



# Environment Weekly Update

## Taiao Ahuarangi ā-Wiki

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For the week beginning 30 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

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## Publication of the Year 2 Jobs for Nature Evaluation Report

### Attention: Minister Hoggard

This report is the second of three reports as part of an independent evaluation of the Jobs for Nature programme by Allen + Clarke and examines the programme on the ground. It is part of a suite of programme evaluation activities to understand the effectiveness of the Jobs for Nature programme in delivering value for people and nature. It complements the updated economic analysis and a report on social return on the investment which will be forwarded to your office when available.

The evaluation independently assesses the effectiveness of programme implementation, and the extent to which Jobs for Nature is on track to deliver the intended outcomes, including once the programme has concluded.

Key findings include:

1. The programme provided people with skills, knowledge and capability with experience on the job. Many of the skills and experiences gained are expected to be highly transferable.
2. At the project level, the programme helped to facilitate partnerships between government agencies, Iwi/Māori, farming communities, and scientific organisations.
3. The employment opportunities stimulated local economic activity, such as through people having more money in their pockets to spend at local businesses, and projects purchasing equipment and services from local suppliers. Projects have supported the establishment and growth of businesses, for example through establishing fencing and planting services securing work beyond the project.
4. The programme established some innovative methods and developed some new uses of traditional knowledge to support environmental outcomes. For example, the release of dung beetles and the development of lake weed mats from flax (harakeke), added experience and evidence on how to restore ecosystems.
5. An immediate and significant benefit of the programme, beyond the direct investment in nature-based jobs, was the value of the workforce in helping communities to respond to major flooding events, especially after Cyclone Gabrielle. This benefit was consistently reported by projects. The skills developed in the nature-based work lent itself to civil defence, from driving to clearing trees, outdoor first aid, chainsaw and scrub bar use, and construction.

A review bringing together all the evaluative work, summing up what we know about the effects and effectiveness of Jobs for Nature will form the final report. This will be completed before 30 June 2025.

We'll be publishing the Year 2 Evaluation on 2 October on the Jobs for Nature website.

Copies of the Year 2 and Te Ao Māori Evaluations are attached to this Update.

We recommend you forward the final copy of the Evaluation to the Minister of Agriculture, the Minister of Forestry, the Minister for Regional Development, the Minister of Conservation, the Minister of Climate Change, the Minister for the Environment, the Minister for Land Information, and to yourself in your capacity as the Minister for Biosecurity.

**Business Group:** Partnerships, Investment, and Engagement

**Owner:** Stephanie Frame, 027 257 3197

## Review of Te Ture Whaimana (Waikato River Vision and Strategy)

The statutory review of Te Ture Whaimana (the Waikato River Vision and Strategy) is underway. Under the Waikato-Tainui Raupatu Claims (Waikato River) Settlement Act 2010, Te Ture Whaimana is the primary direction setting document for the Waikato and Waipā Rivers, and must be reviewed every ten years. We expect there to be high political and community interest and engagement in the review. The review is undertaken by the Waikato River Authority (WRA).

The WRA has engaged consultants to deliver on the review, which is now in Phase 3 - defining the problem and opportunities. If the WRA decides revisions to Te Ture Whaimana are required, a revised draft will be developed, and you, in your capacity as the Minister for the Environment, and the Ministers of Conservation and Fisheries, must be consulted. A public hearing would follow. At the end of the process, the WRA must make a recommendation to the five Waikato River iwi and the Crown who must agree whether to accept any revisions to Te Ture Whaimana. Any revisions must be consistent with the overarching purpose of the Waikato River Treaty settlement: to restore and protect the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River for future generations.

The WRA may write to you in coming weeks to seek advice on which other Ministers and departments should be consulted during the review. There is discretion for the WRA to seek wider input beyond the three Ministers named as having a statutory role. We will provide advice if/when this occurs.

The WRA will start engagement to raise awareness about the review in late September-October with councils, sector stakeholders and the community.

**Business Group:** Tūmatakōkiri

**Owner:** Hakarangi Tichborne, 027 2432 172

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## Withdrawal of the Proposed Regional Coastal Plan for the West Coast Region

West Coast Regional Council (WCRC) has advised that it is withdrawing its proposed Regional Coastal Plan (pRCP) as of 17 September. The pRCP includes identification of outstanding coastal landscapes, natural character areas, and coastal hazard areas in the coastal marine area for the West Coast Region.

The pRCP was originally notified in 2016. WCRC cite the length of time since notification and submissions, and the number of changes to policies and national direction requirements which have occurred since notification, as the primary reasons for withdrawing the pRCP.

Councils are required to review their Regional Coastal Plan at least every ten years because as communities and the environment change, provisions including consenting requirements can become out-of-date and less effective for managing activities.

The current Regional Coastal Plan for the West Coast was made operative in 2001. This predates the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010 (NZCPS) which WCRC is required to give effect to in managing matters such as outstanding coastal landscapes and natural hazards.

We note that national direction instruments including the NZCPS are currently under review and that new national direction on natural hazards is proposed as part of Phase 2 of resource management reform. These reforms are currently proposed to be in place before the next election.

Given your statutory responsibilities, as the Minister for the Environment, to monitor implementation of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) and the significant delays to the review of the pRCP, s 9(2)(f)(iv)

**Business Group:** Environmental Management and Adaptation

**Owner:** Matthew Barbati-Ross, 022 010 2147

s 9(2)(f)(iv)

## Extension of time sought for Te Tai o Poutini Plan review

On 12 August, the Chair of Te Tai o Poutini Plan Committee (the Committee) wrote to you seeking an eighteen-month extension to the two-year statutory timeframe to make decisions on the proposed Te Tai o Poutini Plan (TTPP). TTPP is the proposed combined district plan for Buller, Grey and Westland District Councils, and is being prepared following the establishment of the Local Government Reorganisation (West Coast Region) Final Proposal Order 2018.

s 9(2)(f)(iv)

**Business Group:** RM Systems

**Owner:** Matthew Barbati-Ross, 022 010 2147

## Making Good Decisions Programme

In your capacity as the Minister for the Environment, you are responsible for the Making Good Decisions Programme (MGD). MGD was established almost 20 years ago under Section 39A of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA).

MGD is a series of training modules and accreditations for RMA Hearings Commissioners. Commissioners regularly work as delegated decision-makers for councils on their RMA plan changes and resource consent matters. They have also sat on panels at a national level, for example boards of inquiry and 'fast-track' consenting.

WSP Limited currently deliver MGD training on behalf of the Ministry via a licence agreement which ends in December 2024. We are in negotiations with our preferred supplier for the new licence agreement. The new licence term will be three years, with the option of two one-year extensions.

MGD will turn 20 years old on 18 October 2024. There will be some communications acknowledging this milestone largely targeted at Hearings Commissioners and potential MGD training participants via the WSP website and community of learning platform, and our regular newsletters to councils and Treaty partners.

**Business Group:** RM Systems

**Owner:** Matthew Barbaty-Ross, 022 010 2147

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## Greater Wellington Regional Council Regional Policy Statement Proposed Change 1

Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) officers intend to take the recommendations of the Independent Hearings Panel for Regional Policy Statement Proposed Change 1 to Council for their approval on 26 September 2024.

The focus of Change 1 was to:

- implement recent national direction
- provide a regional response to issues related to climate change
- strengthen management of indigenous biodiversity
- provide direction on areas with high natural character.

The Council's decisions will be notified using public notice, as well as a notice on Council's website and social media, and direct notification (email/letters) to all submitters. Copies of the Decision will also be made available at the GWRC offices and libraries in the region. Following Council's decisions on the recommendations, if required, the next step is appeals to the Environment Court.

**Business Group:** System Enablement

**Owner:** Macaela Flanagan, 022 023 4470

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## Unintentional release of commercially sensitive material

We recently responded to a departmental OIA request concerning correspondence between the Ministry and the Overseas Investment Office (part of Land Information New Zealand). That correspondence included documentation which contained commercially sensitive information about a third party. The commercially sensitive information should have been withheld but was unintentionally released.

Our Chief Executive has written to the affected third party, advised them of the release and has apologised. Our Chief Executive has also apologised to LINZ.

The matter is contained and has been appropriately managed. We've reviewed our OIA practices and improvements have been made as a result.

LINZ has advised that they intend to inform their Minister, Hon Penk, of the release, pursuant to 'no surprises'. Though the matter is contained and has been appropriately managed, we are informing you, pursuant to the same principle.

**Business Group:** Office of the Chief Executive

**Owner:** Martin Workman, 022 517 3268

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# RMA Statutory Notifications to the Minister for the Environment

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

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, 25 September 2024

Tracking Number	Title	Purpose	Responsible General Manager / Chief Advisor	Title Suitable for Proactive Release?	Date due to Minister
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	Sent 24 September
	s 9(2)(f)(iv)				
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	Sent 26 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	Sent 26 September
BRF-5156	Waste in the second emissions reduction plan: consultation summary and final policies	Provides a summary of waste sector feedback from the second emissions reduction plan (ERP2) consultation process; and seeks agreement to the final waste sector policies to be included into ERP2.	Glenn Wigley	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

	s 9(2)(f)(iv)				
BRF-5363	Landfill compliance issues	Provides requested advice regarding landfill compliance issues.	Sara Clarke	Y/N	27 September
BRF-5320	New Zealand's approach at the Montreal Protocol 36th Meeting of the Parties October 2024	Seeks approval of New Zealand's proposed negotiation approach on key issues at the upcoming Montreal Protocol Meeting of the Parties.	Glenn Wigley	Y/N	1 October
	s 9(2)(f)(iv)				
BRF-5387	Rakaia Water Conservation Order Declarations - Affidavit evidence	Includes a copy of Ministry affidavit evidence and seeks approval prior to filing it with the courts by 11 October. The affidavit evidence supports your involvement in the declaration proceedings.	Sara Clarke	Y/N	4 October
BRF-5273	2024 October Baseline Update (excluding Climate Change related appropriations)	Seeks approval of baseline changes.	Arun Patel	Y/N	7 October
BRF-5232	Proactive Release - Severe Weather Emergency Recovery (Resource Management - Hawke's Bay Rural Recovery Works) Order 2024	Seeks approval for proactive release.	Katherine Wilson	Y/N	10 October
	s 9(2)(f)(iv)				

# 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, 25 September 2024

Tracking Number	Title	Purpose	Responsible General Manager / Chief Advisor	Title Suitable for Proactive Release?	Date due to Minister
[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	27 September
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	s 9(2)(f)(iv) [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

# Cabinet Papers

As at 1pm, 25 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	Environmental Protection Authority - Documentation to confirm appointment	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 a Government response to the final report of the Environment Committee: Petition of Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society.	LEG	Hayden Johnston	13 September	10 October	17 October	21 October
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 Use in Tairāwhiti Gisborne and Wairoa	Asks Cabinet to note the final report on the Ministerial Inquiry into Land Use in Tairāwhiti Gisborne and Wairoa.	ECO	Sara Clarke	12 September	10 October	16 October	21 October
		s 9(2)(f)(iv)						
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	30 September	17 October	23 October	28 October
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 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)						
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

# Official Information Act Requests for Minister Simmonds

As at 1pm, 25 September 2024

Tracking Number	MO Tracking Number	Request	Correspondent	Organisation	Date due to Minister's Office	Date due to Requestor
OIAM-617	PSME-OI-24-029	Information and advice provided to the Minister on the protection of source water.	s 9(2)(a)	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
OIAM-640	PSME-OI-24-032	A list of all briefings, reports, aide memoirs and memos produced or received by the Minister for the Environment between August 1, 2024 and August 31, 2024.		Newsroom	9 October	16 October

# Ministerial Correspondence Update

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As at 10am, 25 September 2024

## Minister Simmonds

We are preparing responses to 21 pieces of correspondence on a wide range of topics including concerns about, and recommendations for, product stewardship schemes and council freshwater management plans, and requests for support for various resource efficiency initiatives including container return schemes and recycling programmes, and requests for action on environmental concerns including fast fashion waste and toxins from landfill.

## Minister Hoggard

We are preparing responses to five pieces of correspondence expressing concerns about the Resource Management (Freshwater and Other Matters) Amendment Bill and the Significant Natural Areas (SNAs) review, opposing proposed SNAs, and recommending amendments to the National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity.

# Written Parliamentary Questions Update

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As at 10am, 25 September 2024

## Minister Simmonds

We are preparing responses to written parliamentary questions about agencies' staff numbers, office space, and work from home and flexible working policies, and advice received, and papers taken to Cabinet and Cabinet committees in September.

## Minister Hoggard

We are preparing responses to written parliamentary questions about advice received, and papers taken to Cabinet and Cabinet committees in September.

# Key Dates

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## Upcoming Chief Executive and Deputy Secretary Acting Responsibilities

Staff member	First day of absence	Last day of absence	Acting arrangements
Martin Workman	30 September	30 September	N/A
James Palmer	30 September	4 October	Nadeine Dommissie
Anne Haira	9 September	4 October	Sara Clarke
Laura Dixon	9 October	11 October	Pepi Batsos