



10 February 2021

E aku rangatira kei ngā kāinga me ngā marae maha puta noa i te motu, tēnā koutou katoa

The Government has agreed to reform the resource management system this parliamentary term. The reform will be based on the review of New Zealand's resource management system by an expert panel led by the Hon Tony Randerson QC. Its report *New Directions for Resource Management in New Zealand* was published in July 2020 (Randerson report).

Other significant reports completed in recent years have also been drawn upon to support the reform process, including several reports from the Environmental Defence Society, Ministry for the Environment, New Zealand Productivity Commission, the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment, and the Waitangi Tribunal.

Thank you for your input into the new system and your willingness to work with us to set up the resource management system to safeguard the wellbeing of future generations.

### ***The new legislation***

The reform process is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to set up the resource management system to safeguard the wellbeing of current and future generations. A key objective is to improve recognition of the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and better reflect te ao Māori in the resource management system. In particular, the Government has committed to repealing and replacing the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) and enacting three new pieces of legislation:

- a **Natural and Built Environments Act (NBA)** will be the primary replacement for the RMA. It will provide a greater focus on positive outcomes for both natural and built environments rather than only controlling effects. It will ensure that the use, development and protection of resources only occurs within prescribed environmental limits. Other key changes include stronger national direction, one single combined plan per region, and a more efficient resource consent process
- a **Strategic Planning Act (SPA)** will require strategic plans that set long term goals for each region (both land and coastal areas), integrating land use planning, environmental regulation, infrastructure provision, climate change and natural hazard risk management. The SPA will also integrate functions across the NBA and related statutes
- a **Climate Change Adaptation Act (CAA)** will address complex issues associated with managed retreat and funding and financing adaptation.

The Randerson report also considered a future system should provide a stronger role for mana whenua in plan making under both the NBA and SPA. The report recommendations on Te Tiriti o Waitangi and te ao Māori are focused in Chapter 3 of the report.

I have taken further advice on the Panel's report from my officials and other agencies. I support the Panel's general direction with some changes. The details, including 'in principle' decisions to initiate

the reform process, are included in the Cabinet paper which is available on the [Ministry for the Environment's website](#).

In order to pass this legislation in the current term, Cabinet has agreed to:

- use a special process for the NBA by developing an exposure draft by May 2021 for consideration by a select committee inquiry. A Bill is intended to be formally introduced into Parliament in late 2021 and passed by late 2022
- establish a Ministerial Oversight Group to work through policy details needed to progress the NBA and other legislation
- engage with iwi/Māori to refine policy options as proposals are developed
- engage with local government and other experts to ensure high quality advice is available.

Work on the exposure draft is underway, and we know engaging with Māori on this reform will be critical to ensuring its success. There will be an opportunity to provide feedback on it through the select committee inquiry process.

Separate engagement with Post Settlement Governance Entities is proposed to make sure that Treaty settlement arrangements are carried over by the NBA. The details of those early engagement proposals will be communicated directly to PSGEs to determine how best to proceed.

Work to reform the resource management system will continue for many years after the legislative changes are in place. This work includes supporting the transition to, and implementation of, the reformed system. The Government will start working on transition design as we develop the new system and improve central and local government capability to effectively work with Māori.

You can read more about the reforms on the [Ministry for the Environment's website](#). Please get in touch with the resource management reform team with any questions or comments at [rmreform@mfe.govt.nz](mailto:rmreform@mfe.govt.nz).

I look forward to your participation in this process, which I thank you for.

Naku noa nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David Parker', is positioned above the printed name.

Hon David Parker  
**Minister for the Environment**