

Replacing the Resource Management Act

20 September 2024

A phased approach

The Government is taking a phased approach to reforming the resource management system.

- **Phase One** – repeal the Natural and Built Environment Act and Spatial Planning Act
 - Achieved in December 2023.
- **Phase Two** - targeted changes to the existing resource management system, to address the most pressing issues
 - **Fast-track Approvals Bill** – currently before the Environment Select Committee for their consideration.
 - **Two bills to amend the Resource Management Act and a package of national direction** – changes to the existing system that can address the most pressing issues in the short term.
- **Phase Three** – legislation to replace the Resource Management Act.

A new system based on the enjoyment of property rights

- The enjoyment of property rights will be the guiding principle for the new resource management system.
- In practice, this means the resource management system should allow people to do more on their own property more easily, so long as it doesn't harm others.
- Where an activity is harming others, the resource management system should step in to protect property owners' rights from being compromised by unreasonable activities happening around them.

Two new laws

- One focusing on driving much needed urban development and infrastructure, aligning with the suite of policies in our Going for Housing Growth programme and the recently announced 30-year National Infrastructure Plan.
- Another focused on environmental protection and managing the environmental effects that flow from the activities we use natural resources for.

Expert Advisory Group

- Will take the framework for the new system and work to develop a blueprint for replacing the RMA.
- Made up of experts with relevant technical knowledge ranging from resource management law, to planning and te ao Māori.

Next steps

- The Expert Advisory Group will develop and provide a blueprint for replacing the RMA to the Minister for RMA Reform before Christmas 2024.
- The Minister for RMA Reform will seek Cabinet agreement to key aspects of the replacement legislation at the beginning of 2025, after which detailed policy work and legislative drafting will begin.
- Legislation is expected to be introduced to Parliament next year and be passed into law by mid-2026.

Expert Advisory Group member biographies

Janette Campbell (Chair)

Janette Campbell is a barrister at Auckland's Bankside Chambers, specialising in resource management law. She has 30 years of experience representing clients before Councils and the Courts and has extensive practical experience in advancing resource consent applications, designations and policy documents. Janette has also served as a Hearings Commissioner, advised Regional and District Councils on their decision making roles and has provided advice to Boards of Inquiry. Before joining Bankside Chambers, she was a partner at Meredith Connell.

Christine Jones

Christine Jones is the General Manager – Strategy, Growth & Governance at the Tauranga City Council. She has worked in senior management roles at Tauranga City Council since 2001, with varied experience covering growth management, land use and urban planning, infrastructure and also strategic planning. Christine has expertise in integrated approaches to urban planning, providing for and delivering serviced business and residential land. She has also had significant involvement in local government sector best practice work.

Paul Melville

Paul Melville is General Manager - Policy and Advocacy at Federated Farmers. He has extensive policy experience working in senior roles across the private and public sectors. Paul was a member of the New Zealand delegation to UN climate change negotiations in Doha, Warsaw, Lima and at Paris, taking the lead on agricultural issues. He brings a lifelong knowledge of farming having grown up on a dairy farm near Te Awamutu, Waikato.

Rukumoana Schaafhausen

Rukumoana Schaafhausen is of Ngāti Haua descent and has a background in law and governance. She was recently the Chair of Waikato-Tainui and is currently serving across a number of Iwi, community, private and public organisations in governance roles including Contact Energy, Kiwi Capital Group, Alvarium Investments NZ, Tindall Foundation, and The KingsTrust. Rukumoana is passionate about initiatives that promote economic growth, environmental stewardship, and social equity for Māori communities.

Kevin Counsell

Kevin Counsell is an economic consultant and expert at NERA. He specialises in economic analysis and expert testimony including in urban development, resource management, and environmental policy issues. Kevin has nearly 25 years' of experience as a professional economist, and has served as an expert witness before the New Zealand Environment Court and independent hearings panels. He holds a Masters degree in Economics (with Distinction), an Honours degree in Economics (First Class) and an undergraduate degree in Mathematics.

Gillian Crowcroft







Gillian Crowcroft is Technical Director – Environment at Harrison Grierson. She is a resource management practitioner with more than 30 years' experience in environmental science, strategy, policy and planning. Gillian has significant expertise in freshwater management and is a Freshwater Commissioner. Prior to working at Harrison Grierson, she worked at Auckland Council and Auckland Regional Council in strategy, policy and science roles.

Mark Chrisp

Mark Chrisp is a Founding Director at Mitchell Daysh Ltd. He has 35 years' experience as a planning and resource management expert. Mark specialises in policy and plan development, resource consents and project management, with a focus on the energy, dairy, infrastructure and land development sectors.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT REFORM – PHASE TWO PRIORITIES +

Phase Two will progress targeted amendments through RM Bill 2 and national direction to deliver objectives for Electrify NZ, Infrastructure for the Future, Going for Housing Growth and Primary Sector Growth Plan

	Infrastructure (including energy)  	Housing 	Farming & primary sector 	Emergencies and natural hazards 	System improvements/ other 
RM Bill 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Default consent duration of 35 years for renewable electricity and long-lived infrastructure • Reduce consent and re-consenting processing time for renewable energy and other activities (ie, within 1 year) • Longer lapse period for renewable energy/other infrastructure consents • Amend consent information requirements/requests and support decision makers in making effective consent conditions • Extend default lapse period for designations from 5 to 10 years • Extend designation (requiring) authority status to Kāinga Ora, identified community housing providers, ports and emergency services • Remove or simplify alternatives test, and reduce assessment and information requirements • Extension of certain coastal permits for port companies by 20 years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councils to demonstrate compliance with the 30 year Housing Growth Targets • A process to allow Tier 1 councils to opt-out from implementing the Medium Density Residential Standards (MDRS) into relevant residential zones • Processes for councils that have not yet completed their MDRS and National Policy Statement on Urban Development related plan changes. • Providing central government with new powers relating to compliance with housing and business development capacity assessments. • Exploring additional intervention powers to support implementation of the Going for Housing Growth plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing regulatory overlap between the RMA and Fisheries Act 1996 • Efficient consent processing for wood processing facilities and other activities (ie, within 1 year) • Update consents in an efficient manner (including marine farm consents) • Improving freshwater farm plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement to emergency provisions, including a new regulation making power for emergency responses • Ability to decline land-use consents, or attach conditions, where there are significant risks of natural hazards • Rules relating to natural hazards have immediate legal effect (from notification). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage management • Efficient cost-recovery by local authorities • Targeted improvements to compliance and enforcement • Technical improvements to DOC functions to manage discharges, compliance and enforcement.
National direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendments to NPS-Renewable Electricity Generation, NPS-Electricity Transmission and NES-Electricity Transmission Activities (including distribution), and NES-Telecommunications Facilities • officials are developing further advice on how to deliver the remaining elements of Electrify NZ and Infrastructure commitments • Targeted new national direction for Infrastructure (including standards) • Enabling quarrying • Amendments to NZ Coastal Policy Statement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendments to NPS-Urban Development and NPS-Highly Productive Land • New national direction for housing targets, granny flats and papakāinga. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendments to NPS-Freshwater Management and NES-Freshwater, including new national direction for water storage, NPS-Indigenous Biodiversity, NES-Commercial Forestry, NES-Drinking Water, NES-Marine Aquaculture and Stock Exclusion Regulations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New national direction for Natural Hazards • New national environmental standards for heritage (bundled into the Housing package). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rectifying existing and preventing further policy misalignment through a coordinated approach (where practicable).