



Heavy metals in coastal and estuarine sediment 2009 and 2012-2018

Title	Heavy metals in coastal and estuarine sediment 2009, 2012-2018
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Description	This indicator measures the concentrations of four heavy metals (lead, copper, zinc and cadmium) against the Australian & New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council (ANZECC) guideline values for toxic substances in estuarine sediment. Heavy metals occur naturally in estuaries, but high concentrations suggest contamination from another source. The metals can be transported along waterways from urban environments (and, for cadmium, from farmland) and accumulate in estuarine and coastal sediments. Heavy metals are toxic although some such as copper and zinc are classed as micro-nutrients at very low concentrations. They accumulate in sediment, where they can be taken up by organisms, and are harmful to species and habitats. They also bio-accumulate (are found in higher concentrations in species further up the food chain).
Source	Unitary, district, city, and regional councils (Auckland, Bay of Plenty, Canterbury, Hawke's Bay, Manawatu-Wanganui, Marlborough, Nelson, Northland, Otago, Southland, Tasman, Waikato, Wellington)
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