



# Environment Weekly Update

## Taiao Ahuarangi ā-Wiki

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For the week beginning 16 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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## CSRF Remediation Update - Bluecliffs Landfill Project

In February 2024, you awarded \$1,350,245 of CSRF funding to Environment Southland to support landowner Southland District Council to remediate the Bluecliffs Beach Landfill site in Te Waewae Bay on the Southland coast, west of the Waiau River mouth. The remediation project is now near completion and Environment Southland has provided an update as to the success of the project to date.

The Bluecliffs Landfill was historically used as a dump site for unauthorised and uncontrolled disposal of waste material from 1970 to 1990, with some continued fly-tipping and green waste dumping until recently. Significant coastal erosion was impacting the foreshore adjacent the site and increasing the risk of the landfill contents being discharged onto the beach and into the environment. The issues were compounded by the alleged presence of explosives.

The project aimed at developing and implementing the necessary remedial strategy and site safety provisions to reduce the risks to human health and the environment. Environment Southland and Southland District Council have achieved this through successfully collaborating to coordinate and complete the project. The risks were managed extremely well, noting that no explosives were found, and the works have been completed to the high standard required of contaminated land management. The risk to the public and the environment has been significantly reduced and the site now meets the acceptable recreational land use threshold.

An expense claim for \$1,156,000 for the work done to date is currently being processed. The final activity is the site reinstatement scheduled to be completed at the end of this month, marking the end of the project.

Photos provided by the recipient showing the site during and on completion of remedial works:



**Business Group:** Climate Change Mitigation and Resource Efficiency

**Owner:** Conrad Lendrum, 027 291 2796

# Withdrawal of Glenthorne Station amendment application to the Rakaia WCO

The Glenthorne Station Amendment to the National Water Conservation (Rakaia River) Order 1988 (Rakaia WCO) was intended by the applicant to be considered as a minor amendment under the Environment Canterbury (Temporary Commissioners and Improved Water Management) Act 2010. At the time, a determination was made by, then, Minister Brownlee that it was not a minor amendment, and it was sent to Environment Canterbury with the directive to schedule a hearing. The amendment application was put on hold by request of the applicant, s 9(2)(a), in August 2018.

Environment Canterbury had no further correspondence from the applicant about scheduling a hearing for the amendment to the Rakaia WCO but have advised that the amendment application has been formally withdrawn as of 2 September 2024.

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

**Owner:** Sara Clarke, 021 708 305

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## Draft plan changes to the Canterbury Land and Water Regional Plan – RMA Schedule 1 Clause 3 consultation

You have recently received Canterbury Regional Council's (ECan) draft plan change 8 to the Canterbury Land and Water Regional Plan for consultation, in accordance with Schedule 1 Clause 3 of the RMA. Any feedback is due to ECan by 5pm 20 September 2024.

The purpose of the plan change is to provide greater clarity for consent holders / applicants to take and use water, or to request a change in use. There are three parts to the plan change, which focus on improving the management of:

1. water abstraction, by (a) enabling interception of groundwater for infrastructure projects, and (b) allowing changes in use of consented water
2. wetland construction, by (a) introducing a permitted activity pathway for wetland construction, and (b) removing some of the current consenting barriers to constructing new wetlands
3. nutrient loss, by (a) limiting new conversions to dairy, and (b) enabling more targeted management of intensive winter grazing.

Changes 1 and 2 above will enable better pathways for wetland construction and groundwater related infrastructure. Change 3 uses provisions that are similar to the intensification and winter grazing provisions in the current National Environmental Standards-Freshwater (NES-F) which expire at the beginning of 2025.

We are currently reviewing the draft plan change. We plan to undertake a more thorough review once the plan change is publicly notified in October/November 2024. A briefing with advice on notable issues and recommendations for a submission (or not) can be provided at the public notification stage.

Please let us know if you would like advice further to above before the 20 September consultation deadline.

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

**Owner:** Sara Clarke, 021 708 305

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## Otorohanga District Plan Review – a novel approach

Otorohanga District Council (ODC) is considering a novel approach to the ten-year review of the Otorohanga District Plan. The approach adopts the neighbouring Proposed Waitomo District Plan to create a combined plan for both districts, with the potential for process efficiencies and cost savings. ODC is planning a public workshop on this later this year, and have statutory considerations and processes to follow. We understand initial discussions with Waitomo District Council have been positive. We will keep you and Minister Bishop informed of progress noting that Phase 3 of RMA Reform is considering plan making processes.

ODC is also considering applying to you to use a Streamlined Planning Process to expedite this plan making process. We will provide advice on this if an application is received. In the meantime, we suggest you do not comment on the potential use of Streamlined Planning Process to safeguard your statutory decision-making responsibilities. Until we receive an application from ODC, we will not be undertaking any work on this.

**Business Group:** Environmental Management and Adaptation

**Owner:** David Falconer, 027 243 3047

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## The National Freshwater and Geothermal Resources Inquiry (Wai 2358)

In August 2024, the Ministry for the Environment, Department of Conservation, and Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment filed evidence on behalf of the Crown in Stage 3 (geothermal) of the Waitangi Tribunal's Freshwater and Geothermal Resources Inquiry (Wai 2358). GNS Science filed expert evidence for the Crown. Our evidence covered the overall interaction between the Ministry and geothermal resources, and local authorities' management of geothermal resources. Crown evidence is likely to be heard in the second half of 2025. The first hearing week in Stage 3 of Wai 2358 took place between 9 and 11 September 2024, for New Zealand Māori Council evidence.

**Business Group:** Environmental Management and Adaptation

**Owner:** Clare Maihi, 021 417 676


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## Gene Technology Bill consultation

On 5 September, Minister Collins received a briefing from the Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment (MBIE) regarding additional proposed policy decisions for the Gene Technology Bill that are required prior to drafting of the Bill by the Parliamentary Counsel Office. These include changes to the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996 regarding proposed transitional provisions for approvals and applications.

MBIE has recommended to Minister Collins that she consult with you on these decisions, and it is expected she will do so in due course. We have reviewed these proposals and have no concerns. We can provide you with further information on request.

s 9(2)(f)(iv)



Would you like more information on these proposals?

Yes / No

**Business Group:** Climate Change Mitigation and Resource Efficiency




# 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
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s 9(2)(f)(iv)



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, 11 September 2024

Tracking Number	Title	Purpose	Responsible General Manager / Chief Advisor	Title Suitable for Proactive Release?	Date due to Minister
BRF-4969	Improving the environmental data system	Provides the next iteration of the improving environmental data work programme.	Jonathan Ryan	Y	Sent 5 September
BRF-5259	Meeting with Mayor Tania Gibson, Grey District Council	Provides background and talking points to support meeting with Grey District Council Mayor	Sara Clarke	Y	Sent 5 September
BRF-5271	Environmental Protection Authority: Documentation to confirm new appointment	Provides APH documentation to confirm one new appointment to the EPA Board	Martin Workman	Y	Sent 6 September
BRF-5263	Minister Simmonds meeting with Otago Regional Council	Provides information about your meeting with Otago Regional Council on 12 September 2024.	Sara Clarke	Y	Sent 9 September
BRF-5240	Response to the Environment Committee's report on the Forest & Bird wetland petition	Seeks a decision on a response to the Environment Select Committee's report and recommendations on the 2022 wetland petition from Forest & Bird.	Hayden Johnston	N	Sent 9 September
BRF-5106	Options on the future relationship between the Government and Eco Choice Aotearoa	Seeks a decision on the Government's relationship with Eco Choice Aotearoa.	Shaun Lewis	N	Sent 10 September
BRF-5313	Exceptional Fees for the Fast-track Expert Consenting Panel members under the Natural and Built Environment Act	Provides advice on Exceptional Fees for the Fast-track Expert Consenting Panel members under the Natural and Built Environment Act.	Martin Workman	N	Sent 11 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	12 September
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	12 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	16 September
		s 9(2)(f)(iv)			
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	17 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	19 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	Glenn Wigley	Y/N	19 September

		agreement to the final waste sector policies to be included into ERP2.			
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-5309	Board of inquiry for Te Awamutu waste-to-energy facility	Outlines required steps to set up the board of inquiry for the Te Awamutu waste-to-energy facility.	Liz Moncrieff	Y/N	19 September
BRF-5262	Air Quality Advice Reports	Provides information on recently completed air quality reports.	Sara Clarke	Y/N	20 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	23 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
		s 9(2)(f)(iv)			

[REDACTED]	s 9(2)(f)(iv)	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
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
[REDACTED]	s 9(2)(f)(iv)	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
BRF-5091	Regulation of non-GM new organisms	Seeks approval on potential changes to the new organisms regime in the HSNO Act to align it better with the Gene Technology regime .	Glenn Wigley	Y/N	25 October
BRF-5321	Implementing new persistent organic pollutants following the 2023 Stockholm Convention Conference of the Parties	Seeks approval to lodge a paper for Cabinet consideration.	Glenn Wigley	Y/N	31 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, 11 September 2024

Tracking Number	Title	Purpose	Responsible General Manager / Chief Advisor	Title Suitable for Proactive Release?	Date due to Minister
BRF-5260	Jobs for Nature progress update	Provides Quarter 4 update for 2023/24	Ilana Miller	Y	Sent 4 September
BRF-4969	Improving the environmental data system	Provides the next iteration of the improving environmental data work programme.	Jonathan Ryan	Y	Sent 5 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	12 September
[REDACTED]	s 9(2)(f)(iv) [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
BRF-5315	Results of Rural Schools Drinking Water Quality Survey	Provides an overview of the results from the first ever national drinking water quality survey of New Zealand rural schools.	Hayden Johnston	Y/N	18 September
BRF-5268	Meeting with Horticulture New Zealand on 26 September 2024	Informs meeting with HortNZ, reaffirm Government's support for growers, acknowledge challenges and note Ministers are working through the issues.	Hayden Johnston	Y/N	19 September
BRF-5305	Biodiversity credit market framework roadmap	Outlines a roadmap for work this parliamentary term to progress a	Hayden Johnston	Y/N	23 September

		biodiversity credit market framework, notes resourcing implications, and seeks agreement to targeted engagement.			
BRF-5291	Replacing the NPS-FM	Provides advice on using the 2017 NPS-FM as a based with additional matters and updates to consider engaging on.	Hayden Johnston	Y/N	23 September
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

# Cabinet Papers

As at 1pm, 11 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 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-451	Final report on the Ministerial Inquiry into Land Use in Tairāwhiti Gisborne and Wairoa	Ask Cabinet to note the final report on the Ministerial Inquiry into Land Use Tairāwhiti Gisborne and Wairoa.	ECO	Sara Clarke	12 September	10 October	16 October	21 October
CAB-474	Government response to the final report of the Environment Committee: Petition of Royal Forest & Bird	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

	Protection Society							
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
		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-459	Proposals to reform the ERA 2015	Seeks Cabinet's agreement to reform the ERA.	ECO	Aaron Napier	24 October	7 November	13 November	18 November
		s 9(2)(f)(iv)						

	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
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 release of synthetic refrigerant gases and agreement to publish the summary of submissions from public consultation.	ECO	Shaun Lewis	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC

# Draft Cabinet Papers with the Ministry for Agency Consultation

Below is a list of draft Cabinet papers being prepared by other agencies, which we are being consulted on due to the subject matter's connection with the Environment portfolio as at 1pm, 11 September 2024

Date consultation request received	Draft title of paper	Subject of paper	Our comments	Responsible General Manager	Intended date to Cabinet Committee
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	s 9(2)(f)(iv) [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]



# Official Information Act Requests for Minister Simmonds

As at 1pm, 11 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

# Official Information Act Requests for Minister Hoggard

As at 1pm, 11 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 Min Hoggard.		Opposition	24 September	1 October

# Ministerial Correspondence Update

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**As at 10am, 11 September 2024**

## **Minister Simmonds**

We are preparing responses to 24 pieces of correspondence on a wide range of topics including 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 5 pieces of correspondence regarding opposition to the Otago Regional Council's Land and Water Regional Plan, concerns about the Significant Natural Areas (SNAs) review, seeking information 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

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**As at 10am, 11 September 2024**

## **Minister Simmonds**

We are preparing responses to written parliamentary questions about the Treasury's independent rapid review, the baseline saving exercise, contractor numbers in 2023 and 2024, and advice received, and papers taken to Cabinet and Cabinet committees in September.

## **Minister Hoggard**

We are preparing responses to written parliamentary questions about the Treasury's independent rapid review, the baseline saving exercise, and 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
Anne Haira	9 September	4 October	Sara Clarke
Gina Rangi	9 September	16 September	Hakarangi Tichborne
Laura Dixon	6 September	20 September	Arun Patel