



BAY OF CONNECTIONS

ONE REGION . ONE GOAL . ONE FUTURE

FAQs

What is the Regional Growth Study?

The Bay of Plenty Regional Growth Study (RGS) identifies a range of short to mid-term opportunities (0-10 years) that could assist in increasing investment, employment, and incomes in the region.

The RGS catalogues the region's strengths and opportunities and helps determine the initiatives, mechanisms and investment needed to advance those opportunities and make them a reality. It brings together knowledge held by local business people, iwi/Maori, stakeholders and economic development agencies, and combines that knowledge with official data and independent economic analysis.

The study is not a strategy or an action plan, it is just the first step. Its purpose is to identify growth and investment opportunities and assess how they might be progressed by the private sector, local government, central government and non-government organisations. The next steps include the development of an action plan which will provide the pathway for implementation.

What does it mean/do for the region?

The Bay of Plenty RGS provides a common understanding of the challenges and opportunities in the region and identifies the roles of different players/stakeholders in order to realise growth. Regional success will only be achieved through effective collaboration and the government is committed to working with business, local government, Maori and iwi to take action and provide better outcomes for the Bay of Plenty.

A wide range of sectors contribute to the current success of the Bay of Plenty region, including horticulture, forestry, agriculture and tourism. However, there is significant scope to increase incomes and employment in the region through sensible investment, increased productivity and exports. The RGS looks at what support is needed from central and local government, and brings together skill sets and investment capabilities both within and outside the region in order to make this a reality.

Who is involved?

The RGS has been commissioned by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE), together with the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI), working in partnership with the Bay of Connections on behalf of the region. Independent consultants MartinJenkins have collated the final study, while key regional stakeholders have been consulted throughout the development of the study – including business, industry, education providers, local and regional government and iwi/Maori.

What area does the study cover?

In order to align with the Bay of Connections, the regional growth strategy for the Bay of Plenty Regional Council, the study includes the wider Bay of Plenty region, including Taupo.

- Western – Tauranga City, and Western Bay of Plenty District
- Eastern – Kawerau, Opotiki and Whakatane districts
- Central – Rotorua and Taupo districts

Why was the Bay of Plenty chosen?



BAY OF CONNECTIONS

ONE REGION . ONE GOAL . ONE FUTURE

The Bay of Plenty was identified as a region with a number of opportunities for potential development and growth – especially around lower than average incomes, employment opportunities and skills shortages. It was acknowledged that the Bay of Plenty has the ability to build off an already strong platform of collaboration between industry, research organisations, iwi and local and central government, through the likes of the Bay of Connections. The opportunities identified in the RGS provide a platform for action, and highlights ways the region can better use its assets to build better business, job growth and higher standards of living.

What other regions have been chosen?

Northland and Manawatu-Wanganui are the two other regions that have been a focus for the Regional Growth Study programme. The Northland Regional Growth Study was launched in February 2015, while the Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Growth Study is currently underway.

What involvement has the region had in the development of the study?

There has been considerable regional involvement in the development of the study. A regional project steering group comprising regional and government representatives was formed to keep the project on track. A Bay of Plenty Technical Advisory Group of 14 people was also formed to provide key regional sectoral expertise and oversight into the report during its development to ensure that knowledge held by local business people and stakeholders was integrated with official data. It was led by Bay of Connections, MBIE and MPI.

Independent consultants, MartinJenkins, who wrote the report undertook more than 60 interviews in the region across a wide range of sectors including businesses, local and regional government, education providers and iwi/Maori to inform the development of the report.

What does the study look at and how was it put together?

The study looks at opportunities within the region for growth and development, in order to build a more prosperous region. The study included five phases to identify and assess these potential growth opportunities, which included:

- **Data and research collation and review**
Over 200 studies and research reports on the region and key industries were reviewed, including economic research, economic strategy, local authority planning, infrastructure and industry studies.
- **Key informant interviews**
Over 60 interviews were undertaken with representatives from business, education, research, local government and commercial iwi entities. Workshops and meetings were also held with representatives from the Bay of Connections.
- **Assessment and investment opportunity/action identification**
A long list of potential actions were assessed against initial criteria to identify their suitability, which included: validity, potential impact, practicality, regional significance, international orientation, ability to leverage previous activity and consistency with national priorities.



- **Validation opportunities** **of short-listed**
Twelve additional in-depth interviews and meetings were held with representatives from business, local government and central government.
- **Reporting**
Early drafts were provided to the technical advisory group, steering group and members of local and central government. Feedback was considered and incorporated.

How realistic are expectations for growth in the Bay of Plenty?

Expectations for growth in the region are very realistic. While the study recognises there is no silver bullet or industry that will transform the Bay of Plenty economy, it recognises that the region has significant untapped potential and comparative advantages geographically. This will be achieved by lifting productivity and profitability of the region's current sectors and addressing a number of cross-sectoral enablers such as education and skills achievement levels, transport, communications and water management infrastructure.

The study is not a strategy or an action plan, it is just the first step. Its purpose is to identify growth and investment opportunities and assess how they might be progressed by the private sector, local government, central government and non-government organisations.

Who will be managing the study and its implementation?

The management of the study will be overseen by a steering group comprised of MBIE, MPI, NZTE, Bay of Plenty Regional Council and Bay of Connections. A RGS Governance Group and RGS Action Group will be set up for the development of the Action Plan. Those groups will dis-establish at the completion of the Action Plan. The implementation plan will determine those involved in the next phase.

How can I have a say? How can I be involved in implementation?

The RGS itself is now complete, with the next steps involving the development of an action plan to provide the pathway for implementation. The development of the action plan will involve engagement with businesses and industry across the region. Go to the Bay of Connections website for more information and contact details to get involved: www.bayofconnections.com

What is the Bay of Connections?

The Bay of Connections is the regional growth strategy for the wider Bay of Plenty with a vision of creating a prosperous region supported by sustainable sectors; it is simple and aspirational, with the aim of establishing and implementing sector-based strategies that generate job growth. It is about growing a strong and vibrant community, encouraging collaboration between business and industry, improving wellbeing, and encouraging innovation and leadership.