



Ref: [REDACTED]

Civic House, 110 Trafalgar Street
PO Box 645, Nelson 7040, New Zealand

P (03) 546 0200

E LGOIMA@ncc.govt.nz
nelson.govt.nz

16 May 2024

Dear [REDACTED]

REQUEST REGARDING THE FAST TRACK APPROVALS BILL

I refer to your request dated 19 April 2024 for the information listed below, along with Council's response:

- *Names of projects or organisations, if any, NCC is supporting, or has supported or nominated or intends to support or nominate for the proposed Fast track Approvals Bill.*

The Nelson Marina Masterplan.

- *copies of any correspondence such as letters, emails, meeting notes between NCC and any organisations regarding the proposed Fast Track Approvals Bill.*

Please find attached a copy of the correspondence between Council and other parties that are in scope of your request. We do not hold any meeting notes between Council and other organisations on the Fast Track Approvals Bill.

Redactions have been made to the attachment under the following section of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987:

- s.7(2)(a) to protect the privacy of natural persons.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this response. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or Freephone 0800 802 602.

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact Mandy Bishop, Group Manager Environmental Management (mandy.bishop@ncc.govt.nz).

Yours sincerely

Mandy Bishop

Group Manager, Environmental Management

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Ailish Neyland

From: NZ Planning Institute <melissa.hubbard@planning.org.nz>
Sent: Friday, 2 February 2024 4:09 pm
To: Mandy Bishop
Subject: PLANNING FOCUS | From Indigenous Voices to Planning for Māori Values

CAUTION: External email.

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Mandy Bishop
NZPI MEMBERSHIP STATUS:

Kia ora Mandy

This weeks Planning Focus bulletin features:

- **From Indigenous Voices to Planning for Māori Values**
NZPIC24 will include an exciting panel discussion between indigenous planning specialists.
- **GNS Release Landslide Guidelines for Planning**
GNS Science has released a landslides guidance report.
- **Nominations Received for the NZPI Board**
NZPI has received nominations from across the country for seats for the NZPI Board.
- **Letter from Minister on RM Reform**
Hon Minister Bishop has written an open letter providing an update on the Government's intentions to develop fast track consenting legislation and introduce changes to the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (2020).
- **Spotlight on our Planning for Māori Values workshops**
It is important that planners understand the role of mana whenua and tangata whenua in the resource management environment and how to recognise and provide for their values. Don't miss out, register today.
- **Jobs:** 6 New Opportunities.

[Click here to download your copy now \(PDF\)](#)

If you have any news/information you would like to share with NZPI members, please email admin@planning.org.nz.



Planning is essential for a better New Zealand.

Te Kōkiringa Taumata | New Zealand Planning Institute (NZPI) is the voice of planning in New Zealand. It is the professional organisation representing this country's planners, resource managers, urban designers, and environmental practitioners. Planners have a critical role in shaping New Zealand's future by helping to develop solutions to key issues, such as population growth, infrastructure needs, pressure on natural resources and environments, demographic change and transport.



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www.planning.org.nz



Ailish Neyland

From: Mandy Bishop
Sent: Tuesday, 27 February 2024 8:29 am
To: Consents and Compliance; Planning
Cc: Corey Parsons
Subject: FW: Webinar invitation: New Fast-Track Bill and the second phase of resource management law reform

FYI

From: Simpson Grierson Events <SG.events@simpsongrierson.com>
Sent: Monday, February 26, 2024 4:30 PM
To: Mandy Bishop <mandy.bishop@ncc.govt.nz>
Subject: Webinar invitation: New Fast-Track Bill and the second phase of resource management law reform

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Webinar Invitation

New Fast-Track Bill and the second phase of resource management law reform

The Minister for RM Reform has [announced](#) that the Government's new fast-track legislation will be introduced into the house on 9 March 2024. The Bill will provide a "one-stop-shop" approval process for projects of local, regional and national significance.

Projects would be referred by Ministers to expert panels who will have a limited ability to decline a project.

Given the Bill is part of coalition's 100 day-plan, we anticipate the Bill will be advanced quickly. With that in mind, we are inviting you to a session shortly after the Bill's introduction to discuss:

- what the Bill does;
- how it might affect you; and
- what will happen next.

This webinar will be presented by **Sally McKechnie, Bill Loutit and Hamish Harwood.**



Wednesday
13 March
10am - 10.45am
Via Zoom Webinar

[Register now](#)

Contacts



Bill Loutit

Partner

[Email](#) | [Phone](#) | [Mobile](#)



Hamish Harwood

Senior Associate

[Email](#) | [Phone](#) | [Mobile](#)



Sally McKechnie

Partner

[Email](#) | [Phone](#) | [Mobile](#)



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Ailish Neyland

From: Ministry for the Environment <RM.reform@mfe.govt.nz>
Sent: Thursday, 14 March 2024 10:43 am
To: Nigel Philpott
Subject: Update on the Fast-track Approvals Bill

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No images? [View in your browser](#)



14 March 2024

Tēnā koe Nigel,

The Fast-Track Approvals Bill was introduced to Parliament on 7 March 2024. The bill's introduction was part of the Government's coalition agreement and 100-day plan.

With this bill, the Government aims to make it easier to get approvals for a range of regionally and nationally significant infrastructure and development projects, including those related to housing.

The bill sets out a 'one-stop shop' process for approvals under a range of legislation, including the Resource Management Act 1991, the Wildlife Act 1953, the Conservation Act 1987 and the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014, and others.

It is proposed that responsible ministers will be able to refer projects that meet prescribed eligibility criteria to an Expert Panel, which will apply any necessary conditions to ensure adverse effects of the project are managed appropriately.

Click the button below to view the bill on the New Zealand Legislation website.

[Read the Fast-Track Approvals Bill](#)

Listed projects

There is provision in the bill for a list of individual projects to be included that will be automatically referred to an Expert Panel. This list is not included in the bill as introduced to Parliament. The Government intends to run a public process to

gather suitable projects, and more information will be made available on this in due course.

Feedback received on the policy proposals

The Ministry for the Environment carried out targeted engagement with Māori representative groups, local government, and infrastructure, development, and environmental groups during the development of the bill.

We appreciated and noted all the feedback received, whether verbal or in writing. Some areas where this feedback influenced the policy include:

- recovery of costs by local government
- the addition of procedural steps to provide for enhanced input from post-settlement governance entities and other Māori entities
- a scope adjustment where 'locally significant' projects (that do not have significant regional or national benefits) are no longer included
- the retention of a provision to ensure the compliance history of an applicant is taken into account
- a requirement that panels take account of local statutory Resource Management Act plans.

Making a submission on the bill

I encourage you to read the bill to understand where the policy has landed.

If you have feedback on the bill, you can make a submission to the Environment Committee until 19 April 2024 by clicking on the button below.

Make a submission on the Fast-Track Approvals Bill

Ngā mihi

Nadeine Dommissie

Deputy Secretary, Environment Management and Adaptation

Ministry for the Environment | Manatū Mō Te Taiao



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You are receiving this email as someone interested in resource management reform.

Ailish Neyland

From: Evie Rainey <Evie.Rainey@mfe.govt.nz>
Sent: Tuesday, 19 March 2024 4:10 pm
To: Evie Rainey
Subject: RMLA Auckland: Fast Track Consenting seminar 25 March

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Hi again everyone

The Auckland branch of the RMLA is holding a seminar on fast track consenting on **March 25, 12.30-2pm**. It will be livestreamed at the time as well.

At this in-person, live-streamed and recorded event, you will hear from Judge Newhook, Environment Court Judge and Convenor of Expert Panels for fast-track consenting, as well from Elliott Dennett, Team Leader of the Environmental Protection Authority's fast-track consenting division. Both presenters will provide insights as to how fast-track consenting has been used successfully in the past, pitfalls to avoid, and look to the future role of this process.

If you would like to watch the livestream, please register at this website: [RMLA Fast-Track Consenting | March 25, 2024 \(eventcreate.com\)](https://eventcreate.com). It costs \$50 to attend in person and \$25 to watch the livestream or receive the recording.

Ngā mihi

Evie Rainey (she/her)

Senior Solicitor | Kaitohutohu ā-Ture Matua

Legal

Ministry for the Environment | Manatū Mō Te Taiao

evie.rainey@mfe.govt.nz | mfe.govt.nz

Ministry staff work flexibly by default. For me, this means I work remotely from Whakatū / Nelson

Please note the content of this email may be legally privileged and confidential – please check with me before sharing the content of this email.

Ailish Neyland

From: Mandy Bishop
Sent: Thursday, 21 March 2024 2:58 pm
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Council submission on the new Fast Track Consenting Bill

Not planning on doing our own submission – would likely be different for the regulatory arm vs the facilities/capital projects parts of NCC. There's usually a Regional Council SIG or LGNZ or NZPI submission we can support instead.

See you later?

Cheers
M

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 21, 2024 2:11 PM
To: Mandy Bishop <mandy.bishop@ncc.govt.nz>
Subject: Council submission on the new Fast Track Consenting Bill

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Hi Mandy, are you able to confirm if NCC/ TDC are intending to make a submission on the new fast track consenting bill? Im weighing up the value of making a submission on behalf of the LBU, and keen to know how or if this could dovetail in with any Councils submission

Ngā mihi,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Ailish Neyland

From: EDS Administration <manager@eds.org.nz>
Sent: Thursday, 28 March 2024 1:23 pm
To: Mayor Nick Smith
Subject: Make a submission on the Fast-track Approvals Bill using EDS's template

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Make a submission on the Fast-track Approvals Bill using EDS's template

28 March 2024

EDS has released a template submission on the Fast-Track Approvals Bill.

The template is designed to make it easy for everyone to tell our law makers about the Bill's main flaws. It covers 5 key issues with the Bill and has space for people to add their own perspectives.

EDS has released its own draft submission on the Bill which provides more detail on the Bill's issues. People are welcome to draw on EDS's submission to flesh out their own. Feedback on EDS's draft submission is also welcome.

Last week EDS hosted a webinar on the Bill which over 700 people registered for, demonstrating the depth of concern for this Bill. The webinar prompted some common questions. Here are our top 3:

1. The Bill appears to give Ministers carte blanche to favour particular applicants or projects. Does the Bill deal with conflicts of interest?

It does not. There are no safeguards in the Bill about when Ministers should be expected to recuse themselves from direct decision-making, such as where they have made comments about particular projects in the past or where they have previously received political donations from particular applicants.

2. It seems that any project or development that claims 'national and regional significance' is eligible for fast-tracking. Is that the case?

Pretty much, yes. The key test for eligibility is whether there is a significant national or regional benefit. This is very vague and open to Ministerial interpretation, with criteria as broad as (for example) whether a proposal would support primary industries or a project on a priority list. Very few projects are specifically made not eligible either, so things like prohibited activities under the RMA can pass through.

3. Under existing fast-track processes independent expert panels make the decision on whether a project can proceed. What role do these panels have under the Bill?

Unlike other fast-tracks we've had, expert independent panels are relegated to an advisory role only. In the unlikely event that panels recommend declining an application, Ministers can override this recommendation when making a final decision or simply send it back with further "directions" for reconsideration. The whole thing is designed to be a rubber stamping exercise.

The Bill is currently before the Environment Select Committee and submissions close on 19 April 2024. EDS is encouraging everyone to have a voice in this process.

**Template
submission**

**EDS's draft
submission**

**Watch the
webinar**

Support EDS

EDS relies heavily on donations and memberships to support its mahi. We're currently working hard on matters relating to the Fast-track Approvals Bill.

The Bill is a radical disruption of the resource management system which will undoubtedly lock in environmental degradation for decades to come. It bears little resemblance to existing fast-track processes, which are currently operating adequately. There is simply no need for it and it should not be passed.

We would love your support!

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For more information contact manager@eds.org.nz.

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Ailish Neyland

From: Al Cross <Al.Cross@teurukahika.govt.nz>
Sent: Monday, 1 April 2024 4:37 pm
To: Chris McLay; Darryl Lew; fiona.mctavish@boprc.govt.nz; janine.dowding@tasman.govt.nz; Jonathan Gibbard ; Leonie.Rae@tasman.govt.nz; Mark Wheeler; Megan Tyler; Michael McCartney; Nedine Thatcher-Swann ; Nic Peet; Nigel Corry; Nigel Philpott; Richard Saunders; Stefanie Rixecker; Steve Ruru; wilma.falconer@es.govt.nz
Cc: Warren Hanley; Namouta Poutasi; Katherine Trought <katherine.trought@ecan.govt.nz>
Subject: Sector submission on Fast-track Approvals Bill: Update

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ADJUSTED TITLE – USE THIS EMAIL INSTEAD

Kia ora RCEOs

This is a brief update on our process to form a Sector submission.

I have pulled together a working group to help prepare our submission, comprising representation from key SIGs and Councils. As time permits, I'm also linking with submission leads from those Councils forming their own submissions, to cross-pollinate on issues, risks and opportunities - and help inform content in our Sector submission.

Feedback on key issues late this week

Later this week you'll receive a short document on key issues and positioning, where I'll be asking you for your view to help provide direction on submission content and emphasis.

Draft submission to come

I'm targeting the **end of Friday 12 April** for you to receive the draft submission.

ACTION: No action required at this stage

Ngā mihi

Al

Al Cross

Director – Resource Management Reform



Regional and
Unitary Councils
Aotearoa

Mobile: 027 201 3571

Ailish Neyland

From: Mandy Bishop
Sent: Tuesday, 2 April 2024 8:40 am
To: Clare Piper
Subject: FW: Updates and information sharing from Te Uru Kahika's Chief Science Advisor
Attachments: Ipsos_Local Government Climate Data Needs_research infographic_20 Dec (2).pdf

FYI too
M

From: Gavin Ide <Gavin@hbrc.govt.nz>
Sent: Tuesday, April 2, 2024 8:29 AM
To: Andrew Parrish (ECAN) <Andrew.Parrish@ecan.govt.nz>; Barry Johnson <barry.johnson@tasman.govt.nz>; Bruce McAuliffe <Bruce.McAuliffe@waikatoregion.govt.nz>; Charlotte Almond (HRC) <Charlotte.Almond@horizons.govt.nz>; Charlotte Knight (GDC) <Charlotte.Knight@gdc.govt.nz>; Dennis Bush-King <dennis.bush-king@ncc.govt.nz>; Fleur Matthews <Fleur.Matthews@orc.govt.nz>; Gavin Ide <Gavin@hbrc.govt.nz>; Julie Bevan <Julie.Bevan@boprc.govt.nz>; Lillie Sadler (WCRC) <ls@wrc.govt.nz>; Lisa Hawkins (TRC) <lisa.hawkins@trc.govt.nz>; Lucy Hicks <Lucy.Hicks@es.govt.nz>; Matthew Hickman <matthew.hickman@gw.govt.nz>; Pere.Hawes <Pere.Hawes@marlborough.govt.nz>; Phill Reid (AC) <Phill.Reid@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz>; tamiw@nrc.govt.nz; Brendan Judd (AC) <brendan.judd@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz>; Ceri Edmonds <ceri.edmonds@hbrc.govt.nz>; Debra Yan (AC) (Debra.yan@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz) <Debra.yan@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz>; Finbar Kiddle (TRC) <finbar.kiddle@trc.govt.nz>; Gavin Gilder (ES) <Gavin.Gilder@es.govt.nz>; Janic Slupski <Janic.Slupski@gdc.govt.nz>; Justin Murfitt (NRC) <JustinM@nrc.govt.nz>; Kath Coombes (AC) <Kath.Coombes@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz>; Kathie Fletcher (TDC) <Kathie.Fletcher@tasman.govt.nz>; Lisette Balsom (WRC) <Lisette.Balsom@waikatoregion.govt.nz>; Liz Devery (ES) <Liz.Devery@es.govt.nz>; Mandy Bishop <mandy.bishop@ncc.govt.nz>; Marcus Roy (ES) <marcus.roy@es.govt.nz>; Nicola Green <Nicola.Green@boprc.govt.nz>; Olivia Cook <Olivia.Cook@ecan.govt.nz>; Sarah Brand-8469 <sarah.brand@marlborough.govt.nz>; stephen.lamb@boprc.govt.nz; Teresa Thorp (WCRC) <teresa.thorp@wrc.govt.nz>; Tom Bowen <Tom.Bowen@horizons.govt.nz>; Tom De Pelsemaeker <Tom.DePelsemaeker@orc.govt.nz>
Subject: FW: Updates and information sharing from Te Uru Kahika's Chief Science Advisor

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Hi PSIGers,

I hope you all had a relaxing Easter Break and can power through another short week!

See email below (Forwarding this as it's much easier than trying to transfer across to a MSTEams post that retains links etc).

Gav



Gavin Ide

Principal Advisor Strategic Planning

06 835 9200 | 027 588 8901

Hawke's Bay Regional Council | Te Kaunihera ā-rohe o Te Matau a Māui

159 Dalton Street, Napier 4110 | hbrc.govt.nz

Enhancing Our Environment Together | Te Whakapakari Tahi | Tō Tātau Taiao



Let us know how we're doing, give your feedback here.

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From: Chris Daughney <Chris.Daughney@teurukahika.govt.nz>

Sent: Friday, March 22, 2024 3:37 PM

To:

Cc:

Subject: Updates and information sharing

Kia ora SIG convenors

Here's another update on various initiatives and bits of intel picked up over the last couple weeks.

Most of the items in this newsletter describe **opportunities for us to exert influence** and, if we're successful, to enable production of science, tools and datasets that will help us in our work. So, although this is a time of much uncertainty and change, opportunities to influence abound!

Fast-track Approvals Bill

The [FTA Bill](#) has been introduced with [submissions](#) due by 19 April. Many of your individual organisations will be making submissions, as will Te Uru Kahika. Apart from other matters that we might want to comment on, this is an opportunity for us to lobby for new science and data.

So last month I asked you to **please let me know of any types of evidence, models, datasets, etc. you think the regional sector might need to develop (or have developed) in a hurry to support consenting at pace, whether under this Bill or some other regime.**

Several people responded to say that consenting would be helped by better tools for valuing ecosystems and environments ([globally worth \\$ trillions](#)). Such better tools could take several forms, e.g.: an update to [existing ecological impact assessment guidelines](#) (especially section 5.5!); enhancements to Treasury's [CBAX](#) cost-benefit tool; guidance on benefit transfer so we can use [global ecosystem services valuations](#) in NZ; or training courses (or even a simple checklist) to ensure accounting for [biases](#), [scarcity](#), [irreversibility](#), etc. **Let me know what you think.**



Input into Government's Climate Data Initiative

Budget23 allocated \$24.7m to establish an all-of-government [Climate Data Initiative](#), led by MfE. CDI aims to bring together climate-related datasets and make them easier to use, as per Action 3.2 in the [National Adaptation Plan](#).

In its first year, CDI has been developing two products, to be released in June/July. These are: a portal to access the [updated CMIP6 climate projections](#); and a portal to provide easier access to greenhouse gas emissions data from a range of central government agencies.

By late April, MfE will be providing proposals to Ministers about the next set of CDI products to be developed. A CDI survey (see attachment) suggests that a *geospatial risk assessment tool* would be most valuable for local government, but what exactly would this contain – info on climate impacts on native species, updated projections of river flows under climate change, flood inundation maps, an update of [HIRDS](#), or something else? **Let me know what you think about this too.**

Input into review of MBIE's Extreme Weather Science Response

Your organisations may be contacted by Brendan Morris, who has been commissioned to undertake an independent review of [MBIE's science funding response](#) following the extreme weather events of early 2023. I have also asked Brendan for an opportunity for Science Managers in the affected regions to provide joint feedback into this review.

This is an opportunity for us to influence the way the science system responds to future extreme weather events and natural hazards, e.g. in aspects such as: science coordination, roles and responsibilities; funding and data sharing arrangements; and commissioned [science projects](#) and their deliverables – including the [Weather Recovery Advice Fund](#) made available to regional councils.

Input into MBIE's reform of the science system

This may be one of our best opportunities to influence the types of science undertaken nationwide. Te Uru Kahika provided input under last government but – sorry – I can't give much of an update on the state of play here.

As I reported last month, the [National Science Challenges](#) are still expected to end in June, and the [National Research Priorities](#) to replace them under the [Te Ara Paerangi](#) programme have now been scrapped. However, a [report](#) has now been released by former NRP Independent Advisory Panel, which identifies several 'areas of ambition' in which research could help the nation – such as improving resilience to natural hazards, protecting biodiversity, and improving the health of terrestrial, freshwater, estuarine and marine environment – but whether these will be invested in by the current Government remains to be seen.

Input into MBIE Endeavour proposals

Thanks to all of you who provided input into Endeavour proposals developed by research organisations over the last few months. Bids to the larger fund (Research Programmes) have now been submitted to MBIE, several with letters of support from the regional sector; funding decisions will be announced around Sept. We will have an opportunity to provide input to the bids for the smaller fund (Smart Ideas) over the next few months, if they are invited to full proposal stage.

Input into MfE's science and data projects

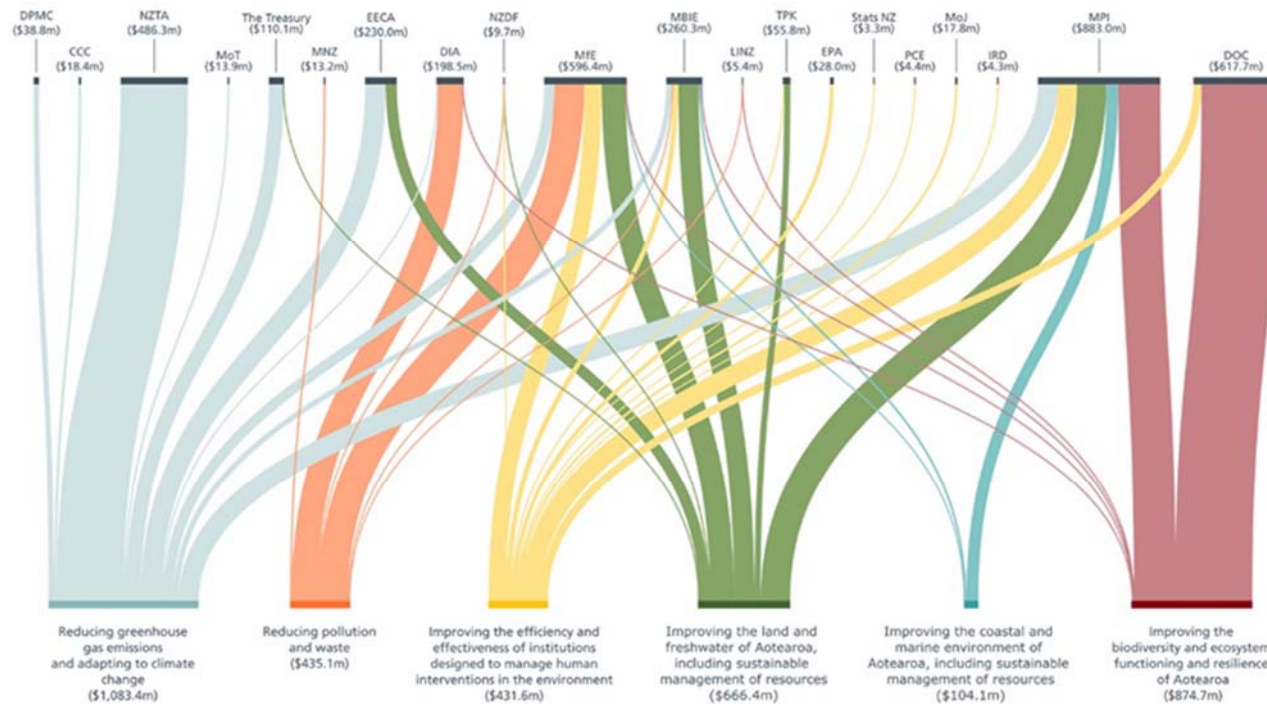
The regional sector is currently providing input into several projects being run within or commissioned by MfE. I'd estimate that collective value of these projects is around \$1m or more. **Let me know if you'd like to know more about any of these projects.**

- Developing a national ecosystem typology
- Developing spatial information to assess naturalness of marine habitats
- Exploring alternative methods for statistical assessment of trends in environmental data
- Pilot study – CMIP5-CMIP6 hydrological projections intercomparison
- Pilot study – Modifying monitoring networks to support adaptive management
- Updating NZ's Land Use Classification and Land Cover Database
- Updating thresholds for indicators of soil quality
- Updating thresholds for indicators of estuarine health
- Updating NZ's estuary monitoring protocol
- National Environmental Monitoring Standard – Erodible soil
- National Environmental Monitoring Standard – Indigenous vegetation cover

Other things on the go

- The **Climate Change Commission** will be undertaking three consultations over April-May: whether NZ's whether 2050 domestic emissions target should change; whether shipping and aviation emissions should be included within NZ's national emissions reporting; and advice to government on the 4th emissions budget (for 2036-2040).
- **NEMA** will coordinate the national CDEM exercise [Rū Whenua](#) over three days (12 June, 26 June, 10 July). It will be based on an Alpine Fault earthquake scenario. The exercise may include a simulated release of MBIE science response funding and advice from regional councils on its use, as occurred after the extreme weather events in early 2023.
- We are engaging with **MBIE** as it undertakes [reforms to gene technology regulation](#), which involves establishing new legislation and a new gene technology regulator by December 2025. These reforms are relevant to councils in part because of our ability to make regional rules, which for some councils already have a GE/GMO stance.
- The **Productivity Commission** has been disestablished (Ganesh Nana's closing statement is [here](#)), in accord with the Coalition Agreement's proposal to create a new **Ministry of Regulation**.
- Your organisations will have received a letter from the **Minister of Climate Change**, requesting data on adaptation preparedness as per section 5ZW of the Climate Change Response Act 2002. Responses to the online responses are due by 12 April. This information will be used to update the [2020 adaptation preparedness report](#). If possible, **please share your organisation's response to this data request**, so I can understand the regional sector's status as distinct from other local government agencies.
- **In case you missed it** (long list – lots going on!)

- The PCE has concluded that the [Government will spend \\$3.6b on the environment in FY23/24](#). The analysis shows how much of each agency's funding is tagged to the achievement of specific 'enduring environmental outcomes'.



- The PCE has also released a report on [protecting urban soils](#). One of the recommendations is to clarify regional councils' roles and responsibilities for soil conservation, e.g. to focus on soil quality and its capacity to support vegetation and attenuate stormwater.
- MfE has published [updated Coastal Hazards and Climate Change guidance](#). Key updates include: new relative sea-level rise projections and vertical land movement estimates; improved knowledge on interactions between different types of coastal hazards (such as sea-level rise, storms, flooding, or rising groundwater); and updated guidance for risk assessments and adaptation pathway planning.
- A recent paper demonstrated an [eDNA-based index for tracking the health of NZ's river ecosystems](#). Congratulations to the co-authors from Hawke's Bay, Waikato and Bay of Plenty regional councils!
- Another recent paper proposes ten key components to foster [climate-smart marine spatial planning](#) globally. Examples include *prioritising ecosystem health* and *promoting dynamic adaptive planning*.
- The Bioheritage NSC has released [A Tika Transition to a Flourishing Aotearoa](#), which provides a framework to evaluate consultation documents and proposals that seek to transition Aotearoa to a better environmental future.
- Another output from Bioheritage NSC identifies [behaviours of the public most likely to improve freshwater environments](#). The top-ranked were Report pollution in drains & waterways; Restore natural channels with a community group; and Report potential fish barriers.

- A project completed through the Our Land and Water NSC has created [national-scale maps of NZ's physiographic environments](#). A key conclusion is that the physiographic characteristics (e.g. precipitation, slope and soil type) account for 2.1x more variation in river contaminant concentrations than land use does.
- An international study of 59,000 participants from 63 countries attempted to identify the [interventions with greatest influence on societal climate action](#). Not surprisingly, the most effective intervention depends on the individual and their background, ideology and socio-cultural context. This led the researchers to develop a [prototype app](#) to assist policy-makers. Apparently, an effective approach in NZ is to get people to 'project themselves into the future and write a letter to themselves in the present, describing the actions they would have wanted to take regarding climate change'.

Dr Chris Daughney

Chief Science Advisor



Mobile: 021 243 0882

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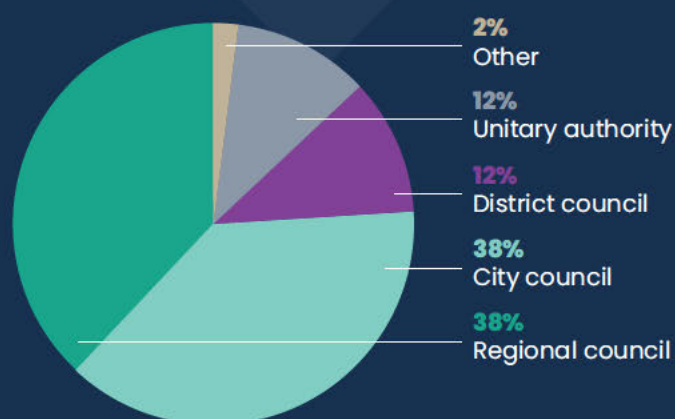


Understanding Local Government Climate Data Needs

This research has been conducted by Ipsos to understand what guidance and tools councils need to support climate-related work.

Specifically to:

- Understand councils' current and future needs and barriers and how MfE can address these needs through the development of tools, guidance, data provision, and resources
- Gauge what kinds of tools / resources / data would help councils in their climate-related work and in driving climate action in their region
- Understand how these needs are organised, from critical to low priority



 **44%** large council

 **46%** medium council

 **10%** small council

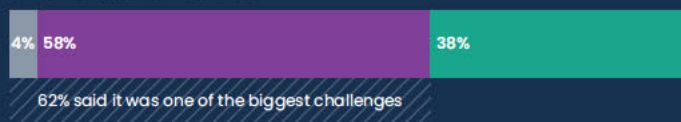
This research is made up of n=50 responses from local government, consisting of various ratepayer bases and geographical locations. A large proportion of responses were completed as groups of council staff, and 30% as individuals responsible for managing climate action in their communities. The survey was conducted online from the 15th August – 12th September 2023.

Climate change may be widely acknowledged and accepted; however, councils are still struggling to have it prioritised.

The majority view climate change as one of the biggest challenges facing their council; however, it isn't seen to be as large of a priority for council.

None of the councils who took part in this research stated that climate change is their biggest priority. Only a third stated it fitted in the category of being one of their biggest priorities. For the majority, **it's a priority, but others are higher.**

Challenge for council



Priority for council



“Priorities are more around protecting the community's economic abilities and development.”

This points to an opportunity to support council staff with evidence and tools to improve climate change prioritisation.

The biggest barriers to climate action are issues around *funding / costs & issues of acceptance / prioritisation, with resourcing & expertise* being prevalent for a large proportion. As well as battling higher strategic priorities, climate change is also challenging to deal with for councils. For the majority, it's **one of the biggest challenges they face.**



Ministry for the
Environment
Manatū Mō Te Taiao



Understanding Local Government Climate Data Needs

When identifying issues or activities councils are dealing with related to climate change, it is clear climate change staff have many competing priorities across adaptation, emissions reduction, comms and engagement, and other matters.

The top priorities for councils now are mostly adaptation processes.

Adaptation Process	Emissions Reductions	Comms & Engagement	Other Priorities
Updating policy / planning documents	Emissions reduction planning - for organisation/region/district/city	Community engagement for adaptation / decision-making	Ability to link climate change response to other council priorities
Climate change / multi-hazard risk assessment	Carbon emission modelling/ reporting - for region		

The spread of activities is large and when combined with the barriers the councils are facing, we understand councils are stretched. There is an opportunity to provide improved data tools which streamline, or make more efficient, the work required to complete these.

Current tools / resources councils are using

The top 3 commonly used tools / resources are:



72%

StatsNZ website



64%

coastal hazard guidance



64%

external consultants

For the least used tools, the reason for not using these tools is typically due to *not having heard of it*, or *having low capability or capacity to use these*.

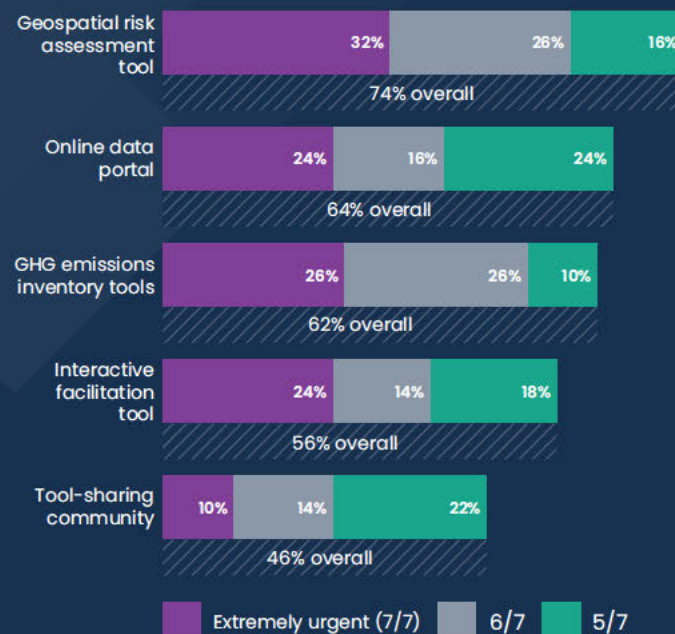
There is an opportunity to bring light to existing tools across the system and improve their ease of use or accessibility to increase efficiencies in council work programmes.

“Standardised tool to assess the emissions impact of infrastructure investments”

“Visualisation of different climate scenarios affecting different hazards, associated risk and cumulative risk”

The urgency on what tools are needed are:

A geospatial risk assessment tool is most urgently needed by councils and a tool-sharing community is least urgently needed by councils.



It is clear that MfE's proposed tools would be valuable to councils. There is a high level of both urgency and need. A number of councils are also keen to be involved and work with MfE to co-design tools.

- The *geospatial risk assessment tool* stands out as the first priority for MfE to focus on. It is the highest ranked in terms of councils' priorities, need, and usefulness both now and long term (5–10 years). Key to making this a success will be having an *easy interface, reliable and recent data*, and *Māori iwi alignment*. A number of councils are keen to work with MfE to co-design tools.
- While an *online data portal* is seen as the second most urgent in terms of need, *GHG emissions inventory tools* and an *interactive facilitation tool* are seen as greater priorities.
- A *tool-sharing community* has the lowest level of urgency, even though nearly a half state it is needed with some urgency. It is the one tool that is seen to be more useful in 5–10 years than it is now. The other tools were seen to be just as useful now as they will be in the future.

Councils are looking for tools that are easy to use, accessible, responsive to their needs, and co-designed (have stakeholder / Māori iwi alignment).



Ministry for the
Environment
Manatū Mō Te Taiao



Ailish Neyland

From: Listed Projects <ListedProjects@mfe.govt.nz>
Sent: Friday, 5 April 2024 1:35 pm
To: Nigel Philpott
Subject: Letter from Minister Bishop- Listed Process Approval Process
Attachments: Letter from Minister Bishop- Listed Projects Process.pdf

CAUTION: External email.

Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Kia ora Nigel Philpott,

Please see the attached letter from Minister Bishop regarding the Fast-track Approval Bill.

Ngā mihi nui,
The Listed Projects Team

Ministry for the Environment | Manatū Mō Te Taiao
environment.govt.nz



Hon Chris Bishop

Minister of Housing
Minister for Infrastructure
Minister Responsible for RMA Reform
Minister for Sport and Recreation
Leader of the House
Associate Minister of Finance



3 April 2024

Tēnā koe,

After being introduced to Parliament on 7 March 2024, the Fast-Track Approvals Bill (Bill) is now being considered by the Environment Select Committee.

I'm getting in touch as I understand that you were invited to, or had a high level of interest in, nominating projects for inclusion as a 'listed projects' in the Bill. These 'listed projects' will be included in Schedules 2A and 2B of the Bill once the Select Committee process has concluded.

The Government has now established a process to identify listed projects for inclusion in the Bill. This will involve a group of independent experts - the Fast-Track Projects Advisory Group (the Advisory Group) who will be assessing and making recommendations to Ministers on which projects to include in the Bill.

You can nominate a project for listing by submitting it to the Advisory Group for consideration via the Ministry for the Environment (MfE) website ([Fast-track consenting applications - Ministry for the Environment - Citizen Space](#)). You will need to identify which schedule you would like the project to be on and provide supporting information.

The Advisory Group will then undertake an assessment of the projects against the referral criteria in the Bill. It will be supported by a group of officials from the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment and MfE.

The Advisory Group will then make its recommendations to Ministers who will make decisions on what projects to include in the Bill. These projects will be added to the Bill either through the Select Committee process or later in the Parliamentary process.

The application portal on the MfE website will be live from 3 April to 3 May 2024.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chris Bishop'.

Hon Chris Bishop
Minister Responsible for RMA Reform

Ailish Neyland

From: Inside Government <subs@insidegovernment.co.nz>
Sent: Thursday, 11 April 2024 11:09 am
To: Mayor Nick Smith
Subject: Study finds ETS let down by five key sectors, Fast Track expert advisory group named, Govt honours Taranaki Maunga deal and Much More...

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INSIDE GOVERNMENT

News, Information and Events for the New Zealand Public Service

THURSDAY 11 APRIL, 2024



Study finds ETS let down by five key sectors

Researchers from the University of Auckland's Business School Energy Centre say New Zealand's Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) is being let down by several key sectors.

[Read more...](#)



Fast Track expert advisory group named

The Government has today announced the expert advisory group who will provide independent recommendations to Ministers on projects to be included in the Fast Track Approvals Bill.

[Read more...](#)

Ailish Neyland

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 12 April 2024 9:13 pm
To: Mayor Nick Smith
Subject: Fwd: Fast Track Bill

Categories: STEPHEN

CAUTION: External email.

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Kia ora Nick and Rohan

I live in the Nelson electorate and I am **horrified** and **extremely** worried about the Fast-track Approvals Bill as are most New Zealanders who know about it and have at least half a brain. This bill is an attempt to undermine democratic process **and** environmental considerations. A great deal of work has gone into developing laws that will protect both the environment and communities from unbridled and ill considered developments. This bill tries to undermine those protections and allow just **three** ministers unfettered power to approve anything and everything willy nilly.

This would allow our money-fixated coalition of clowns to allow unsustainable and unsound industrial practices to go ahead such as:

1. Sea bed mining: this has been proven to be extremely harmful to the marine environment on a long term basis. It is highly unsustainable. I can provide more details if desired. The government is keen to approve Deep seabed mining off the coastline of Taranaki which is one of New Zealand's most precious marine mammal areas. It is home to our critically endangered little Maui dolphins (only about 55 left), and also rare blue pygmy whales, and little blue penguins.
2. Gold mining: Companies always promise to leave mining areas clean and "remediated" afterwards. But history shows us that in fact they leave a massive mess for taxpayers to pay to clean up such as highly toxic and leaking cyanide dams which pollute streams and rivers and the ocean.

3. Drilling for oil and gas. The latter would be totally inappropriate given that we need to be stopping fossil fuels and in actual fact we should have stopped them long ago. We need to become 100% renewable as soon as possible. Fossil fuels are outdated and unsustainable. It is time we caught up with the science.

4. Antimony mining: I have heard that Antimony has been found in Reefton and companies want to mine this. It is used for electric car batteries, (there must be better options) but also military uses, including bullets, night vision goggles, explosive formulations, flares, nuclear weapons production, and infrared sensors." This is probably the main reason they want to mine it. It is highly toxic and similar to lead, (but TEN times more toxic) and has a cumulative effect on health." Antimony (Sb) and arsenic (As) are toxic heavy metals of the same group on the periodic table of elements..... and their migration processes in water affect the ecological environment." Who is going to pay for the damaged health of mine workers, potential mining disasters, and extremely likely pollution of our beautiful streams, rivers, lakes and ocean?

As noted by Forest and Bird:

"This law is not about fast tracking environmentally sound development as the Government already has the power to do that without changing the law. Instead, the proposed law change is about giving ministers the power to override and undermine core environmental and conservation standards and prevent your constituents - people like me - from having a say about major developments in our own community. I was particularly concerned that the RMA Minister Chris Bishop told TVNZ that he thinks "there will be projects that will be granted consent that would not otherwise have got a consent under the status quo. Frankly, I hope that's why we're doing it." It worries me that ministers are openly talking about giving approval to developments that have been previously thrown out in Court because they were too environmentally damaging. I am also worried about my ability to express my thoughts about developments affecting our local community. It looks like developers will be able to put forward their ideas, but my voice as a local can be ignored. This doesn't seem fair or how our democracy should work. I am seeking your assurance that no development will be put through this environmental override process in your electorate, unless it would have been approved under existing laws. If it would fail to get permission under our existing environmental laws, it should not go ahead. I am seeking your assurance that you will do everything in your power to make sure that your own constituents and the environment in this electorate are not adversely impacted by this Bill.

Please ask RMA Minister Chris Bishop to immediately publicly release the list of developments being considered for inclusion in the Bill to allow people to make submissions to Parliament about what is on the list. Please write back to me urgently and advise me of any developments that are being considered in our community and how we can have a say about these. "

Yours sincerely,

Ailish Neyland

From: Aaron Stallard
Sent: Tuesday, 16 April 2024 12:07 pm
To: Councillors
Cc: Nigel Philpott; Stephen Rainbow; Mandy Bishop
Subject: Submission regarding Fast-track Approvals Bill
Attachments: Fast Track submission.docx

Kia ora everyone,

In the absence of any Council-wide submission on the Fast-track Approvals Bill I have drafted a personal submission (attached). If any elected member would like to add their name to the letter, please let me know by this Friday at 1 pm.

Ngā mihi,

Aaron

Dr Aaron Stallard
Councillor | Kaikaunihera
021 1237099

Nelson City Council | Te Kaunihera o Whakatū
nelson.govt.nz

Ailish Neyland

From: Mandy Bishop
Sent: Wednesday, 17 April 2024 11:33 am
To: CE & GMs
Subject: RE: FOR YOUR REVIEW: Draft sector submission on Fast-track Amendment Bill: Update

The submission recommendations align with our environmental management role and to provide a clear place for iwi.

The recommendations will make the fast-track process more complex so there may be aspects from a Council projects viewpoint that wouldn't be as streamlined as the Bill proposes.

However as Council should be (IMHO) leading the way in our approach to projects, providing a good example for private developers to follow, I don't think there is anything significant we should suggest needs changing.

Cheers
M

From: Nigel Philpott <nigel.philpott@ncc.govt.nz>
Sent: Tuesday, April 16, 2024 2:25 PM
To: CE & GMs <SLT2@ncc.govt.nz>
Subject: Fwd: FOR YOUR REVIEW: Draft sector submission on Fast-track Amendment Bill: Update

Any feedback you wish to provide? Nil returns not required.....

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From: Al Cross <Al.Cross@teurukahika.govt.nz>
Sent: Tuesday, April 16, 2024 2:22:55 PM
To: Chris McLay <Chris.McLay@waikatoregion.govt.nz>; Darryl Lew <Darryl.lew@wrc.govt.nz>; Leonie.Rae@tasman.govt.nz <Leonie.Rae@tasman.govt.nz>;
Leonie.Rae@tasman.govt.nz <Leonie.Rae@tasman.govt.nz>; Megan Tyler <megan.tyler@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz>; Jonathan Gibbard <jong@nrc.govt.nz>; Michael McCartney <michael.mccartney@horizons.govt.nz>; Nedine Thatcher-Swann <Nedine.Thatcher-Swann@gdc.govt.nz>; Nic Peet <nic.peet@hbrc.govt.nz>; Nigel Corry <nigel.corry@gw.govt.nz>; Nigel Philpott <nigel.philpott@ncc.govt.nz>; Richard Saunders <richard.saunders@orc.govt.nz>; Stefanie Rixecker <Stefanie.Rixecker@ecan.govt.nz>; Steve Ruru <Steve.Ruru@trc.govt.nz>; wilma.falconer@es.govt.nz <wilma.falconer@es.govt.nz>; fiona.mctavish@boprc.govt.nz <fiona.mctavish@boprc.govt.nz>
Cc: Namouta Poutasi <Namouta.Poutasi@boprc.govt.nz>; Katherine Trought <katherine.trought@ecan.govt.nz> <Katherine.Trought@ecan.govt.nz>; Liz Lambert

<Liz.Lambert@teurukahika.govt.nz>; Tom Bowen <Tom.Bowen@teurukahika.govt.nz>

Subject: FOR YOUR REVIEW: Draft sector submission on Fast-track Amendment Bill: Update

CAUTION: External email.

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Kia ora CEs

Please find attached a draft for review.

ACTION: Please provide feedback by Wednesday night.

Ngā mihi nui

Al

Al Cross

Director – Resource Management Reform



Regional and
Unitary Councils
Aotearoa

Mobile: 027 201 3571

From: Al Cross

Sent: Monday, April 15, 2024 4:21 PM

To: Chris McLay <Chris.McLay@waikatoregion.govt.nz>; Darryl Lew <Darryl.lew@wcrc.govt.nz>; Leonie.Rae@tasman.govt.nz; Leonie.Rae@tasman.govt.nz; Megan Tyler <megan.tyler@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz>; Jonathan Gibbard <jong@nrc.govt.nz>; Michael McCartney <michael.mccartney@horizons.govt.nz>; Nedine Thatcher-Swann <Nedine.Thatcher-Swann@gdc.govt.nz>; Nic Peet <nic.peet@hbrc.govt.nz>; Nigel Corry <nigel.corry@gw.govt.nz>; Nigel Philpott <nigel.philpott@ncc.govt.nz>; Richard Saunders <richard.saunders@orc.govt.nz>; Stefanie Rixecker <Stefanie.Rixecker@ecan.govt.nz>; Steve Ruru <Steve.Ruru@trc.govt.nz>; wilma.falconer@es.govt.nz; fiona.mctavish@boprc.govt.nz

Cc: Namouta Poutasi <Namouta.Poutasi@boprc.govt.nz>; Katherine Trought <katherine.trought@ecan.govt.nz> <Katherine.Trought@ecan.govt.nz>; Liz Lambert <Liz.Lambert@teurukahika.govt.nz>; Tom Bowen <Tom.Bowen@teurukahika.govt.nz>

Subject: Sector submission on Fast-track Amendment Bill: Update

Kia ora RCEOs

A brief update.

The draft submission will be with you for review **by around the middle of Tuesday**.

You'll have until Wednesday night (preferably) to provide feedback, before final sign-off by Michael and lodgement by Friday (at the outside).

Please come back to me if you have any questions.

Ngā mihi

Al

Al Cross

Director – Resource Management Reform



Regional and
Unitary Councils
Aotearoa

Mobile: 027 201 3571

From: Al Cross <Al.Cross@teurukahika.govt.nz>

Sent: Monday, April 8, 2024 11:28 AM

To: Chris McLay <Chris.McLay@waikatoregion.govt.nz>; Darryl Lew <Darryl.lew@wcrc.govt.nz>; Leonie.Rae@tasman.govt.nz; Leonie.Rae@tasman.govt.nz; Megan Tyler <megan.tyler@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz>; Jonathan Gibbard <jong@nrc.govt.nz>; Michael McCartney <michael.mccartney@horizons.govt.nz>; Nedine Thatcher-Swann <Nedine.Thatcher-Swann@gdc.govt.nz>; Nic Peet <nic.peet@hbrc.govt.nz>; Nigel Corry <nigel.corry@gw.govt.nz>; Nigel Philpott <nigel.philpott@ncc.govt.nz>; Richard Saunders <richard.saunders@orc.govt.nz>; Stefanie Rixecker <Stefanie.Rixecker@ecan.govt.nz>; Steve Ruru <Steve.Ruru@trc.govt.nz>; wilma.falconer@es.govt.nz; fiona.mctavish@boprc.govt.nz

Cc: Warren Hanley <warren.hanley@orc.govt.nz>; Namouta Poutasi <Namouta.Poutasi@boprc.govt.nz>; Katherine Trought <katherine.trought@ecan.govt.nz> <Katherine.Trought@ecan.govt.nz>

Subject: Re: Sector submission on Fast-track Amendment Bill: Update

Mōrena RCEOs

As briefed below, please find attached a summary of key issues document for your consideration and feedback, to help inform direction for our Sector submission.

This document will also be shared with the RMG, for their consideration and feedback in parallel.

ACTION: Please provide your feedback by **COB Wednesday 10 April.**

Ngā mihi

Al

Al Cross

Director – Resource Management Reform



Regional and
Unitary Councils
Aotearoa

Mobile: 027 201 3571

From: Al Cross

Sent: Monday, April 1, 2024 4:31 PM

To: Chris McLay <Chris.McLay@waikatoregion.govt.nz>; Darryl Lew <Darryl.lew@wrcr.govt.nz>; Fiona McTavish <fiona.mctavish@boprc.govt.nz>; Janine Dowding <Janine.Dowding@tasman.govt.nz>; Jonathan Gibbard <jong@nrc.govt.nz>; Leonie.Rae@tasman.govt.nz <Leonie.Rae@tasman.govt.nz>; Mark Wheeler <mark.wheeler@marlborough.govt.nz>; Megan Tyler <megan.tyler@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz>; Michael McCartney <michael.mccartney@horizons.govt.nz>; Nedine Thatcher-Swann <Nedine.Thatcher-Swann@gdc.govt.nz>; Nic Peet <nic.peet@hbrc.govt.nz>; Nigel Corry <nigel.corry@gw.govt.nz>; Nigel Philpott <nigel.philpott@ncc.govt.nz>; Richard Saunders <Richard.saunders@orc.govt.nz>; Stefanie Rixecker <Stefanie.Rixecker@ecan.govt.nz>; Steve Ruru

<Steve.Ruru@trc.govt.nz>; Wilma Falconer <wilma.falconer@es.govt.nz>

Cc: Warren Hanley <warren.hanley@orc.govt.nz>; Namouta Poutasi <Namouta.Poutasi@boprc.govt.nz>; Katherine Trought <katherine.trought@ecan.govt.nz>
<Katherine.Trought@ecan.govt.nz>

Subject: Sector submission on Fast-track Amendment Bill: Update

Kia ora RCEOs

This is a brief update on our process to form a Sector submission.

I have pulled together a working group to help prepare our submission, comprising representation from key SIGs and Councils. As time permits, I'm also linking with submission leads from those Councils forming their own submissions, to cross-pollinate on issues, risks and opportunities - and help inform content in our Sector submission.

Feedback on key issues late this week

Later this week you'll receive a short document on key issues and positioning, where I'll be asking you for your view to help provide direction on submission content and emphasis.

Draft submission to come

I'm targeting the **end of Friday 12 April** for you to receive the draft submission.

ACTION: No action required at this stage

Ngā mihi

AI

AI Cross

Director – Resource Management Reform



Mobile: 027 201 3571

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19 APRIL 2024
ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE
PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS
WELLINGTON

VIA EMAIL TO: EN@PARLIAMENT.GOV.T.NZ

Tēnā koutou katoa

Te Uru Kahika (Regional and Unitary Councils Aotearoa) thanks the Environment Select Committee for the opportunity to submit on the Fast-track Approvals Bill.

Te Uru Kahika is the Regional and Unitary Councils' collective voice, representing New Zealand's 16 regional and unitary councils. This sector submission is based upon input from several groups within Te Uru Kahika – including Ngā Kairapu, the Resource Management Group, other key group leads and specialist subject matter experts.

The role of these groups is to provide the regional CEOs with tactical advice and expertise on a range of issues, as well as working with Central Government to achieve a range of outcomes. The Te Uru Kahika network also plays a vital role in championing best practice, information sharing and collaboration across councils.

At the outset we wish to acknowledge the Government's intention to streamline regulatory processes to unlock New Zealand's potential. We recognise that this Bill fits within the Government's broader Resource Management Reform programme, and that more substantive matters are intended to be addressed during the remainder of Phase 2 and into Phase 3 to deliver on its goals.

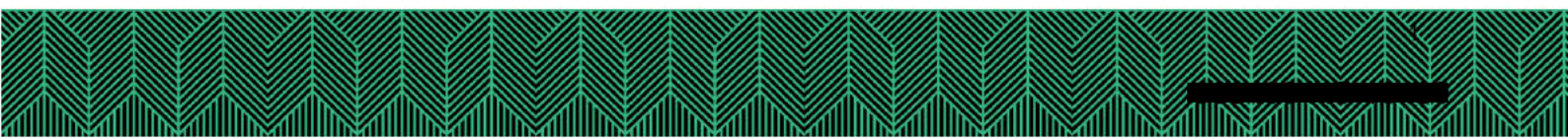
A fast-tracking process, akin to the existing fast-track legislation, has a place in a modern resource management system. If designed well an efficient 'one stop shop' approvals system may be capable of delivering tangible benefits Ministers envisage for our regional communities.

To add value, we believe this Bill should be adjusted in a number of critical areas to ensure these goals are met, while providing for other key system inputs and outcomes. A rebalancing of environmental protection and a fairer more inclusive process for Māori (iwi and hapū) to support good outcomes at place are key to this, as are adjusting other key areas of process highlighted in the submission.

To this end, we suggest this Bill should be adjusted in a number of critical areas. Better accommodation and rebalancing of environmental considerations and a fairer more inclusive process for Māori (iwi and hapū) to support good outcomes at place are key to this, as are adjusting other key areas of process highlighted in the submission.

Regional Government will be a critical partner in the implementation of a new fast-track system. Our involvement in the approvals process is crucial to ensure it can be agile and adaptable in the new system. We want to continue to work productively with Central Government, and other system partners, to ensure its resource management work programme can be implemented successfully.

Our Sector's Chief Science Advisor have provided detailed commentary on more specific matters that should be addressed. These are set out in the General Comment section of the submission.



Furthermore, this submission does not override the position taken by respective regional and unitary council submissions.

We welcome the opportunity to give feedback on the Bill and our contribution aims to ensure the new fast-track approvals system can be implemented, and resource management system goals can be achieved.

This submission is approved by the Regional Chief Executive Officers.

On matters arising from this submission, contact in the first instance should be made with:

Al Cross
Director – Resource Management Reform
Te Uru Kahika
Al.Cross@teurukahika.govt.nz
0272013571

We wish to be heard in support of our submission.

Nāku iti noa, nā

[ADD SIGNATURE]

Michael McCartney

CONVENOR – REGIONAL CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS GROUP

TE URU KAHIKA – REGIONAL AND UNITARY COUNCILS AOTEAROA

INTRODUCTION

1. This submission:
 - Is approved by Regional Council Chief Executives.
 - Provides a platform for productive effort with Central Government, and other system partners for Bill refinement and implementation.
 - Provides additional comment from the Regional Government Sector Chief Science Advisor.
2. This submission identifies aspects of the fast-track approvals reform that are supported and makes recommendations in relation to improving drafting of the Bill to enhance its workability in the following eight key areas.
 - Bill Purpose
 - Treaty of Waitangi obligations
 - Decision-making and process transparency
 - Process participation
 - Avoiding harmful activities
 - Cost recovery
 - Project tracks and eligibility requirements
 - Evidence-based decision making
3. Te Uru Kahika thanks the Environment Select Committee again for the opportunity to submit on the Fast-track Approvals Bill.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

4. Te Uru Kahika understands that this Bill forms part of the Government's near-term Resource Management Reform programme. We further understand that its intent is to enable a range of projects to move through approvals system toward implementation at relative pace, reducing delay and saving cost.
5. A fast-tracking process, akin to the existing fast-track legislation, has a place in a modern resource management system. We believe some changes are required for it to perform effectively.
6. A rebalancing of environmental protection in the form of sustainable management and a fairer more inclusive process for Māori (iwi and hapū) to support good outcomes at place are key areas we believe need attention. Other possible process improvements are highlighted in the submission.
7. We suggest some general process changes that seek to improve process participation in a way that contributes to better outcomes and successful project implementation.
8. Regional Government is a critical partner in the implementation of a new fast-track system. We have substantial experience in regulatory implementation. We seek a stronger role in the approvals system to ensure it can be successfully delivered.

9. We ask the Select Committee to adjust the Bill in eight key areas as a matter of priority to ensure reform programme goals are met. In summary:
1. Bill Purpose: Rebalance to place fast-track development goals alongside a secondary focus on sustainable management; and apply a sunset clause to fast-track legislation to tie into Resource Management Act 1991 proposed replacement.
 2. Treaty of Waitangi obligations: Broaden obligations to take into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi and to uphold iwi and hapū rights and interests through inclusion of a Treaty principles clause; and enable non-settled iwi and hapū the same access to the fast-track process and consultation obligations as settled iwi.
 3. Decision-making and process transparency: Shift approvals decision-making to expert panels; and improve decision-making transparency by making information available throughout the approvals process.
 4. Process participation: We recommend process timeframe changes including through the pre-lodgement stage and some extensions to make the overall process more workable for councils. A new process for developing consent conditions and caucusing options is also recommended, as well as mandatory consultation.
 5. Avoiding harmful activities: Replace the focus on activity status for eligible activities with the avoidance of long-term irreversible harm.
 6. Cost recovery: Extend cost-recovery provisions to enable councils to charge for reasonable costs of providing pre-lodgement advice to applicants; and clarify provision for councils to recover costs for assessing and reporting on applications to expert panels. Cost-recovery provisions also need to include iwi and hapū.
 7. Project tracks and eligibility requirements: Consideration of project eligibility criteria should be made mandatory. We also recommend that projects already declined through other processes, where they are re-presented in their previous form, be made ineligible.
 8. Evidence-based decision making: The introduction of fast-track legislation brings a critical opportunity to enhance the integrity, robustness, and transparency of scientific evidence and its use in fast-track approvals decision-making.

KEY ISSUES

Purpose of the Bill – sustainable management rebalanced

10. As stand-alone legislation, the Bill's purpose should extend beyond the facilitation of projects and requires rebalancing to ensure its considerations are broader than just economic, to also include sustainable management as a secondary focus.
11. We suggest the outcomes focus of the Bill could be clearer, so that it reflects fast-track development goals alongside the secondary focus on sustainable management.

12. Sustainable management is a concept that has been legally tested through three decades of resource management practice. Reference to it offers clarity for decision-making without needing to cause undue delay to the fast-track process.
13. From the perspective of Regional Government, a clearer rebalanced purpose enables environmental protection, climate adaptation and natural hazards risk-management to be accounted for in proposals, assessments, and decision-making.
14. Te Uru Kahika does not support significant environmental trade-offs being enabled by the Bill. It is unclear whether such trade-offs are intended in the Bill, so this needs to be made very clear in drafting, to avoid the potential for unintended environmental consequences.
15. Finally, we recommend applying a sunset clause to the fast-track approvals legislation, so that it ties in with the programmed replacement to the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA). Ongoing fast-track provisions could be integrated into those bill(s) as they are drafted.

Treaty of Waitangi clause and equal access to process

16. Te Uru Kahika recognises the Bill's intent to uphold Treaty of Waitangi Settlements and other Treaty-related commitments and arrangements, and engagement and other procedural requirements through the various application and decision-making process points. The Bill needs to go further.
17. Requirements to *take into account* the principles of the Treaty, or to protect and uphold iwi and hapū rights and interests, are absent.
18. In addition, non-settled iwi and hapū must be enabled the same access to various parts of the fast-track process as settled groups, including obligations to consult. Our recommendations about the importance of general access, timeframes and cost-recovery apply to iwi and hapū in a similar way to councils and other key system parties.
19. The Bill also appears to diminish local decision making and an evolving history of planning and community preferences tied in sustainable management and environmental protection that have increasingly woven to reflect tangata whenua preferences.
20. Ineligibility for projects on Māori land should be revised so that unnecessary barriers to Māori use of the fast-track process are removed.
21. We ask the Select Committee to work with Māori groups who hold rights and interests to shape possible changes presented above.

Strengthening decision-making and process transparency

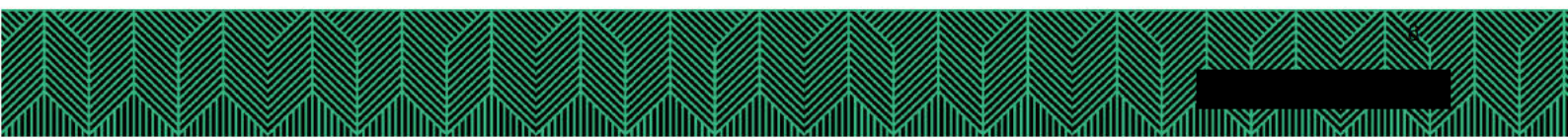
22. Our Sector's strong preference is for decision-making to be the charge of expert panels, appointed for their inherent expertise and capability. Many potential panel members have proven their ability to assess and make decisions at pace through the COVID fast-track regime. through the past three years of the COVID Fast-track regime. Furthermore, by removing a layer of decision-making, system efficiency would be improved. We also suggest where applications are recommended to be declined, these would go to the Joint-Ministers for a final decision.

23. Decision-making transparency should be improved. Regardless of where decisions are made, decision-making transparency can be enhanced by requiring circulation of recommendations or decisions and associated rationale (including how Local Government advice has been considered); and in the case of ministerial decision-making, making available official advice provided to ministers and responses to expert panel recommendations.
24. We also believe the consideration of Local Government planning frameworks and regional strategies should be made mandatory. Local views otherwise risk being by-passed for expedience.

Enhancing effective participation in the fast-tracking process

25. We recognise that a successful fast-tracking system is underpinned by keeping a lid on process timeframes. In our view process steps between application lodgement and consideration by the expert panel are too short for very large projects, limiting effective input by councils and other parties. The process and associated timeframes, up to a limit, could be adjusted at the discretion of the EPA to account for the requirements of particular applications.
26. Te Uru Kahika suggests adding in a pre-lodgement stage bounded by set timeframes (for pre-lodgement engagement and specific inputs required from councils). Evidence shows that good pre-lodgement engagement builds quality applications, capable of being approved and successfully implemented. This is especially important where there are significant implications for infrastructure provision by councils, such as consideration of demands on infrastructure (including roading and wastewater), project sequencing and infrastructure funding. Set timeframes provides certainty for all in the pre-lodgement process.
27. In addition, to provide certainty for project applicants, set clear timeframes through all steps in the process, including for Ministerial decision-making.
28. More effective participation from Regional Government can add considerable value at the expert panel stage.
29. The workability of consent decisions has a bearing on the practical implementation of projects approved. Councils will receive the outcomes of decisions including responsibilities to defend them on appeal and in every case a duty to monitor approved projects. For these reasons, we believe it reasonable to build in steps for greater involvement of Local Government in a few key parts of the process. These include:
 - Requiring conditions to be developed by applicants and councils, with the option to bring in other participants on merit based on circumstances.
 - Providing an option to expert panels to direct caucusing with participants, in lieu of a hearing, while still maintaining process efficiency.
30. Ultimately, we believe changes to timeframes and participation as suggested would improve overall outcomes for applicants, Councils, iwi and hāpu and communities but need not significantly impact on project approval timeframes.

Avoiding activities which cause irreversible effects – prohibited activities



31. Prohibited classification in Local Government planning frameworks is a proven, effective tool to restrict a consenting pathway, and reflects national direction for activities and effects deemed unacceptable.
32. Activities prohibited by Regional Plans, have been determined through a robust plan-making process, involving local communities.
33. Instead of focussing on the (prohibited) status of activities, we suggest a broad assessment of fast-track applications based on the potential for long-term and significant irreversible harm. Projects or their constituent parts which fall into this bracket would need to be adjusted (via applications) to avoid these harms or be declined. The burden of proof would fall on applicants to demonstrate the project applications will not result in the potential for long-term and significant irreversible harm. Otherwise, long-term negative legacies for communities and iwi and hapū may endure.
34. Exceptions could be made to those projects which carry a proven critical public benefit (such as to reduce a significant immediate risk to life and property), where no viable alternative exists.

Cost recovery to be extended, and expert panel rates

35. The cost-recovery regime under this Bill needs to be broadened and rebalanced. While an improvement on the COVID fast track regime, ratepayers should not be expected to pick up the full tab for councils' functions in relation to pre-lodgement advice to applicants and assessing and reporting on applications. It seems fair to expect applicants to pay reasonable costs for council inputs, which needs to be made more explicit in the Bill.
36. In addition, cost-recovery provisions in the Bill ought to be extended to include reasonable costs incurred by iwi and hapū in participating in fast-track processes.
37. Fees and charges should be set in the new legislation, until superseded by respective councils charging policy review processes.
38. The scope of process cost-recovery for councils must cover both mandated duties and the exercise of discretionary powers.

Project tracks and eligibility requirement changes

39. Te Uru Kahika views Project Track B as appropriate, potentially repeating the process offered by the COVID fast-track legislation. The associated referral process is efficient, as demonstrated through councils' effective participation.
40. We are concerned about the exclusion of participation by the public, councils, iwi and hapū and other system parties from the Track A process. A range of fundamental considerations would consequently not be available to the expert advisory group. The Track A framework would offer a more balanced and transparent process of consideration were it open to public submission. Should Track A remain, we also ask that criteria for listing these projects be included in the Bill.
41. We also believe that the consideration of eligibility criteria could be made mandatory. Projects already declined through other processes and re-presented in their same form must be

ineligible. Allowing such projects to be considered would not offer a “fast track”, but a back door for effects already found to be unacceptable.

42. We also note the potential for a project approvals bottleneck when the fast-track legislation is enacted. Processes and expectations will need to be carefully managed to mitigate this risk.

Focussed evidence-based decision-making becomes more crucial

43. Te Uru Kahika believes the introduction of fast-track legislation brings a critical opportunity to enhance the integrity, robustness, and transparency of scientific evidence and its use in fast-track approvals decision-making.
44. Packages of evidence need to be able to be picked up, understood, and translated to inform decision-making at relative pace, overcoming inherent challenges in its use.
45. To recognise this need, we suggest the following:
- Develop guidance and standards for the use of scientific evidence in the FTA process.
 - Enhance access to pertinent scientific datasets to support evidence-informed decision-making.
 - Develop scientific models to assist decision-makers in predicting the impacts of infrastructure and other developments on ecosystems and natural resources.
 - Enhance decision-makers' ability to use scientific evidence effectively.
 - Foster adaptability and innovation in infrastructure projects within the fast-track approvals process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

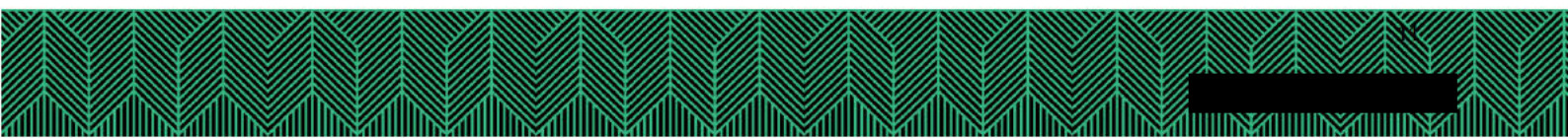
<i>Recommendation 1: Bill Purpose</i>	
1.1	Redraft the Bill Purpose to include sustainable management as a secondary focus. Extend Bill purpose drawing from the purpose of the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act that includes “while continuing to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources.”
1.2	Apply a sunset clause to the eventual fast-track approvals legislation, so that it ties in with the programmed replacement to the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) once the relevant bill(s) are drafted.
<i>Recommendation 2: Treaty of Waitangi</i>	
2.1	Include a Treaty principles clause includes the requirement to take into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, and to protect and uphold iwi and hapū rights and interests.
2.2	Ensure process steps enable reasonable access to relevant parts of the fast-track process for non-settled iwi and hapū (akin to settled Māori groups).
2.3	Remove barriers to use of Māori owned land in the ineligibility criteria.
<i>Recommendation 3: Decision-making and process transparency</i>	
3.1	Shift approvals process decision-making to expert panels.
3.2	Mirror key reporting arrangements in COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act, including making comment, providing evidence, and seeking further information.
3.3	Require that applications recommended to be declined by the Expert Panel be referred to Ministers for final decision.
3.4	Include requirement for circulation of official advice to Joint-Ministers (in support of Ministerial decision-making) to inform decisions on expert panel recommendations; and Ministerial responses to expert panel recommendations, and reasons for decisions made.

3.5	Build in requirement for panels to confirm where council advice has and hasn't been followed, and why.
3.6	Make mandatory to consider Local Government planning frameworks and regional strategies.
Recommendation 4: Process participation	
4.1	Make mandatory the requirement to consult councils and tangata whenua at the pre-lodgement pre-referral stage (section 16)
4.2	Add in a pre-lodgement stage bounded by set timeframes (for pre-lodgement engagement and specific inputs required from councils).
4.3	Increase timeframes on process steps between application the lodgement and expert panel stages.
4.4	Set clear timeframes through all steps in the fast-track approvals process, including for Ministerial decision-making.
4.5	Require draft conditions to be developed by applicants and councils, with the option to bring in other participants on merit based on circumstances.
4.6	Provide an option to expert panels to direct caucusing with participants at expert panel stage, in lieu of a hearing.
Recommendation 5: Avoiding harmful activities	
5.1	Remove the consideration of activity status for eligible activities. Require applicants to demonstrate the project applications will not result in the potential for long-term and significant irreversible harm.
Recommendation 6: Cost-recovery	
6.1	Extend cost-recovery provisions to enable councils to charge for reasonable costs of providing pre-lodgement advice to applicants.
6.2	Clarify the provision for councils to recover costs for assessing and reporting on applications to expert panels.

6.3	Set fees and charges in the new legislation, until superseded by respective councils charging policy processes, or alternatively current council charging regimes enabled by the legislation.
Recommendation 7: Project tracks and eligibility requirements	
7.1	Make ineligible projects already declined through other processes ineligible for fast-track consenting.
7.2	Make mandatory the consideration of eligibility criteria.
Recommendation 8: Evidence-based decision-making	
	See attachment to General Comment for a series of system-related recommendations

GENERAL COMMENT

46. This submission has been compiled in full consideration of respective regional and unitary council submissions in development, and notes at a higher level similar main themes and key issues covered within these.
47. Similarly, Te Uru Kahika's submission has been made in full visibility of the LGNZ / Taituarā submission addressing matters of significant mutual interest affecting Local Government, our communities and iwi and hapū within our regions, cities, and districts.
48. Finally, system-related recommendations to support evidence-based decision-making, prepared by our Sector Chief Science Advisor, Dr Chris Daughney, are attached from page 12 of this submission.



ATTACHMENT: RECOMMENDATIONS FROM TE URU KAHIKA CHIEF SCIENCE ADVISOR

49. Our submission makes the following recommendations to enhance the integrity, robustness, and transparency of scientific evidence and its use in FTA decision-making:
50. **Recommendation 1:** Develop guidance and standards for the use of scientific evidence in the FTA process. This should include:
- a) ***Framework for evaluating the robustness and relevance of scientific evidence:*** Decision-makers need to objectively assess the strength and relevance of scientific evidence, similar to frameworks used in medical and environmental sciences, to ensure reliable and applicable evidence guides their decisions.
 - b) ***Guidance on accounting for scientific uncertainty:*** Decision-makers must consider and communicate scientific uncertainty effectively, balancing action with caution by developing clearer guidelines for assessing and managing uncertainty in decision-making processes.
 - c) ***Updated guidance for valuing environmental assets and ecosystem services:*** Improved tools for valuing ecosystems and environments are essential for better decision-making, such as updates to ecological impact assessment guidelines, enhancements to cost-benefit tools, and guidance on benefit transfer for global ecosystem valuations.
 - d) ***Shared framework for evaluating hazards and risks across different threats and critical infrastructure:*** Implementing a 'whole of society approach' to disaster risk reduction requires standardized approaches for assessing hazards, threats, exposure, and vulnerability to disasters like floods, droughts, wildfires, and sea-level rise.
 - e) ***Improved standards for climate change risk assessments:*** Addressing critical shortcomings in Climate Change Risk Assessments is vital to consider cascading impacts on communities and assets, requiring scientifically-driven standards to guide comprehensive climate change responses.
51. **Recommendation 2:** Enhance access to pertinent scientific datasets to support evidence-informed decision-making:
- a) ***Environmental datasets:*** Real-time data from environmental monitoring stations offer crucial operational insights for various sectors like infrastructure, agriculture, and transport. Establishing an enhanced national environmental reporting system with coordinated agency roles and funding support would ensure comprehensive data availability for informed decision-making.
 - b) ***Data portals:*** Centralised data systems that integrate diverse information sources while respecting data sovereignty can aid decision-makers in navigating complex challenges.
 - c) ***Risk assessments:*** Regular updates of risk assessments at appropriate scales are essential for informed consenting, including evaluations of climate change risks and the status of freshwater and ocean environments.

- d) **Adoption of new technologies:** Investments in advanced data collection technologies like remote sensing, drones, and real-time monitoring systems offer accurate and current information on environmental conditions, biodiversity, and ecosystem health.
52. **Recommendation 3:** Develop scientific models to assist decision-makers in predicting the impacts of infrastructure and other developments on ecosystems and natural resources:
- a) **Hazard and risk forecasting:** Nationally coordinated hazard forecasting services can provide spatial and temporal likelihood assessments of extreme weather events, river flows, slope stability, marine conditions, and any related impacts on critical infrastructure.
 - b) **Hydro-ecological modelling:** Models simulating the effects of developments on freshwater and marine ecosystems, considering climate change and human activities' compounding impacts, are crucial for informed infrastructure planning.
 - c) **Greenhouse gas emissions:** Models evaluating carbon sequestration potential in terrestrial, coastal and marine environments may help infrastructure developments optimise reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.
53. **Recommendation 4:** Enhance decision-makers' ability to use scientific evidence effectively:
- a) **Training for Expert Panels:** Training for Expert Panels, responsible for advising Ministers on consent applications, should focus on using national guidelines, standards, datasets, and models effectively.
 - b) **Training for local government and Māori:** Enhancing the engagement of local government and Māori in the FTA process by providing training on effective participation will improve outcomes for all stakeholders.
 - c) **Training for technical advisors:** Upskilling technical advisors in interdisciplinary fields like ecology, hydrology, climatology, and social sciences will promote collaboration and broaden decision-makers' access to diverse expertise, enriching Expert Panel assessments.
 - d) **Capability-building for Māori and communities:** Capability-building is required to support iwi/hapū and communities to play active roles in infrastructure decision-making.
54. **Recommendation 5:** Foster adaptability and innovation in infrastructure projects within the FTA process:
- a) **Enhanced outcome monitoring:** While scientific evidence traditionally informs infrastructure *design*, there is a growing need for science to assess its contributions to intended *outcomes* (socio-cultural, economic and environmental).
 - b) **Adaptive infrastructure development approaches:** Incorporating feedback loops and iterative monitoring into planning and consenting processes can enhance infrastructure resilience to evolving societal and environmental conditions. Tools like dynamic adaptive pathways planning and multi-criteria analysis offer valuable support but may require further refinement for specific settings or types of infrastructure.

Ailish Neyland

From: RMReform <RM.Reform@mfe.govt.nz>
Sent: Friday, 19 April 2024 8:59 am
Subject: Fast-track Approval Bill

CAUTION: External email.

Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Kia ora

This email is to let you know the name of your organisation will soon be publicly released, following an Official Information Act 1982 request. This release relates to the names of all parties who received a letter from Hon Bishop informing of them of the process to identify listed projects for inclusion in the Fast-Track Approvals Bill.

Ngā mihi

RM Reform Team

Ministry for the Environment | Manatū Mō Te Taiao

mfe.govt.nz



Ministry for the
Environment
Manatū Mō Te Taiao



Ailish Neyland

From: Aaron Stallard
Sent: Saturday, 27 April 2024 2:09 pm
To: Mayor Nick Smith
Cc: Nigel Philpott; Stephen Rainbow
Subject: Copy of Fast Track Approvals submission
Attachments: Fast Track submission.pdf

Kia ora Nick,

For your information, please find attached a copy of the submission on the Fast Track Approvals bill.

Ngā mihi,

Aaron

Dr Aaron Stallard
Councillor | Kaikaunihera
021 1237099

Nelson City Council | Te Kaunihera o Whakatū
nelson.govt.nz



Councillor of Nelson City

19 April 2024

Tēnā koe

We would like to thank the Environment Select Committee for this opportunity to make a submission on the Fast-track Approvals Bill.

We are a group of Nelson City Councillors who value local- and national-level democracy, evidence-based decision-making, and environmental protections that ensure human activity occurs within safe planetary limits.

We strongly oppose the bill and request that the Environment Select Committee recommend the bill does not proceed through further stages in Parliament.

This bill will undermine existing plans and strategies at all scales from national to local, and will override local and regional priorities. At a time of worsening biodiversity and climate crises, this bill seeks to advance environmentally damaging projects and bypass environmental protections. Consequently, this bill has the potential to lock in adverse environmental, biodiversity, social, and climate outcomes for decades to come.

Projects approved under the bill will forever be tainted and subjected to an uncertain future as a result of the inadequate process entailed in the Bill, a lack of social license for approved projects, and the bypassing of sound democratic process and environmental regulations. Under this bill, New Zealand's reputation will suffer in the eyes of consumers and trading partners.

We are concerned that under the powers of this bill, a Minister can be the developer, the regulator, and the decision maker. This sidesteps the normal checks and balances that are the hallmark of responsible and healthy democracy.

We would also like to highlight the following critical shortcomings in the Bill:

- Extreme and unusual centralisation of power
- Lack of transparency regarding decision-making and the influence of lobbying
- Potential for conflicts of interest
- Lack of expertise by decision-makers
- Insufficient involvement of local communities and iwi
- Unwarranted bypassing of environmental protections
- Insufficient consideration of the effect of projects on climate change

Recommendations

Given the above considerations, we make the following recommendations regarding the bill.

- Minister for the Environment and Minister of Climate Change to be decision-making ministers under the Bill.
- Undertake a detailed benefit-to-cost analysis of all projects that considers environmental and climate/emissions costs.





Councillor of Nelson City

- Ensure that all projects under the Bill are consistent with national, regional, and local environmental standards and protections (e.g., freshwater and biodiversity).
- Exclude projects that increase greenhouse gas emissions, pollute freshwater, cause risk to human health, or have negative biodiversity outcomes.
- Exclude public conservation land, prohibited activities, and fossil fuel projects from the fast-track process.
- Require an independent group such as the Climate Change Commission to assess projects against our climate goals, with the results of the assessment being a priority in decision making.
- Slow the pace of this legislative change and consult widely and thoroughly with the public, stakeholders, and experts (e.g., scientific societies) to fully understand the possible adverse outcomes that might result from passing of the bill.

In summary, we consider this bill imposes an intolerable cost on our democracy and on the natural world. We ask that a more democratic approach be taken to decision-making and that utmost priority be given to ensuring that human activity is sustainable and occurs within safe planetary limits.

Thank you again for the opportunity to engage in this important process.

Yours sincerely,

Cr Aaron Stallard
Cr Rachel Sanson
Cr Campbell Rollo
Deputy Mayor Rohan O'Neill-Stevens
Cr Pete Rainey
Cr Matty Anderson



Ailish Neyland

From: Ministry for the Environment <info@mfe.govt.nz>
Sent: Monday, 6 May 2024 10:29 am
To: Mandy Bishop
Subject: Environment Update May 2024

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A newsletter for council staff

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A newsletter for council staff

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May 2024

Kia ora Mandy

This monthly newsletter provides updates on the Government's reform agenda for people working for or with regional and unitary councils, as well as those with an interest in environmental policy reform and implementation.

If someone has forwarded you this newsletter, or you're not already subscribed, you can do so [here](#).

He taiao tōnui mō ngā reanga katoa – a flourishing environment for every generation

IN THIS EDITION

1. Resource Management

- RM Amendment Bill
- Fast-track Approvals
- Going for Housing Growth

2. Environmental reporting

- Our Land 2024 released.

3. Freshwater

- Freshwater farm plan changes signalled
- An invitation to find out more about the health of estuaries

- Nitrogen Risk Index Tool

4. Climate change

- Greenhouse Gas Inventory 1990-2022
- Emissions Plan Guidance for councils

5. Waste

- Waste Advisory Board nominations

6. Working with councils and communities

- Environmental Legal Assistance Fund applications close in early June



1. Resource management

Resource Management Amendment Bill due to be introduced in May

On 23 April the Government announced a new Resource Management Amendment Bill is expected to be introduced to Parliament in May.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM



1. Resource management

Resource Management Amendment Bill due to be introduced in May

On 23 April the Government announced a new Resource Management Amendment Bill is expected to be introduced to Parliament in May.

The proposed Bill will include changes to:

- Make it clear that resource consent applicants no longer need to demonstrate their proposed activities follow Te Mana o te Wai hierarchy of obligations, as set out in the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM).
- Amend stock exclusion regulations in relation to sloped land.
- Repeal intensive winter grazing regulations.

- Align the consenting pathway for coal mining with the pathway for other mining activities in the National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity (NPS-IB), NPS-FM, and the National Environmental Standards for Freshwater (NES-F).
- Suspend the requirement for councils to identify new Significant Natural Areas (SNAs) in accordance with the NPS-IB for three years, to give enough time for a thorough review of how they operate.
- Speed up the process to develop or amend national direction, such as national policy statements and national environmental standards.

For more on the Resource Management Amendment Bill and an update on the Fast-track Approvals Bill, click below.

[Read more](#)

Going for Housing Growth work programme

The Government is providing opportunities for housing development via Going for Housing Growth - a joint work programme between the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development and the Ministry for the Environment.

The two ministries are working on policy details and providing advice to

ministers which aims to strike a balance between zoning for housing growth and the flexibility for councils to decide how that growth happens. There will likely be other changes as legislation gets designed.

Some councils have already completed changes to have the Medium Density Residential Standards (MDRS) in their plans. If councils want to remove these standards, they will need to show they have enough housing capacity for 30 years (as per the Housing Growth Targets).

The Government also wants to extend the National Policy Statement for Urban Development to encourage density and an increased mix of residential and business activities in some places, such as homes above shops and restaurants.

To help increase greenfield land availability, the National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land is being reviewed by the Ministry for the Environment and the Ministry for Primary Industries.

In the coming months, the Government will introduce legislation focused on these areas. The 30-year Housing Growth Targets and the decision whether to opt out of the MDRS will be included through targeted amendments to the Resource Management Act 1991.



2. Environmental reporting

Our Land 2024 highlights importance of natural assets and infrastructure

When land and ecosystems are healthy, they act as natural assets and infrastructure that support our economy, resilience to climate change impacts, and public health.

That is a key theme of the Ministry for the Environment and Stats NZ's latest three-yearly update on land in Aotearoa New Zealand, released in April.

The report shows how population growth, the ways we use land, and climate change are putting pressures on these assets and infrastructure. This limits their ability to:

- support our food sector (soil)
- reduce soil erosion (indigenous forests)
- drain catchments (urban green spaces, flood plains and wetlands)
- protect coastal areas against storm surges and sea level rise (wetlands and dunes)
- support our wellbeing (urban green spaces).

Our Land 2024 is particularly relevant for councils as it explores environmental trade-offs and the potential of our natural infrastructure to provide solutions.

[Read more](#)



3. Freshwater

Freshwater farm plan changes signalled

The Government has announced it intends to change the freshwater farm plan system to make it more cost effective and practical.

The changes are intended to enable farmers and growers to find the right solutions for their farm and catchment, and to make sure the time and cost of completing a farm plan matches the level of risk.

Farm plans can be used to identify environmental risks and plan actions to manage those risks, considering property and catchment factors. The freshwater farm plan system needs to be a trusted and robust alternative to local rules and resource consents, where appropriate.

There is also work underway to integrate existing farm environment or industry assurance plans into the freshwater farm plan system, as well as the certification and auditing requirements of the system.

Farm plans can be used to identify environmental risks and plan actions to manage those risks, considering property and catchment factors. The freshwater farm plan system needs to be a trusted and robust alternative to local rules and resource consents, where appropriate.

There is also work underway to integrate existing farm environment or industry assurance plans into the freshwater farm plan system, as well as the certification and auditing requirements of the system.

In the areas where the freshwater farm plan rollout has started, the Government may look at whether current requirements to complete a freshwater farm plan could be paused while improvements are developed.

For an invitation to find out more about the health of estuaries, or information on the Nitrogen Risk Index Tool, click below.

[Read more](#)

CLIMATE CHANGE

4. Climate Change

New Zealand's Greenhouse Gas Inventory (1990-2022)

CLIMATE CHANGE



4. Climate Change

New Zealand's Greenhouse Gas Inventory (1990-2022)

New Zealand's Greenhouse Gas Inventory (1990-2022), the official annual report of all human-induced emissions and removals produced within New Zealand, was published on April 18. The key findings are summarised in the infographic below.

In 2022, gross emissions were the equivalent of 3.4 million tonnes of carbon dioxide (Mt CO₂-e) lower than in 2021. Note that 3.4 Mt CO₂-e is about three times the emissions produced by all domestic flights in 2022.

Net emissions are calculated by adding up all the emissions we produce, then taking off what is removed by forests and other land uses. Forests and other land uses

absorbed 24.5 per cent (19.2 Mt CO₂-e) of New Zealand's total emissions in 2022, slightly less than in 2021.

Greenhouse Gas Inventory 1990-2022: how we are tracking



Emissions Plan Guidance for regional councils

EECA (Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority) has published non-statutory Emissions Plan Guidance to support regional councils with implementing the National Direction for Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Industrial Process which came into effect 27 July 2023.

The objective of the national direction is to reduce discharges to air of greenhouse gas emissions from industrial process heat.

This means resource consent applications for fossil-fuel fired heat devices must now include emissions plans. The guidance will help regional councils make good resource consent decisions and support businesses with producing quality emissions plans.

To find out more visit [Emissions Plan Guidance | EECA](#)

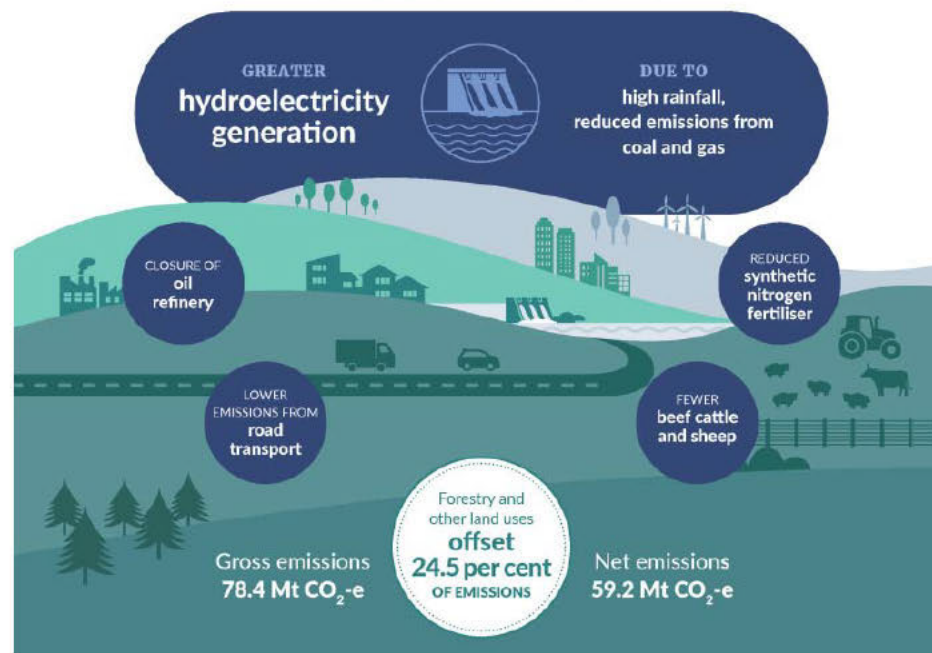
BETWEEN
2021 & 2022

Gross emissions fell by 4 per cent with emissions the lowest since 1999

All gross emitting sectors saw **reductions**:



Drivers of reductions



Emissions Plan Guidance for regional councils

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This means resource consent applications for fossil-fuel fired heat devices must now include emissions plans. The guidance will help regional councils make good resource consent decisions and support businesses with producing quality emissions plans.

To find out more visit [Emissions Plan Guidance | EECA](#)

EECA has also developed an information pack for regional councils that outlines the resources available to help navigate what an emissions plan is, how to go about assessing one, and how to work with businesses that require one.

To see the information pack visit [Emissions Plan Guidance Information Pack | EECA](#)

Ailish Neyland

From: Ministry for the Environment | RM Reform <RM.Reform@mfe.govt.nz>
Sent: Monday, 6 May 2024 10:00 am
To: Mandy Bishop
Subject: Resource Management Reform Update - May 2024

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Resource Management Update

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May 2024

Welcome to the 19th edition of the Resource Management Update

This newsletter provides a regular update from the Ministry for the Environment to people and organisations with an interest in the resource management system.

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For more information about the resource management system please contact rm.reform@mfe.govt.nz

IN THIS EDITION

- [Message from the Ministry for the Environment](#)
- [Resource Management Act amendment bills proposed](#)
- [Fast-track Approvals Bill update](#)
- [Freshwater farm plan changes](#)
- [National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management changes](#)
- [Going for Housing Growth work programme update](#)

- [Climate update - Emissions Reduction Plan two](#)

Message from the Ministry for the Environment

Kia ora koutou,

In the past month, the Ministry has continued to support the Government's phased approach to resource management reform.

The Fast-track Approvals Bill was introduced to Parliament in early March and is before the Environment Committee for review.

In this phase, the Government also intends to make amendments to the Resource Management Act and national direction.

The Government recently announced a new resource management amendment bill is expected to be introduced to Parliament in May.

The proposed bill will include changes to:

- Make it clear that resource consent applicants no longer need to demonstrate their proposed activities follow the Te Mana o te Wai hierarchy of obligations, as set out in the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM).
- Amend stock exclusion regulations in relation to sloped land.

- Repeal intensive winter grazing regulations.
- Align the consenting pathway for coal mining with the pathway for other mining activities in the National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity (NPS-IB), NPS-FM, and the National Environmental Standards for Freshwater (NES-F).
- Suspend the requirement for councils to identify new Significant Natural Areas (SNAs) in accordance with the NPS-IB for three years, to give enough time for a thorough review of how they operate.
- Speed up the process to develop or amend national direction, such as national policy statements and national environmental standards.

We look forward to working with you on these programmes, and continuing to share updates on future resource management system reform.

Ngā mihi nui, nā



Nadeine Dommissie,

Deputy Secretary, Environment Management and Adaptation

Resource Management Act amendment bills proposed

The Government is continuing its phased approach to resource management reform.

Phase One to repeal the Natural and Built Environment Act and Spatial Planning Act completed in December 2023.

Phase Two started with the Government's commitment to introduce a one-stop-shop approvals, consenting and permitting regime for regionally and nationally significant projects. This is expected to reduce the costs and improve the speed of such projects.

Phase Two also involves changes to the RMA to reduce regulation and unlock development, boost investment in infrastructure, housing and primary industries, while ensuring the environment is protected.

This will take the form of two bills to amend the RMA. These bills will focus on amendments to the current system that can be progressed quickly and have a short-to-medium term impact. The first bill is expected to be introduced in May 2024.

The scope of the second bill is still to be finalised. However, the Government has signalled it will include measures to increase renewable energy.

Bill 2 will also make the Medium Density Residential Standards optional rather than mandatory for councils and require councils to ratify their use.

Phase Three involves replacing the Resource Management Act with new legislation based on the enjoyment of property rights. The Government is aiming to introduce legislation to achieve this in mid-2025.

Please contact rm.reform@mfe.govt.nz with any questions.

Fast-track Approvals Bill update

The Fast-track Approvals Bill was introduced to Parliament in early March and is before the Environment Committee for review.

Submissions on the Bill closed on 19 April.

Applications to list projects in Schedule 2 of the Bill closed on 3 May.

An Advisory Group - that will make recommendations on which projects may be included in the Bill - was announced [by the Government on 9 April.](#)

Freshwater farm plan changes

The Government has announced it intends to change the freshwater farm plan system to make it more cost effective and practical.

The changes are intended to enable farmers and growers to find the right solutions for their farm and catchment, and to make sure the time and cost of completing a farm plan matches the level of risk.

Farm plans can be used to identify environmental risks and plan actions to manage those risks, considering property and catchment factors. The freshwater farm plan system needs to be a trusted and robust alternative to local rules and resource consents, where appropriate.

There is also work underway to integrate existing farm environment or industry assurance plans into the freshwater farm plan system, as well as the certification and auditing requirements of the system.

In the areas where the freshwater farm plan rollout has started, the Government may look at whether current requirements to complete a freshwater farm plan could be paused while improvements are developed.

MfE's freshwater policies, regulations and guidance can be [found here](#).

National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management changes

The Government is planning to clarify how Te Mana o te Wai hierarchy of obligations in the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM) is applied to resource consent applications and decisions.

The aim is to ensure resource consent applicants don't have to demonstrate how their activity adheres to the hierarchy and remove the hierarchy from council's decision making for consents.

Review of the NPS-FM and related regulations

- In December 2023, the Government announced it would review and replace the NPS-FM; the proposed RMA Amendment Bill measures are temporary and may apply only while this process is underway.
- The review process is expected to take 18 to 24-months.
- The Government extended the deadline for councils to notify draft freshwater plans by three years, from 2024 until 2027 to avoid duplication and compliance costs for councils.

Going for Housing Growth work programme update

The Government is providing opportunities for housing development via Going for Housing Growth - a joint work programme between the Ministry of Housing and

Urban Development and the Ministry for the Environment.

The two ministries are working on policy details and providing advice to ministers which aims to strike a balance between zoning for housing growth and the flexibility for councils to decide how that growth happens. There will likely be other changes as legislation gets designed.

Some councils have already completed changes to have the Medium Density Residential Standards (MDRS) in their plans. If councils want to remove these standards, they will need to show they have enough housing capacity for 30 years (as per the Housing Growth Targets).

The Government also wants to extend the National Policy Statement for Urban Development to encourage density and an increased mix of residential and business activities in some places, such as homes above shops and restaurants.

To help increase greenfield land availability, the National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land is being reviewed by the Ministry for the Environment and the Ministry for Primary Industries.

In the coming months, the Government will introduce legislation focused on these areas. The 30-year Housing Growth Targets and the decision whether to opt out of the MDRS will be included through targeted amendments to the Resource Management Act 1991.

Climate update - the second Emissions Reduction Plan

Work is underway to develop the second Emissions Reduction Plan (ERP2) which must be produced by the end of 2024. The plan will set-out actions needed to reduce emissions to meet the second emissions budget for the years 2026–2030. We note that this budget is also one of the nine recently announced Government targets.

The success of this plan will depend on all New Zealanders playing their part to reduce emissions; the private sector, local government, iwi and Māori, households and individuals will all have a role to play.

The government will be seeking feedback from a range of voices and perspectives as part of this process including public consultation in the middle of the year.

If you would like to be notified when ERP2 consultation opens, please sign-up to receive updates [here](#).

Greenhouse Gas Inventory 1990-2022: how we are tracking



BETWEEN
2021 & 2022

Gross emissions fell by 4 per cent with emissions the lowest since 1999

All gross emitting sectors saw **reductions**:



Drivers of reductions

