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Can collaboration between local authorities enable efficient and effective environmental management?

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
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ABSTRACT

Local authorities in New Zealand are under increasing pressure from central government and the public to deliver efficient and effective local government. Local authorities are required to operate in a fiscally efficient manner while also undertaking a range of local government functions effectively. Local authority collaboration has been identified as a useful approach to the delivery of local government functions that can achieve efficiencies while also providing for effective local government. Local authority collaboration has also been identified as an alternative or complimentary approach to local authority amalgamation. Regulatory functions associated with environmental management are a key responsibility of local governments in New Zealand. This research evaluates the value and efficacy of local authority collaboration in environmental management. The primary research method was a case study of a Southland example of local authority collaboration in environmental management. The secondary research method was a documentary analysis of eight other New Zealand examples of inter-council collaboration in environmental management. The theory and practice of collaboration between local governments was also analysed through a review of relevant literature. This research has shown that collaboration between local governments can be fiscally efficient, whilst also providing an effective approach to the management of environmental issues. The research has also shown that local authority collaboration in environmental management can be effective across a range of environmental issues. The research concludes that local authority collaboration is a valuable and efficacious approach that can enable effective and efficient environmental management.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ARGS	Auckland Regional Growth Strategy
ARGF	Auckland Regional Growth Forum
CDEM	Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002
CMF	Canterbury Mayoral Forum
CWMS	Canterbury Water Management Strategy
ECan	Environment Canterbury (Canterbury Regional Council)
ES	Environment Southland (Southland Regional Council)
GDC	Gore District Council
GDP	Gore District Plan 2006
GCUDS	Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy
HPUDS	Heretaunga Plains Urban Development Strategy
ICC	Invercargill City Council
ICDP	Invercargill City District Plan 2005
LAWF	Land and Water Forum
LGA	Local Government Act 2002
LGNZ	Local Government New Zealand
MfE	Ministry for the Environment
RMA	Resource Management Act 1991
RPS	Regional Policy Statement
SGSC	Smarter Government - Stronger Communities
SRPS	Southland Regional Policy Statement 1997
SRPS/SDP	Southland Regional Policy Statement/Southland District Plan
SDC	Southland District Council
SDP	Southland District Plan 2001
SRC	Southland Regional Council (Environment Southland)
SSSF	Southland Shared Services Forum