

MfE meeting with Gigablue, March 2026 -Agenda

Context

- Gigablue is an international company focused on developing novel marine carbon removal (mCDR) technologies to address the climate crisis.
- Promoting Gigablue's technology within the NZ EEZ brings the following benefits to NZ: **economic** benefits, **energy-enabling** benefits, **ocean restoration**, and support for meeting **national climate goals**.
- Gigablue has been investing in NZ for the last three years (approximately 9(2)(b)(ii)), collaborating with local marine ecosystem partners - ESNZ, Cawthron, Seasworks, Kernohen - as well as logistics and operational partners - 9(2)(b)(ii), 9(2)(b)(ii), and others.
- After three years, the company is seeking clarity on its ability to continue operations in NZ, which depends on enablers that the government must address.
- While Gigablue recognizes New Zealand's EEZ advantages for its experiments and scaling-up progress, the company is already engaging with Australia, the USA, Chile, and Canada as alternatives.
- Gigablue's visit to New Zealand involves several stakeholders. We intend to meet with the EPA, Ngai Tahu, and the Ministers Jones, Patterson, Watts, and Simmonds (or their staff members), as well as Rachel Brooking.

The MfE is central to our visit and planning ahead.

We aim to move forward with the government, the EPA, and other stakeholders during the period of March to July to achieve two goals:

1. A Fit-for-purpose regulatory framework pathway to secure our ability to scale up in 2028 onward.
2. A Solution pathway to allow 2026-27 activities.

Note: We do not assume that a final fit-for-purpose solution will be in place by July.

However, we must reach a high level of confidence regarding the possible pathways and solutions. **We must also have an immediate solution for the company's work plan continuity in 2026-27.**

Meeting objectives

1. Alignment between the MfE and Gigablue regarding:
 - a. The potential benefits to New Zealand from Gigablue's presence and operations.
 - b. The MCFS technology principles and Gigablue's scientific research plan.
 - c. Gigablue's work plan for the coming years in New Zealand.
 - d. The existing regulatory frameworks and their limitations.
2. Analyze potential regulatory frameworks to enable mCDR and MCFS activities.
3. Clarity on the process ahead: stages, timeline, risks, and mitigation plan.

Desired outcome (from Gigablue's perspective)

2026–27 Activities

1. 9(2)(b)(ii), 9(2)(j)
[REDACTED]
2. Clarity regarding a possible regulatory solution to allow the 2026-27 plan, including:
 - a. Pathways.
 - b. Tools the government has to support such a solution (e.g., policy statements, legal opinions, interpretations of the London Protocol, etc.).
 - c. Timeline.
 - d. Risks and mitigation.

Longer-Term Framework

3. To map and prioritize possible fit-for-purpose regulatory pathways for large-scale experiments and commercial activities. (regulatory changes) inducing:
 - a. Pathways.
 - b. Professional gaps analysis (if exists).
 - c. Process form, roles, and responsibilities.
 - d. Timeline.
 - e. Government support given the upcoming election.
4. Alignment regarding the process ahead and the next steps.

Supported documents were added prior to the visit.

Drafted agenda

We suggest a 4-5 hour meeting. It can be held in one session or split over two days (March 25-6). Participations will be confirmed after the agenda is finalized.

Session 1 (1.5 hours): introduction, benefits, and Gigablue's status.

- Introduction.
- 2025 recap and alignment on the current situation.
- Economic and other benefits to New Zealand (including the Ngai Tahu process).
- Research status and research plan review.
- Gigablue's 2026-27-28 work plan.

Session 2 (1.5-2 hours): Regulatory frameworks.

Global precedents.

Regulatory changes for 2027-28 onward

- The EPA perspective, the London Protocol context.
- Fit-For-Purpose framework for mCDR activities (experiments and commercial activities).
 - Legislation changes alternatives.

Immediate solutions for 2026-27.

- Existing frameworks and interpretations.
- Government support options: policy statement; legal review, etc.

Session 3 (1H): summary

- We suggest establishing a joint work plan with the leading team, the economic team, and the science team, with all teams working in parallel and integrating their efforts.
- Next steps and process alignment. (8-10 weeks of focused process).
- Risk analysis and mitigation.