

Kermadec Ocean Sanctuary Bill – Talking points

Key messages:

- The Government has removed the Kermadec Ocean Sanctuary Bill from the House and will not progress with it this term.
- The Sanctuary proposal was contentious and we have listened to the ongoing concerns from iwi about it
- We understand that iwi consider the proposal did not adequately protect their rights guaranteed in the 1992 Fisheries Deed of Settlement. The last Government's revised proposal was also rejected by iwi
- Many opponents to the Bill hold the view that:
 - there was a lack of consultation when it was introduced in 2016, and
 - the Bill impacted existing rights, including Fisheries Settlement quota given as redress to iwi.
- This Government remains committed to the 30 x 30 global biodiversity targets and will be looking at other ways of contributing to this. We will take advice from officials on this next year.
- We are confident there are no immediate risks to the marine environment in the Kermadec region.
- There are protection measures already in place there and they will remain
 - they include the benthic protection area and the existing marine reserve in the territorial sea around the Kermadec/Rangitāhua islands.

Context

- The previous Government worked with Te Ohu Kaimoana (the Māori fisheries organisation that acts as trustee for fishing quota held by iwi organisations) and engaged with Ngāti Kuri and Te Aupōuri to develop a proposal to amend the Bill.
- A Special General Meeting was held by Te Ohu in June 2023 for mandated iwi organisations to consider and vote on the revised proposal. They overwhelmingly voted against the proposal.

What does this mean for NZ's commitment to the global 30 by 30 target under the Global Biodiversity Framework?

- This Government is supportive of the goals of the Global Biodiversity Framework.
- The Government will consider how it can best contribute to meeting the goals and targets of the Global Biodiversity Framework and will be taking advice on this next year.

Further information about existing protections that will remain in place:

- A marine reserve surrounds each of the Kermadec islands, which extends out to 12 nautical miles from the coast.
- Regulations prohibit the use of bottom impacting fishing methods.
- A minerals reservation under the Crown Minerals Act prevents the granting of new mining permits over much of the Kermadec area.
- Existing regulations also protect a range of marine wildlife.