



Environment Weekly Update

Taiao Ahuarangi ā-Wiki

For the week beginning 23 September 2024

Hon. Penny Simmonds, Minister for the Environment

Copy to:

Hon. Chris Bishop, Minister Responsible for Resource Management Reform

Hon. Andrew Hoggard, Associate Minister for the Environment

Key Updates

Our Air 2024 to be released on 9 October 2024

Under the Environmental Reporting Act 2015 (ERA) we, along with Stats NZ, are required to release environmental reports every six months focused on different environmental domains. *Our Air 2024* is the next report in the series to be published and is scheduled for an embargoed release on 8 October and public release on 9 October.

Our Air 2024 will continue the scaled-back format for environmental reports first signalled in *Our Air 2021*. The report provides valuable information while we progress the changes needed to improve the reporting system in line with recommendations from the PCE, including the reform of the ERA. This is an information-oriented release, with the focus on six updated air quality indicators that will be released to the public by Stats NZ on 26 September.

Ahead of the public release of the report we are preparing a pre-release briefing for Ministers which will provide further information about the release process and seek decisions on the support required ahead of the release.

Business Group: Evidence Data and Insights

Owner: Aaron Napier, 027 247 1893

LAWA freshwater data release during World Rivers Day

World Rivers Day is on 22 September. In recognition, the regional sector via Land Air Water Aotearoa (LAWA) is releasing an update on river, lake and estuary health on that day. Results from more than 3,000 monitoring sites are available, with some key points being:

- two-thirds of river and stream sites have impaired ecological health,
- nearly all lowland shallow lakes are in poor or very poor condition, but 70% of monitored upland deep lakes are in fair, good or very good health,
- estuaries are increasingly challenged by changing climate and human activities.

Although the evidence points to widespread pressure on freshwater systems, there is some evidence of improvement in some areas. The LAWA team are encouraging people to record the actions they are taking to improve water quality on the Healthy Waterways Register, so this information can be reported in future LAWA updates.

We will provide your office with further information and the embargoed analysis report on 20 September, in advance of the release.

Business Group: Evidence Data and Insights

Owner: Aaron Napier, 027 247 1893

Resignation of Fiordland Marine Guardian

Simon Childerhouse has decided to resign from his role as a Fiordland Marine Guardian s 9(2)(a)

Simon has written to you, in your capacity as the Minister for the Environment, giving notice of his resignation (as required under section 15(6) of the Fiordland (Te Moana o Atawhenua) Marine Management Act 2005).

We'll prepare a letter for you to send to Simon acknowledging his resignation and thanking him for his service to the Guardians.

There is no urgency in appointing a new member. We recommend filling this vacancy during the upcoming appointments round (five of the eight Guardians have terms expiring in June 2025). We'll brief your office on the appointments process in October 2024.

Business Group: Environment Management and Adaptation

Owner: Hayden Johnston, 022 153 0221

Towards evidence-informed evaluation

Previously we informed you that a peer-reviewed technical report, that we authored, is intended to be published in the coming weeks, titled "*Towards evidence-informed policy evaluation: Exploring National Monitoring System Data to determine effectiveness of the National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land.*"

We can confirm that this report will be published on our website on 24 September. The URL is as follows that will be active on publication release: <https://environment.govt.nz/publications/towards-evidence-informed-policy-evaluation-exploring-national-monitoring-system-data-to-inform-effectiveness-of-the-national-policy-statement-for-highly-productive-land>

Business Group: Science and Data Systems

Owner: Clare Barton, 027 3304659

Evidence-informed selection of ecological attributes

Having undergone a double-blind peer review process, an academic manuscript we authored, has been recently accepted for publication in the Australasian Journal of Environmental Management, titled "*Selecting ecological attributes for managing within environmental limits: an example of a robust science-policy process in Aotearoa New Zealand*".

The article is about the science and process used to identify attributes (or environmental indicators) focusing on soil, indigenous biodiversity, estuaries and coastal waters. It outlines an evidence-informed process and criteria developed (urgency and importance, suitability and feasibility) to select an initial suite of possible attributes. The catalyst for the work was related to the National Planning Framework, which was secondary legislation to the now repealed Natural Built and Environment Act. While the framework outlined in the academic manuscript can be adapted depending on the details of any future resource management system, it does not comment on this and focuses on an evidence-informed process for selecting ecological attributes.

The article requires final proofing prior to publication.

Would you like to be informed of the publication date once known and provided with a you with a copy of the publication when released?

Yes / No

Business Group: Science and Data Systems

Owner: Clare Barton, 027 3304659

RMA Statutory Notifications to the Minister for the Environment

Type	From	Planning Instrument	Purpose	Date Received	Consultation Period or Statutory Timeframe	Response
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	s 9(2)(f)(iv) [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

This information is also included in the RMA Reform Weekly Update in recognition of the correlation between the Environment and RMA Reform portfolios.

Upcoming Briefings for Minister Simmonds

Papers sent to the Minister in the last seven days and due to the Minister in the following 3 weeks
As at 1pm, 18 September 2024

Tracking Number	Title	Purpose	Responsible General Manager / Chief Advisor	Title Suitable for Proactive Release?	Date due to Minister
BRF-5202	Hastings District Council Plan Change 6 Severe Weather Emergency Recovery Streamlined Planning Process Decisions	Provides recommendations to support decisions on Hastings District Council's Plan Change 6 assisting property owners displaced by Cyclone Gabrielle.	Liz Moncrieff	Y/N	Sent 12 September
BRF-5330	Cover briefing for Cabinet paper CAB-483: Waste and resource efficiency work programme	Encloses a draft Cabinet paper on the Minister's waste work programme.	Glenn Wigley	Y	Sent 17 September
BRF-5354	Transitional provisions for the Gene Technology Bill and the HSNO Act	Provides an update on the proposed transitional provisions for the Gene Technology Bill and the HSNO Act.	Glenn Wigley	Y/N	Sent 19 September
BRF-5169	Clause 10A timeframe extension from Timaru District Council on its Proposed District Plan	Seeks decision on the Council's request to extend the process by 18-months.	Liz Moncrieff	Y/N	19 September
BRF-5348	Managing Council's freshwater planning ahead of the replacement of the NPS-FM	Provides advice and options to ensure council freshwater planning is managed efficiently between now and the replacement of NPS-FM.	Sara Clarke	Y/N	19 September
BRF-5245	Update on stakeholder engagement - improvements to the FW-FP system	Updates joint Ministers on the outcomes and key themes of the second round of stakeholder engagement on improvements to the freshwater farm plan system.	Sara Clarke	Y/N	Sent 19 September
BRF-5262	Air Quality Advice Reports	Provides information on recently completed air quality reports.	Sara Clarke	Y/N	20 September

BRF-5291	Replacing the NPS-FM	Provides advice on using the 2017 NPS-FM as a base with additional matters and updates to consider engaging on.	Hayden Johnston	Y/N	23 September
BRF-5309	Selecting board of inquiry for Te Awamutu waste-to-energy facility	Seeks feedback and agreement on potential appointees to the board of inquiry on the Te Awamutu waste-to-energy facility (Proposal of National Significance).	Matthew Barbati-Ross	Y/N	24 September
	s 9(2)(f)(iv)				
BRF-5290	Freshwater regulations affecting the primary sector	Seeks decisions on proposals to test and refine through engagement for water storage, commercial vegetable and fruit growing, and existing activity-based regulations.	Hayden Johnston	Y/N	25 September
BRF-4924	Application by Connexa Limited for approval as a requiring authority	Seeks approval on an application by Connexa Limited for approval as a requiring authority under section 167 of the RMA.	Liz Moncrieff	Y/N	26 September
BRF-5156	Waste in the second emissions reduction plan: consultation summary and final policies	Provides (a) a summary of waste sector feedback from the second emissions reduction plan (ERP2) consultation process; and (b) seeks agreement to the final waste sector policies to be included into ERP2.	Glenn Wigley	Y/N	26 September
BRF-5353	Briefing on the upcoming release of Our Air 2024	Advises of the release procedures for the upcoming report Our Air 2024.	Jonathan Ryan	Y/N	26 September
	s 9(2)(f)(iv)				

BRF-5300	Waste legislation reform 3: Lifting the performance of the waste sector	This is the third of a series of briefings on policy underpinning the waste legislation reform.	Glenn Wigley	Y/N	27 September
BRF-3959	Government response to Select Committee report on the petition of Lydia Chai to ban plastic waste exports to developing countries	Seeks agreement to Government response prior to drafting Cabinet paper.	Glenn Wigley	Y/N	30 September
	s 9(2)(f)(iv)				
BRF-4797	Natural Resource Negotiations and Resource Management Reforms	Seeks a decision about the approach to take during RM reforms to natural resource negotiations as part of Treaty settlements.	Clare Maihi	Y/N	4 October

Upcoming Briefings for Minister Hoggard

Papers sent to the Minister in the last seven days and due to the Minister in the following 3 weeks
As at 1pm, 18 September 2024

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[REDACTED]	s 9(2)(f)(iv) [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
BRF-5268	Meeting with Horticulture New Zealand on 26 September 2024	Informs meeting with HortNZ, reaffirms Government's support for growers, acknowledge challenges and note Ministers are working through the issues.	Hayden Johnston	Y/N	19 September
BRF-5348	Managing Council's freshwater planning ahead of the replacement of the NPS-FM	Provides advice and options to ensure Council freshwater planning is managed efficiently between now and the replacement of NPS-FM.	Sara Clarke	Y/N	19 September
BRF-5245	Update on stakeholder engagement - improvements to the FW-FP system	Updates joint Ministers on the outcomes and key themes of the second round of stakeholder engagement on improvements to the freshwater farm plan system.	Sara Clarke	Y/N	20 September
BRF-5305	Biodiversity credit market framework roadmap	Outlines a roadmap for work this parliamentary term to progress a biodiversity credit market framework, notes resourcing implications, and seeks agreement to targeted engagement.	Hayden Johnston	Y/N	23 September
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	s 9(2)(f)(iv) [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

BRF-5290	Freshwater regulations affecting the primary sector	Seek decisions on proposals to test and refine through engagement for water storage, commercial vegetable and fruit growing, and existing activity-based regulations.	Hayden Johnston	Y/N	25 September
BRF-5346	Review findings and options for changing the operation of significant natural areas	Provide the outcome of the review of the operation of significant natural areas (SNA) and seeks decisions on which options to develop for inclusion in the national direction programme.	Hayden Johnston	Y/N	4 October

Cabinet Papers

As at 1pm, 18 September 2024

Tracking Number	Title	Description	Committee	Responsible General Manager	Date due to Minister's Office	Lodgement Date	Date of Committee Meeting	Date of Cabinet Meeting
CAB-475	APH – Cabinet Appointments and Honours Committee	Seeks Cabinet's approval of a new appointment to the EPA Board.	APH	Martin Workman	6 September	19 September	24 September	30 September
CAB-484	Exceptional Fees for the Fast-track Expert Consenting Panel members under the Natural and Built Environment Act	Seeks Cabinet's approval for Exceptional Fees for the Fast-track Expert Consenting Panel members under the Natural and Built Environment Act.	APH	Martin Workman	11 September	19 September	24 September	30 September
CAB-474	Government response to the final report of the Environment Committee: Petition of Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society	Seeks Cabinet's agreement to table in the House a Government response to the final report of the Environment Committee: Petition of Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society.	LEG	Hayden Johnston	13 September	19 September	26 September	30 September
CAB-483	Waste and resource efficiency work programme	Sets out a proposed Government approach and work plan for improving waste outcomes.	ECO	Glenn Wigley	17 September	10 October	16 October	21 October
CAB-451	Final report on the Ministerial Inquiry into Land	Asks Cabinet to note the final report on the Ministerial Inquiry into	ECO	Sara Clarke	12 September	10 October	16 October	21 October

	Use in Tairāwhiti Gisborne and Wairoa	Land Use in Tairāwhiti Gisborne and Wairoa.						
		s 9(2)(f)(iv)						
CAB-482	Government response to Select Committee report on the petition of Lydia Chai to ban plastic waste exports to developing countries	Seeks Cabinet's agreement to table in the House a Government response to the final report of the Environment Committee: Lydia Chai.	LEG	Glenn Wigley	21 October	14 November	21 November	25 November
		s 9(2)(f)(iv)						
CAB-471	Report-back on investment of the waste disposal levy	Provides a report-back requested by Cabinet on matters related to investment of the waste disposal levy, including an independent review.	ECO	Glenn Wigley	1 November	14 November	20 November	25 November
		s 9(2)(f)(iv)						

	s 9(2)(f)(iv)							
CAB-459	Proposals to reform the ERA 2015	Seeks Cabinet's agreement to reform the ERA.	ECO	Aaron Napier	17 March 2025	3 April 2025	9 April 2025	14 April 2025
CAB-490	Joint paper on environmental data improvements	Improving environmental data (includes natural hazards and reporting under the Environmental Reporting Act 2015).	ECO	Katherine Wilson/ Jonathan Ryan	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
CAB-472	Proposed product stewardship regulation for synthetic refrigerants	Seeks Cabinet's agreement to policy decisions on proposed regulations to reduce risk of environmental harm from the release of synthetic refrigerant gases and agreement to publish the summary of submissions from public consultation.	ECO	Shaun Lewis	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC

Official Information Act Requests for Minister Simmonds

As at 1pm, 18 September 2024

Tracking Number	MO Tracking Number	Request	Correspondent	Organisation	Date due to Minister's Office	Date due to Requestor
OIAM-621	PSME-OI-093-24	Information on programmes for improving freshwater.	s 9(2)(a)	University of Otago	23 September	30 September
OIAM-617	PSME-OI-24-029	Information and advice provided to the Minister on the protection of source water.		University of Otago	3 October	10 October
OIAM-634	PSME-OI-24-031	Information on Ministerial Forum with Raukawa.		Baden Vertongen Barrister and Solicitor	4 October	11 October

Official Information Act Requests for Minister Hoggard

As at 1pm, 18 September 2024

Tracking Number	MO Tracking Number	Request	Correspondent	Organisation	Date due to Minister's Office	Date due to Requestor
OIAM-626	OIA-065	Establishment of the review of significant natural areas.	s 9(2)(a)	Green Party	24 September	1 October
OIAM-627	OIA-066	Correspondence regarding international travel opportunities for Minister Hoggard.		Opposition	24 September	1 October

Ministerial Correspondence Update

As at 10am, 18 September 2024

Minister Simmonds

We are preparing responses to 22 pieces of correspondence on a wide range of topics including concerns about, and support for, recent amendments to the Waste Minimisation Act 2008, concerns about various councils' land and water plans, recommendations for product stewardship schemes, seeking agreement to confirm a waste chapter and related policies for the second emissions reduction plan, and requests for support for various environmental and resource efficiency concerns and initiatives.

Minister Hoggard

We are preparing responses to five pieces of correspondence on a range of topics including concerns about the Resource Management (Freshwater and Other Matters) Amendment Bill and the Significant Natural Areas (SNAs) review, queries about suspending the requirements for councils to identify SNAs, and the timeframes for any changes to the stock exclusion low slope land map as part of Resource Management Act 1991 reforms.

Written Parliamentary Questions Update

As at 10am, 18 September 2024

Minister Simmonds

We are preparing responses to written parliamentary questions about Freshwater Farm Plans, flooding and flood management, the review of the national hazards' national direction, redundancy payments for the Minister's agencies, and advice received, and papers taken to Cabinet and Cabinet committees in September.

Minister Hoggard

We are preparing responses to written parliamentary questions about redundancy payments for the Minister's agencies, and advice received, and papers taken to Cabinet and Cabinet committees in September.

Key Dates

Upcoming Chief Executive and Deputy Secretary Acting Responsibilities

Staff member	First day of absence	Last day of absence	Acting arrangements
Laura Dixon	6 September	20 September	Arun Patel
Anne Haira	9 September	4 October	Sara Clarke
Martin Workman	30 September	30 September	TBC
James Palmer	30 September	4 October	Nadeine Dommissee
Laura Dixon	9 October	11 October	Pepi Batsos