



Ngā mahi āhuarangi mō ngāi Māori Climate action for Māori

Te mahere urutaunga ā-motu

The national adaptation plan

Adapt and thrive: Building a climate-resilient New Zealand

Our first national adaptation plan will help New Zealanders adapt to the effects of climate change now, and better protect us against changes to come.

Many impacts are already with us, with unstable and unpredictable weather, worsening floods, droughts and storms, and rising sea levels. We can expect more changes will happen. Lowering emissions can reduce the impacts of climate change but won't eliminate them all.

The national adaptation plan sets out what actions the Government will take over the next six years to help all New Zealanders adapt and thrive in a changing climate.

Māori are kaitiaki of their whenua, leaders in their communities, decision-makers about resources and infrastructure, landowners and business owners. Māori will help lead the response to climate change in each of these roles. Mātauranga Māori will help us learn and better inform our decision-making.

The plan has actions relevant to every sector and community in Aotearoa New Zealand, and addresses the priority risks that need action now.

Managing risk now and for the future

In 2020, the National Climate Change Risk Assessment set out the main risks that New Zealanders face from the impacts of climate change.

These include risks to people's homes and safety, their livelihoods, marae and cultural sites of significance.

This national adaptation plan is the first in a series. It will be updated every six years to respond to changing climate risks.

Impacts of climate change on Māori

Everyone is affected by climate change. Some communities, including Māori, are disproportionately impacted and are particularly vulnerable – for example, because of existing socio-economic inequities or where they live.

Many Māori live in coastal, rural and remote areas, and climate change will affect their homes, infrastructure and sites of cultural significance – including marae, urupā, wāhi tapu and mahinga kai. In regions like Tairāwhiti, recent rainfall events and widespread flooding and road slips have left coastal communities isolated causing issues around access to food, medical supplies and outside help. Many local marae have suffered significant damage and part of an urupā was washed out to sea.

Climate change impacts will also affect the forestry, seafood and primary sectors – which are major areas of investment and employment for Māori. All of these sectors will need to change how they operate. Climate change may also create economic opportunities, such as increased agriculture and horticulture productivity in new places, new fisheries species, more business and employment opportunities in sustainable sectors and new tourism offerings. Investing in climate resilience can reduce risks for some businesses and open up new technologies and markets.

What you told us during consultation on the draft adaptation plan

During consultation on the draft adaptation plan, submitters who identified as Māori or iwi/hapū let us know:

- the importance of kaitiakitanga
- that Māori communities are increasingly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change
- Māori communities face significant, varied challenges when responding to climate change
- the importance of embedding Te Tiriti across the plan
- they supported the acknowledgement of the Rauora Framework in the plan
- that a stronger partnership with Māori is needed on the development and decision-making processes of climate actions specific for iwi, hapū, and Māori.

How the actions in the plan will help Māori adapt to climate change

Embedding Te Tiriti across the climate response

We need to ensure an equitable transition for Māori, led by Māori, to uphold their rights and interests under Te Tiriti o Waitangi. That will require building Crown–Māori relationships and capability to work together as equal partners on our climate response.

The Government will work together with Māori to support Māori to engage in kōrero about adaptation and to explore adaptation options for Māori. These options will be led by Māori. A key action in the plan (and in the emissions reduction plan) is to establish a platform for Māori climate action (action 3.3). That platform will support Māori to define, measure and implement a national Māori climate strategy and action plan. It will provide a space to build more equal partnership and improve knowledge and data to help Māori plan for climate change. It will activate kaupapa Māori, tangata whenua solutions that build climate resilience and support Māori through the transition.

The Government recognises that Māori have a worldview that sits outside western interpretations. The Rauora framework – in chapter 1 of the plan – brings together Māori values and principles into an indigenous worldview of climate change. The Rauora framework will help facilitate its work in partnership with Māori. How the Rauora framework will inform our adaptation journey will be established in partnership with Māori through the platform for Māori climate action.

Enabling better risk-informed decisions

One of the Government's priorities is to provide information about climate change threats, alongside guidance and tools that can help us respond to those threats. This can help Māori understand and assess the risks they face and develop suitable adaptation strategies and solutions. Key actions that will ensure the right information, tools and guidance are available include:

- Action 3.2 Design and develop risk and resilience and climate adaptation information portals: these portals will make information on social and equity risks available to the public. They will also help assess the vulnerability to climate change of Māori and other impacted groups.
- Action 3.10 Assess socio-economic and climate vulnerability for Māori: social and climate data will be collected and analysed to determine how to strengthen resilience for Māori communities.
- Action 3.27 Develop a framework for assessing exposure and vulnerability of taonga/cultural assets to climate change.

The plan supports the development and use of mātauranga Māori in our adaptation journey, including through the following actions:

- Action 3.7.6 Produce guidance on integrating mātauranga Māori into adaptive planning and working with mana whenua.
- Action 3.21 Develop mātauranga Māori indicators of climate impacts on the natural environment.
- Action 3.24 Produce new tools and guidance specific to mātauranga Māori and mātauranga indicators.

Driving climate-resilient development in the right locations

Buildings and infrastructure have a long lifespan. Decisions we make today about how and where we develop really matter. It is a priority for the Government that we improve our planning and infrastructure investment systems to guide climate-resilient development in the right locations.

Key actions related to Māori are:

- Action 4.1 Reform the resource management system: the future resource management system proposes a more effective role for Māori in the plan making process, as well as a national Māori entity to provide oversight at the national level. The future resource management system also proposes requiring decision makers to “give effect to” to the principles of Te Tiriti, replacing the existing requirement to only “take into account” those principles.
- Action 4.4 Embed adaptation in funding models for housing and urban development, including Māori housing: existing funding programmes will be updated to consider the costs of existing and future climate hazards. New funding programmes may be created if gaps are identified.

Adaptation options including managed retreat

Many communities are already under threat from natural hazards. Successfully adapting will be vital as climate impacts worsen. Some people and communities may have to alter how and where they live.

One option is managed retreat, which may be necessary to reduce or eliminate exposure to intolerable risk. It's a carefully planned and managed process of relocating assets, activities and sites of cultural significance away from at-risk areas.

Other options can include protecting our assets from risk as much as possible or adapting our way of living to accommodate the risk.

The plan will support Māori to understand the adaptation options available through actions such as:

- Action 5.1 Pass legislation to support managed retreat: this legislation will address the complex issues around retreating from at-risk areas exposed to climate hazards. We know there are significant implications for Māori communities, which are more sensitive to natural hazards and climate impacts because of the proximity of housing, infrastructure, marae, urupā, pātaka kai and wāhi tapu to the coast and other at-risk areas. This legislation will be developed alongside Māori to build a system that protects and preserves what Māori see as important. A new managed retreat system will consider issues including the Crown–Māori partnership, Māori land, treaty settlement legislation, takutai moana legislation, and iwi environmental management plans.
- Action 5.7 Reduce and manage the impacts of climate hazards on homes and buildings: this will help building owners, renters and new home builders to understand and assess their adaptation options, including through guidance, and tools such as a building risk assessment framework.
- Action 5.8 Support kaitiaki communities to adapt and conserve taonga/cultural assets.

Embedding climate resilience across government

The Government will embed climate resilience across all of its strategies and policies. The following chapters in the plan have actions relevant to Māori.

Chapter 6: Natural environment supports the protection of taonga species and freshwater, including through the following actions:

- Action 6.3 Implement Te Mana o te Taiao – Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy 2020.
- Action 6.4 Implement the proposed National Policy Statement on Indigenous Biodiversity.
- Action 6.7 Implement the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020.

Chapter 7: Homes, buildings and places focuses on ensuring homes, buildings and places in Aotearoa are resilient in the face of climate change, including through the following actions:

- Action 7.2 Partner with Māori landowners to increase the resilience of Māori-owned land, homes and cultural sites.
- Action 7.3 Partner with Māori to support Māori-led approaches to adaptation planning.

Chapter 9: Communities includes resources and support for Māori communities to adapt to a changing climate, including through the following actions:

- Action 9.3 Develop the emergency management workforce.

- Action: 9.6 Building community resilience through social cohesion.
- Action 9.9 Expand current funding for proactive community resilience.

Chapter 10: Economy and financial system aims to create equitable climate resilient economies, including through the following actions:

- Action 10.5 Deliver the Māori agribusiness extension programme.
- Action 10.17 Support Māori small business resilience and transitions.

Future engagement during implementation

As the plan is implemented, more targeted engagement with different stakeholders, including Māori, will take place.

Inclusive engagement, particularly with those disproportionately affected by climate change, will help ensure actions lead to equitable climate resilience.

We are taking the same approach with the implementation of the emissions reduction plan and encouraging engaged and active public participation.

Find out more

Read [Aotearoa New Zealand's first national adaptation plan](#)

