



## *Factsheets for Estimates 2019/2020*

# The Environmental Protection Authority

This is part of a series of fact sheets prepared for the Environment Committee's 2019/20 Estimates examination of Vote Environment.

## Activities and expenditure of the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) for 2018/19 and 2019/20

### The EPA has identified six work priorities for 2019/2020

1. Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS): Working with other agencies to respond to ETS changes and ensuring the effective operation of the NZ Emissions Trading Register.
2. Chemical Modernisation: Programme to modernise and improve how chemicals are managed and regulated.
3. Compliance, Monitoring and Enforcement: The EPA aims to be a more proactive regulator across all its existing business functions.
4. Community and Māori Engagement: Improving the frequency and quality of the EPA's engagement with communities, Māori and specialised groups.
5. Science and Regulatory Leadership: Supporting the use of science and regulatory expertise together in the EPA's work.
6. Mātauranga Māori and Decision-Making: Weaving Mātauranga Maori with conventional western science to create a uniquely New Zealand way to address environmental issues.

### Other issues relating to the EPA

#### Funding pressure

The EPA has one more year of fixed-term Crown funding for its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) functions until the end of 2019/20.

A key challenge for the EPA in Budget 2020 will be whether it can obtain a more permanent funding solution.

#### Fees increased in 2018/19 to process hazardous substances and new organisms' applications

From 1 October 2018 the EPA increased its fees to customers applying for consents of hazardous substances and new organisms.

The intention is for the EPA to increase its cost recovery levels in the future for these applications and make it more equitable for the taxpayer, as the Crown fund the remainder of the costs.

### Decommissioning plans to be processed and cost recovered by the EPA

New policy to be introduced in 2019/20 will require oil and gas operators conducting activities in the Exclusive Economic Zone to submit decommissioning plans to the EPA for processing and approval.

Regulatory amendments will allow the EPA to cost recover for this, in-line with existing EPA cost recovery rates used for processing marine consents.

### Appointments expected to be made to the EPA Board

Three appointments are expected to be made to the eight member EPA Board, with one reappointment (Nicki Crauford) and two new members to replace outgoing members Gillian Wratt and member Tim Lusk (who resigned on August 2018). It is expected that the new members will begin working in the new financial year.

### The new EPA Chief Scientist, Professor Michael Bunce

Professor Michael Bunce has been announced as the new EPA Chief Scientist, starting in August 2019. He is currently Professor of Environmental Genomics at Curtin University, Western Australia.

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