

February 2012

Project

2058

Methodology
and review
of work

Working towards a
National Sustainable
Development
Strategy

MCGUINNESS INSTITUTE

Project 2058: Methodology and review of work

Version 4

Updated February 2012

**Working towards a National Sustainable
Development Strategy**

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About the Institute	The Sustainable Future Institute is an independently funded non-partisan think tank. The main work programme of the Institute is <i>Project 2058</i> . The strategic aim of this project is to promote integrated long-term thinking, leadership and capacity-building so that New Zealand can effectively seek and create opportunities and explore and manage risks over the next 50 years. It is hoped that <i>Project 2058</i> will help develop dialogue among government ministers, policy analysts and members of the public about alternative strategies for the future of New Zealand.
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Preface

The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them.

Albert Einstein, 1879–1955

It is a great privilege to have the time to explore New Zealand’s long-term future, but it is not a task without risks. Looking into the future and forecasting is, by its nature, a risky business – however, *Project 2058* is more than forecasting. It is about building capacity and skills within the next generation of New Zealanders so that we can move towards a sustainable future. This requires an understanding of what New Zealanders want for their country and their future. It is hard enough to get a small group of people to agree on what they want for New Zealand now, let alone to try and establish a single view on what New Zealanders may want in 50 years’ time. This is the underlying challenge facing the *Project 2058* research team.

What follows is the fourth version of our methodology. This outlines our approach and the principles we will use to guide *Project 2058*. Its purpose is to act as a spine, providing sufficient direction and form to move the project forward with enough flexibility to adapt to allow for changes along the way. This will allow us to adopt new tools and methodologies to help guide and refine our process and integrate our thinking to develop a robust National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS). This is like creating an igloo from blocks of ice. Each block is a report, working paper or think piece. The last block is our vision of an NSDS – the report that completes the igloo. This analogy reminds us to continually question the purpose and shape of each report and how it fits with our overall strategic aim. Hence, this paper is the fourth version of our methodology.

It is difficult for government to see the big picture while it is mired in managing crises and focusing on budgets at the expense of outcomes. Scientific inquiry relative to the well-being (current and future) of New Zealand is necessary and provides a basis for planning and action at government, policy, and operating levels. We clearly need a great deal of assistance and advice from a wide range of New Zealanders to ensure the best outcome. Therefore we welcome your input and ideas, whatever form they may take. In the words of Confucius, ‘a gem cannot be polished without friction, nor man perfected without trials’.



Wendy McGuinness
Chief Executive

1. The Sustainable Future Institute and Project 2058

The Sustainable Future Institute is an independently funded, non-partisan think tank working for the public good, contributing strategic foresight through evidence-based research and policy analysis. Our values are inclusiveness, integrity, non-partisanship and relevance. Our vision is to provide relevant and timely information that is complete and well-researched for those interested in exploring New Zealand's long-term future. Sustainable Future is a registered charity with the Charities Commission.

Project 2058 is the Institute's flagship project – its strategic aim is to promote integrated long-term thinking, leadership and capacity-building so that New Zealand can effectively explore and manage risks and opportunities over the next 50 years.

1.1 A National Sustainable Development Strategy

The culmination of *Project 2058* will be the Institute's proposal of a National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) for New Zealand. Earlier work by the Institute found that New Zealand is well behind on its international obligations to develop and implement an NSDS (SFI, 2007). The Institute's proposed NSDS will draw on the findings of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis, the preferred future and chosen strategic option, based on the earlier research and scenario-development phases.

To provide clarity over what is meant by a National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS), we provide two internationally recognised definitions. An NSDS is defined by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) as:

a strategic and participatory process of analysis, debate, capacity strengthening, planning and action towards sustainable development. (OECD/DAC, 2002a: 2)

Similarly, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) describes an NSDS as:

a coordinated, participatory and iterative process of thoughts and actions to achieve economic, environmental and social objectives in a balanced and integrated manner. (UNDESA, 2002a: 1)

These definitions capture the cyclical, iterative nature of an NSDS, in which a strategy document is not the end product, but rather a stage in an on-going process. For further information about global best practice, see earlier *Project 2058* reports. In particular:

- Report 1: *A National Sustainable Development Strategy: How New Zealand measures up against international commitments* (SFI, 2007) looked at New Zealand's failure to meet its international commitments with regard to preparing an NSDS;
- Report 4a: *Institutions for Sustainable Development: Learning from international experience* (SFI, 2008b) looked at the institutional frameworks for sustainable development of nine countries;
- Report 4: *Institutions for Sustainable Development: Developing an optimal framework for New Zealand* (SFI, 2008c) explored options for institutional frameworks in New Zealand; and
- Report 5: *The Common Elements of a National Sustainable Development Strategy* (SFI, 2008d) analyses three NSDSs (those of Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom). The common elements of these are set out in Table 1:

Table 1. The Seven Common Elements of an NSDS

Source: SFI, 2008d: 2

Seven Common Elements of an NSDS	Seven Strategic Questions
Background (to the strategy)	1. Where have we been and where are we now?
Vision (including desired outcomes)	2. Where do we want to be in the long term?
Principles (and values)	3. What do we believe in?
Priorities	4. What do we need to focus on?
Method of implementation	5. What do we decide to do and decide not to do?
Governance	6. Who is going to do what?
Monitoring progress	7. How well are we going?

In creating an NSDS, the *Project 2058* team will also take guidance from the OECD which recommends that the following elements are addressed in an NSDS:

1. Integration of economic, social and environmental objectives, and balance across sectors, territories and generations;
2. Broad participation and effective partnerships;
3. Country ownership and commitment;
4. Developing capacity and an enabling environment, and
5. Focus on outcomes and means of implementation. (OECD/DAC, 2002: 36)

2. Methodology

2.1 Proposition

The fundamental proposition of *Project 2058* is that ‘business as usual’ is no longer an acceptable option for New Zealand. Social, cultural, economic and environmental inequities within our society deliver current and future generations more problems than solutions. *Project 2058* is a mechanism that attempts to creatively explore the future and to develop integrated long-term solutions so that we may progress towards a more sustainable New Zealand. We are adopting a pragmatic and flexible approach. Our policy papers are made available to the general public, with our research recommendations written for politicians and policy makers.

The Institute selected the year 2058 because we needed to ensure we had a timeframe that was not too short to be attached to, or too long to be unimaginable. We chose 50 years as a way of drawing a line in the sand, however we would also like to work with and support groups and individuals thinking further ahead. New Zealand’s future is worth exploring, and *Project 2058* is one of a number of mechanisms that provide a way for individuals and entities to consider and discuss options for shaping New Zealand’s future. It is anticipated that *Project 2058* will help develop dialogue among government ministers, policy analysts and members of the public about alternative strategies for New Zealand’s future.

At the end of the project, the Institute will create a National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS). Acknowledging that there are a multiplicity of ways of planning for a sustainable future, we have chosen to continually review and renew our approach, thus this is the fourth version of our methodology. Like sustainability itself, we consider our project a process and not necessarily an endpoint – the strategy we produce at the end will encourage greater government engagement with sustainability and assist future strategy making.

Ultimately, this NSDS will be the expression of the Institute’s desired path towards a sustainable future. It will not represent the desires of all the people of New Zealand – as a small, non-governmental organisation, we have neither the mandate nor the resources to undertake and execute such a task. The Institute is taking this opportunity to explore New Zealand’s future primarily due to the absence of government activity in this area, an absence that is at odds with both international experience and New Zealand’s international commitments.

2.2 Purpose

The Institute’s *Project 2058* aims to promote integrated long-term thinking, leadership and capacity-building so that New Zealand can effectively explore and manage risks and opportunities over the next 50 years. The world is constantly changing and, as New Zealanders, we need to think about what this means for us and our future. Often strategic thinking only occurs in terms of the three-year election cycle where short-term problems obscure the big picture focus, and this does not prepare us well for the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. Promoting long-term thinking, leadership and capacity-building to manage an uncertain future is critical. *Project 2058* is developing a vision of what a sustainable New Zealand may look like in the year 2058 and an overarching strategy to reach this vision. Established in 2006, the project is expected to be completed in 2013.

In order to achieve this aim, the *Project 2058* team will:

1. Develop a detailed understanding of the current national planning landscape, and in particular the government’s ability to deliver long-term strategic thinking;
2. Develop a good working relationship with all parties working for and thinking about the long-term view;
3. Recognise the goals of iwi and hapū, and acknowledge te Tiriti o Waitangi (see Appendix 1);
4. Assess key aspects of New Zealand’s society, asset base and economy in order to understand how they may shape the country’s long-term future, such as government-funded science, natural and human-generated resources, the state sector and infrastructure;
5. Develop a set of four scenarios to explore and map possible futures;

6. Identify and analyse New Zealand's future strengths and weaknesses, and potential international opportunities and threats;
7. Describe a desirable sustainable future in detail, and
8. Prepare a *Project 2058* National Sustainable Development Strategy.

2.3 Principles

To develop a set of principles to apply to the project, the work of a number of different organisations and programmes were analysed (see the Institute's Working Paper 2009/01: *Developing principles for Project 2058* (SFI, 2009a)). Through a process of review, synthesis and reflection, six basic principles for *Project 2058* were developed. These are referred to throughout the project to help guide ideas and output:

1. Planning and decision-making must have a long-term focus.
2. Sustainability requires maintaining and promoting opportunity and equity for current and future generations.
3. Sustainability must be pursued through the integration of cultural, economic, environmental and social goals in a way that recognises the interconnected nature of our world. Planning should take a systems approach, celebrate diversity, respect human rights, and seek mutual solutions to mutual problems.
4. Sustainability must be progressed through participation and partnerships. It is vital for Māori and other New Zealanders to work together towards active participation and to give effect to the Treaty of Waitangi.
5. New Zealand should focus on sustainable *development* rather than *solely on economic growth*.
6. Environmental limits must be respected and recognition made of the intrinsic value of all life systems.
7. Decision-making should be based on the best information. Research on sustainability must aim to be timely, accurate and meaningful.

These principles are action-focused and solutions oriented. They reflect the critical standpoint of the Institute and *Project 2058* – that current governance, social and economic systems are inappropriate for long-term sustainability and well-being.

2.4 Positionality Statement

In undertaking research about New Zealand's future, we acknowledge that we are not speaking on behalf of, or representative of, all the people of New Zealand. *Project 2058* team members are largely New Zealanders of European and Māori descent, mostly under 30 years of age, and are either current tertiary students or recent graduates, with many working during the university summer holidays. Our backgrounds are in law, environmental studies, planning, languages, Māori studies, biological sciences, psychology and design. Our project leader, Wendy McGuinness, has extensive professional experience in the public and corporate sectors, in business, risk management, strategy and corporate governance. We are in close contact with external reviewers who are specialists in their respective fields, and who provide us with expertise in academia, industry and policy advice.¹

The nature of this project – the idea that we can determine how New Zealand moves into the future – brings with it obligations under te Tiriti o Waitangi not to speak on behalf of Māori. We recognise that there is no one Māori worldview, aspiration or role, but instead a multiplicity of understandings amongst the many iwi and hapū. Likewise, we are aware that New Zealand's multicultural nature means that there are many different understandings of sustainability. The Institute has produced a large body of work examining the shared goals of Māori and Māori representation, the resulting publications can be seen in Appendix 1.

¹ For more information on the Institute's external reviewers and external review policy, see http://www.sustainablefuture.info/Site/About/External_Review_Policy.aspx

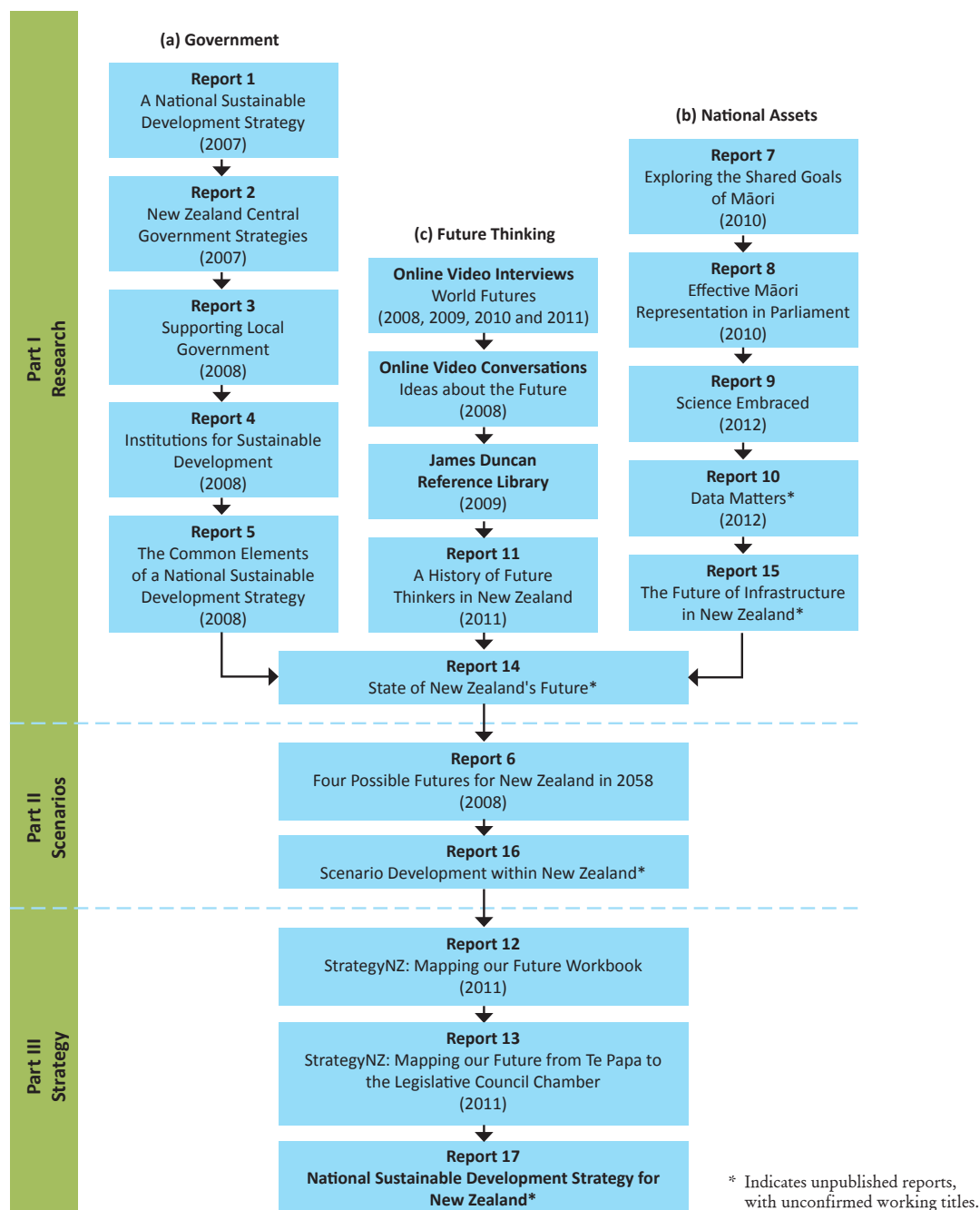
3. Project 2058 programme

The *Project 2058* method is divided into three parts:

- Part I – Research
- Part II – Scenario Development
- Part III – Strategy Development

The output is a series of reports, working papers and think pieces that are all available on the Institute's website. Figure 1 shows the connections between the reports that make up *Project 2058*. Published reports have a report number and date of publication. Unpublished reports (marked *) have working titles and our aim is to publish these in late 2012.

Figure 1. *Project 2058* Method



3.1 Part I: Research

Part I, the research phase of *Project 2058*, is divided into three areas:

- a. Government;
- b. National assets;
- c. Future thinkers; and
- d. The state of New Zealand's future.

3.1.1 (a) Government

These papers review the effectiveness of the New Zealand government's initiatives for strategy development and its capacity to deliver long-term strategic thinking. This section of research was completed in 2008 with the publication of five reports (left-hand column of Figure 1).

3.1.2 (b) National Assets

This research will describe the state of New Zealand's natural, human-generated, social and cultural assets. This process will identify the specific challenges and opportunities New Zealand faces in relation to other countries, and question which unique characteristics are essential in the development and implementation of an NSDS. This stage of the project incorporates seven research reports, which are expected to be completed in late 2012 (right-hand column of Figure 1).

3.1.3 (c) Future Thinking

The Institute has benefited from understanding the methodology and ideas created by past and current future thinkers. This section comprises a series of interviews with future thinkers from the World Futures Conference held in Washington DC in July 2008, Chicago in 2009, Boston in 2010 and Vancouver in 2011; the *Conversations: Ideas about the Future* project in which New Zealanders from a range of backgrounds speak about the country's future;² and Report 11: *A History of Future-thinking Initiatives in New Zealand, 1936–2010: Learning from the past to build a better future* (SFI, 2011a) which reviews the future thinking landscape in New Zealand by exploring and documenting past initiatives and reflecting on the lessons learnt (middle column of Figure 1). In reviewing scenarios published by Sustainable Aotearoa New Zealand,³ Landcare Research,⁴ the Future Makers project,⁵ and others, *Project 2058* identifies both similarities and differences that can be woven into the final strategy in Part III.

The Institute's review of the 18 initiatives in Report 11 evaluated: the *inputs*, which related to a clear definition of each initiative's purpose and goals; the *process*, the means by which the purpose was achieved; the *outputs*, the products that resulted from the process; and the *outcomes*, the ultimate effects of the work. To present this information succinctly a 'four-step model for planning future-thinking initiatives' was developed (see Figure 2). The model also shows the conclusions drawn from the study, which take the form of lessons learnt.

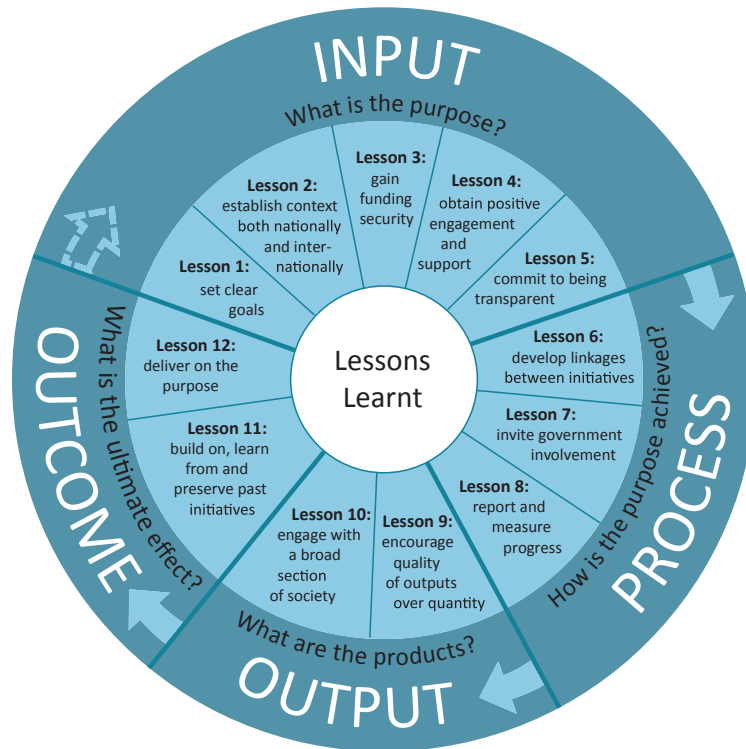
2 Interviews are available to watch on the Institute's website.

3 See *Strong Sustainability for New Zealand: Principles and Scenarios* (SANZ, 2009).

4 See *Hatched: The capacity for sustainable development* (Landcare Research, 2009).

5 See Future Makers (n.d.).

Figure 2. Four-step Model for Planning Future-thinking Initiatives



As part of the *Future Thinkers* section of *Project 2058*, the Institute opened the James Duncan Reference Library – so named after the Chair of the Commission for the Future (1976–1982) – at its offices in Wellington. The library was a by-product of the collection of future thinking material for *Project 2058*, and has been established to provide a record of long-term thinking in New Zealand.

The collection of publications has evolved as the Institute has grown, and it is now clear that the library is becoming a resource in its own right for those interested in thinking about New Zealand’s long-term future. As well as publications on foresight specific to New Zealand, the library also features collections focusing on the work of international future thinkers and scenario planners; New Zealand history and society; books with a Māori focus, and a diverse collection of reference and general materials from New Zealand and around the world.⁶

The *StrategyNZ: Mapping our Future* event, hosted by the Institute in March 2011, aimed to explore how New Zealanders might develop a strategy map for our nation. The event involved teams composed of a wide range of New Zealanders developing strategy maps for New Zealand, with selected groups presenting their strategy map at the Legislative Council Chamber of Parliament. The results of the two-day workshop were published in Report 13: *StrategyNZ: Mapping our Future Strategy Maps* (SFI, 2011b) and an e-book *StrategyNZ: Mapping our Future: Reflections from participants of the workshop – 30/31 March* was also produced (SFI, 2011c). Key themes that resonated with the participants were the importance of attracting talent to New Zealand and retaining it; the desire to move to a much more entrepreneurial, high-income society; the constitutional review; the appetite of young people to engage in national dialogues; and the desire to have a robust, multicultural society. Particularly relevant to this discussion was the theme that participants wanted New Zealand to be ‘a place where talent wants to live’. The themes arising from the event have greatly informed the Institute’s work programme going forward. An overview of the wider inputs and outputs of *StrategyNZ: Mapping our Future* can be found in Working Paper 2011/20 *Foresight in New Zealand*. Appendix 2 shows a list of publications and projects resulting from the event.

⁶ The James Duncan Reference Library is open to the public by prior appointment, and is located in the Sustainable Future Institute’s offices at Level 2, 5 Cable St, Wellington. The Library’s online catalogue is available via the Institute’s website.

3.1.4 (d) State of New Zealand's future

Report 14: *State of New Zealand's Future* will bring together a range of work that identifies important international factors and drivers of change, as well as current international future studies work. The Institute will use this international perspective together with the knowledge gained from our earlier New Zealand-focused research (see Figure 1) to develop our view of New Zealand's future. *Project 2058* approaches this through identifying drivers of change. Report 14 will be released in late 2012.

3.2 Part II: Scenario Development

3.2.1 Four possible futures

Scenario building is a critical technique for exploring futures. *The Project 2058* team is using this tool to construct and describe four possible futures for New Zealand in the year 2058. The scenarios are not intended to be a blueprint for planning or a description of the most probable future; rather they are a way of exploring the future landscape, as depicted at the end of the cone in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Exploring the Future from 2008 to 2058

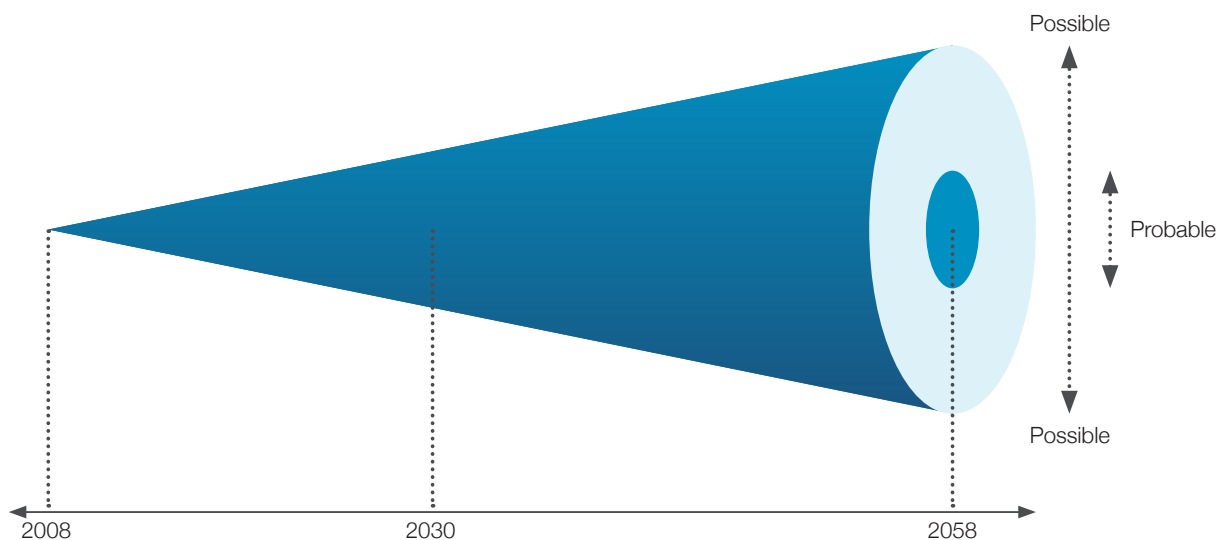


Table 2 below describes four possible futures: New Zealand either manages itself well or does not, and the world either manages itself well or does not, thus creating four possible futures, these are described in detail in Report 6: *Four Possible Futures for New Zealand in 2058* (SFI, 2008a).

Table 2. Four Scenarios Matrix

	The world does manage its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats	The world does not manage its strengths, weaknesses opportunities and threats
New Zealand does manage its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats	Scenario 1: New Zealand ✓ World ✓	Scenario 2: New Zealand ✓ World x
New Zealand does not manage its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats	Scenario 3: New Zealand x World ✓	Scenario 4: New Zealand x World x

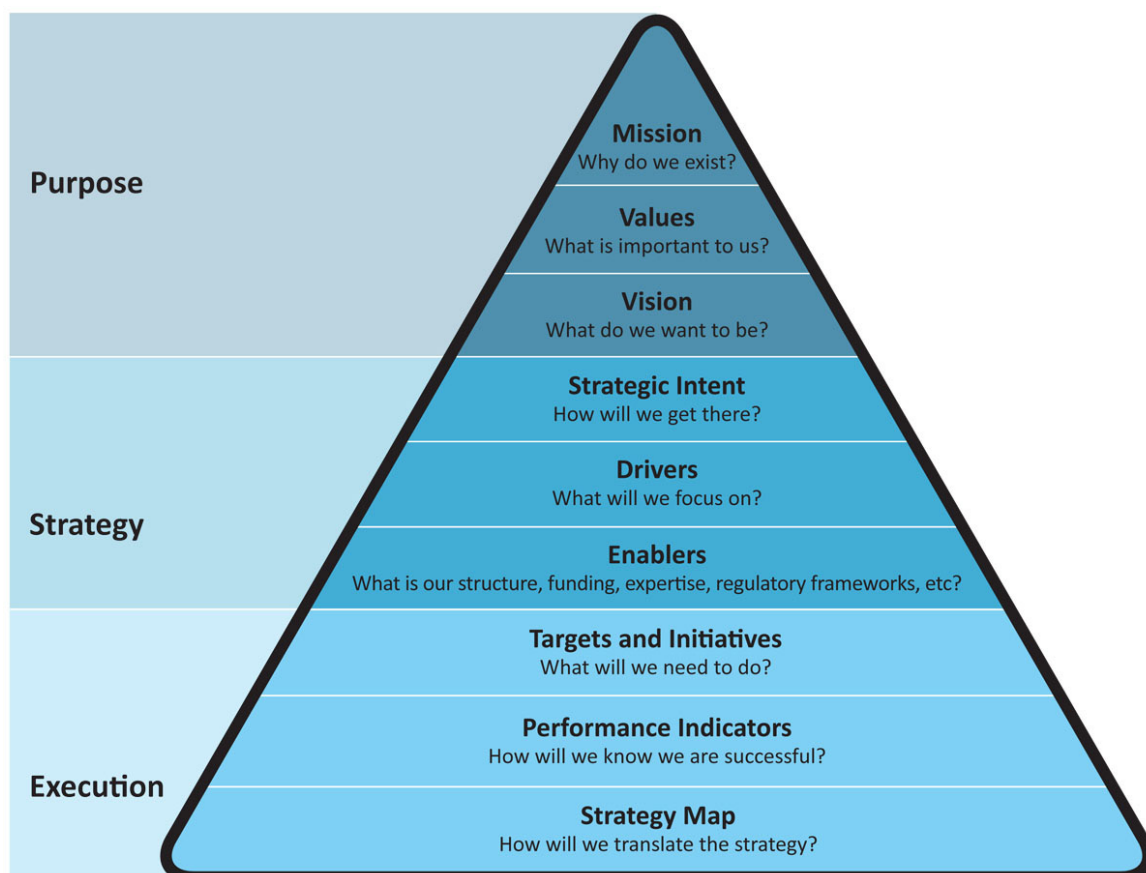
3.3 Part III: Strategy Development

The *Project 2058* team will outline one feasible and desirable option for New Zealand's future, and develop a strategy showing how New Zealand can get there. This approach will draw heavily on the strategy mapping methodology developed by Harvard Business School. Although the strategy map is just one tool used in the development and polishing of strategies, it is a powerful one that not only provides clarity, but also enables strategy to be discussed and debated. Strategy mapping was a core conceptual component of the Institute's *StrategyNZ: Mapping our Future* event and has underpinned the structure of Report 9: *Science Embraced*. The Institute regards the strategy mapping process as a rigorous strategy development tool for a National Sustainable Development Strategy.

In adopting this approach we have drawn heavily on the work of Robert S. Kaplan and David P. Norton, professors at the Harvard Business School. Developed with businesses in mind, the ability of strategy maps to demonstrate a strategic outline clearly and to communicate visions and strategies effectively is finding value beyond the corporate world as they are increasingly being used by communities and even countries.⁷

Strategy mapping is a process whereby horizontal and vertical linkages between the different strategic components can be identified and integrated into the overall strategy. Each stage builds into the next through an integrated approach that vertically aligns the purpose, strategy and execution through cause and effect relationships. This approach ensures a strategy has both internal cohesion (within the elements of the strategy) and external cohesion (with the wider landscape). The key steps and questions for each stage can be seen in the pyramid below. Each of the nine steps act as a pillar supporting the strategy.

Figure 4. Strategy Pyramid



⁷ This methodology has been successfully applied to the context of strengthening economic development in Brazil. For information see Kaplan and Norton, 2008.

4. Conclusion

This paper has outlined how the Institute will progress *Project 2058* – the development of a National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) for New Zealand, the work that has been done to date, and the work programme that is yet to be completed. The revised methodology is the result of adapting the learning and the tools we have acquired in our work. It defines the approach and principles we will use to guide the *Project 2058* work programme and shows how we have continually worked to integrate new tools and ways of thinking into our work. This serves to ensure that we are using the most up-to-date methodology for developing a National Sustainable Development Strategy for New Zealand.

Appendix 1: Exploring Māori Representation

Our research on Māori representation was initially intended to fit in a section within Report 7: *Exploring the Shared Goals of Māori: Working towards a National Sustainable Development Strategy* (SFI, 2010a). However, as this work progressed, we found the terrain increasingly complex and unclear. This ultimately resulted in a further six months of work and a complete rewrite, the outcome of this initial work being two major reports, Report 7 and Report 8: *Effective Māori Representation in Parliament: Working towards a National Sustainable Development Strategy* (SFI, 2010b). These two reports form part of a package of eleven research reports and working papers:

1. Report 7: *Exploring the Shared Goals of Māori: Working towards a National Sustainable Development Strategy* (SFI, 2010a);
2. Report 8: *Effective Māori Representation in Parliament: Working towards a National Sustainable Development Strategy* (SFI, 2010b);
3. Report 7a: *Environmental Goals of Iwi and Hapū: Six case studies* (SFI, 2009b);
4. Working Paper 2009/02: *A Methodological Approach to Māori-focused Research* (SFI, 2009c);
5. Working Paper 2009/03: *Identifying the Shared Goals of Six Māori Organisations* (SFI, 2009d);
6. Working Paper 2009/04: *Statistics: A selection of available data associated with shared Māori goals* (SFI, 2009e);
7. Working Paper 2010/02: *Institutions and Mechanisms Designed to Progress the Goals of Māori* (SFI, 2010c);
8. Working Paper 2010/03: *The Evolution of New Zealand as a Nation: Significant events and legislation 1770–2010* (SFI, 2010d);
9. Working Paper 2010/04: *The 2008 Election: Reviewing seat allocations without the Māori electorate seats* (SFI, 2010e), and
10. Working Paper 2010/05: *The Treaty settlement process: An overview of the Waitangi Tribunal and the Office of Treaty Settlements* (SFI, 2010f).

Together these reports work towards meeting Objective 3 of *Project 2058*, which is to recognise the goals of iwi and hapū, and acknowledge te Tiriti o Waitangi. The methodology of this work is informed by the wider methodological framework of *Project 2058*.

Appendix 2: Outputs from StrategyNZ: Mapping our Future

I. Exploring the Landscape

- Report 11: History of Future Thinkers



II. Pre-workshop

- Nation Dates (book)
- Workbook (Report 12)
- Two-day Future Studies Course (Dr Peter Bishop)



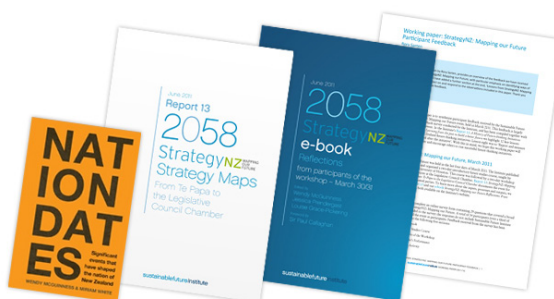
III. Workshop

- Part 1: Setting the global context
- Part 2: Where New Zealand is today
- Part 3: Preparing strategy maps
- Part 4: Presenting and judging strategy maps
- Part 5: Three workstreams
- Part 6: Presentations to Members of Parliament



IV. Post-workshop

- Strategy Map (Report 13)
- Feedback (Working paper)
- Reflections by participants (e-book)
- Final Nation Dates Book Published



V. New Initiatives emerging from StrategyNZ: Mapping our Future

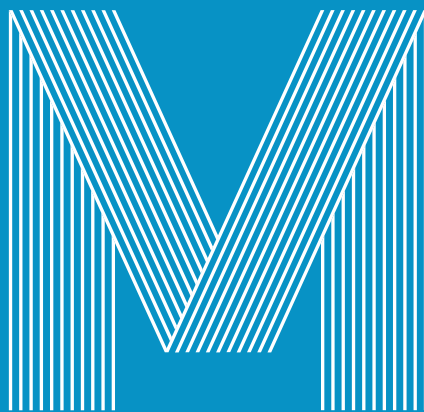
- Constitutional Review Project and EmpowerNZ website
- 'A place where talent wants to live' Project and Sir Paul Callaghan lunch
- In addition the event reinforced the importance of two ongoing projects: Project 2058 and Project One Integrated Report

empowerNZ
BUILDING THE FUTURE WITH
A NEW CONSTITUTION

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