6. Branding**

- Do the branding of the RIG/ promotional materials/ website effectively convey the purpose of the RIG to all intended audiences?
- What changes or improvements might you suggest to improve the branding?

#### **7. Green RIG as an education and information sharing forum**

- What are your thoughts/ impressions of the use of the Green RIG as opposed to other forms of learning programmes to educate and raise public awareness of regional environmental issues?

#### **8. Concluding comments**

- What are your overall impressions of the first year of operation?

## APPENDIX 2

### Funders and Sponsors Interview Questions (Phone Interviews)

#### 1. Green RIG attendance

- What Green RIG events have you attended?

Prompts:

- Opening visit and/or 20,000 visitor celebration
- Community Event
- Public Meeting
- School session

#### 2. Purpose of the Green RIG

- What do you see as being the main purpose of the Green RIG?

- Who is particular is it trying to reach?

#### 3. Environmental messages

- What are the main environmental messages put forward on/ in the Green RIG?

Prompts:

- Were the messages obvious?
- The 4 main themes

- Are the environmental messages which are presented- clear, balanced and accurate?

Balanced = tell both sides of the story

Useful/ appropriate for both urban and rural

Suitable for students and adults

- What is your response to the criticism that some of the messages are 'anti farmer', 'dumb down the issues' and are not appropriate for adult audiences?

- What changes or improvement might you suggest be made to improve the environmental messages?

#### 4. Exhibits and activities

- What are your general impressions of the standard/appearance of the exhibits and activities?

- Are the exhibits and activities structured in such a way (content and delivery) as to educate and raise awareness of the region's environmental issues for each of the intended audiences?

That is- students, adults- town and country

- Do the exhibits and activities raise awareness of Horizon's work and the connections between this work and the region's communities as stated in the purpose of the RIG?

- What changes or improvement might you suggest to improve the content and/or presentation of the exhibits and activities?

#### 5. Educator role

-If you saw the educator at one of the RIG events, what were your general impressions of their interaction with the students and/or adults?

Prompts:

- Did the educators interact/relate well with all audiences?
- Did the educator enthuse/ interest their audiences in the environmental issues presented in the RIG?

- Were the educators knowledgeable about the subject?



- What changes or improvement might you suggest to improve the performance of the RIG educators?

#### **6. Branding**

- Do the branding, painting of the RIG/ promotional materials/ website effectively convey the purpose of the RIG to all intended audiences?

- Is it evident that the RIG comes from Horizons?

- What changes or improvement might you suggest to improve the branding?

#### **7. Green RIG as an education and information sharing forum**

-What are your thoughts/ impressions of the use of the Green RIG as opposed to other forms of learning programmes to educate and raise public awareness of regional environmental issues?

#### **8. Concluding comments**

- What are your overall impressions of the first year of operation of the RIG?

## APPENDIX 3

### Knowledge Partners Interview Questions

#### 1. Green RIG attendance

- What Green RIG events have you attended?

Prompts:

- Opening visit and/or 20,000 visitor celebration
- Community Event
- Public Meeting
- School session

#### 2. Purpose of the Green RIG

- What do you see as being the main purpose of the Green RIG?

- Who is particular is it trying to reach?

#### 3. Environmental messages

- What are the main environmental messages put forward on/ in the Green RIG?

Prompts:

- Were the messages obvious?
- The 4 main themes

- Are the environmental messages which are presented- clear, balanced and accurate?

Balanced = tell both sides of the story

Useful/ appropriate for both urban and rural

Suitable for students and adults

- What is your response to the criticism that some of the messages are 'anti farmer', 'dumb down the issues' and are not appropriate for adult audiences?

- What changes or improvement might you suggest be made to improve the environmental messages?

#### 4. Exhibits and activities

- What are your general impressions of the standard/appearance of the exhibits and activities?

- Are the exhibits and activities structured in such a way (content and delivery) as to educate and raise awareness of the region's environmental issues for each of the intended audiences?

That is- students, adults- town and country

- Do the exhibits and activities raise awareness of Horizon's work and the connections between this work and the region's communities as stated in the purpose of the RIG?

- What changes or improvement might you suggest to improve the content and/or presentation of the exhibits and activities?

#### 5. Educator role

-If you saw the educator at one of the RIG events, what were your general impressions of their interaction with the students and/or adults?

Prompts:

- Did the educators interact/relate well with all audiences?
- Did the educator enthuse/ interest their audiences in the environmental issues presented in the RIG?

- Were the educators knowledgeable about the subject?

- What changes or improvement might you suggest to improve the performance of the RIG educators?

#### **6. Branding**

- Do the branding, painting of the RIG/ promotional materials/ website effectively convey the purpose of the RIG to all intended audiences?

- Is it evident that the RIG comes from Horizons?

- What changes or improvement might you suggest to improve the branding?

#### **7. Green RIG as an education and information sharing forum**

-What are your thoughts/ impressions of the use of the Green RIG as opposed to other forms of learning programmes to educate and raise public awareness of regional environmental issues?

#### **8. Concluding comments**

- What are your overall impressions of the first year of operation of the RIG?

## APPENDIX 4

### Community Partner/ Leaders and E.Heroes Interview Questions

#### 1. Green RIG attendance

- What Green RIG events have you attended?

Prompts:

- Opening visit and/or 20,000 visitor celebration
- Community Event
- Public Meeting
- School session

#### 2. Purpose of the Green RIG

- What do you see as being the main purpose of the Green RIG?

- Who is particular is it trying to reach?

#### 3. Environmental messages

- What are the main environmental messages put forward on/ in the Green RIG?

Prompts:

- Were the messages obvious?
- The 4 main themes

- Are the environmental messages which are presented- clear, balanced and accurate?

Balanced = tell both sides of the story

Useful/ appropriate for both urban and rural

Suitable for students and adults

- What is your response to the criticism that some of the messages are 'anti farmer', 'dumb down the issues' and are not appropriate for adult audiences?

- What changes or improvement might you suggest be made to improve the environmental messages?

#### 4. Exhibits and activities

- What are your general impressions of the standard/appearance of the exhibits and activities?

- Are the exhibits and activities structured in such a way (content and delivery) as to educate and raise awareness of the region's environmental issues for each of the intended audiences?

That is- students, adults- town and country

- Do the exhibits and activities raise awareness of Horizon's work and the connections between this work and the region's communities as stated in the purpose of the RIG?

- What changes or improvement might you suggest to improve the content and/or presentation of the exhibits and activities?

#### 5. Educator role

-If you saw the educator at one of the RIG events, what were your general impressions of their interaction with the students and/or adults?

Prompts:

- Did the educators interact/relate well with all audiences?
- Did the educator enthuse/ interest their audiences in the environmental issues presented in the RIG?

- Were the educators knowledgeable about the subject?

- What changes or improvement might you suggest to improve the performance of the RIG educators?

#### **6. Branding**

- Do the branding, painting of the RIG/ promotional materials/ website effectively convey the purpose of the RIG to all intended audiences?

- Is it evident that the RIG comes from Horizons?

- What changes or improvement might you suggest to improve the branding?

#### **7. Green RIG as an education and information sharing forum**

-What are your thoughts/ impressions of the use of the Green RIG as opposed to other forms of learning programmes to educate and raise public awareness of regional environmental issues?

#### **8. Concluding comments**

- What are your overall impressions of the first year of operation of the RIG?

**Green RIG Review – School Interview Questions  
(30-40 minutes as a group)**

**Principal/ Teachers**

**1. Purpose of the Green RIG**

- What do you see as being the main purpose of the Green RIG?

**2. Environmental Messages**

- What are the main environmental messages put forward on/in the Green Rig and by the presenter?
- The messages are also supposed to raise awareness of the region's environment, the threats to it and the work Horizon's does. Did the messages convey this to the students/ teachers?
  - Are the messages sufficiently regional specific?
- Do you consider the level and nature of the environmental messages suitable for the level/s of students?
- Were the environmental messages presented in a balanced and accurate manner? way? Balanced meaning telling both sides of the story. Is it important to tell both sides of the story to students?

**3. Educator's Class Programme**

- Did the presenter require you to do any preparation before the visit? If so, what did it involve and did it prepare/ enhance the experience for the students?
  - How much time did it take you to prepare for the visit?
  - Was this time justified in view of the outcomes of the visit?
- Were the lesson/s well structured with clear objectives, expected outcomes etc?
- Were the levels of the lessons appropriate to the students?
- Were all students catered for?
- Were the activities, displays suitable for level/s of students?
- Was the presenter able to establish a rapport with the students which engaged motivated and interested them for the duration of the visit?
- Any suggestions/ recommendations for improvements

**4. Links to science curriculum and school science programme**

- Were the links between the lesson and the national curriculum/ school science program apparent and useful to you both before/ after the visit?
- Did you get any assistance/ guidance from the educator about how you could further develop and investigate the environmental messages after the visit?
- Have you used any of the other resources on the Green Rig website? If so, what value were they?
- Do you plan to do any further work on our environment as a consequence of this visit? If yes, what might you do?
- Any suggestions or recommendations for improvements

**5. Visit Organisation**

- Was the educator contact with the school to make visit arrangements timely and efficient?
- Where the setting up requirements of electricity, Rig driver etc- easily met, too

demanding, in what ways?

- Any suggestions for changes or improvements

## **6. Concluding Questions**

- What are your overall impressions of Green Rig as a means for delivering environmental issues to school age students/ adults?
- Would they invite the Rig to visit again? Why/ why not?

## APPENDIX 6

### **Guidelines for casual conversations with students**

1. What have you enjoyed most about the Green RIG visit? Why?
2. What have you learn from the Green RIG visit?
3. Tell me about the game you are playing, what are you learning from it?

## APPENDIX 7

### **General Public Interview Questions**

**NB- Questions were used as a framework as the interviewer had to be prepared to adapt/ to shorten the questions according to the amount of time the interviewee was prepared to give.**

#### **1. Green RIG attendance**

- What Green RIG events have you attended?

Prompts:

- Opening visit and/or 20,000 visitor celebration
- Community Event
- Public Meeting
- School session

#### **2. Purpose of the Green RIG**

- What do you see as being the main purpose of the Green RIG?
- Who in particular is it trying to reach?

#### **3. Environmental messages**

- What are the main environmental messages put forward on/ in the Green RIG?

Prompts:

- Were the messages obvious?
- The 4 main themes

- Are the environmental messages which are presented- clear, balanced and accurate?

Balanced = tell both sides of the story

Useful/ appropriate for both urban and rural

Suitable for students and adults

- What is your response to the criticism that some of the messages are 'anti farmer', 'dumb down the issues' and are not appropriate for adult audiences?
- What changes or improvement might you suggest be made to improve the environmental messages?

#### **4. Exhibits and activities**

- What are your general impressions of the standard/appearance of the exhibits and activities?



- Are the exhibits and activities structured in such a way (content and delivery) as to educate and raise awareness of the region's environmental issues for each of the intended audiences? That is- students, adults- town and country
- Do the exhibits and activities raise awareness of Horizon's work and the connections between this work and the region's communities as stated in the purpose of the RIG?
- What changes or improvement might you suggest to improve the content and/or presentation of the exhibits and activities?

#### **5. Educator role**

-If you saw the educator at one of the RIG events, what were your general impressions of their interaction with the students and/or adults?

Prompts:

- Did the educators interact/relate well with all audiences?
- Did the educator enthuse/ interest their audiences in the environmental issues presented in the RIG?
- Were the educators knowledgeable about the subject?
- What changes or improvement might you suggest to improve the performance of the RIG educators?

#### **6. Branding**

- Do the branding, painting of the RIG/ promotional materials/ website effectively convey the purpose of the RIG to all intended audiences?
- Is it evident that the RIG comes from Horizons?
- What changes or improvement might you suggest to improve the branding?

#### **7. Green RIG as an education and information sharing forum**

-What are your thoughts/ impressions of the use of the Green RIG as opposed to other forms of learning programmes to educate and raise public awareness of regional environmental issues?

## APPENDIX 8

### **Recommended changes and additions to exhibits and activities**

- Develop an activity along the lines of the streamulator but around the Fonterra Clean Streams Accord, whereby a “dairy farmer that’s milking lots of cows puts on another 100 cows and the stream starts to go quite green”. The participants would consider options to clean up the water like planting riparian strips.
- Develop an activity along the lines of Monopoly where the participants have to make decisions and tradeoffs e.g. the price of lambs is very high this year, will you put on more fertiliser to raise more animals and if so what are the likely impacts on the environment?
- Provide more informative videos for adult audiences. Suggest smaller five minute documentaries about issues and perhaps also a documentary about the economic importance of farming to the region.
- Provide short videos like a “mini country calendar” with someone like Alec McKay talking about his work and/or a local community leader talking about issues such as flood protection and possum control.
- Develop an activity built along the lines of Sim City but pertaining to land management. It should demonstrate cause and effect by showing, how for example if you put more cows on the land, that may result in degradation of a stream. The activity would have to offer participant’s suggestions and solutions to consider.
- Develop at least one more exhibit with the ‘wow’ factor because he considers that some of the activities, and in particular the space invaders, do not engage the students. A new activity might be centred on the concept of the Sale of the Century.
- Make a small number of the exhibits “a little more professional”. In particular, the card about who killed the kiwi needs to be made larger.
- Provide information on farming processes and the positive aspects of the primary industry i.e. nutrient budgets, direct drilling and precision fertiliser applications.
- Provide activities/ exhibits showing the work Horizons are doing on environmental impacts.
- Provide a landscape/land use integrated activity that allows the public to test a range of land use options (including intensification) to see the consequences of their choices.
- Articulate clearly financial and environmental bottom lines in displays/activities. “It’s not about blame, we all live in the landscape together”.
- Highlight the value of species richness (including soil biodiversity) and healthy landscapes including fragmented or modified ecosystems.
- Pay attention to keeping exhibits and activities “new and fresh” over time so that repeat visits provide new, topical material.



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## What Modes Have you observed?

- Council Visit
- Opening / Celebration Event
- Community Event
- Public Meeting
- School Session
- Generally Councillors had been to 1 -2 of the 'modes'. Cnr. Gordon had attended a number of local school events. Cnr. Main had covered all event types above. Generally most Councillor hadn't observed EE delivering school programme.



## What are your overall impressions?

- Appears useful tool in a way relevant to students
- Excellent educational tool for EE curriculum
- Excellent for general public but need to be more sensitive to some sectors.
- As above but not so sure about role at field days (for example). Messages targeted at kids. Avg. farming more sophisticated view of enviro. issues.
- Dislike of "Dirty Little Secret". A lot of flak from this module, wide spread criticism from rural community.
- Excellent tool for 'kids' would like different modules aligned to adults / mature audience.
- Excellent tool to get HRC message out to the wider community. e.g. Whanganui flood consultation. Integrating these two roles. Secondary schools. Wider environmental message.
- Not appropriate for adult audience at moment. Impression in school mode, interaction with kids good.
- Good initiative but captured by 'extremist'. Kids too impressionable to 'take on' environmental message at the moment. Concerns on the erosion module – land use change message. Flood table / possum story great. Needs to be significant change to content.
- Look at the dual education audience of the RIG (i.e. children and adults). Name change? On detail programmes would like some discussion on trees and the tree message on the RIG..
- Should RIG be EE alone or more broader message (e.g. include transport?)



## What are your overall impressions of the messages?

- The 3 messages discussed in the media (1) Dirty Little Secrets (2) Ease up on Meat and (3) Place Invaders (fertiliser) were obvious concerns
- Concern by one Councilor on the Land use change message in Land module of the RIG. Felt too much of a land use change message. Not supported by rest of Councilors.
- To counter this concern one Councilor pointed out that the SLUI message has remained consistent for past 4 years and was happy the messages being conveyed in land mode.



## What are your overall impressions of the Team?

- Interaction with kids and adult is absolutely fantastic
- Done extremely well
- Comments endorsed.
- Impressed with commitment and long hours worked
- Organisational skills impressive (incl. support team).
- Teaching qualification important



## What are the positives?

- Concept great
- Teachers absolutely love it
- Effective way to get EE message



## Any further comments / suggestions?

- Use RIG more in the LTCCP process
- If some changes can be done effectively need to bring these forward sooner rather than later.
- Got to have the urban message covered.
- Balance

