



He mahi tahi nō ngā whiunga ā-āhuarangi Severe Weather Integrated Response

Fact sheet for online hui
April/May 2023

Ahatia ngā whiunga ā-āhuarangi he iwi manawaroa tātou: despite the impacts of climate change we are a resilient people

E ngā maunga e tū tonu rā, e ngā awa e rere rā, e ngā moana a papaki mai rā, tēnā koutou.
Maringi noa ngā roimata mō ngā aitua, aituere, aitutāmaki, haere ki te okioikingā o te tangata.
Tātou e noho moke nei tēnā tātou katoa.

Mountains stand resolute, rivers still flow, oceans still crash to shore.
Our tears flow for those who have passed on and travelled to the resting place of humankind
We who have been left grieving, greetings.

We acknowledge the resilience of whānau, hapū and iwi who moved quickly to manaaki communities affected by cyclones and flooding earlier their year, and the critical support marae continue to provide, particularly to isolated communities. In the coming months our focus is on supporting communities with the significant recovery job ahead and building resilience to future severe weather events.

The Ministry for the Environment's Severe Weather Integrated Response brings together our work to counter the effects of our changing climate. The Government has been clear that decisions need to be made quickly to effectively support the recovery. We are being careful to make sure that advice we provide on the short-term decisions also supports longer term environmental goals.

Work in this area is proceeding at pace, involves other Government agencies, and is still under development. This document shares with you our most up-to-date information on kaupapa the Ministry for the Environment is likely to be leading. Its purpose is to introduce you to our mahi and to offer you the opportunity to kōrero with us on policy choices that address the needs of your communities and align with the values and aspirations of your whānau, hapū and iwi.

We acknowledge the crowded landscape of engagement requests with whānau, hapū and iwi across Government. We wish to make it clear that our kaupapa is not about us talking at you, but rather us listening to you and working with you to meet the needs of your communities.

Orders in Council

From June 2023 onwards, laws will be changed on a range of kaupapa to help communities continue to recover from the effects of the recent severe weather events. The mechanism that will be used to do this is a piece of secondary legislation called an Order in Council. Orders in Council enable the Ministry for the Environment to amend legislation we are responsible for, which in this context is the Resource Management Act 1991 and the Waste Minimisation Act 2008.

The Ministry for the Environment is currently scoping potential Orders in Council. We want to make sure that what we are proposing will meet the needs of your communities. We would like to hear from you about the impacts the severe weather events have had on your whānau, hapū and iwi. We would also like to understand what your needs and aspirations are to recover from these events.

The Ministry for the Environment is likely to have a role in developing and supporting other agencies to develop Orders in Council to:

- fast track the repair and restoration of significant infrastructure like roads, powerlines and pipes, and streamline planning requirements, while ensuring infrastructure is ‘built back better’ where possible.
- provide temporary housing by removing barriers that might impede their establishment.
- assist waste management by minimising barriers to the efficient clean up and disposal of waste, debris and silt, and selecting sites to accept this waste and silt.
- change existing planning requirements, which may include:
 - relaxing resource consent conditions for users who are unable to comply with existing conditions.
 - temporarily waiving the requirements to exclude livestock from waterways, to recognise the damage the severe weather has caused to fencing.
 - enabling district or regional plans to be quickly amended to allow for recovery activities.

Given Orders in Council could cover a number of pieces of legislation it is likely that multiple government agencies will be involved in their development. The Ministry for the Environment anticipates that it will lead the development of Orders in Council relating to waste and planning requirements and be in a supporting or co-leading role for the others.

Key concerns we have heard so far include:

- the importance of meaningful engagement with iwi, hapū and Māori when thinking about how to manage waste, housing or significant infrastructure, and the need for appropriate mechanisms to protect sensitive information.
- impacts on Te Taiao of relaxing planning requirements on freshwater, riparian planting and stock exclusion from waterways.
- carefully balancing the need to enable recovery in affected communities, while not pre-empting larger conversations, for example on managed retreat and resource management reform.
- the need to address the social impacts of temporary housing on whānau.

Statutory timeframes are tight for engagement with iwi, hapū, Māori and community groups during the development of proposed Orders in Council. The Severe Weather Recovery Legislation requires a minimum of three days to provide feedback on any proposal for an Order in Council, with a panel being appointed to review all proposed Orders in Council.

The panel is comprised of up to 12 members, including a High Court judge. The Minister must consider appointing members to the panel with local perspectives of Māori, Māori communities, and their interests and values, including mātauranga Māori and tikanga Māori, as well as other specialist knowledge, experience or expertise.

National direction on natural hazards

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. We are exploring options and it may involve two pieces of work.

The first of these could be a new piece of national direction on natural hazards, which includes a nationally consistent risk assessment criteria for natural hazards. It is likely that this national direction on natural hazards will be developed under the RMA and will be transitioned into the new resource management system in the future.

This national direction is likely to take some time to establish, so in the next three months we are looking at whether a short term measure could be used nationwide to limit new development in areas at high risk from natural hazards. We are working closely with other agencies, including Toka Tū Ake (Earthquake Commission) who have data to support policy development in this area.

We would like to kōrero with you on both the national direction and the short-term issue of development in high-risk natural hazard areas. Key themes we've heard through previous engagement that we need to address include:

- the importance of embedding whakaaro Māori and mātauranga Māori into natural hazard risk and risk assessment, acknowledging the need to protect sensitive information.
- the need to incorporate the values and aspirations of Māori landowners, given the large amount of whenua Māori that is coastal, low-lying or steep terrain and may be disproportionately affected by such a policy.
- the role iwi and hapū environmental management plans should play in identifying risk from natural hazards.
- whether iwi, hapū and Māori see value in central government intervention to limit development in areas at high risk from natural hazards, and if so which types of development or hazards should be prioritised.

Climate Change Adaptation Bill

The Ministry is also working on the Climate Change Adaptation Bill (CCAB), expected to be introduced to Parliament later in 2023.

This Bill is expected to lay the foundations for responses to managing and reducing impacts of natural hazard risks, including those caused or made worse by climate change.

Ministers have not yet made decisions on this mahi. We are happy to come back to you once we know more, should you wish to kōrero on this kaupapa.

Online hui

To support these kaupapa, in the first three weeks of May we will be holding fifteen online hui which you are welcome to attend to share your whakaaro, and to hear our initial thinking. We are aware how stretched you are on the recovery, so we are holding these online hui at different times so you can find a time that best suits you.

[View the available online hui dates and book a session](#)

After this time, we propose to shift to fortnightly evening online hui for six months.

Some of this kaupapa has also been covered as part of our resource management reform engagement material, [which you can read here](#).

