

National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation 2011

Amended December 2025



Ministry for the
Environment
Manatū Mō Te Taiao



**MINISTRY OF BUSINESS,
INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT**
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI



Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

Authority

This National Policy Statement was approved by the Governor-General under section 52(1) of the Resource Management Act 1991 on 11 April 2011, and is published by the Minister for the Environment under section 52(3) of that Act.

This version of the National Policy Statement incorporates the following amendments:

1. amendments made by the Minister for the Environment under section 53(1) of the Resource Management Act 1991 regarding the objective and policies.

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Part 1: Preliminary provisions

1.1 Title

- (1) This is the National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation 2011.

1.2 Commencement

- (1) This National Policy Statement came into force on 13 May 2011.
- (2) See [Part 3](#) for timeframes for giving effect to this National Policy Statement.

1.3 Application

- (1) The National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation applies across the whole of New Zealand.

1.4 Interpretation

- (1) In this National Policy Statement:

Act means the Resource Management Act 1991

ancillary renewable electricity generation (REG) activities mean an activity that supports and is subsidiary to a REG activity, including but not limited to:

- (a) vegetation clearance and tree trimming;
- (b) earthworks and land disturbance;
- (c) construction, maintenance, repair and upgrading of access tracks, bridges and culverts; and
- (d) construction, maintenance, repair and upgrading of power supply and telecommunication cables and devices

community-scale renewable electricity generation (REG) means REG with the primary purpose of supplying electricity to a community

decision-makers mean any persons exercising functions or powers under the Act

electricity networks has the same meaning as in the National Policy Statement for Electricity Transmission 2008 and its amendments

existing renewable electricity generation (REG) assets and activities mean REG assets and activities that are:

- (a) lawfully established and constructed; or
- (b) authorised by an unimplemented resource consent or designation, or by another authorisation, that has not lapsed

existing renewable electricity generation (REG) site means the site or sites as defined in any applicable resource consent(s), designations, or by another authorisation, that is used to generate, store and convey electricity, including all REG assets and activities

functional need has the same meaning as the National Planning Standards 2019

operational need has the same meaning as the National Planning Standards 2019

renewable electricity generation (REG) means the generation of electricity from solar, wind, hydro, geothermal, biomass, tidal, wave, or ocean current energy sources

renewable electricity generation (REG) activities include the full range of activities required for REG, including small-scale and community-scale REG, including:

- (a) the investigation, construction, operation, monitoring, maintenance, upgrade, repowering, decommissioning and removal of REG assets;
- (b) the storage of generated electricity, whether connected to REG, the electricity network or directly to a site or community;
- (c) the conveyance of generated electricity to electricity networks or directly to end users;
- (d) all ancillary REG activities; but
- (e) does not include electricity network assets as defined by the National Policy Statement for Electricity Transmission 2008 and its amendments

renewable electricity generation (REG) assets mean the physical components and structures for REG, including small-scale and community-scale REG, and include:

- (a) the supporting infrastructure required for ancillary REG activities and to generate and store electricity, such as monitoring equipment, cabling, access tracks and roads; and
- (b) the infrastructure required to convey generated and stored electricity to electricity networks or directly to end users

repowering means, in relation to existing REG assets generating electricity from wind or solar sources, the whole or partial replacement of REG assets within an existing REG site to increase generation capacity and output and/or extend the operational life of the REG asset

resilience means the capacity of REG assets to absorb and recover from a shock or disruption, or adapt to changing conditions, while retaining an appropriate level of service as determined by the renewable electricity generation provider

small-scale renewable electricity generation (REG) means REG where the primary purpose is to provide electricity for on-site use at an individual site or to a telecommunications facility

upgrading means, in relation to existing REG activities, improving the capacity, efficiency, safety, security, resilience, reliability, flexibility or longevity of existing REG assets.

- (2) Terms defined in the Act and used in the National Policy Statement have the meaning in the Act, unless otherwise specified.

- (3) Terms defined in the National Planning Standards issued under section 58E of the Act and used in this National Policy Statement have the meanings in that Standard, unless otherwise specified.

1.5 Incorporation by reference

- (1) Clause 2(1) of Schedule 1AA of the Act does not apply to any material incorporated by reference in this National Policy Statement.

Part 2: Objective and policies

2.1 Objective

- (1) The objective of this National Policy Statement is to:
 - (a) ensure the national, regional and local benefits of REG are provided for;
 - (b) enable REG capacity and output to significantly increase;
 - (c) enable REG to support the social, economic and cultural wellbeing of people and communities, and for their health and safety;
 - (d) enable REG to provide greater security of electricity supply and resilience to supply disruptions to all people and communities;
 - (e) enable REG to support achieving New Zealand's emission reduction target and implementation of the emissions reduction plan under the Climate Change Response Act 2002; and
 - (f) ensure REG is developed and operated in a safe, efficient and effective manner while managing the adverse effects from or on REG activities.

2.2 Policies

Policy A: National significance and benefits of renewable electricity generation

- (1) Decision-makers on REG activities must recognise and provide for the national significance and the national, regional and local benefits of REG activities.
- (2) Decision-makers must recognise that the benefits of REG activities include:
 - (a) avoiding, reducing and displacing greenhouse gas emissions;
 - (b) contributing to the security, resilience and independence of electricity supply at local, regional and national scales through diverse REG sources and electricity storage in diverse locations;
 - (c) providing for the social, economic and cultural wellbeing of people and communities and for their health and safety;
 - (d) using renewable rather than finite sources of energy;

- (e) avoiding reliance on imported and domestic fossil fuels for the purposes of generating electricity;
- (f) the temporary and reversible nature of adverse effects on the environment of some REG technologies;
- (g) reducing electricity losses by locating REG activities close to electricity demand and existing electricity networks; and
- (h) reducing adverse effects by:
 - (i) co-locating REG with other appropriate REG assets and activities and other appropriate infrastructure and activities; and
 - (ii) locating REG activities to minimise adverse effects on other activities.

Policy B: Considering cumulative gains and losses of renewable electricity generation capacity

- (1) Decision-makers on REG assets and activities must recognise and provide for the importance of:
 - (a) enabling cumulative increases of REG capacity and output at any scale and any location, including small-scale and community-scale REG assets and activities; and
 - (b) avoiding, where practicable, any overall or cumulative losses of REG capacity and output from a region or district or existing REG assets and activities.
- (2) Decision-makers must have regard to any potential and reasonably foreseeable reduction in the utilisation of renewable electricity resources from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.

Policy C: Operational need or functional need for REG assets and activities to be in particular locations and environments

- (1) Decision-makers must recognise and provide for REG assets and activities that have an operational need or functional need to be in particular locations and environments.
- (2) Decision-makers must recognise that the operational need or functional need of REG assets and activities includes, but is not limited to, the need to:
 - (a) be located where a renewable electricity resource is located and available at a viable scale and quality to sustain the REG activity;
 - (b) be accessible and to connect to electricity networks and be nearby to electricity demand; and
 - (c) have sufficient and accessible land available to support all associated current and reasonably foreseeable future REG activities at that particular location.
- (3) An assessment of alternative sites is not required to demonstrate that an operational or functional need exists.

Policy D: Protecting existing REG assets and activities from other activities

- (1) Decision-makers must protect existing REG assets and activities, to the extent reasonably possible, from the adverse effects of new activities, including by avoiding reverse sensitivity effects.

Policy E: Recognising and providing for Māori interests

- (1) Decision-makers must recognise and provide for Māori interests in relation to REG assets and activities, including by:
 - (a) taking into account the outcome of any engagement with tangata whenua on a relevant resource consent, notice of requirement or private plan change;
 - (b) recognising the opportunities tangata whenua may have in developing and operating their own REG activities at any scale or in partnership; and
 - (c) local authorities:
 - (i) providing opportunities for tangata whenua involvement where REG assets and activities may affect a site of significance or issue of cultural significance to Māori; and
 - (ii) operating in a way that is consistent with any relevant iwi participation legislation or Mana Whakahono ā Rohe.

Policy F: Enabling and managing the effects of REG assets and activities on the environment

- (1) Decision-makers must enable REG assets and activities in all locations and environments.
- (2) Where REG assets and activities are proposed to locate in or are likely to have adverse effects on environments and values provided for in section 6 of the Act, the provisions of this policy must be read alongside other relevant national direction, regional policy statements and regional and district plans.
- (3) Where (2) does not apply, the adverse effects of REG assets and activities must be, where practicable, avoided, remedied or mitigated.
- (4) Decision-makers must have particular regard to the use of adaptive management measures.
- (5) When considering any residual adverse effects of REG assets and activities that cannot be avoided, remedied or mitigated, decision-makers shall have regard to offsetting measures or environmental compensation, including measures or compensation that benefit the local environment and community affected.

Policy G: Providing for the operation and maintenance of existing REG assets and activities

- (1) Decision-makers must enable the efficient operation and maintenance of existing REG assets and activities in all locations and environments.

Policy H: Reconsenting, upgrading and repowering existing REG assets and activities

- (1) For reconsenting, upgrading and repowering of existing REG assets and activities, decision-makers must:
 - (a) recognise that existing REG assets form part of the existing environment;
 - (b) take into account the extent to which the effects of the proposed REG assets and activities are different in scale, intensity, duration and frequency from the effects of existing REG assets and activities;
 - (c) have particular regard to the efficiencies and environmental benefits of increasing REG capacity and output within the same REG site; and
 - (d) provide flexibility for changes in consent conditions to enable the upgrading of existing REG assets and activities, including adapting to new technologies.

Part 3: Timing

3.1 Timing

- (1) Decision-makers must give effect to this National Policy Statement on and from the commencement date.

Made at Wellington on 15 December 2025.

Hon Chris Bishop
Minister for the Environment

Explanatory note

This note is not part of the National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation 2011 but is intended to indicate its general effect.

This National Policy Statement amends in full the National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation 2011. This National Policy Statement recognises renewable electricity generation assets and activities and the benefits of renewable electricity generation as matters of national significance under the Resource Management Act 1991 (the Act).

New Zealand's electricity demand has been growing steadily and is forecast to continue to grow. A large increase in renewable electricity generation is required to electrify sectors of the economy with electricity generated from renewable sources. This transition will reduce greenhouse gas emissions from non-renewable electricity sources and supply clean electricity to respond to increased demand (eg, vehicle electrification), to help achieve New Zealand's emissions reduction target under the Climate Change Response Act 2002. It will also help increase electricity security and resilience through more diverse sources and locations of electricity generation.

This National Policy Statement applies to all decisions made under the Act affecting the operation, maintenance, renewal, upgrade and repowering of existing REG assets and activities, and decisions on development of new REG assets and activities.

This National Policy Statement does not apply to:

- the electricity transmission network, or electricity distribution network assets and activities, both of which are managed under the National Policy Statement for Electricity Transmission 2008 and its amendments
- infrastructure managed under the National Policy Statement for Infrastructure 2025
- the allocation and prioritisation of freshwater because these are matters for regional councils to address in a catchment or regional context.

The National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity 2023 does not apply to the development, operation, maintenance or upgrade of REG assets and activities.

No national policy statement overrides another. Each national policy statement must be applied to the relevant decision-making process.

In relation to REG assets and activities, the enabling policy applies to all locations and environments. However, it must be read alongside other national direction and local authority planning documents that govern section 6 environments and values of the Act. Where section 6 environments and values are not affected, the adverse effects of REG activities must be, where practicable, avoided, remedied or mitigated.

This National Policy Statement is to be applied by all persons exercising powers and functions under the Act. The objective and policies are intended to guide decision-makers in making decisions on the determination of resource consent applications, in considering a designation or a heritage order, in considering an application for a water conservation order and when exercising other relevant powers as required by the Act. The objective and policies will also provide guidance for local authorities in relation to plan making.

In applying this National Policy Statement, local authorities should be aware of their obligations with regard to other legislation, including Te Ture Whenua Māori Act 1993, the Local Government Act 2002, Treaty settlement legislation, iwi participation legislation and the Treaty of Waitangi. Local authorities should also be aware of their obligations in any Mana Whakahono ā Rohe agreement they may have with relevant hapū and iwi.

In August 2025, the Government passed an amendment to the Act that introduced a requirement to stop most plan making under the Act, unless it was subject to an exemption. This 'plan stop' amendment suspends the requirement to review plans and policy statements and prevents notification of new plan or policy statement changes or variations until the end of 2027, when the new resource management system will be in effect.

Due to the plan stop amendment, plans and policy statements will not be updated to give effect to this amendment (unless a relevant exemption applies).

For the avoidance of doubt, plan and policy statement content that implements the original National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation 2011 does not require amendment.

This is secondary legislation issued under the authority of the Legislation Act 2019 .	
Title	National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation 2011
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Replacement empowering Act and provisions	N/A
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