



PROACTIVE RELEASE COVERSHEET

Minister	Hon Chris Bishop Hon Tama Potaka	Portfolio	Responsible for RMA Reform Housing Conservation
Name of package	Resource Management Reform Phase 2 National Direction - Approval to Consult	Date to be published	16 February 2026

List of documents that have been proactively released

Date	Title	Author
7 May 2025	Cabinet paper: Resource Management Reform Phase 2 National Direction - Approval to Consult	Ministry for the Environment
1 May 2025	Appendix 6: Phase 2 ND work programme scope	Ministry for the Environment
7 May 2025	ECO-25-MIN-0059 Minute	Cabinet Office
12 May 2025	CAB-25-MIN-0151 Report of the Cabinet Economic Policy Committee Minute	Cabinet Office

Information redacted **YES**

Any information redacted in this document is redacted in accordance with the Ministry for the Environment's policy on proactive release and is labelled with the reason for redaction. This may include information that would be redacted if this information was requested under Official Information Act 1982. Where this is the case, the reasons for withholding information are listed below. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Summary of reasons for redaction

- Section 9(2)(g)(i) – to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by Ministers and officials
- Section 9(2)(h) – to maintain legal professional privilege
- Out of scope information has been removed from the Cabinet Minute of Decision CAB-25- Min-0151.

Office of the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform

Office of the Minister of Conservation

Office of the Minister of Housing

ECO - Cabinet Economic Policy Committee

Resource Management Reform Phase 2 National Direction: Approval to Consult

Proposal

1. We seek Cabinet approval to undertake public notification and statutory consultation under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) on Phase 2 infrastructure and development, and primary sector national direction (ND) policy proposals and non-statutory consultation on a Going for Housing Growth package. We also seek Cabinet approval to undertake a two-stage consultation process on freshwater policy proposals. This follows Cabinet agreement to develop and amend a suite of ND as part of resource management reform [CAB-24-MIN-0246 and ECO-24-MIN-0112 refers], with necessary changes to align with Phase 3 reform [CAB-25-MIN-0080.01 and CBC-25-MIN-0005 refers].

Relation to government priorities

2. Our resource management reform (RMA Reform) Phase 2 ND work programme supports a range of Government priorities, including:
 - 2.1 Amending the RMA to make it easier to consent new infrastructure, including for renewable energy, building houses, and enhancing the primary sector (2023 Speech from the Throne, Coalition Agreement National Party/New Zealand First, Coalition Agreement National Party/Act).
 - 2.2 Getting Back to Farming by removing unworkable rules and replacing ND on environmental limits with local control to improve environmental outcomes (National Party policy).
 - 2.3 Infrastructure for the Future/Primary Sector Growth Plan/Faster and Fairer Disaster Recovery (National Party policy).
 - 2.4 Going for Housing Growth programme to unlock land for housing, build infrastructure and allow communities to share the benefits of growth (National Party policy, Coalition Agreement National Party/Act).

Executive Summary

3. The Government has committed to a three-phase programme of resource management reform to make the RM system efficient and effective, and to unlock development in infrastructure, housing and the primary sector. Phase 1 is complete, Phase 2 is underway, and initial decisions on Phase 3 (replacement of the RMA) have been made. This paper is focused on progressing the remainder of Phase 2.
4. The Phase 2 ND work programme was rescoped in March 2025 so that it only progresses targeted changes under the RMA, which are aligned with Phase 3, and do not have substantial implementation requirements on local government and communities. The proposals will have immediate and meaningful impact in the current resource management system and influence the development of the future system. It includes a freshwater package, a suite of changes to National Environmental Standards (NES), and targeted changes to selected national policy statements (NPS).

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5. The work programme also includes consultation on Going for Housing Growth policy and how this will be implemented in the new system in recognition of the speed at which Phase 3 reform is progressing. Despite being rescoped, the combined work programme still represents the biggest changes to RMA national direction ever undertaken and will unlock much needed potential in the system.
6. We present the components of the Phase 2 ND work programme as four packages: Infrastructure and Development national direction (Package 1), Primary Sector national direction (Package 2), Freshwater national direction (Package 3), and Going for Housing Growth policies (Package 4).
7. The Minister of Conservation (for matters relating to the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement (NZCPS)) and I are seeking Cabinet approval to commence public statutory notification and consultation on proposals contained in Packages 1 and 2 under sections 46A and 57 of the RMA, and to commence a two-stage consultation process for package 3 and non-statutory consultation on Package 4 (purpose of this paper)¹. The proposals are provided in the four proposed public discussion documents attached to this paper.
8. Our suggested timeframe for consultation on Packages 1, 2, 3 and 4 is eight weeks, with Minister discretion to extend timeframes if necessary (this commences as soon as possible, after 26 May 2025).
9. As required by the RMA, following public statutory notification and consultation on Packages 1 and 2, officials will prepare reports and recommendations on submissions received for the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform and the Minister of Conservation (for changes relating to the NZCPS). This process will inform further policy development and drafting of national direction instruments, followed by gazettal in late 2025 or early 2026 (depending on the complexity of submissions) to complete Phase 2 of the RMA Reform. Package 3 will follow these statutory steps on a slightly different track due to the package following a two-stage consultation process, however, gazettal of Package 3 proposals will take place alongside the gazettal of Package 1 and 2 proposals in late 2025 or early 2026.
10. To speed up the post-consultation process and deliver ND as soon as possible ahead of standing up the new system, we propose final policy and drafting decisions on Packages 1, 2 and 3 are made by the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform and the Minister of Conservation (for changes affecting the NZCPS only), in consultation with other relevant portfolio Ministers (prior to seeking final Cabinet confirmation to submit the instruments to Executive Council). This would reduce the number of times we seek Cabinet decisions post-consultation and deliver an estimated time saving of 2.5 months.
11. The process and next steps for Package 4 will be different from the other three packages to reflect that it is non-statutory consultation. Officials will report back to the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform and Minister of Housing on submissions received and this will inform the development of the new resource management system.

Background

Phase 2 ND work programme

12. The Phase 2 ND work programme, alongside the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 and a suite of amendments to the RMA², form Phase 2 of our three-phased resource management system reform. Through the programme we aim to address the most pressing resource management issues while minimizing disruption as we stand up a new resource management system.

¹ The Prime Minister has agreed that the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform has portfolio responsibility for Package 1 and 2 statutory decisions (in relation to ND other than the NZCPS). The Minister Responsible for RMA Reform can exercise these powers in accordance with section 7 of the Constitution Act 1986.

² Resource Management (Freshwater and Other Matters) Amendment Act (Bill 1) was passed in 2024. Resource Management (Consenting and Other System Changes) Amendment Bill (Bill 2) is due to be reported back to Select Committee on 17 June 2025 and is scheduled to be passed by August 2025.

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13. Accordingly, in March 2025, Cabinet agreed to change the scope of the Phase 2 ND programme to align with the Expert Advisory Group blueprint for resource management reform and Phase 3 reform decisions [CAB-25-MIN-0080.01 and CBC-25-MIN-0005 refers]. The rescoped ND work programme includes progressing a freshwater package, a suite of changes to national environmental standards (NES), targeted changes to selected national policy statements (NPS), and consultation on a package of urban development and housing policy for the new system (Going for Housing Growth) [CAB-25-MIN-0080.01 and CBC-25-MIN-0005 refers]. Cabinet made detailed decisions on the scope of freshwater policy in March 2025 [EXP-25-MIN-0023 and CAB-25-MIN-0092]. The Phase 2 proposals previously considered that are no longer part of the rescoped Phase 2 ND programme will be incorporated into the new resource management system, as appropriate.
14. We have split the components of the Phase 2 ND work programme into four packages: Infrastructure and Development (Package 1), Primary Sector (Package 2), Freshwater (Package 3) and Going for Housing Growth (Package 4) (see Attachment 6).
15. Packages 1, 2 and 3 include proposed ND instruments (proposals³) for statutory consultation and gazettal under Phase 2, while Package 4 presents a suite of Going for Housing Growth policy proposals, and how they could be implemented in the new system (Phase 3), for non-statutory consultation.

Updated statutory process to develop national direction instruments in Packages 1, 2 and 3

16. The process to develop ND (excluding RMA section 360 regulations) was streamlined by the Resource Management (Freshwater and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2024 (Amendment Act). The updated process shapes the development of Phase 2 ND and the decisions Ministers are required to make⁴ in the following ways: all Phase 2 NES and NPS must be developed using the agency-and Minister-led process under section 46A of the RMA, evaluation reports are no longer required⁵, and there is Minister discretion on the length of consultation⁶.
17. Amendments to the Stock Exclusion Regulations⁷ made under section 360 of the RMA are also included in the work programme under Package 2. While the same statutory consultation process does not need to be followed as for NES or NPS, we propose they are consulted on as part of the Primary Sector package to support easy input from submitters.
18. As well as the RMA, Treaty settlement legislation, the Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Act 2011 and the Ngā Rohe Moana o Ngā Hapū o Ngāti Porou Act 2019 include specific obligations related to making or amending ND under the RMA. These broadly require either engagement with specific groups or statutory weighting of certain matters. They are addressed further in the Treaty impacts analysis section.

Package 1 and 2: ND proposals

19. Phase 2 ND proposals have been developed in accordance with the Ministerial decision-making delegations agreed in July 2024 [CAB-24-MIN-0246 and ECO-24-MIN-0112 refers]. We have presented the proposals in the attached Packages 1 and 2 discussion documents.
20. The Minister of Conservation (for matters relating to the NZCPS) and I consider each of the proposals provided is consistent with the purpose of the RMA, noting this is a statutory

³ National direction instruments under packages 1 and 2 are called 'proposals' in this paper for consistency and alignment with the legal requirements under the RMA. These proposals are presented in the attached Package 1 and 2 discussion documents.

⁴ Refers to the decisions the Minister for the Environment (or a relevant Minister with appropriate delegations or transfers of powers under section 7 of the Constitution Act 1986, which in this case is the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform) and the Minister of Conservation (for matters relating to the NZCPS) are required to make under the RMA.

⁵ Noting that the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform, and the Minister of Conservation (for matters relating to the NZCPS), must still confirm and provide reasons why proposed NES and NPS are consistent with the purpose of the RMA, in accordance with section 46A of the RMA.

⁶ Noting a minimum 20 working day period is required for submissions. The Minister Responsible for RMA Reform and the Minister of Conservation (for matters relating to the NZCPS only) must be satisfied that the length of time meets the legal test of ensuring submitters have adequate time and opportunity to submit on the subject matter of the proposals.

⁷ Resource Management (Stock Exclusion) Regulations 2020.

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requirement under sections 46A(1) and 57 of the RMA for NES and NPS proposals and we must notify our reasons publicly alongside the notified ND proposals.

Package 3: ND Proposals (Freshwater)

21. Package 3 ND proposals on freshwater have been developed in accordance with the Ministerial decision-making delegations agreed in July 2024 [CAB-24-MIN-0246 and ECO-24-MIN-0112 refers]. We have presented the freshwater proposals in the attached Package 3 discussion document (Attachment 3).
22. In relation to freshwater, I want to seek feedback on a broader range of options than for the proposals in Packages 1 and 2. Therefore, I have established a two-stage consultation process for Package 3 (Freshwater), as follows: the first stage is pre-statutory consultation (including engagement with post-settlement governance entities (PSGEs) and primary industry groups) on broad proposals, being undertaken now alongside Packages 1 and 2; the second stage being section 46A statutory consultation on an exposure draft which will provide a clear proposal for the ND instruments and be undertaken later in 2025.
23. Package 3 incorporates Cabinet decisions taken in respect of new national direction for freshwater and pragmatic rules for on-farm water storage and vegetable growing [EXP-25-MIN-0023 and CAB-25-MIN-0092].

Package 4 Proposals

24. Package 4 relates to policy proposals under Pillar 1 of Going for Housing Growth, previously proposed to be implemented through changes to the National Policy Statement for Urban Development (NPS-UD) as part of Phase 2.
25. The non-statutory discussion document in Attachment 4 sets out key aspects of the policy proposals for public feedback, along with an indicative assessment about how and where different components could be implemented in the new system. The discussion document includes content on Future Development Strategies and spatial planning, Housing Growth Targets, responsive planning, rural-urban boundaries, intensification, enabling a mix of uses across urban environments, minimum floor area and balcony requirements, and targeting of proposals.
26. Submissions will be used to inform policy development for the new resource management system. Taken together, these proposals will significantly advance our Housing Growth work programme.

Targeted engagement to date

27. As part of the policy development phase, officials tested initial policy proposals with Māori groups and relevant stakeholders through targeted engagement from July 2024 to December 2024. Some stakeholders may not be aware of the more recent scaled-back Phase 2 national direction proposals.
28. Targeted engagement on freshwater policy proposals was undertaken from November 2024 to February 2025. The 2017 version of the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM) was used as a starting point with adjustments explored in key areas [CAB-24-MIN-0413.01 and ECO-24-MIN-0112]. Feedback from this engagement has informed development of the proposals in the attached Package 3 discussion document. To address Treaty settlement and related obligations, engagement with PSGEs and other Māori groups is continuing and will be an iterative process throughout policy development.

Consultation plan

29. Consultation on the Phase 2 ND work programme includes RMA statutory consultation on Packages 1, 2 and 3 and non-statutory consultation on Package 4.

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Packages 1 and 2

30. The Minister of Conservation and I propose under sections 46A(1) and 57 of the RMA to give notice and publicly consult on Package 1 and 2 Phase 2 ND proposals.
31. The consultation process will follow RMA sections 46A(1) and 57 requirements to give notice to iwi authorities and the public of the ND proposals and why we consider that the proposals are consistent with the purpose of the RMA; and to provide what we consider to be adequate time and opportunity to make submissions on the subject matter of the proposals⁸. We intend to give statutory notification to iwi authorities and the public as soon as possible after 26 May 2025 and for statutory consultation to take place for an eight-week period, with Minister discretion to update timeframes if necessary.
32. We consider that in accordance with section 46A(1)(b) of the RMA, an eight-week consultation period will provide adequate time and opportunity for submissions to be made on Package 1 and 2 proposals. We seek Cabinet agreement to publicly notify the attached discussion documents for Package 1 and 2 policy proposals for the purposes of statutory notification and consultation.
33. Minor and technical policy changes to proposals, and editorial and design changes required for publication, may be required after Cabinet decisions and prior to publishing. In addition, the Ministers' forewords will need to be incorporated into the Package 1 and 2 discussion documents. I propose that the Minister of Conservation (for matters relating to the NZCPS) and I are given the authority to make these changes.

Package 3

34. I have established a two-stage consultation process on Package 3 proposals. I intend for stage 1 (consultation on the attached discussion document) to take place at the same time as consultation on proposals in Packages 1 and 2 (notifying proposals as soon as possible after 26 May 2025) and for consultation to occur for an eight-week period, with Minister discretion to update timeframes if necessary. I am also seeking agreement for the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform to issue a freshwater exposure draft for public consultation for the purpose of section 46A prior to seeking final Cabinet decisions (stage 2). I will provide adequate time and opportunity for submissions to be made on the exposure draft in accordance with section 46A(1)(b).
35. Relating to the attached Package 3 discussion document, minor and technical changes to proposals and editorial and design changes required for publication may be required after Cabinet decisions and prior to publishing. In addition, the Minister's foreword will need to be incorporated into the Package 3 discussion document. I propose that the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform is given the authority to make these changes.

Package 4

36. I intend to publicly consult on Package 4 for an eight-week period using the attached discussion document, with Minister discretion to update timeframes if necessary, and for notification to occur as soon as possible after 26 May 2025.
37. Minor changes, and editorial and design changes required for publication may be required after Cabinet decisions and prior to publishing. In addition, the Minister's foreword will need to be incorporated into the Package 4 discussion document. I propose that the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform and Minister of Housing are given the authority to make these changes.

Post consultation steps for Packages 1, 2 and 3

38. Following the public statutory consultation period for Packages 1,2, and 3, officials will prepare reports and recommendations on submissions for the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform and the Minister of Conservation (for changes relating to the NZCPS) as required under section 46A(1)(c) of the RMA. Following this, we will need to work quickly to make final policy and drafting

⁸ The time given must not be less than 20 working days.

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decisions so that ND can be gazetted as soon as possible and have an immediate positive impact on the ground while we work to stand up the new system.

39. To facilitate a quicker process, we seek Cabinet authorisation for the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform and Minister of Conservation (for matters affecting the NZCPS only), in consultation with relevant portfolio Ministers, to have the power to make final policy and drafting decisions prior to seeking final Cabinet confirmation to submit the national direction instruments to Executive Council. This has achieved substantial time saving in previous national direction processes.

Previously proposed national direction

40. To progress with statutory consultation on Package 1 and 2 proposals, I will withdraw (under section 51A of the RMA) the previously proposed amendments to the NPS-Renewable Electricity Generation (NPS-REG) and the NPS-Electricity Transmission (NPS-ET) and new NPS-Natural Hazards (NPS-NH), which were notified for statutory consultation under s46A RMA in 2023.
41. The updated proposals for NPS-REG, NPS-ET and NPS-NH in the attached Package 1 Discussion Document have been informed by this earlier work.
42. The Government previously proposed amendments to the National Environmental Standards for Electricity Transmission Activities (NES-ETA) in 2023, and a new National Environmental Standard for Granny Flats (NES-GF) in 2024; however, these proposals are not required to be withdrawn under the RMA. This earlier work has informed the development of proposals in the attached Package 1 Discussion Document. I intend to consider previous submissions on the 2024 proposed NES-GF alongside any new submissions received.

Implementation

43. The rescoped Packages 1,2, 3 and 4 do not include proposals that are expected to require substantive regulatory plan changes by councils or disrupt the resource management system.
44. RMA statutory implementation options are provided in the attached Package 1 and 2 discussion documents to support statutory consultation. Implementation options for Package 3 are provided in the attached discussion document. The consultation process will inform the development of an implementation plan for Package 1, 2 and 3 proposals. Implementation of Package 4 will occur through Phase 3.

Cost-of-living Implications

45. Package 4 will improve development opportunities and over time, is expected to reduce the cost of housing.

Financial Implications

46. The proposals in this paper do not entail financial implications for the Crown.

Legislative Implications

47. We propose one new NPS, amendments to five existing NPS and to the NZCPS, three new NES, amendments to five existing NES, and amendments to regulations under section 360(1)(hn) of the RMA. The NES and section 360 regulations will be drafted by the Parliamentary Counsel Office following final policy decisions. We will seek Cabinet agreement (LEG) to gazette these instruments between late 2025 and early 2026 depending on the nature and complexity of submissions and whether further refinement of the policies is required.

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Impact Analysis

Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS)

48. Interim RIS for each ND instrument in Packages 1, 2 and 3 have been prepared to assess the impacts of the proposals (Attachment 5). The level of analysis reflects the early stage of policy development and information currently available. The RIS will be updated and finalised following public consultation.
49. An exemption has been issued by the Ministry for Regulation for the proposed changes to the NPS-FM, National Environmental Standards for Freshwater (NES-F), National Environmental Standards for Drinking Water (NES-DW) and section 360 stock exclusion regulations. The exemption is on the basis that RIS have already been prepared for these instruments to support Cabinet decisions made in March 2025 [EXP-25-MIN-0023 and CAB-25-MIN-0092 refers].
50. For Package 4, the Ministry for Regulation has determined that proposals relating to setting housing growth targets, enabling intensification, enabling mixed-use, and removing minimum floor area requirements and balcony sizes are exempt from the requirement to provide a RIS on the grounds that this has been addressed by existing impact analysis⁹ [CAB-24-MIN-0228.01]. As required by the Ministry for Regulation, the Housing and Urban Development Quality Assurance panel has reviewed the relevant parts of the discussion document (future development strategies and spatial planning and responsiveness to out of sequence and unanticipated developments) and determined that it will lead to effective consultation and enable the development of future impact analysis. Therefore, a separate RIS for these parts of the discussion document is not required at this stage. A full RIS will be completed at a later stage to inform Cabinet's final decisions on these specific proposals.

Climate Implications of Policy Assessment

51. For Packages 1, 2 and 3, the Climate Implications of Policy Assessment (CIPA) team has been consulted and confirms that the CIPA requirements do not apply to the proposals as the threshold for significance is not met.
52. For Package 4, the CIPA team has been consulted and confirms that the CIPA requirements do not apply to this proposal. The direct emissions impacts of this proposal are unable to be accurately quantified and it is difficult to anticipate the reaction to this proposal.
53. The CIPA team acknowledges that Package 4 proposals will have an indirect emissions impact for the transport and land use sectors because of brownfield versus greenfield housing development. Examples of these impacts include associated changes in private vehicle use, intensification around high-frequency bus routes, and associated promotion of public and active transit. To ensure better emissions reduction outcomes are achieved, it is important that this proposal is progressed alongside measures that support low emissions modes of transport.

Treaty of Waitangi and Impacts on Māori/iwi/hapū for Packages 1, 2 and 3

54. In addition to obligations arising from the RMA, Treaty settlements and other arrangements include specific obligations related to making or amending ND under the RMA. We have endeavoured to meet the requirements in Treaty settlements and related legislation through engagement and instrument-specific analysis, while also meeting our ambitious objectives for reform.
55. Most of the proposals are intended to be more enabling of development, which can have positive impacts for Māori along with the general public. Specific changes related to engagement with Māori have also been made to some instruments in recognition of requirements under Part 2 of the RMA.

⁹ <https://www.regulation.govt.nz/assets/RIS-Documents/ris-hud-gfhg-jun24.pdf>

56. 9(2)(g)(i)

[Redacted]

57. Engagement with Māori groups has informed some proposals, however the volume and pace of policy development has limited the ability for groups to participate and provide feedback to inform proposals. We will continue engagement during the pre-statutory and statutory consultation periods to better understand Treaty impacts and to meet obligations in settlements and related arrangements.

Population Implications

58. Improvements to national direction delivered through ND proposals in Packages 1, 2, 3 and 4 should result in a more efficient and effective resource management system that will have an immediate positive impact on all New Zealanders. Implementation of this work programme will need to closely consider its potential impact on populations and communities, including on Māori.

Human Rights

59. There are no direct human rights implications resulting from this paper. Consistency with the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 and the Human Rights Act 1993 will be assessed as the work programme is implemented and through further Cabinet decisions.

Use of External Resources

- 60. One consultant at SLR was engaged for approximately six months to develop electricity network policy. Further external resource will be used to refine this policy and to provide technical support in submissions analysis. These resources have been engaged due to a lack of internal resources and to provide technical expertise.
- 61. Crow Advisory was commissioned to prepare a report in 2024: *Minor residential unit uptake analysis: Report on estimated policy impact* to support policy development for the provision of granny flats. The consultancy provided specialist/technical advice not available within MfE. They were engaged for three months from contract initiation to delivery of the final report.
- 62. A pool of experts were engaged to develop a basic risk assessment standard as part of natural hazards policy development.
- 63. Policy proposals included in Package 4 were tested with the Housing Expert Advisory Group.

Consultation

64. MfE has worked collaboratively with the agencies responsible for the Package 1, 2, 3 and 4 policy proposals, Ministers, the RMA Reform Ministerial Group, and the Parliamentary Counsel Office. MfE provided two earlier versions of this paper to agencies who report to a Minister with delegated decision-making responsibilities for at least one ND instrument and has incorporated their feedback.

Communications

- 65. We intend to announce the package (including press releases) as soon as possible, after 26 May.
- 66. Public notice under the RMA will be given by publishing discussion documents for Packages 1, 2 and 3 on MfE's website. Online presentation of the consultation packages will clearly differentiate the statutory consultation on Packages 1 and 2, pre-statutory consultation on Package 3, and non-statutory consultation on Package 4.

67. Iwi authorities will receive a letter and potentially interested parties will be emailed.

Legal implications

68. 9(2)(h) [Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

69. 9(2)(h) [Redacted]

70. 9(2)(h) [Redacted]

71. 9(2)(h) [Redacted]

72. 9(2)(h) [Redacted]

¹⁰ 9(2)(h) [Redacted]

Proactive Release

73. This Cabinet paper and related Cabinet minutes will be proactively released at the time when the first package is notified and will be subject to redaction as appropriate under the Official Information Act 1982.

Recommendations

74. The Minister Responsible for RMA Reform, Minister of Housing (for policy matters relating to Going for Housing Growth) and Minister of Conservation (for policy and statutory matters relating to the NZCPS), recommend that the Committee:

Background

1. **note** in March 2025 Cabinet agreed to rescope the Phase 2 national direction work programme to align with Phase 3 reform [CAB-25-MIN-0080.01 and CBC-25-MIN-0005 refers], with detailed decisions made on the scope of Phase 2 freshwater policy in April [EXP-25-MIN-0023 and CAB-25-MIN-0092]. The rescope programme is split across four packages: Infrastructure and Development national direction, Primary Sector national direction, Freshwater national direction, and consultation on a Going for Housing Growth package and how it will be implemented in the new system (as set out in Attachment 6).

National direction development – Infrastructure and Development, Primary Sector, and Freshwater packages

2. **note** all proposed national environmental standards and national policy statements will be developed in accordance with the agency and Minister-led process under section 46A of the RMA. Amendments to the Stock Exclusion Regulations made under section 360 of the RMA are also proposed.

Consultation process – Infrastructure and Development, Primary Sector, and Freshwater packages

3. **note** I have established a two-stage consultation process on Freshwater proposals. The stages are as follows: the first stage is public consultation on broad proposals; the second stage is public consultation for the purposes of section 46A of the RMA on an exposure draft later in 2025.
4. **invite** the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform and Minister of Conservation (for matters relating to the NZCPS) to notify the instruments and amendments to instruments set out in the Infrastructure and Development, and Primary Sector discussion documents for the purpose of public consultation to meet the requirements of section 46A RMA.
5. **invite** the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform to consult on amendments to the Stock Exclusion Regulations.
6. **invite** the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform to notify the amendments to Freshwater instruments set out in the attached discussion document for the purpose of the first stage of a two-stage consultation process on Freshwater proposals.
7. **note** the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform and the Minister of Conservation (for matters relating to the NZCPS) have agreed to an eight-week submission period on Infrastructure and Development, and Primary Sector proposals, with Minister discretion to update timeframes if necessary, and they consider this will provide adequate time and opportunity for the public and iwi authorities to make submissions on the subject matter of the proposals in accordance with sections 46A and 57 of the RMA.
8. **note** the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform has agreed to an eight-week submission period on Freshwater policy proposals, undertaken alongside Infrastructure and Development, and Primary Sector proposals, with Minister discretion to update timeframes if necessary.

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9. **note** notification of Infrastructure and Development, Primary Sector, and Freshwater proposals will take place as soon as possible after 26 May 2025.
10. **authorise** the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform to issue a freshwater exposure draft late 2025 for public consultation prior to seeking final Cabinet decisions.
11. **note** the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform will provide adequate time and opportunity for those notified to make submissions on the exposure draft for Freshwater proposals, in accordance with section 46A of the RMA.

Consistency with the purpose of the RMA - Infrastructure and Development, and Primary Sector proposals

12. **note** the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform and the Minister of Conservation (for matters relating to the NZCPS) agree that each proposal in the Infrastructure and Development discussion document (Attachment 1) and Primary Sector discussion document (Attachment 2) is consistent with the purpose of the RMA.

Withdrawal of previously proposed National Policy Statements

13. **note** the proposed amendments to the National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation 2011 and the National Policy Statement for Electricity Transmission 2008 and the proposed new National Policy Statement for Natural Hazards (all publicly notified under section 46A of the RMA in 2023), will be withdrawn under section 51A of the RMA.

RIS – Infrastructure and Development, Primary Sector and Freshwater proposals

14. **note** impact analysis requirements have been met and Interim Regulatory Impact Statements for Phase 2 ND proposals are attached (Attachment 5).

Decision-making – Infrastructure and Development, Primary Sector and Freshwater proposals

15. **authorise** the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform, and Minister of Conservation (for matters affecting the NZCPS), to make minor and technical policy changes to proposals, editorial and design changes required for publication, and incorporate the Ministers' forewords, after Cabinet decisions and prior to publishing discussion documents.
16. **authorise** the Minister Responsible for RMA reform and the Minister of Conservation (for matters relating to the NZCPS only) to make final policy and drafting decisions (prior to seeking final Cabinet confirmation to submit the instruments to Executive Council) in consultation with relevant portfolio Ministers.
17. **authorise** the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform and the Minister of Conservation (for matters relating to the NZCPS only) to issue drafting instructions to the Parliamentary Counsel Office to draft new and amended NES, and section 360 regulations.

Going for Housing Growth package

18. **authorise** the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform and Minister of Housing to consult on the Going for Housing Growth package discussion document.
19. **authorise** the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform and Minister of Housing to make minor changes, editorial and design changes required for publication, and incorporate the Minister's foreword, after Cabinet decisions and prior to publishing the Going for Housing Growth package discussion document.
20. **note** that the Going for Housing Growth discussion document will be consulted on for eight weeks, with Minister discretion to update timeframes if necessary, and that this represents non-statutory initial consultation that will be used to inform policy development for Phase 3.

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21. **note** that the Going for Housing Growth discussion document will be notified as soon as possible after 26 May 2025.

Next steps – Infrastructure and Development, Primary Sector, and Freshwater proposals

22. **note** following statutory consultation, officials will report back to the Minister for RMA Reform and Minister of Conservation (for matters relating to the NZCPS) with a report and recommendations on submissions, which will inform the form of the final national direction instruments.

23. **note** officials will consider submissions from the previous consultation “Making it easier to build granny flats” carried out between 17 June 2024 to 12 August 2024 on a proposed National Environmental Standard for Granny Flats [CAB-24-MIN-0211 refers], alongside any new submissions received through this Phase 2 consultation.

24. **note** gazettal of Phase 2 national direction will take place late 2025 or early 2026 depending on the complexity of submissions.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Chris Bishop
Minister Responsible for RMA Reform
Minister of Housing

Hon Tama Potaka
Minister of Conservation

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Appendix 6 – Phase 2 national direction work programme – in scope

<i>Infrastructure and Development (Package 1)</i>
National Policy Statement for Infrastructure
National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation
National Policy Statement on Electricity Transmission (propose to change the title to National Policy Statement on Electricity Networks)
National Environmental Standards for Electricity Transmission Activities (Propose to change the title to National Environmental Standards for Electricity Network Activities)
National Environmental Standards for Telecommunication Facilities
National Environmental Standards for Granny Flats
National Environmental Standards for Papakāinga
National Policy Statement for Natural Hazards
<i>Primary Sector (Package 2)</i>
RMA Section 360 Stock Exclusion Regulations
New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement
National Environmental Standards for Marine Aquaculture
National Environmental Standards for Commercial Forestry
National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land
Mining and Quarrying provisions in: National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management National Environmental Standards for Freshwater
<i>Freshwater (Package 3)</i>
National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management
National Environmental Standards for Freshwater
<i>Going for Housing Growth (Package 4)</i>
Going for Housing Growth Pillar 1 policy proposals and how they could be implemented in the new system.



Cabinet

Minute of Decision

This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.

Report of the Cabinet Economic Policy Committee: Period Ended 9 May 2025

On 12 May 2025, Cabinet made the following decisions on the work of the Cabinet Economic Policy Committee for the period ended 9 May 2025:

Out of scope	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
ECO-25-MIN-0059	Resource Management Reform Phase 2 National Direction: Approval to Consult Portfolios: Housing / RMA Reform / Conservation	CONFIRMED
Out of scope	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]

Diana Hawker
for Secretary of the Cabinet



Cabinet Economic Policy Committee

Minute of Decision

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Resource Management Reform Phase 2 National Direction: Approval to Consult

Portfolios **Housing / RMA Reform / Conservation**

On 7 May 2025, the Cabinet Economic Policy Committee:

Background

1 **noted** that:

- 1.1 in March 2025, Cabinet agreed to rescope the Phase 2 national direction work programme to align with Phase 3 reform [CAB-25-MIN-0080.01] to include, among other things, detailed decisions on the scope of Phase 2 freshwater policy [EXP-25-MIN-0023];
- 1.2 the rescoped programme is split across four packages: Infrastructure and Development national direction, Primary Sector national direction, Freshwater national direction, and consultation on a Going for Housing Growth package and how it will be implemented in the new system, as set out in Attachment 6 under ECO-25-SUB-0059;

National direction development – Infrastructure and Development, Primary Sector, and Freshwater packages

2 **noted** that all proposed national environmental standards and national policy statements will be developed in accordance with the agency and Minister-led process under section 46A of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) and that amendments to the Stock Exclusion Regulations made under section 360 of the RMA are also proposed;

Consultation process – Infrastructure and Development, Primary Sector, and Freshwater packages

3 **noted** that the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform has established a two-stage consultation process on Freshwater proposals, as follows:

- 3.1 the first stage is public consultation on broad proposals;
- 3.2 the second stage is public consultation for the purposes of section 46A of the RMA on an exposure draft later in 2025;

- 4 **invited** the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform and Minister of Conservation (for matters relating to the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement (NZCPS)) to notify the instruments and amendments to instruments set out in the Infrastructure and Development and Primary Sector discussion documents (Attachments 1 and 2 under ECO-25-SUB-0059), for the purpose of public consultation to meet the requirements of section 46A RMA;
- 5 **invited** the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform to consult on amendments to the Stock Exclusion Regulations;
- 6 **invited** the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform to notify the amendments to Freshwater instruments, set out in the Freshwater discussion document (Attachment 3 under ECO-25-SUB-0059), for the purpose of the first stage of a two-stage consultation process on Freshwater proposals;
- 7 **noted** that the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform and Minister of Conservation (for matters relating to the NZCPS) have agreed to an eight-week submission period on the Infrastructure and Development and Primary Sector proposals, with Ministerial discretion to update timeframes if necessary, and that they consider this will provide adequate time and opportunity for the public and iwi authorities to make submissions on the subject matter of the proposals in accordance with sections 46A and 57 of the RMA;
- 8 **noted** that the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform has agreed to an eight-week submission period on Freshwater policy proposals, undertaken alongside Infrastructure and Development, and Primary Sector proposals, with Ministerial discretion to update timeframes if necessary;
- 9 **noted** that notification of the Infrastructure and Development, Primary Sector, and Freshwater proposals will take place as soon as possible after 26 May 2025;
- 10 **authorised** the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform to issue a Freshwater exposure draft in late 2025 for public consultation prior to seeking final Cabinet decisions;
- 11 **noted** that the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform will provide adequate time and opportunity for those notified to make submissions on the exposure draft for Freshwater proposals, in accordance with section 46A of the RMA;

Consistency with the purpose of the RMA - Infrastructure and Development, and Primary Sector proposals

- 12 **noted** that the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform and the Minister of Conservation (for matters relating to the NZCPS) agree that each proposal in the Infrastructure and Development and Primary Sector discussion documents is consistent with the purpose of the RMA;

Withdrawal of previously proposed National Policy Statements

- 13 **noted** that the proposed amendments to the National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation 2011, the National Policy Statement for Electricity Transmission 2008, and the proposed new National Policy Statement for Natural Hazards (all publicly notified under section 46A of the RMA in 2023), will be withdrawn under section 51A of the RMA;

Regulatory Impact – Infrastructure and Development, Primary Sector and Freshwater proposals

- 14 **noted** that impact analysis requirements have been met, and that there are three Interim Regulatory Impact Statements for Phase 2 national direction proposals (Attachment 5 under ECO-25-SUB-0059);

Decision-making – Infrastructure and Development, Primary Sector and Freshwater proposals

- 15 **authorised** the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform and Minister of Conservation (for matters affecting the NZCPS) to make minor and technical policy changes to proposals, editorial and design changes required for publication, and incorporate the Ministers' forewords, prior to publication of the Infrastructure and Development, Primary Sector, and Freshwater discussion documents;
- 16 **authorised** the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform and the Minister of Conservation (for matters relating to the NZCPS only) to make final policy and drafting decisions prior to seeking final Cabinet confirmation to submit the instruments to Executive Council, in consultation with relevant portfolio Ministers;
- 17 **authorised** the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform and the Minister of Conservation (for matters relating to the NZCPS only) to issue drafting instructions to the Parliamentary Counsel Office to draft new and amended National Environmental Standards, and section 360 regulations;

Going for Housing Growth package

- 18 **authorised** the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform and Minister of Housing to consult on the Going for Housing Growth package discussion document (Attachment 4 under ECO-25-SUB-0059);
- 19 **authorised** the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform and Minister of Housing to make minor changes, editorial and design changes required for publication, and incorporate the Minister's foreword, prior to publication of the Going for Housing Growth package discussion document;
- 20 **noted** that the Going for Housing Growth discussion document will be consulted on for eight weeks, with Ministerial discretion to update timeframes if necessary, and that this represents non-statutory initial consultation that will be used to inform policy development for Phase 3;
- 21 **noted** that the Going for Housing Growth discussion document will be notified as soon as possible after 26 May 2025;

Next steps – Infrastructure and Development, Primary Sector, and Freshwater proposals

- 22 **noted** that following statutory consultation, officials will report back to the Minister Responsible for RMA Reform and Minister of Conservation (for matters relating to the NZCPS) with a report and recommendations on submissions, which will inform the form of the final national direction instruments;
- 23 **noted** that officials will consider submissions from the 2024 consultation, *Making it easier to build granny flats* [CAB-24-MIN-0211], on a proposed National Environmental Standard for Granny Flats, alongside any new submissions received through this Phase 2 consultation;

24 **noted** that gazettal of Phase 2 national direction will take place in late 2025 or early 2026, depending on the complexity of submissions.

Rachel Clarke
Committee Secretary

Present:

Rt Hon Winston Peters
Hon David Seymour
Hon Nicola Willis (Chair)
Hon Chris Bishop
Hon Shane Jones
Hon Erica Stanford
Hon Paul Goldsmith
Hon Tama Potaka
Hon Andrew Hoggard
Hon Nicola Grigg
Hon Scott Simpson
Hon Mark Patterson
Hon James Meager
Simon Court MP

Officials present from:

Office of the Prime Minister
Office of Hon Chris Bishop
Office of Hon James Meager
Officials Committee for ECO