

# Resource Management Reform, Climate Change and Other Environment Matters (as at 10 October 2024)

WHAT		WHEN		LINKS			
<b>RESOURCE MANAGEMENT</b>							
<b>Fast-track Approvals Bill</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This Bill aims to establish a permanent fast-track approvals process for infrastructure, housing, and development projects that offer significant regional or national benefits.</li> <li>It is intended to provide a “one-stop-shop” for a range of approvals under the RMA, Wildlife Act, Conservation Act, Reserves Act, Crown Minerals Act and more.</li> <li>It was introduced on 7 March 2024 and is currently being considered by the Environment Select Committee.</li> <li>Cabinet has proposed several amendments, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Minister for Infrastructure, after consulting with the Minister for the Environment and other relevant ministers, will refer projects to an expert panel.</li> <li>The expert panel will make final decisions on project approvals (instead of Joint Ministers).</li> <li>The panel will include a representative from an iwi authority where required by a Treaty settlement and will replace mātauranga Māori expertise with Māori development expertise.</li> <li>Applicants must provide information on prior decisions by relevant authorities, including court decisions, as part of their applications.</li> </ul> </li> <li>On 6 November 2024, the Government released a list of 149 projects that will be included in the bill. These projects will be listed in Schedule 2 of the Bill.</li> </ul>	Environment Select Committee Report due on 18 Oct 2024	Signalled intention that Bill to be passed before end of 2024	<a href="#">Bill progress in Parliament</a>  <a href="#">MfE information</a>  <a href="#">Schedule 2 projects</a>			
<b>Resource Management (Extended Duration of Coastal Permits for Marine Farms) Amendment Act 2024</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduced to Parliament on 30 May 2024 and was considered by the Primary Production Select Committee. It received Royal assent on 2 September 2024.</li> <li>Amends the RMA to extend duration of existing coastal permits for marine farms by 20 years, but not beyond 2050.</li> <li>For consents where renewal applications were already submitted under s 165ZH, consent holders can either continue operating under their automatically extended consent or proceed with their renewal application.</li> <li>The Act allows consent authorities to conduct a one-off review of consent conditions, which must occur within two years of the Act’s commencement.</li> </ul>	Enacted		<a href="#">Act</a>			
<b>Resource Management (Freshwater and Other Matters) Amendment Bill</b>	<b>FRESHWATER MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>SIGNIFICANT NATURAL AREAS (SNAs)</b>	<b>SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS/OTHER</b>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Removes the hierarchy of obligations in the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM) from resource consent processes.</li> <li>Repeals low slope map and related requirements from stock exclusion regulations.</li> <li>Repeals regulations on intensive winter grazing under the National Environmental Standards for Freshwater (NES-F) for permitted and restricted discretionary activities.</li> <li>The Select Committee has proposed changes to section 107 of the RMA to align with the approach in the NPS-FM.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aligns the provisions for coal mining with those for other mineral extraction activities under the NPS for Indigenous Biodiversity (NPS-IB), NPS-FM, and NES-F.</li> <li>Suspends, for three years, the requirement for councils to identify new SNAs and incorporate them into district plans.</li> <li>Extends SNA implementation deadlines to 31 December 2030.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Changes the process for preparing and amending national direction, including national environmental standards, planning standards, policy statements, and the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement.</li> <li>Enables ministers to recommend changes to national environmental standards without following the full process, exempts national direction from s 32 evaluation requirements, and creates a single process for such changes.</li> </ul>	Primary Production Select Committee Report released 30 September 2024	Signalled intention that RM Amendment Bill 1 to be passed before end of 2024	<a href="#">Bill progress in Parliament</a>  <a href="#">MfE information</a>	
<b>Resource Management Changes Phase 2</b>	<b>SIGNALLED LEGISLATIVE CHANGES</b>						
	<b>INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENERGY</b>	<b>HOUSING</b>	<b>FARMING AND PRIMARY SECTOR</b>	<b>EMERGENCIES AND NATURAL HAZARDS</b>	<b>SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS/OTHER</b>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Default consent duration of 35 years for renewable energy and long-lived infrastructure</li> <li>Reduce consent and re-consenting processing time for renewable energy and other activities (i.e. within 1 year)</li> <li>Longer lapse period for renewable energy/other infrastructure consents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Councils to demonstrate compliance with the 30 year Housing Growth Targets</li> <li>A process to allow Tier 1 councils to opt-out from implementing the Medium Density Residential</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reducing regulatory overlap between the RMA and the Fisheries Act 1996</li> <li>Efficient consent processing for wood processing and other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improvement to emergency provisions, including a new regulation making power for emergency responses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heritage management</li> <li>Efficient cost-recovery by local authorities</li> <li>Targeted improvements to</li> </ul>	Signalled intention that RM Amendment Bill 2 to be introduced into Parliament before the end of 2024 and passed mid 2025	<a href="#">Press Release</a>  <a href="#">Factsheet</a>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amend consent information requirements/requests and support decision makers in making effective consent conditions</li> <li>Extend default lapse period for designations from 5 to 10 years</li> <li>Extend designation (requiring) authority status to Kāinga Ora, identified community housing providers, ports and emergency services</li> <li>Remove or simplify alternatives test, and reduce assessment and information requirements</li> <li>Extension of certain coastal permits for port companies by 20 years.</li> </ul>	<p>Standards (MDRS) into relevant residential zones</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Processes for councils that have not yet completed their MDRS and National Policy Statement on Urban Development (NPS-UD) related plan changes</li> <li>Providing central government with new powers relating to compliance with housing and business development capacity assessments</li> <li>Exploring additional intervention powers to support implementation of the Going for Housing Growth plan</li> </ul>	<p>activities (i.e. within 1 year)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update consents in an efficient manner (including marine farm consents)</li> <li>Improving freshwater farm plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to decline land-use consents, or attach conditions, where there are significant risks of natural hazards</li> <li>Rules relating to natural hazards have immediate legal effect (from notification)</li> </ul>	<p>compliance and enforcement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technical improvements to DOC functions to manage discharges, compliance and enforcement</li> </ul>		
	<b>SIGNALLED NATIONAL DIRECTION CHANGES</b>						
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amendments to NPS-Renewable Electricity Generation, NPS-Electricity Transmission and NES-Electricity Transmission Activities (including distribution) and NES-Telecommunications Facilities</li> <li>Targeted new national direction for Infrastructure (including standards)</li> <li>Enabling quarrying</li> <li>Further Electrify NZ changes</li> <li>Amendments to NSCPS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amendments to NPS-UD and NPS-Highly Productive Land (NPS-HPL)</li> <li>New national direction for housing targets, granny flats and papakāinga</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amendments to NPS-FM and NES-F including new national direction for water storage, NPS-IB, NES-Drinking Water, NES Marine Aquaculture and Stock Exclusion Regulations</li> <li>Amendments to NES-Commercial Forestry to improve slash management standards and clarify rules around low-risk slash</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New national direction for Natural Hazards</li> <li>New national environmental standards for heritage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rectifying existing and preventing further policy misalignment through a coordinated approach (where practicable)</li> <li>Review of NPS-IB will consider how SNAs should be identified, assessed and managed (see further details here: <a href="#">Press Release</a>)</li> </ul>	<p>Consultation in first quarter of 2025</p> <p>To take effect mid 2025</p>	<p><a href="#">Press Release</a></p> <p><a href="#">Farming and primary sector press release</a></p>
<p><b>Resource Management Changes Phase 3</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two new acts to replace the RMA: one to manage environmental effects arising from activities, and another to enable urban development and infrastructure.</li> <li>Although details are currently limited, the legislation is expected to incorporate the following design features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilisation of national standards and environmental limits to reduce the need for resource consents</li> <li>Streamlining of planning processes, including one plan per region and spatial planning</li> <li>Implementation of faster procedures, potentially involving the creation of a new planning tribunal and a shift from a consent-based system to one focused on regulating activities and their effects</li> </ul> </li> <li>Additionally, the new framework will emphasise the enjoyment of property rights, allowing individuals to make greater use of their property more easily, provided it does not harm others.</li> <li>An Expert Advisory Group has been established to develop a blueprint for this legislation.</li> </ul>					<p>Expert Advisory Group Report due before Christmas 2024.</p> <p>Signalled intention that legislation to be introduced in 2025 and passed in 2026 (this Parliamentary term)</p>	<p><a href="#">Press Release</a></p>

WHAT		WHEN	LINKS
<b>CLIMATE CHANGE</b>			
<b>Inquiry into Climate Adaptation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On 1 October 2024 the Finance and Expenditure Select Committee released its report on the Inquiry into Climate Adaptation.</li> <li>The Report discusses and makes recommendations on the development of a climate adaptation framework.</li> </ul>	Government Response due 16 January 2024	<a href="#">Select Committee Report</a>
<b>Emissions Reduction Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan will set-out actions needed to reduce emissions to meet the second emissions budget for the years 2026–2030.</li> <li>Draft Emissions Reduction Plan 2026-2030 has been released.</li> </ul>	Plan to be finalised at the end of 2024	<a href="#">MfE Information</a>
<b>Climate Adaptation Framework</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work is now underway at a Government level on a new climate adaptation framework to enhance the country’s preparedness for climate change and to better manage increasingly frequent and intense natural events, such as floods and storms.</li> </ul>	n/a	<a href="#">MfE Information</a>
<b>National Adaptation Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sets out New Zealand’s long-term strategy and first national adaptation plan. The long-term strategy sets out the Government’s approach to adaptation. This first national adaptation plan, and subsequent plans, will be prepared and implemented in accordance with this strategy.</li> <li>Climate Change Commission’s first national adaptation plan monitoring report was released in August 2024.</li> </ul>	n/a	<a href="#">Monitoring Report</a>
<b>Climate Change Response Response (ETS Agricultural Obligations) Amendment Bill</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bill seeks to remove agricultural emissions from the ETS (including removing the current reporting requirements for animal processors).</li> <li>Introduced to Parliament on 20 June 2024, currently before Primary Production Select Committee.</li> </ul>	Primary Production Select Committee Report due 1 November 2024	<a href="#">Bill progress in Parliament</a>
<b>OTHER ENVIRONMENT MATTERS</b>			
<b>Local Water Done Well</b>	<b>WATER BILL I</b>	<b>WATER BILL II</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Local Government (Water Services Preliminary Arrangements) Act was enacted on 2 September 2024.</li> <li>Requirements for councils to develop Water Services Delivery Plans (within 12 months of enactment).</li> <li>Streamlined consultation and decision-making processes for setting up water services council-controlled organisations (water services CCOs).</li> <li>Provisions that enable a new, financially sustainable model for Watercare.</li> <li>Interim changes to the Water Services Act, which mean the Te Mana o te Wai hierarchy of obligations in the NPS-FM will not apply when Taumata Arowai sets wastewater standards.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New water services delivery models for councils to choose from, including new water organisations that can be owned by councils and/or consumer trusts.</li> <li>Minimum requirements for local government water services providers .</li> <li>A new economic regulation regime for local government water services providers, to be implemented by the Commerce Commission.</li> <li>Changes to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the drinking water regulatory regime, and the approach Taumata Arowai takes to regulating the regime.</li> <li>Change in the approach to applying Te Mana o te Wai, affecting drinking water suppliers as well as wastewater and stormwater networks.</li> <li>A new approach to managing urban stormwater, including changes to improve the management of overland flow paths and watercourses in urban areas.</li> </ul>	<p>Water Bill 1 enacted on 2 September 2024</p> <p>Water Bill 2 to be introduced in December 2024</p>
<b>Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bill introduced on 24 September 2024 to amend the Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Act 2011.</li> <li>Further seeks to defines requirements for recognition of customary marine title, specifically relating to exclusive use and occupation.</li> <li>The Bill also seeks to alter aspects of the law as they have been expressed in recent Court decisions.</li> <li>Bill is currently being considered by the Justice Select Committee.</li> </ul>	Submissions to Select Committee close 15 October 2024	<a href="#">Bill progress in Parliament</a>

WHAT		WHEN	LINKS
(Customary Marine Title Bill		Justice Select Committee Report due 5 December 2024	
Crown Minerals Amendment Bill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bill was introduced on 24 September 2024, submissions to Economic Development, Science and Innovation Select Committee were due 1 October 2024.</li> <li>• Reverses ban on oil and gas exploration outside onshore Taranaki.</li> <li>• Removes restriction preventing new petroleum holders from accessing some Taranaki conservation for petroleum activities other than minimum impact activities.</li> <li>• Changes to petroleum exploration permit allocation processes. Specifically, the Bill seeks to allow the option of using a competitive tender or non-tender method.</li> <li>• Amendments to the petroleum decommissioning requirements.</li> <li>• Introduce a new tier of mineral permitting that will make it easier to undertake small-scale non-commercial gold mining.</li> </ul>	Economic Development, Science and Innovation Select Committee Report due 31 October 2024	<a href="#">Bill Progress in Parliament</a>  <a href="#">Press Release</a>
Building and Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Government is investigating options for a major reform of the building consent system, with the intention of improving efficiency and consistency across the country.</li> <li>• Options to establish a more streamlined model include replacing New Zealand’s 67 Building Consent Authorities by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Enabling councils to group together to deliver building control functions; or</li> <li>○ Establishing larger regional building consent authorities; or</li> <li>○ Setting up a single point of contact for builders to submit plans to.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The Government has implemented the Building (Minor Variations) Amendment Regulations 2024, and the Building (Minor Customisations) Regulations 2024, allowing people to make small changes to building plans without having to apply for building consent.</li> <li>• The Government is progressing plans to enable the use of remote building inspections.</li> </ul>	Public Consultation regarding remote building inspections will run until 29 November 2024	<a href="#">Replacing BCA’s press release</a>  <a href="#">Minor variations press release</a>  <a href="#">Remove building inspections press release</a>