Case Study

From Oil and Gas to a Diversified Economy

Taranaki's Just Transition Roadmap in New Zealand

Future Skills Centre | Centre des Compétences futures

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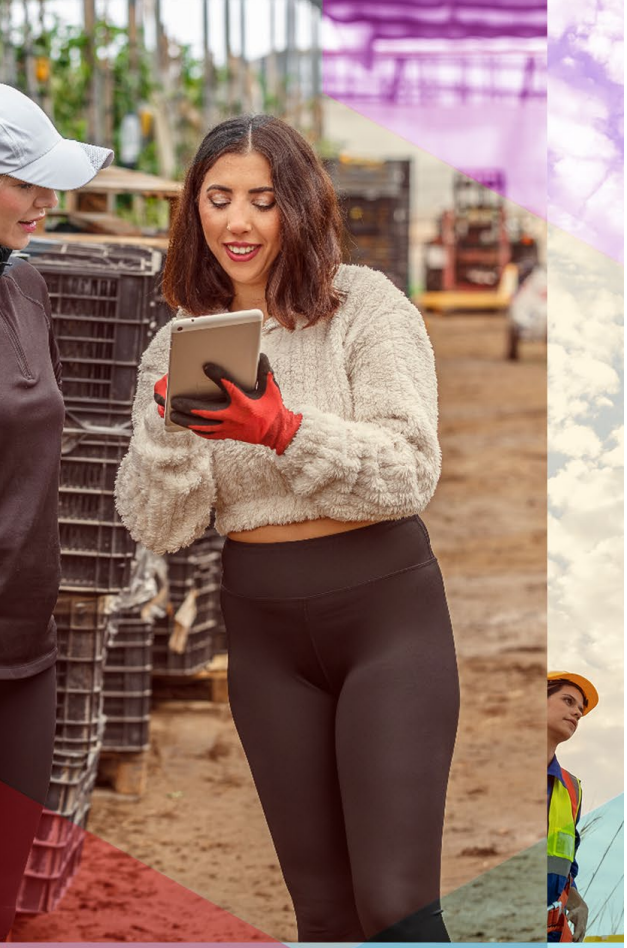

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Overview

Location	**Taranaki, New Zealand**
Initiative	***Taranaki 2050 Roadmap* and *2025/26 Action Plan***
Program snapshot	In 2019, Venture Taranaki, a local development agency, convened a wide-ranging social dialogue to support the Taranaki region's transition away from oil and gas. The place-based co-design process identified local assets and economic opportunities, building community consensus and mobilizing stakeholders to act. The dialogue included iwi (the Māori term for 'clan'), local and central governments, businesses, educators, unions, workers and other community members. As a result, the community-driven *Taranaki 2050 Roadmap* emerged, followed by an updated *2025/26 Action Plan.* Several localized skills training and workforce development initiatives took shape, particularly targeting youth and Māori communities and focusing on growth sectors, such as renewable energy, conservation, food and fibre and tourism. Guided by a community-developed monitoring and evaluation framework, these programs support workers, preserve and create employment opportunities and diversify the regional economy. The overarching goal is a sustainable future that preserves Taranaki's quality of life.
Sector focus	The focus is on the energy sector, specifically transitioning from oil and gas to broader and diversified economic development by leveraging local assets in sectors such as renewable energy, conservation, tourism and food and fibre.
Time frame	In 2017, three district councils (local authorities), the Taranaki Regional Council and Ngā Iwi o Taranaki (a collective of eight Māori tribes) released *Tapuae Roa: Make Way for Taranaki*, a document comprising a high-level regional economic development strategy. In 2019, Venture Taranaki released a detailed community-co-designed planning document called *Taranaki 2050 Roadmap*. In 2024, these efforts were updated and consolidated into the *2025/26 Action Plan*.

Foundations of the Transition

Background and context

Taranaki's energy sector, historically built on its rich oil and gas reserves (Venture Taranaki, 2015), hosts the majority of New Zealand's oil and gas projects (Krawchenko, 2022; Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, 2025a, 2025b). These resources underpin the production of derivatives, such as methanol and ammonia, fostering a robust local oil and gas support sector that provides production, operation, maintenance and manufacturing services (Venture Taranaki, 2024a). After ratifying the Paris Agreement in 2016 (Ministry for the Environment, 2020), the New Zealand government committed to gradually phasing out the oil and gas sector, starting with the cessation of future offshore oil-and-gas-exploration permits in 2018 but allowing existing fields to operate until 2050 (Ardern, 2018). However, the ban will be repealed by the incoming government (Jones, 2024), creating additional uncertainty.

The commitment to phase out oil and gas — albeit gradually — has disproportionately impacted Taranaki, highlighting socio-economic vulnerabilities due to the sector's central role in the region's economy, jobs and identity.

In 2013, Taranaki's oil and gas sector supported 4,340 direct full-time equivalent jobs, totaling 7,072 full-time equivalent jobs when indirect and induced employment were included (Venture Taranaki, 2015). In the context of Taranaki's 2013 population of 109,608, this represented a substantial portion of local employment (Taranaki Regional Council, 2014), and that same year, Taranaki was home to 86 per cent of the country's direct employment in the sector (Venture Taranaki, 2015). In 2018, the sector directly employed 4,700 people (New Zealand Government, 2018).

By 2024, that number fell to 780 across 36 businesses (Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, n.d.a). The accelerated decline in Taranaki's oil and gas workforce, driven in part by a steeper-than-anticipated drop in gas production, risks the loss of specialized skills critical to energy system maintenance and future innovation (Venture Taranaki, 2024a). Meanwhile, the gradual transition to renewables may not compensate for the lost employment in the oil and gas sector, making regional economic diversification and workforce development essential (Venture Taranaki, 2024a). Taranaki's workers recognize the challenge ahead; in 2022, only 2 per cent of surveyed workers felt highly prepared for forthcoming shifts in the local economy (E tū, 2022).

In this context, local leaders and communities recognized the need for a co-ordinated, future-focused and region-specific plan. In 2019, Venture Taranaki, the regional development agency (owned by the New Plymouth District Council, one of three local authorities that collaborated on *Taranaki 2050 Roadmap*) convened a wide-ranging social dialogue to reflect local needs, identify economic opportunities and secure community buy-in for a just transition. The place-based co-design process involved community stakeholders, including iwi (the Māori term for 'clan'), local and central governments, businesses, educators, unions, workers and other community members, who identified workforce development and training, job creation and regional economic diversification as crucial to sustaining Taranaki's identity and quality of life (Venture Taranaki, 2019).

The result was the *Taranaki 2050 Roadmap*, later consolidated with 2017's *Tapuae Roa: Make Way for Taranaki* into the *2025/26 Action Plan* (Venture Taranaki, 2024a). Twelve transition pathways were outlined identifying key sectors (e.g., tourism, food and fibre) and enablers, such as the talents and regulations needed to diversify beyond oil and gas (Krawchenko & Gordon, 2022; Venture Taranaki, 2024a). Several localized skills training and workforce development initiatives emerged, particularly targeting youth and Māori communities and focusing on growth sectors, such as renewable energy, conservation and food and fibre (Venture Taranaki, 2024a). Notable initiatives have included flexible training programs at the Western Institute of Technology at Taranaki (WITT), collaborations with the civil construction sector through the Infrastructure Talent Pipeline and environmental workforce development for *rangatahi* ("youth") under the Te Kāhui Maru Trust (Venture Taranaki, 2024a). The roadmap's community-led, place-based approach emphasizes long-term social, economic and environmental outcomes, supports both transitioning and new workers and ensures Taranaki's economic resilience beyond oil and gas.

Further drivers and enablers

Structural labour market challenges shape the *Taranaki 2050 Roadmap* and *2025/26 Action Plan's* emphasis on robust workforce initiatives. Despite a robust workforce development ecosystem — with over 5,500 employers, 126 educational institutions and 65 community support services — co-ordination challenges leave Taranaki with persistently high not-in-employment, -education or -training (NEET) rates among youth aged 15-24 (Venture Taranaki, 2024a). Between 2013 and 2017, Taranaki's NEET rate was around 14 per cent, increasing to about 17 per cent in 2023. This exceeds the national average (which declined from about 12 per cent to 11 per cent over the same period) and aligns with levels in regions of New Zealand that have lower GDP per capita, indicating underused workforce capacity and heightened vulnerability (Venture Taranaki, 2024a).

Youth who remain out of work or education for extended periods are likely to have worse employment outcomes, reducing overall productivity and potential earnings (Schwerdtfeger, 2013). This can translate into higher welfare costs, lost GDP and social challenges, including poverty, poor health and crime (International Labour Organization, 2011; O'Higgins, 2011). Because NEET status indicates the future workforce's size, shape and skill level, the *2025/26 Action Plan* prioritizes youth engagement and targeted workforce development to close this gap and strengthen Taranaki's long-term resilience (Venture Taranaki, 2024a).

New Zealand offers lower levels of social assistance and public employment support for displaced workers relative to other countries in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), meaning the costs of economic restructuring often fall squarely on workers and households (E tū, 2022; OECD, 2017). The shortfall in national-level supports and protections for transitioning workers further reinforces the urgency behind Taranaki's just transition efforts. While flexible labour market regulations facilitate companies' workforce adjustments, they increase the burden on individual workers. New Zealand relies on family and private supports in the event of worker displacement, with social assistance and public employment assistance kept to a minimum (OECD, 2017). The New Zealand Government has a stated goal of rebuilding its approach to active labour market policies that help unemployed or displaced workers find work and help underemployed or currently employed workers secure better positions (Welfare Expert Advisory Group, 2019).

Place-based strategy

New Zealand is recognized as a leader in community-based transition planning (Kiernan, 2019). The *2050 Roadmap* and *2025/26 Action Plan* focus on regional, place-based actions co-designed with community stakeholders. The dialogue included iwi (the Māori term for 'clan'), local and central governments, businesses, educators, unions, workers and other community members. The creation of the roadmap included 29 workshops, survey reponses from over 360 people and consultations with over 1,000 people across more than 40 locations (Venture Taranaki, 2019). A lead group of 27 volunteers (from local business, iwi, community, unions and local and central governments) guided the co-design process, allowing a diverse group of people to contribute to problem-solving, ensuring a bottom-up approach. The planning process is firmly grounded in the Taranaki community, with all corresponding strategies, targets and programs tied to local realities.

Addressing net-zero transition workforce challenges

As Taranaki shifts away from oil and gas, it faces significant workforce challenges. *Taranaki 2050 Roadmap* and the *2025/26 Action Plan* address these challenges through targeted community-driven skills training and workforce development initiatives, drawing on local assets and extensive community dialogue. Table 1 summarizes key workforce challenges alongside the *2050 Roadmap* and *2025/26 Action Plan* strategies designed to mitigate those challenges.

TABLE 1:

***Taranaki 2050 Roadmap* and the *2025/26 Action Plan* address several workforce challenges common to net-zero transitions**

Potential challenges	Strategies to mitigate potential challenges
Workforce displacement	The accelerated decline of the oil and gas sector could lead to job losses, income reductions and social disruptions. High concentrations of employment in high-emitting, declining sectors could heighten socio-economic challenges. *Taranaki 2050 Roadmap* and the *2025/26 Action Plan* seek to foster local training programs for workers to re-skill and up-skill where they live. Diversifying into emerging sectors, such as renewable energy and food and fibre, creates alternative economic opportunities so workers can smoothly transition away from oil and gas.
Lack of diversity and inclusion	In Taranaki, certain groups, such as youth, Māori and people with disabilities, face higher unemployment rates, lower levels of skills and education and higher levels of income inequality. The roadmap's People and Talent transition pathway emphasizes the need to remove systemic barriers and achieve parity. Co-design processes ensure that skills training and workforce development initiatives, which are developed by and for the community, include youth and Māori perspectives.
Worker shortages	Shortages of trained workers in growing sectors could create high competition for talent and potential hiring challenges. Persistently high NEET rates further shrink the pool of local candidates, intensifying these shortages. The roadmap's planning process promotes intersectoral collaboration among stakeholders, including employers, educators and local authorities, to align economic development with skills needs. By targeting youth through specialized training and support, Taranaki addresses potential workforce shortages while lowering NEET levels and securing future talent for its emerging industries.

Potential challenges	Strategies to mitigate potential challenges
Insufficient training infrastructure and delivery	Lack of sufficient training facilities, trainers and resources could create bottlenecks in local skills development, exacerbating worker shortages. The skills training programs emerging from the roadmap leverage existing training institutions and local organizations, including WITT and Venture Taranaki. They leverage existing infrastructure to scale programs that have demonstrated performance.
Barriers to geographic mobility	If there are imbalances in job opportunities and labour market mismatches, workers may need to relocate to access work. One goal of the roadmap's proactive, community-led planning is to take a holistic approach to community development in order to retain community residents, attract new talent and ensure that youth and Māori communities can access employment opportunities in place so they do not need to relocate.
Lack of cross-sector collaboration	A lack of industry and governmental co-ordination could fragment workforce development and create inefficiencies. Developing the roadmap and associated programs was collaborative from inception across a wide range of stakeholders, ensuring social consensus and collective buy-in for implementation.

Source: IRPP table based on information from Energy Resources Aotearoa, n.d.; Kiernan, 2019; Krawchenko, 2022; Samson et al., 2025; Strietska-Ilina & Mahmud, 2019; Taranaki Regional Council, 2014; Venture Taranaki, 2015; 2017; 2019; 2020; 2021; 2024a.

Note: NEET = not in employment, education or training; WITT = Western Institute of Technology at Taranaki.

Program Implementation

Delivery

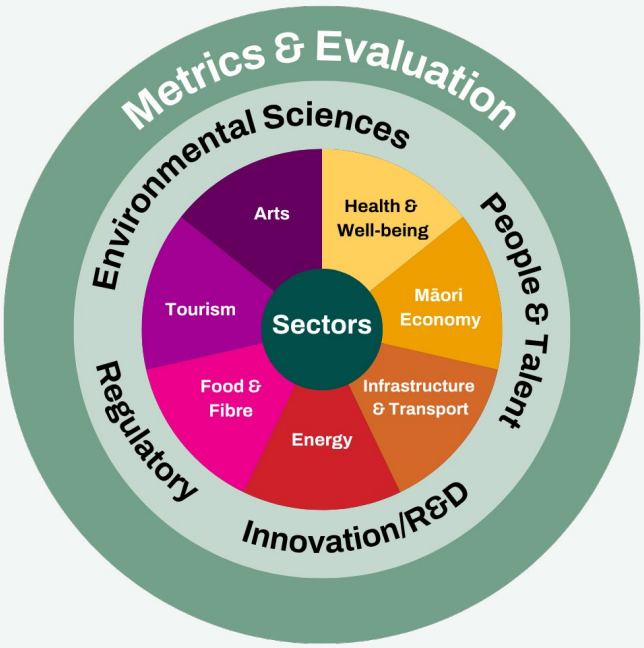
In 2017, a group of regional leaders — supported by district councils (local authorities), the Taranaki Regional Council and Ngā Iwi o Taranaki (a collective of eight Māori tribes) — developed a Regional Economic Development Strategy for Taranaki called *Tapuae Roa: Make Way for Taranaki* (Krawchenko, 2022; Venture Taranaki, 2017).

In 2019, following the 2018 national climate commitments, Venture Taranaki convened a wide-ranging social dialogue to secure social consensus and mobilize implementation efforts (Ardern, 2018). This process produced *Taranaki 2050 Roadmap*, which outlined 12 local transition pathways (see Box 1), each accompanied by action plans, co-ordination mechanisms, required resources and specific projects (Krawchenko & Gordon, 2022; Venture Taranaki, 2019). Unlike the first strategy — set out in *Tapuae Roa: Make Way for Taranaki* — the roadmap had significant community buy-in and support due to a greater focus on community well-being and the need to balance economic outcomes with environmental priorities (Venture Taranaki, 2024a). In 2024, the *2025/26 Action Plan* consolidated the strategies (Venture Taranaki, 2024a). *The Roadmap* and *Action Plan* identified specific workforce and skills training supports, such as the development of flexible training programs at WITT to support worker transitions and Māori enterprise; collaborations such as the Infrastructure Talent Pipeline, which brings together students at WITT's

BOX 1

Taranaki's 2050 Roadmap: Twelve transition pathways

The 12 transition pathways are organized into sectors, enablers that support multiple sectors and pathways serving both roles. The Metrics and Evaluation pathway spans all other pathways to track progress and enable adaptation.



Note: Figure based on Venture Taranaki, 2019.

Trades Academy with 12 Taranaki businesses in the civil construction sector; and the Tupu-ā-Nuku Environmental Workforce Development program, which trains rangatahi to work in forestry and conservation. These programs are complemented by initiatives like PowerUp, which nurtures entrepreneurship by supporting early-stage startups, and the Jobs and Skills Hubs, which have already helped place numerous workers in permanent jobs (Venture Taranaki, 2024a). Further details on each program are presented in Appendix A.

Complementing *the Roadmap* and *Action Plan* was the work of the Taranaki Regional Skills Leadership Group, which was tasked with creating regional workforce plans that align the area's workforce with the education and immigration systems (Taranaki Regional Skills Leadership Group, 2022). Their first plan, released in 2022, focused on the food, fibre and whenua ("land") and energy sectors (Taranaki Regional Skills Leadership Group, 2023). Priorities included ensuring on-the-job training leads to formal skill recognition for workers, developing paid internships programs, exposing youth to careers in the energy sector, reducing constraints to obtaining drivers licences, co-ordinating to ensure qualifications and skills are transferable across sectors of the emerging economy and developing the Energy Industry Skills Action Plan, launched in 2022 (Energy Resources Aotearoa, n.d.; Taranaki Regional Skills Leadership Group, 2023). New Zealand's Regional Skills Leadership Groups have since been decommissioned by the new coalition government (Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, n.d.b), but their work continues to provide guidance for the initiatives of the *2025/26 Action Plan*.

Governance

The *2050 Roadmap* was developed through a co-design process involving the Taranaki Regional Council, three district councils, Ngā Iwi o Taranaki (a collective of 8 Māori tribes), local businesses, and community members (Venture Taranaki, 2019). This bottom-up design fostered local ownership and grounded the roadmap in regional priorities and realities. The integration of Māori principles throughout the process further tailors the strategies to the region's unique cultural and governance landscape. Local networks and organizations are collectively leading the implementation of the strategy (Krawchenko, 2022).

The national government provided some initial supports for the process in Taranaki. In 2018, the Just Transitions Unit was established within the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment and was meant to serve as a centralized body that could help co-ordinate between regional actors and government ministries and help close funding gaps when necessary (Krawchenko, 2022). However, after the change in government that took place in 2023, the national government's Just Transition programme, including the Just Transitions Unit, was closed (Gibson, 2024; Kiernan, 2019).

Funding mechanisms

The actions included in the *2025/26 Action Plan* are funded through a variety of mechanisms, including local and regional councils, governments, businesses, private investors, trusts, philanthropic organizations and individuals (Venture Taranaki, 2024a). When the roadmap was initially developed, each of the 12 identified pathways required resources and budgetary requests that were sent to the central government. The central government has supported these requests through the Provincial Growth Fund (Kānoa, n.d.; Krawchenko, 2022). Regarding skills training programs, some are funded through the Ministry of Social Development, as is the case for active labour market programs, and others are funded through demand-led government services, such as the higher education system (Krawchenko, 2022).

Implementation challenges and adaptations

The central government's 2018 ban on new offshore oil-and-gas-exploration permits shocked Taranaki's local industry, spurring a decline in long-term investment and heightening uncertainty for both workers and businesses (Kiernan, 2019). The perceived lack of consultation eroded community buy-in, intensifying criticism of the policy. An independent review by the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment and the 2019 broad consultation that culminated in *Taranaki 2050 Roadmap* aimed to rebuild trust, ensuring that local stakeholders had an opportunity to provide input on shaping the region's transition (Kiernan, 2019).

Despite intentions of inclusive co-design, there were concerns that the roadmap's early stages gave more prominence to business interests than Māori perspectives, signalling a need for deeper cultural competency (Kiernan, 2019). In response, steps to address power imbalances and ensure balanced representation were taken. Māori principles were integrated via the government's Just Transition programme guide, more diverse oversight groups were adopted and a robust monitoring and evaluation framework with community-defined metrics was established (Krawchenko, 2022; Kiernan, 2019).

The lack of an apparent replacement industry for oil and gas raised public concerns over job stability and living standards (Kiernan, 2019). The *2050 Roadmap* and *2025/26 Action Plan* emphasize economic diversification, capitalizing on the region's expertise and engineering infrastructure to develop clean technologies and exploring offshore wind options and other renewable energies as well as the expansion into high-potential sectors, such as food and fibre production. The region is positioning itself to lead in emerging sectors focused on sustainability, innovation and technology (Venture Taranaki, 2024a).

In 2023, the New Zealand Government began dissolving Te Pūkenga (n.d.), the national network for the country's 25 polytechnics and industry training organizations, introducing uncertainty into Taranaki's higher education landscape (Simmonds, 2023). The *2025/26 Action Plan* identifies the need to stabilize the vocational education sector as central (Venture Taranaki, 2024a). Before it was defunded, the Taranaki Regional Skills Leadership Group (2023) submitted advice and guidance to the Tertiary Education Commission with the goal of informing strategies to deliver skills and training. Because Te Pūkenga was dissolved, the *2025/26 Action Plan* states an intent to provide co-ordinated input and feedback to WITT as it undergoes restructuring.

Impact and Relevance

Outcomes and impact

Taranaki 2050 Roadmap includes a robust approach to monitoring and evaluation, designating Metrics and Evaluation as a transition pathway (Venture Taranaki, 2020).

The *Metrics and Evaluation Transition Pathway Action Plan* document outlines a comprehensive approach to tracking progress toward the Taranaki 2050 vision, initially using well-being and economic indicators, then expanding to customized data on work transitions and broader environmental and emissions metrics (Venture Taranaki, 2020). From the outset, monitoring and evaluation were agile, allowing goals and measurements to evolve over time.

The indicators were developed through the same engagement process that shaped the *2050 Roadmap* and included a wide-range of perspectives, such as those of Māori communities. A foundation of shared measurement ensures a collaborative approach to defining success (Venture Taranaki, 2019). Evaluations would be independently audited, and interpretation would be grounded in national and international standards, including United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, International Labour Standards on Occupational Safety and Health guidelines and New Zealand's Living Standards Framework (Venture Taranaki, 2019). Environmental and well-being indicators carry equal weight, requiring both quantitative and qualitative data. Emissions metrics build on Statistics New Zealand's greenhouse gas data and may evolve into more direct measures over time. Well-being indicators were developed by considering various national and international frameworks, such as the Living Standards Framework, the OECD model of individual well-being, the Sustainable Development Goals and so-called doughnut economics (a model that balances human well-being and ecological limits; Venture Taranaki, 2020).

To measure progress, a high-level vision for Taranaki was broken down into three main aspects, and the following nine themes were developed: environment, economy, employment, education and skills, equity, culture, well-being, communities and collaboration (Venture Taranaki, 2020). The criteria for selecting metrics included relevance, comparability, sensitivity to policy interventions, ability to be disaggregated, timeliness, alignment with other regional measures and parsimony. Of the 166 actions identified in the 2017 economic development strategy and the *2050 Roadmap*, 85 actions were complete or underway by 2021, 38 were partly underway and 43 actions were remaining (Venture Taranaki, 2021, 2024a).

Outcomes for specific skills training and workforce development programs are listed in Table A1 in Appendix A. On a higher level, the *2025/26 Action Plan's* 2024 update noted that Taranaki was making progress toward becoming a hub for renewable energy, with new organizations and developers investing in the hydrogen economy and offshore wind (Venture Taranaki, 2024a). In the food and fibre sectors, several initiatives were actively de-risking the diversification and expansion of these sectors, though further investment was required (Venture Taranaki, 2024a). In other emerging sectors focused on innovation and technology, Taranaki was in the process of "positioning itself to lead" (Venture Taranaki, 2024a, p. 51). To support entrepreneurship, the creation of Venture Taranaki's PowerUp program demonstrated some progress, though further investment is needed to scale and expand. Regarding workforce development outcomes, the *2025/26 Action Plan's* update emphasized the need to further investigate best approaches to improving functionality across sectors and initiatives, including exploring co-ordination models from other jurisdictions, developing clear governance structures, securing funding for a co-ordinator and consolidating funding structures (Venture Taranaki, 2024a). A substantial update on the outcomes of the *2025/26 Action Plan* is slated for mid-2026.

Lessons learned and relevance to Canada

Lesson 1

Industry-ready replacement

Taranaki's experience demonstrates the challenge of an accelerated oil and gas phase-out without a fully developed replacement industry (or industries) to absorb transitioning workers. The emergence of the renewable energy sector in Taranaki has been prolonged, costly and complex beyond initial expectations (Krawchenko, 2022). Taranaki is navigating the workforce impacts of a declining oil and gas sector while bridging the gap before a fully realized renewable-energy and associated value-add-industry future have been achieved (Venture Taranaki, 2024a). A diverse set of technologies remains under consideration, with no single direction for investments, complicating efforts to target specific skills or employment pathways (Krawchenko, 2022). Expansions in tourism, renewable energy and the emerging food and fibre industries provide potential transitional job opportunities for Taranaki's future, but

only if they are adequately supported with appropriate policy enablers. This mirrors conditions in Canadian regions reliant on oil and gas production or coal power, where accelerating declines (or policy-driven phase-outs) without clear economic alternatives generate backlashes from communities. Without policy certainty and a coherent vision for investments, re-skilling or up-skilling efforts become harder to plan (Simmonds & Lally, 2024). Any major economic transition requires prioritizing policy certainty, economic development and long-term workforce development.

Lesson 2

Community-led transition planning

New Zealand's process of community-led planning, illustrated in *Taranaki 2050 Roadmap*, highlights how early buy-in and shared goal setting can galvanize local support. Place-based co-design can foster local buy-in and social acceptance of new programs and policies, which is critical when pivoting from a dominant economic sector (Bolter et al., 2022; Green, 2023). Community input also shaped the initiative's definition of success, with one of the co-designed pathways devoted to evaluation and measurement. Developing wide support for these measures is especially important given the localized nature of the interventions and the dispersed accountability of the *2050 Roadmap* and *2025/26 Action Plan.*

Lesson 3

Social consensus

The 2018 offshore oil-and-gas-exploration ban, introduced without robust local consultation, is being reversed by the incoming government (Jones, 2024), showing how a lack of consensus can undermine policy durability. Canadian jurisdictions facing tensions over resource development could benefit from broad multi-stakeholder dialogues that secure local buy-in and reduce policy reversals. For instance, in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, proposals for offshore wind turbines have sparked concerns about impacts on fisheries and coastal vistas, underscoring the need for flexible, adaptive plans that can accommodate evolving community priorities (Institute for Research on Public Policy, 2025a). In Estevan, Saskatchewan, the planned phase-out of local coal plants without a concrete plan to develop new economic activity to replace the jobs and local income generated significant opposition (Institute for Research on Public Policy, 2025b).

Lesson 4

Agility in monitoring, evaluation and plan adaptation

Taranaki's robust monitoring and evaluation framework, with flexibility to revise as needed, provides an agile approach to managing evolving conditions. As the pace of transition from oil and gas accelerated faster than expected, some medium-term goals quickly became obsolete. In response, the *2025/26 Action Plan* replaced them with an overarching vision to ensure alignment with local realities (Venture Taranaki, 2024a). For Canada — where provincial and federal policies and global market conditions can shift rapidly — continuous plan adaptation is essential. Embedding regular reviews, independent audits and community feedback loops into transition strategies can sustain momentum and credibility, especially in regions experiencing rapid market or policy changes. For example, in Ingersoll, Ontario, the largest local employer — the General Motors CAMI plant — transitioned from making internal combustion engine vehicles to assembling electric vans. With growing trade tensions between Canada and the U.S. and changing U.S. climate policy, demand for electric vehicles could weaken. Ingersoll might need to adapt its economic development strategy to new market conditions, which would likely require significant support from the provincial and federal governments (Institute for Research on Public Policy, 2025c).

Lesson 5

Inclusion of Indigenous communities

Taranaki's 2050 Roadmap and *2025/26 Action Plan* have both emphasized the inclusion of Māori communities (Krawchenko, 2022) and underscore how marginalized groups should be involved and adequately resourced during transitions. Similar to Indigenous Peoples in Canada, Māori in New Zealand are key stakeholders in a just transition. Many Māori-owned businesses are in vulnerable sectors (Whetu, 2020). Canadian parallels extend across the country, including to Atlantic Canada, British Columbia, Northern communities and Alberta, where many Indigenous communities hold substantial ownership stakes in major natural resource and infrastructure projects (Canada Infrastructure Bank, n.d.; Conference Board of Canada, n.d.; First Nations Major Projects Coalition, n.d.). In several cases, comprehensive community planning, an asset-based approach

spearheaded by First Nations in British Columbia, already guides local priorities — offering a model Canada could leverage and scale to ensure robust Indigenous engagement in just transitions (Samson et al., 2025). Ensuring co-design and shared decision-making can preserve cultural and identity values, protect livelihoods and harness Indigenous-led innovation.

Lesson 6

Proactive skills development as long-range planning

Taranaki's proactive approach to the phase-out of oil and gas puts workforce development at the core of its long-term transition strategy (Venture Taranaki, 2024a). By investing in local people and talent, the region is building skills and employment pathways for people to transition toward the future of work as the local economy shifts toward future-focused industries (Venture Taranaki, 2020). A skilled, diverse workforce spurs innovation, bolsters local businesses and attracts investment, ultimately reinforcing competitiveness and well-being for the whole community (Venture Taranaki, 2024a). Canadian provinces can similarly anticipate future labour demands by proactively preparing talent for emerging fields, such as renewable energy, conservation, advanced manufacturing, knowledge-based sectors, clean technology, electric vehicle infrastructure, and critical minerals (Natural Resources Canada, 2023). Taranaki's just transition planning highlights that a well-prepared workforce fosters resilience to shifting market demands, paving the way for an equitable and prosperous transitioned future (Venture Taranaki, 2024a). This requires working in close collaboration with local employers and learning institutions to adapt to changing workforce needs.

Appendix A

Taranaki Skills Training and Workforce Development Programs

TABLE A1:

Selected skills training and workforce development programs in Taranaki

Program	Partners	Description	Outcomes (interim and expected)
1. WITT training courses	WITT, local industry partners and Māori enterprises	WITT has developed new flexible courses to support workers in transition and Māori enterprises. WITT also made a commitment to becoming a national vocational training centre for energy, offering courses in renewable energy.	WITT enrollments have been rising since 2022. Expected outcomes of the new courses include a significant increase in student numbers and more trained workers entering the workforce in areas such as health, trades and primary industries.
2. Infrastructure Talent Pipeline	New Plymouth District Council, 12 civil construction sector businesses, Taranaki Futures and WITT	A pipeline to train youth in infrastructure careers, developed in collaboration with the civil construction sector and WITT.	Active support for youth to enter the infrastructure industry, resulting in improved skills and employment in the sector.
3. Worker Transition Research	E tū union, workers and employers	Union-led research into how to support employers and workers transitioning to new or modified work, with a focus on the interventions useful for successful transitions. Following their research, E tū has been working to establish redeployment clauses in their collective agreements with employers.	Research resulted in an identification of key supports and an exploration of the potential implementation of a multi-employer redeployment scheme. This research helps inform future collective agreements.
4. PowerUp	Tapuae Roa and New Plymouth District Council, StartUp Taranaki and Venture Taranaki	PowerUp is a program launched to support entrepreneurship in Taranaki, including the Ideas Competition and StartUp Weekend. Training is provided through Masterclass workshops, a 10-week accelerator training with funding provided and their Business Ready Programme.	Programs increase the number of entrepreneurs and startups, thereby increasing their business potential.

Program	Partners	Description	Outcomes (interim and expected)
5. Jobs and Skills Hubs	Ministry of Social Development and Chamber of Commerce	Established in 2020, the Chamber's Jobs and Skills Hub aims to connect individuals with permanent employment opportunities.	Sixty people found permanent employment within six months, contributing to regional workforce development.
6. Tupu-ā-Nuku Environmental Workforce Program	Te Kāhui Maru Trust and Ministry of Social Development	This 17-week program trains rangatahi (ages 16-24), helping them gain work experience and skills for future careers aligned with regional needs. While centred on forestry and conservation, the program also equips rangatahi with skills for industries such as agriculture, beekeeping, solar farming and construction.	Forty rangatahi graduated in 2023, with 23 securing employment. Expansion included a new group program to support youth before entering Tupu-ā-Nuku. The program was renewed for three more years. The program has offered at least six cohorts since its launch in 2021.

Source: IRPP table based on information from E tū, 2022; Ngāti Maru, 2024; New Zealand Institute of Highway Technology, Western Institute of Technology at Taranaki & Te Pūkenga, 2023; Taranaki Futures, n.d.; Venture Taranaki, n.d.a; Venture Taranaki, n.d.b; Venture Taranaki, 2024b; Western Institute of Technology at Taranaki, 2025.

Note: WITT = Western Institute of Technology at Taranaki.

Appendix B

URLs and Official Websites

Programs, Initiatives and Strategic Frameworks

Tapuae Roa: Make Way for Taranaki (2017)
https://www.venture.org.nz/assets/Uploads/Venture-Taranaki/170831-Final-Tapuae-Roa-Strategy.pdf
Taranaki 2050 Roadmap (2019)
https://www.taranaki.co.nz/assets/Uploads/Like-No-Other/Taranaki-2050-Roadmap.pdf
Taranaki 2025/26 Action Plan (2024)
https://www.venture.org.nz/assets/Tapuae-Roa-Action-Plan.pdf
Energy Industry Skills Action Plan
https://www.energyresources.org.nz/assets/Uploads/Building-Energys-Talent-Pipeline-Skills-Plan-Energy-Resources.pdf
New Zealand Just Transition Programme (closed)
https://www.mbie.govt.nz/business-and-employment/economic-growth/previous-economic-development-work/just-transition

Organizations and Implementing Bodies

Venture Taranaki
https://www.venture.org.nz/
New Plymouth District Council
https://www.npdc.govt.nz/
Taranaki Regional Council
https://www.trc.govt.nz/
Ngā Iwi o Taranaki
http://www.venture.org.nz/taranaki-story/iwi-story/
Taranaki Regional Skills Leadership Group (decommissioned)
https://www.mbie.govt.nz/business-and-employment/employment-and-skills/regional-skills-leadership-groups/taranaki/
Western Institute of Technology at Taranaki (WITT)
https://www.witt.ac.nz/
Te Kāhui Maru Trust
https://maru.nz/
E tū Union
https://etu.nz/
Ministry of Social Development
https://www.msd.govt.nz/
Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment - Former Home of Just Transitions Unit
https://www.mbie.govt.nz/
Taranaki Futures
https://www.taranakifutures.org/

Training and Workforce Development Programs

Tupu-ā-Nuku Environmental Workforce Program
https://maru.nz/kaupapa/tupu-a-nuku/
PowerUp Entrepreneurship Support Program
https://www.venture.org.nz/enterprise-and-entrepreneurship/power-up/
Infrastructure Talent Pipeline
https://www.taranakifutures.org/itp-gateway
WITT Environmental Training Programs
https://www.witt.ac.nz/study/environmental/
Jobs and Skills Hub
https://www.jobsandskillshubs.govt.nz/

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