

Office of Hon Nicola Grigg

Minister for the Environment
Minister of State for Trade and Investment
Minister for Women
Associate Minister for AC



31 JUL 2026

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Guy Shafran
Chief Operating Officer
Gigablue Aotearoa

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Dear Guy,

Thank you for meeting with the previous Minister for the Environment, Hon Penny Simmonds, and for engaging with officials regarding Gigablue's Microalgae Carbon Fixation and Sinking (MCFS) technology and the regulatory framework under the Exclusive Economic Zone and Continental Shelf (Environmental Effects) Act 2012 (EEZ Act).

We are responding as these matters fall within the Climate Change and Environment portfolios. We appreciate the opportunity to better understand the potential role that marine carbon dioxide removal technologies may play in addressing climate change.

The Government is committed to meeting New Zealand's domestic and international climate change commitments while supporting innovation and investment in technologies that can contribute to emissions reductions and removals. As outlined in the Second Emissions Reduction Plan, the Government is pursuing a technology-led approach and exploring a range of emissions reduction and carbon removal opportunities, including nature-based and emerging removal technologies.

For example, the Assessment Framework for Carbon Removals aims to improve our understanding of a broad range of carbon removal activities and their potential application in New Zealand. Further information is available at: <https://environment.govt.nz/what-you-can-do/assessments-for-carbon-removals/>

We acknowledge Gigablue's interest in scaling its activities within New Zealand's exclusive economic zone and your suggestion that amendments be made to the EEZ Act and associated regulations. Having considered the proposal, we do not consider legislative or regulatory amendments are warranted at this time. The EEZ Act already provides a framework for considering marine scientific research activities within New Zealand's exclusive economic zone, consistent with New Zealand's international obligations.

Officials will continue to monitor international developments in marine carbon dioxide removal technologies, including emerging scientific evidence, environmental effects, and regulatory approaches in other jurisdictions. Any future consideration of regulatory settings would need to be informed by robust evidence and a clear understanding of the environmental, legal, and policy implications of these activities.

We encourage Gigablue to continue engaging with the Environmental Protection Authority and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade regarding any future marine scientific research activities in New Zealand's exclusive economic zone. Ongoing engagement with the scientific community, including the publication of research findings, will also assist in strengthening the evidence base for marine carbon dioxide removal technologies.

Thank you for your contribution to research and innovation in this emerging field. We look forward to hearing of future developments in your work.

Yours sincerely,

Hon Nicola Grigg
Minister for the Environment

Hon Simon Watts
Minister of Climate Change