



# Natural hazards

## Engagement material Severe Weather Integrated Response online hui May 2023

Recent severe weather events have shown us that climate change is here and now. We acknowledge the resilience of whānau, hapū and iwi who moved quickly to manaaki communities impacted by recent severe weather events, and who continue to support recovery efforts.

Ministers have asked the Ministry for the Environment to consider how the resource management system might better manage risks from natural hazards like flooding, in light of recent severe weather events. These matters are being considered for all of Aotearoa not just the areas affected by the recent severe weather.

We have heard through our online hui this week and in previous engagement the importance of having conversations about whenua Māori when thinking about natural hazards. We have also heard concerns about the term 'managed retreat', and that we need to enable whānau, hapū and iwi to exercise kaitiakitanga and rangatiratanga over how to respond to climate change.

## Proposal

Additional options are being considered urgently to ensure that future harm from severe weather events is minimised. We are currently advising Ministers on several potential matters in this area, including:

- **Better information**: Ensuring local governments, whānau, hapū, marae, iwi and communities have better information on identifying the natural hazards they face. This will support being further prepared to adapt and manage risk in the longer-term. We are keen to understand what information you need to help your communities think about risk from natural hazards and how identification of risks could include mātauranga Māori.
- **Assessing areas of risk**: Identifying and assessing areas that may be at risk from natural hazards as a critical first step in ensuring the adaptation system, including managed retreat, is effective. This provides whānau, hapū, iwi and marae with critical data and information to incorporate into their plans. We are interested to understand the information you need and how to incorporate mātauranga Māori, as well as understanding how decisions about what level of risk is acceptable are made.

- No new development in high-risk areas: Preventing new development in high-risk areas. Councils are able to restrict development in areas subject to high natural hazard and climate change risk, however, practice on the ground is variable. Communities and landowners have not been in support of some of these decisions in the past. We would like to hear from you about whether you think central government intervention to limit development in high risk areas is needed, and if so, how we can ensure any policy appropriately gives effect to Article 2 of the Treaty of Waitangi.
- Prioritisation of strategic adaptation planning and enable managed retreat: A gap in the managed retreat system is ensuring local government prioritises planning for identified natural hazard risks, with the planning to include:
  - Clear roles for hapū, iwi and Māori
  - Use of mātauranga Māori in risk assessment and management
  - Funding for these areas
  - Accounting of future climate projections.
- a Managed Retreat Expert Working Group, established last year that considers technical matters relating to the managed retreat system, currently under development. Their final report is expected later in 2023.
- Climate Change Adaptation Bill: MfE will be engaging with iwi, Māori and hapū to incorporate needs and aspirations for a pre-emptive adaptation system in the Climate Change Adaptation Bill.
- The Natural and Built Environment Bill sets out a list of outcomes that must be provided for, including “reduction of risks arising from, and better resilience of the environment to, natural hazards and the effects of climate change”.
- The National Planning Framework (NPF) which provides direction on how decision makers and communities will reduce the risks from natural hazards and the effects of climate change.
- The Regional Spatial Strategies and natural and built environment plans will provide more information on how the risks of natural hazards will be reduced at a regional and local level.

## National Planning Framework

The Ministry for the Environment are proposing that the first NPF require regional planning committees to:

- identify natural hazards facing a region
- consider the risk posed by natural hazards
- consider what further work is needed for the NBE plan that reduces risks from natural hazards. For example - determining areas that are at risk, where further work may be required to determine if development is appropriate
- consider if existing infrastructure is sufficient to manage risks posed by natural hazards, and consider next steps if it is not
- reduce emissions and build resilience to severe weather caused by climate change.

## He pātai - questions

- What has been your experience during these previous severe weather events with natural hazards and their associated risks?

- What could be improved further with the response to natural hazards and their risks for you, your whānau, marae and hapū?
- What are your values and aspirations for whenua Māori, and for your communities, in the face of climate change?
- Do you think that central government should limit development in high risk areas? If you do, how might we uphold Māori rights and interests, including the exercise of tino rangatiratanga?