

Environment

IMPROVING ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE AND STANDARDS

Our environment is at the core of our quality of life, our national identity, and our competitive advantage, yet it is not being well managed. Many of our streams, rivers, and lakes are deteriorating. Greenhouse gas emissions are soaring. Our forest estate is shrinking for the first time in decades. New environmental leadership and direction is needed.

National's priorities are tackling climate change, fresh-water issues, and effective nature conservation. Improving environmental governance and standards will help achieve these goals.

New Zealand's environmental management is being compromised by the poor performance of the Ministry for the Environment. National wants to rebuild the ministry so it can lead government policy advice on the environmental challenges we face. We also want to lift environmental standards for air quality, solid waste and vehicle noise.

OUR PRINCIPLES

- Resource use must be based on sustainability.
- Economic growth and improving the environment can and must go hand in hand.
- Good science is essential to quality environmental decision-making.
- People respond best to change when engaged and given incentives.
- New Zealanders have a unique birthright to access and to enjoy our special places.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

READ › National's [Environment Policy](#).

SEE › Our [Blue Green Vision for New Zealand](#).

SEE › Our [web page on Environment](#).

NATIONAL'S PLAN

1. Environmental Governance & Reporting

- Work with stakeholders to agree on up to 20 national environmental goals to be achieved by specific dates, at the latest by 2030.
- Introduce an Environmental Reporting Act requiring independent five-yearly State of the Environment Reports by the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment.
- Refocus the Ministry for the Environment into a politically neutral, highly skilled, policy adviser.
- Expand the existing Environmental Risk Management Authority into an Environmental Protection Authority with increased responsibilities, including some RMA regulatory functions and development of national policy statements and environmental standards.

2. Healthy Air

- Review progress on the National Environmental Standard for air quality.
- Work with councils to help low-income households get cleaner heating and better insulation.
- Introduce better vehicle emission standards and testing. Ensure standards for imported vehicles keep up with international best practice.

3. Noise

- Bring noise standards for new cars in line with European and Australian standards.
- Include noise checks for vehicle exhaust systems in warrants of fitness.

4. Solid Waste

- Implement a National Environmental Standard for landfills and phase out non-complying landfills.
- Implement the Waste Minimisation Act. Ensure it does not undermine successful waste reduction programmes.
- Support Keep New Zealand Beautiful and the Clean Up New Zealand Week.