

TE URU KAHIKA WEBINAR

BEYOND LEGISLATION

New Resource Management System

What it means for us

28 September 2026



Regional and
Unitary Councils
Aotearoa



Introductions

Welcome to this Te Uru Kahika webinar

Today we're going to broadly cover the new legislation, and go beyond to think about the new RM system.

Q&A

Post your questions using the Teams Q&A function.

If we can't answer all the questions received today, we'll follow up with answers before the weekend.



01

A few words from:

CE Nigel Corry

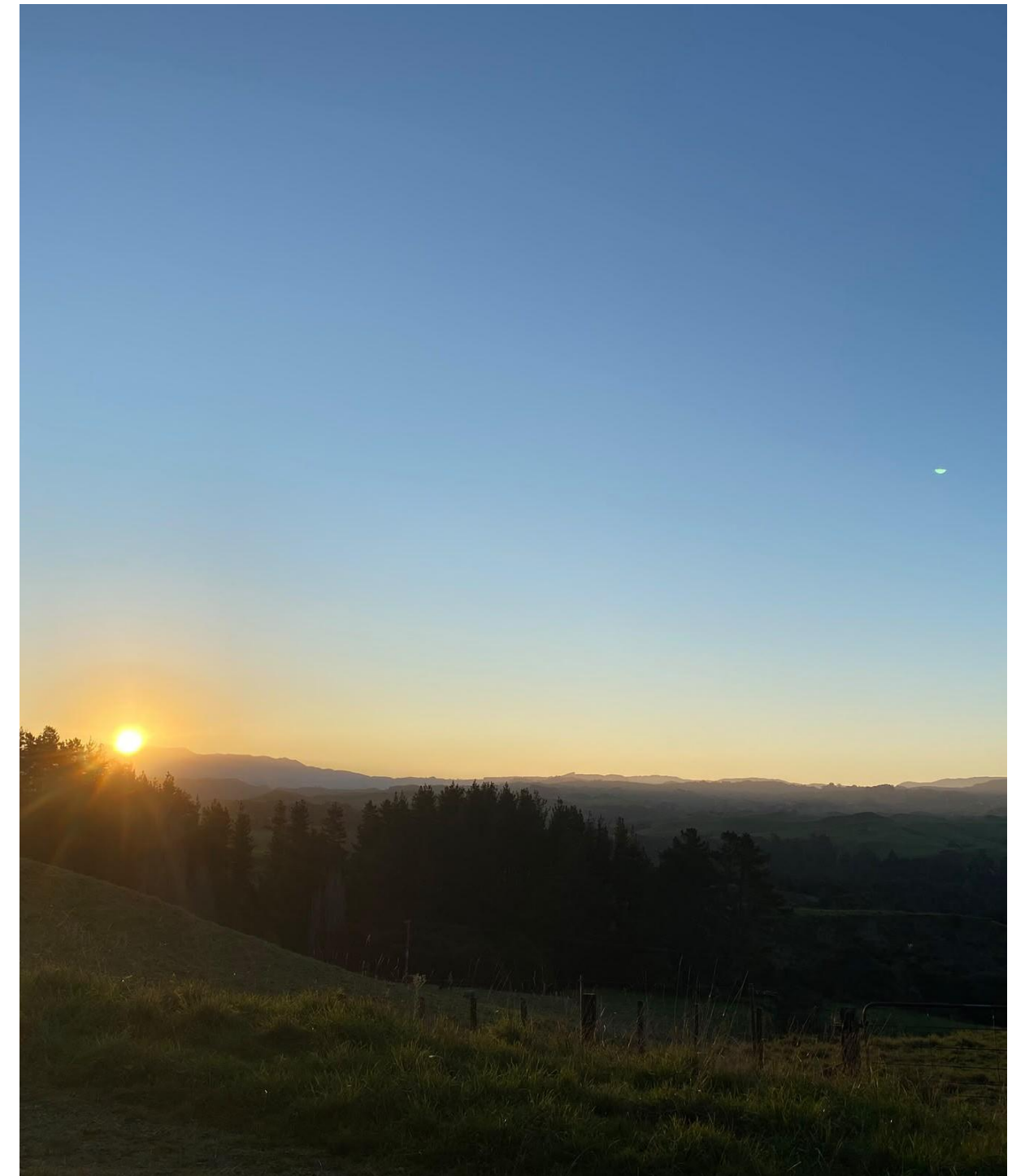
CE Stefanie Rixecker

CE Jono Gibbard



Big picture context, what this means for us

- In the twilight of the RMA system, the scale of change ahead as the new planning and environment management system rises is significant.
- But regional and unitary councils know how to adapt through complex reform.
- Our legislative framework and organisational structures may change, but the outcomes New Zealand needs from regional functions do not.
- We should get prepared now to embrace new ways of working and keep focused on outcomes for communities, environments and regional economies.



The shift into implementation

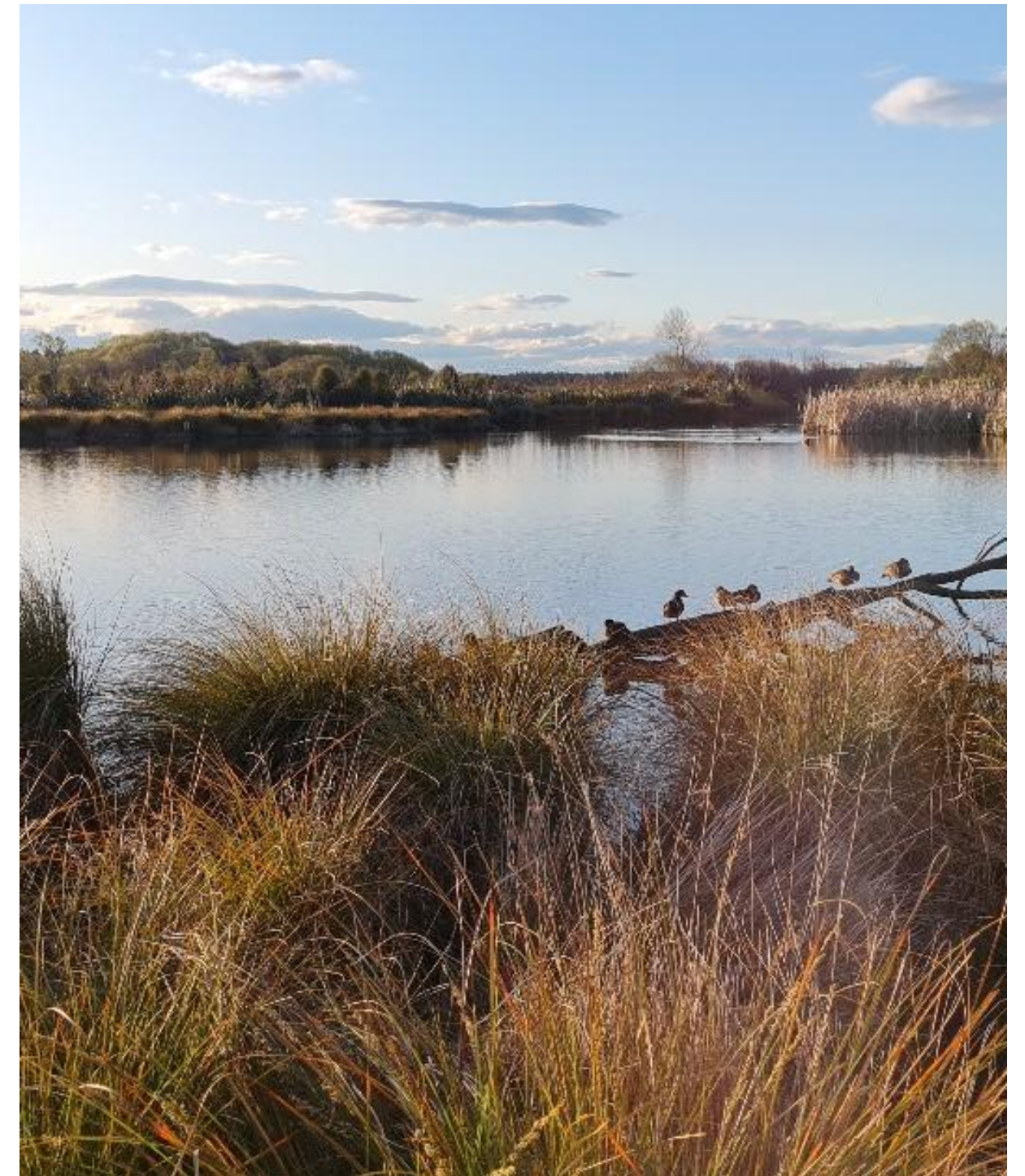
Implementation will depend on our people, knowledge, capability and relationships.

- Retaining and looking after our people, capability, long-held partnerships and relationships will be vital.
- We have a critical role to tie together local government change and the new planning and environmental management system. No one else can do it as well as us.
- Remember, the policy work is not done – still a big job to do and we have a critical role in secondary legislation work to follow. The engine driving decisions impacting how we implement!
- New planning, forming of environmental limits and consenting will require strengthened regional coordination, working beyond boundaries, preparing for changes ahead.
- The new legislation retains and expands existing regional council responsibilities.
- The people who understand our environments, systems, communities and data will be critical to turning the legislation into something that works in practice.

Staying connected, delivering well

Build the new system while continuing to deliver the current one

- Our important day-to-day business continues for now: existing plans, consents, monitoring and council responsibilities remain in place through transition.
- Big milestones will start arriving quickly: national policy direction, national standards, and regional spatial planning.
- We need to stay close to those milestones, sharing implementation challenges and opportunities as a sector early.
- Maintaining a high standard of current delivery will be essential for the success of the transition, future system, and the outcomes we come to work to support.



Key Shifts and Implications

Namouta Poutasi

02



Key components, shifts and implications for delivery

Moving on now to a short overview of the new system, and key shifts for the regional sector.

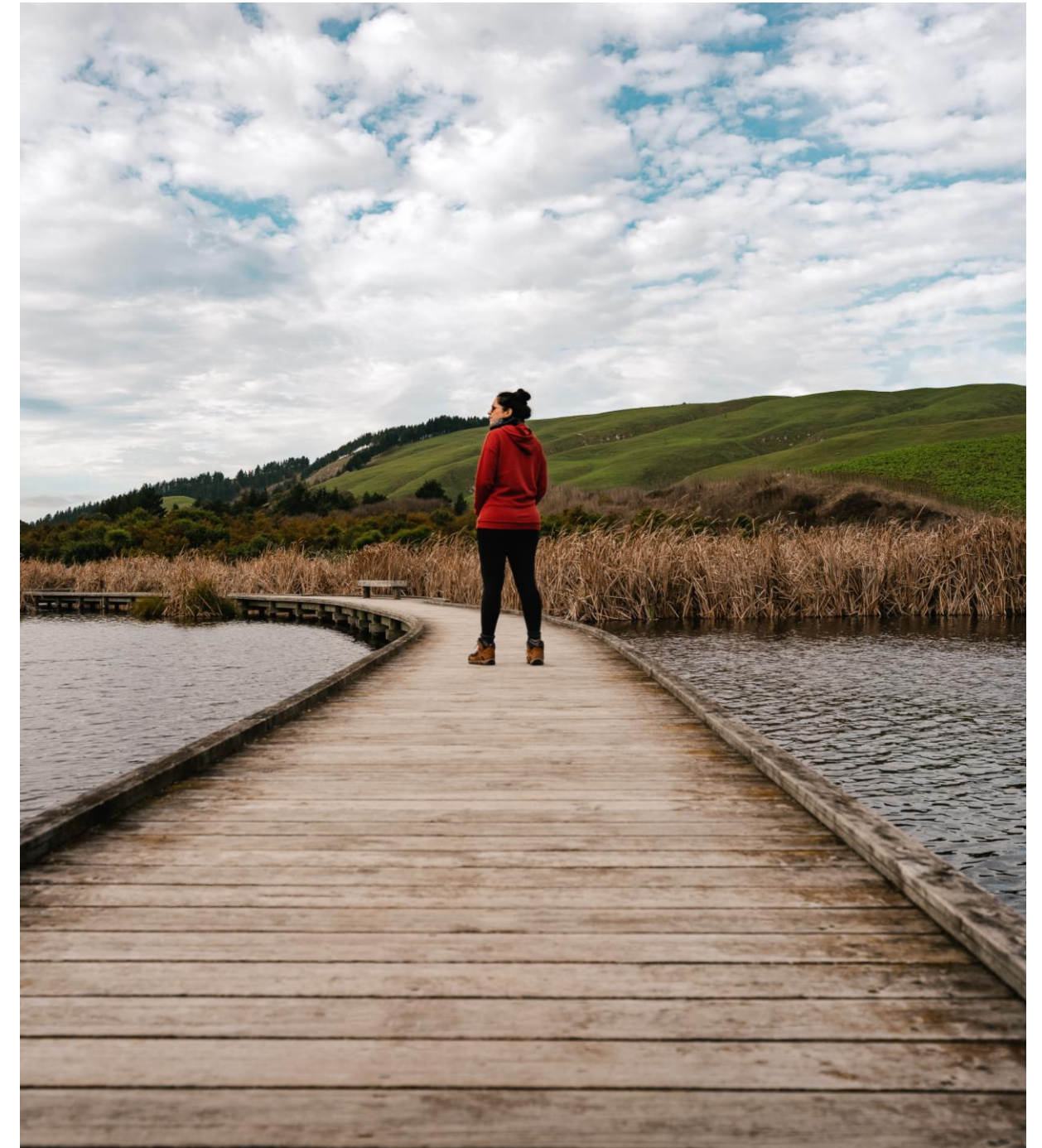
Run through framing of the new system – its sequence and how it works.

Key components that affect your work and delivery to our communities and with mana whenua partners.

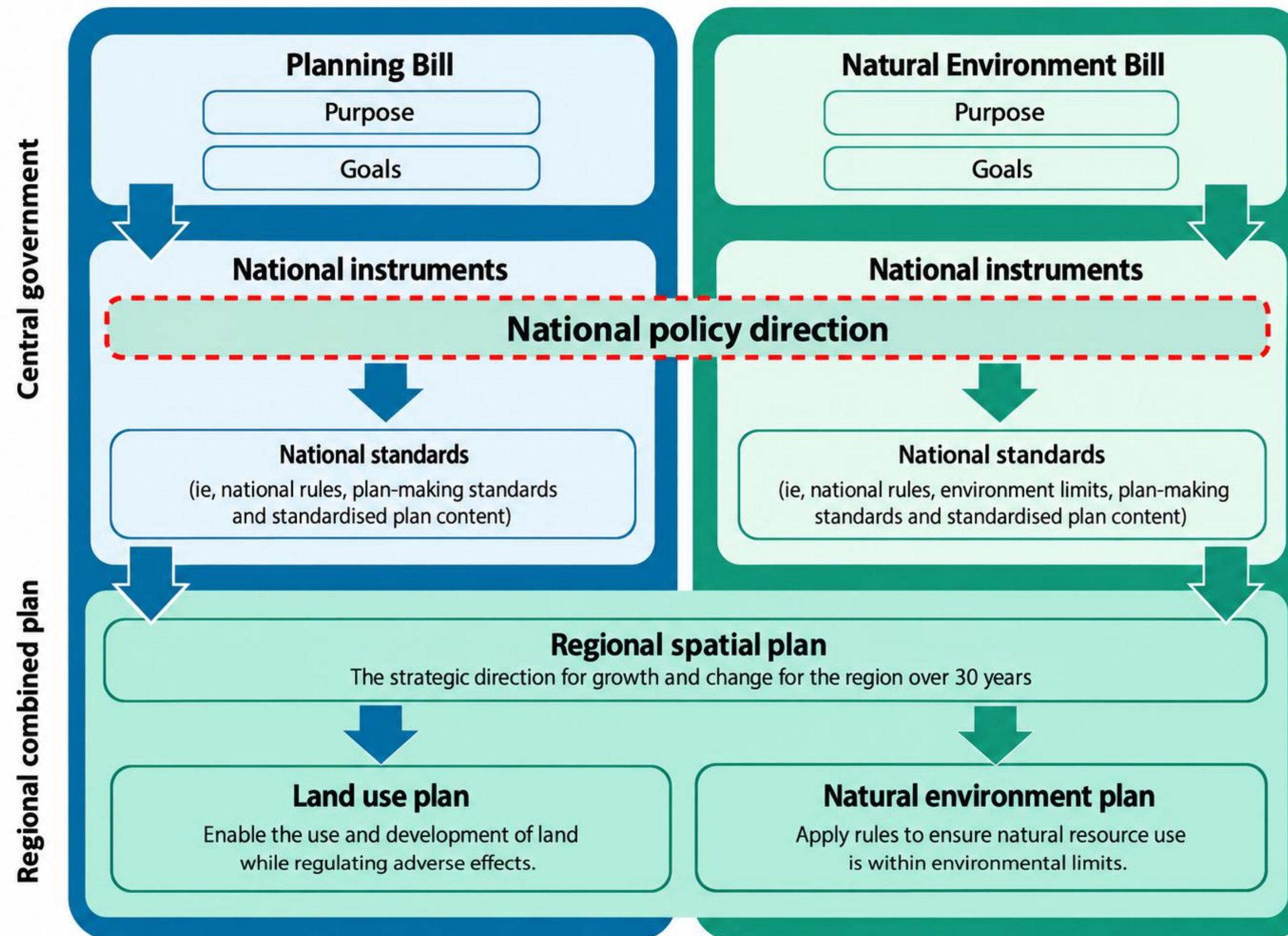
Implications for our sector – what's coming up that we need to pay attention to.

Note the timing – still pre-enactment and we're yet to see the final wording of the new Acts.

Work is underway....



New Planning and Environmental Management System



Implementation roadmap

2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
• Planning Bill and Natural Environment Bill – expected to be enacted September 2026 • Head Start outline proposals submitted (9 August 2026) • Transition period and transitional consenting begins • RMA plans and consenting stay in place until the new system takes over • Informal non-statutory public engagement on illustrative national policy direction in August 2026	• National policy direction issued no later than 12 months after the Bills become law (e.g. September 2027) • National standards, providing direction on the structure and form of regional spatial plans finalised within 12 months of enactment (e.g. September 2027) (but not before national policy direction)	• National standards relating to environmental limits finalised within 18 months after the Bills become law (e.g. March 2028) • National standards on standardised plan provisions finalised within 21 months after the Bills become law (e.g. June 2028) • Councils notify draft regional spatial plans within 21 months of the Bills becoming law (e.g. June 2028)	• Regional spatial plans must be decided within 9 months after they are publicly notified (e.g. March 2029) • Councils notify natural environment plans and land use plans within 9 months of regional spatial plan decisions (e.g. December 2029). • Once all plans are notified, the Minister will recommend an Order in Council be made specifying the date the new legislation will apply (the specified transition date)	• From the specified transition date, all notified plans have legal effect and the new system is fully ‘switched on’ • Councils must decide land use plans and natural environment plans within 12 months of notifying them.

Key components affecting your work – and implications

Some changes from the original Bills – but core design and components retained

Headlines for our sector:

- More decisions made centrally, and fewer decisions made at the regional and local level
- Fewer regulatory plans and more standardisation
- Fewer consents and more permitted activities, monitoring & enforcement
- Mandatory environmental limits
- A single combined plan for each region, which includes a regional spatial plan, land use plan and natural environment plan
- Confined mana whenua participation
- Fewer pathways for community input

Lots of unanswered questions – clarity through national standards



Things we need to pay extra attention to

Much detail on how the system is to work is yet to emerge!

Immediate focus on elements of transitional consenting, and regional spatial planning

Spatial planning arrangements forming in regions right now, constraints (and opportunities) mapping frameworks to be formed

Work on environmental limits framework development, right now

Substantial national policy and standards development (the *what* and *how* of the new system) over next year-to-18 months

Catchment and place-based non-regulatory – remains an ongoing focus and effort

Sector readiness: programme planning, capacity and capability, and retention support will be crucial





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GET IN TOUCH

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Q & A



Ngā mihi nui

Thank you for joining us today!