

Research and Development and Water Workshop – 10.8.2006

Facilitators: Tupara Morrison and Lachlan McKenzie

A quick background was given for each sector including an outline of global and national drivers, advantages of Rotorua (ie, location, facilities, established linkages) and examples of current waste that could be harnessed/made into a quality product (see PowerPoint presentation).

Vision for Rotorua was outlined as:

- Be seen as an innovative hub to drive solutions.
- Build on synergies.
- Be a role model for NZ Inc.
- Harness R&D and funding.
- Turn waste products into assets and economic drivers.
- Understand barriers – what is current consumption and requirements to go forward.
- Work closely with Scion.

Discussion

Is Scion the only driver? No – there are other businesses such as AgResearch.

How do businesses get into R&D? The Board and NZTE are looking at this.

There is a social aspect to innovation - rethinking the way we live? It's important to work out social drivers for innovations ie, can't force innovations onto society – it takes a lot of consultation around adopting ideas and how different ideas appeal.

Does the board know the long-term quality and quantity of water required? Have they consulted with RDC? Grey water reuse and metering. It's important to undertake a stocktake on water do establish what's needed locally ie, base projections on population growth and business requirements.

How much water can be exported? Water is very expensive to export as it's heavy.

Who owns the water in Rotorua?

Arguments around the use of Scion by the Board. Noted that Scion's strengths include it's location in Rotorua and ability to undertake work.

Gentleman from Integrated Systems Design asked how local companies can compete in the global marketplace. Need to collectively move on and compete in the global marketplace.

Important to identify challenges to local businesses.

Communication between stakeholders is crucial.

Ownership – do you have protection of your idea is you take it to Scion? Businesses want to own intellectual intelligence. NZ needs to take advantage of global models and global technologies. It was stressed that we *can* compete in the global economy.

Need a link between commercialisation and R&D.

How do SME's get into R&D? What are the current barriers for SME's to get into R&D? Need to bring scientists and ideas together.

Scion is an R&D catalyst. Other companies can also be catalysts as required. This is not a Scion strategy but Scion would like to help. Scion has been used as an example today but there are many other providers (ie, AgResearch).

Local business people would like to see money channelled to SME local businesses for R&D.

It's important for SME's to link into CRI's. Need a streamlined system. Noted that funding does not always go directly to CRI's and there are opportunities for local businesses to get funding.

Introduce flyers on links available for local business assistance – need to find ways for funding to be easily accessed by SME's.

R&D days – annual event with CRI's and SME's. 3 hour workshops to inform businesses on R&D and innovation development.

Links between SME's are important ie, economies grow faster by linking companies than by enlarging current companies.

Look at Scandinavian models.

Get top minds together and go to European trade shows. Don't reinvent the wheel.

Focus on the marketable value of water. Don't take it for granted. Promote the uses of water (ie, rafting and boating).