

Fantastic insights for Catchment Groups

Thriving Southland conducted independent research by Scarlatti to collect lessons from four Catchment Groups that successfully engaged their communities and achieved environmental outcomes. A more detailed report is available.

Credible science is key

Science that is grounded in local realities is invaluable

Farmers want the full picture before they make decisions: Seeing data and information targeted to their own catchment gave farmers confidence that it was built for them.

Sense-check it against real experience: Farmers know their land best, and good science connects with what they already know or helps them understand why something may be different.

Make it useful at the farm gate: Catchment-wide maps are a great starting point, but when you can, zoom in. Farm-level insights give farmers something they can use now or in the future.

Do your science with your farmers - not to them

Make data collection part of the engagement: Invite farmers to see how and why things are being measured. It builds buy-in and sparks great conversations.

Let farmers lead the thinking: Consultants bring expertise, but lasting change happens when farmers shape the solutions, with technical support fitting around their goals.

Use the tools! Don't be afraid to explore what's out there. New tech, such as handheld measurement devices, is making science more visible, accessible, and immediate.

The science led to practical solutions

Make the solution fit the farm: Prioritise solutions that fit farmers' business goals and financial realities. Environmental change is more likely to stick when it supports the whole system, not just one outcome.

Build momentum with the doable: You don't need to achieve gold-standard solutions on day one. Start with practical steps that your group can get behind. Small wins lay the groundwork for bigger gains later as trust, knowledge, and resources grow.

Catchment group insights: check out the feedback from successful catchment groups at thrivingsouthland.co.nz/catchment-groups