

5 May 2022

Tēnā koe,

In December last year the Minister of Conservation Kiri Allan [announced](#) the conservation law reform [roadmap](#). The roadmap outlines both the short-term and long-term changes we're making to improve conservation legislation for nature and people. You can find out more about the reform programme on our [website](#).

As part of our law reform work, we are initiating a review of the Wildlife Act and proposing targeted amendments to concessions and management planning legislation (CMAP).

We know whānau, hapū and iwi have a significant interest in the management of public conservation lands and waters, and the wildlife that live in your rohe. Over many years, we have heard your frustrations and aspirations for how we manage species and use of cultural materials, and also with our systems such as concessions and management planning processes.

Conservation law reform is an opportunity to build on these conversations and design species legislation and systems that are modern and fit for purpose. Your engagement will help ensure any future changes made to conservation legislation reflect what's important to your hapū or iwi and give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi.

We want to understand your potential interest or desired involvement in this work. We will be holding a series of hui to discuss both the review of legislation for species management (the Wildlife Act) and conservation management processes (CMAP).

Due to Covid we intend to initially run regional virtual hui in May and June. If you would prefer to meet kanohi ki te kanohi we will organise an in-person hui where it is safe to do so.

We are looking to schedule online hui for your region the week of 16-20 May. If you would like more information about these regional hui or would prefer to engage with us individually, in an alternative way, or at another time, please email lawreform@doc.govt.nz and we will be in touch.

E ngā Rangatira o te Titrīti, we would like to discuss the CMAP proposals with you directly. There is further information on this kaupapa in the attachment.

Ngā mihi mahana,

Penny Nelson

Director-General

Te Papa Atawhai | Department of Conservation

What is the Wildlife Act 1953 and why are we reviewing it?

The Wildlife Act 1953 is the legislation that protects wildlife in Aotearoa from harm, including many of our most endangered species. The act also regulates game bird hunting, and access to cultural materials derived from wildlife, including feathers, bones, and shells.

More than 4,000 of Aotearoa's native species are threatened or at risk of extinction. We are at a defining moment for nature, yet the Wildlife Act is decades old and not fit for purpose, as it lacks the tools we need to sustainably manage and use wildlife. The Act does not reflect modern pressures on ecosystems and species, such as climate change, pests, predators, and fragmentation of habitats and landscapes. The Act also does not provide for Treaty partnership in a way that recognises contemporary partnership approaches and considers the post-settlement environment.

Reviews, court decisions and Waitangi Tribunal claims have highlighted significant challenges in the conservation system and issues with the Wildlife Act. *Te Mana o te Taiao – Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy* highlights the failure of the current conservation system to safeguard biodiversity.

The Wai 262 report *Ko Aotearoa Tēnei* contains specific recommendations about changes needed to the Wildlife Act. These include reviewing the Act to enable the exercise of kaitiakitanga and rangatiratanga, addressing the issue within the act of Crown ownership of wildlife and cultural works crafted from wildlife, and issues relating to genetic materials and intellectual property.

As we progress in the year-long review of the Wildlife Act 1953, it's important that we understand the aspirations of whānau, hapū and iwi for the species living in Aotearoa me Te Waipounamu.

About the hui

We would like to meet with you to discuss the review of the Wildlife Act. We acknowledge that many conversations with DOC about the Wildlife Act and your aspirations for wildlife have already been had over the years. During the hui we would like to share the process ahead of us, hear your thoughts, and reflect back what we have heard from you and others in the past to ensure we have the right starting point for the review.

We would like to meet with representatives from your iwi, hapū or PSGE to discuss this work and:

- how we meaningfully engage with your PSGE, iwi, or hapū
- what issues you are experiencing in relation to the Wildlife Act

- what aspirations or outcomes you would like to see our legislation deliver for Aotearoa's wildlife, and for whānau, hapū and iwi.

What we hear during these hui will be reflected in the information we give to the Minister, outlining the problems experienced with the current legislation, what outcomes we would like the legislation to be able to deliver, and the next steps in our work.

Looking forward...

We understand you may have competing priorities. If you are unable to take part in these initial conversations but would like to meet later or receive further information, please let us know.

We plan to have a second round of engagement with hapū, iwi and PSGE in late 2022 to provide a progress update on the work, and to share what we heard during early engagement and how this has influenced the direction of the work. We'll be in touch using the same channels as this time.

Please feel free to contact the team responsible for this work with any questions, feedback, or comments at lawreform@doc.govt.nz.

Conservation Management and Processes (CMAP)

Improving current management planning and concessions processes

This work is focused on making targeted amendments to the statutory processes for conservation management planning and concessions. Management planning is the process for creating and reviewing the conservation management plans and strategies, and national park management plans, that guide how DOC manages these places. Concessions are the permits, licenses and leases required to use public conservation lands and waters.

Our aim is to identify changes that will make concession decision-making and reviews of statutory planning documents more efficient, while ensuring these processes give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and protect conservation values.

A public discussion document, including the specific options for amendments, will be released by the Minister of Conservation on Thursday the 5th of May. It will be available on the DOC website (<http://www.doc.govt.nz/cmap-2022-consultation>).

E ngā Rangatira o te Titrīti

It's important to note that many Treaty settlements contain redress related to management planning and concessions processes. We are firm in our position that that none of the changes should limit any settlement requirements relating to the involvement of post-settlement governance entities (PSGEs) in these processes. Details on how the options would accommodate existing settlement requirements in any new processes are included in the discussion document.

The CMAP team are keen to hear from representatives of PSGEs whose settlements contain redress relevant to the proposals. We would encourage any PSGEs with questions or concerns to contact the team and the Pou Tairangahau for their rohe. The CMAP team are also available to meet with PSGE's individually to discuss the proposals and how they relate to their specific redress.

What kind of changes are being proposed?

The proposals in the discussion document will be the key focus of our hui. What we hear about the options during these hui will inform the targeted amendments to conservation legislation that will be proposed to Ministers.

We have been exploring options for targeted improvements to conservation legislation in three areas:

- Changes to improve the legislative process for developing and reviewing conservation management planning documents.
- Changes to concessions legislation to improve efficiency and enable more proactive approaches to concessions management.

- Additional changes are also being explored to address minor or technical issues within existing conservation legislation.

Prior to the hui, we will send you an electronic copy of the discussion document directly, along with a short summary of the proposals highlighting potential key areas of interest for PSGEs, iwi and hapū.

Topics for discussion at the hui could include:

- your views on how we have defined the problems and the options to address them,
- how the proposed options may affect the way your PSGE, iwi, or hapū engage in statutory processes; and,
- what aspirations or outcomes you would like to see targeted amendments deliver for whānau, hapū and iwi in concessions and management planning processes

Looking forward

The Minister of Conservation aims to seek Cabinet approval of the targeted amendments and begin drafting targeted amendments in July and August 2022

Please feel free to contact the team responsible for this work with any questions or comments at cmap@doc.govt.nz.