



Green

New Zealand Labour Party
& Green Party of Aotearoa
New Zealand

COOPERATION AGREEMENT

53rd Parliament



Cooperation Agreement between the New Zealand Labour Party and the Green Party of Aotearoa New Zealand

Preamble

1. The Green Party commits to supporting the Labour Government to provide stable government for the term of the 53rd Parliament. The parties commit to working in the best interests of New Zealand and New Zealanders, working to honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and building and maintaining public confidence in the integrity of Parliament and our democracy.
2. This agreement builds on the constructive and enduring working relationship between the two parties. It does this by setting out the arrangements between the parliamentary Labour and Green Parties as they relate to the Ministerial portfolios and areas of policy cooperation set out in this agreement.

Nature of agreement

3. The Green Party agrees to support the Labour Government by not opposing votes on matters of confidence and supply for the full term of this Parliament. In addition, the Green Party will support the Labour Government on procedural motions in the House and at Select Committees on the terms set out in this agreement. This will provide New Zealanders with the certainty of a strong, stable Labour Government with support from the Green Party over the next three years.
4. The Green Party will determine its own position in relation to any policy or legislative matter not covered by the Ministerial portfolios and areas of cooperation set out in this agreement. Differences of position within such portfolios and areas of cooperation will be managed in accordance with this agreement.
5. The Labour Government in turn commits to working constructively with the Green Party to advance the policy goals set out in this agreement, alongside Labour's policy programme.

Ministerial positions

6. The Labour Government's priorities for this term centre on a COVID-19 recovery plan. This includes the implementation of Labour's manifesto promises and five point economic plan, with a focus on investing in our people and preparing for the future.
7. The Green Party's aspirations include enabling a Just Transition to a zero-carbon economy; supporting equity, compassion and inclusive communities; ensuring ecosystems, indigenous species and their habitats thrive; and cultivating a flourishing democracy founded on Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

8. This agreement supports the advance of the Government's priorities by allocating portfolios and establishing areas of cooperation that are consistent with the direction and goals of the Labour Government, as well as contributing to addressing the Green Party's aspirations.
9. The Green Party will hold the following portfolios outside of Cabinet:
 - A. Marama Davidson will be appointed to the position of Minister for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence and Associate Minister of Housing (Homelessness).
 - B. Hon James Shaw will be appointed to the position of Minister of Climate Change and Associate Minister for the Environment (Biodiversity).
10. The Minister for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence will be the lead Minister for the whole of government response on family and sexual violence with the mandate to coordinate Budget bids in this area. The Minister will also be a member of the ad hoc Ministerial group on the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy.
11. These Ministerial portfolios also reflect areas where Green Party expertise provides a valuable contribution to the Labour Government.
12. Ministers from the Green Party will attend Cabinet Committees for items relevant to their portfolios and receive Cabinet Papers relevant to their portfolios, as provided for in the Cabinet Manual.
13. In addition, the Labour Party will support the nomination of a Green Party Member of Parliament to be the Chair of a Select Committee, as well as a Green Party Member of Parliament in the role of Deputy Chair of an additional Select Committee.

Areas of cooperation

14. The parties will cooperate on agreed areas where the Labour and Green Parties have common goals:
 - A. Achieving the purpose and goals of the Zero Carbon Act** through decarbonising public transport, decarbonising the public sector, increasing the uptake of zero-emission vehicles, introducing clean car standards, and supporting the use of renewable energy for industrial heat.
 - B. Protecting our environment and biodiversity** through working to achieve the outcomes of *Te Mana o te Taiao - Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy 2020*, protecting Kauri, building on pest management programmes, and taking action to minimise waste and problem plastics.
 - C. Improving child wellbeing and marginalised communities** through action on homelessness, warmer homes, and child and youth mental health.
15. These areas of cooperation reflect common goals between the Labour and Green Parties, and

represent areas where the policy and experience of the Green Party provides a positive contribution to the Labour Government.

16. The Labour and Green Parties will work together in good faith and cooperate with each other in respect of executive and Parliamentary activities to advance these shared goals, including any public statements. The Prime Minister's letters of expectations to Ministers will reflect the areas of policy cooperation and consultation processes required.
17. Beyond these stated areas of cooperation, it is also the Government's intention to work with political parties from across Parliament (including the Opposition) on issues that affect our democracy, including the Electoral Commission's 2012 recommended changes to MMP, electoral finance law, and the length of the Parliamentary term.

Consultation

18. On the areas of cooperation set out in this agreement, or other matters as agreed, the parties commit to undertaking political consultation between the responsible Minister and the appropriate spokesperson. This process will also apply to Green Party Ministerial portfolio matters.
19. This process, which will be agreed between the parties and set out in a Cabinet Office Circular, will cover:
 - A. the initial policy development, including access to relevant papers and drafts of legislation,
 - B. the development of Cabinet Papers,
 - C. the public communication of the policy to acknowledge the role of the Green Party.
20. The Labour Government will also brief the Green Party on:
 - A. the broad outline of the legislative programme
 - B. broad Budget parameters and process.
21. Outside of the areas specified in this agreement, there will be no requirement for consultation, but this could happen on a case by case basis.
22. Where there has been full participation in the development of a policy initiative and that participation has led to an agreed position, it is expected that both parties to this agreement will publicly support the process and outcome. This does not prevent the parties from noting where the agreed position deviates from their stated policy.

Relationship between the parties

23. The Labour and Green Parties will cooperate with each other with mutual respect on the areas set out in this agreement. Cooperation will include joint announcements relating to areas of policy cooperation.

24. The Leader of the Labour Party and the Green Party Co-leaders will meet every six weeks to monitor progress against the areas of cooperation set out in this agreement. The Chiefs of Staff will meet regularly.
25. The parties agree that any concerns will be raised in confidence as early as possible and in good faith, between the Prime Minister's Office and the Office of the Co-leaders of the Green Party. Matters can be escalated to the Chiefs of Staff, and then Party leaders, as required.
26. The parties may establish a process in order to maintain different public positions on the areas of cooperation. The parties agree that matters of differentiation will be dealt with on a 'no surprises' basis.
27. This agreement will evolve as the term of Government progresses, including through opening up potential additional areas of cooperation. Any additional areas of cooperation will be agreed to between the Party leaders and given effect by a letter from the Prime Minister to the relevant Minister.

Cabinet Manual

28. Green Party Ministers agree to be bound by the Cabinet Manual in the exercise of Ministerial Responsibilities, and in particular, agree to be bound by the provisions in the Cabinet Manual on conduct, public duty, and personal interests of Ministers.

Collective responsibility

29. Ministers from the Green Party agree to be bound by collective responsibility in relation to their Ministerial portfolios. When speaking within portfolio responsibilities, they will speak for the Government representing the Government's position in relation to those responsibilities.
30. In accordance with the Cabinet Manual, Ministers from the Green Party must support and implement Cabinet decisions in their portfolio areas. However, Ministers from the Green Party will not be restricted from noting where that policy may deviate from the Green Party policy on an issue. If this is required, it may be noted in the Cabinet minute that on a key issue, the Green Party position differs from the Cabinet decision.
31. When Ministers from the Green Party are speaking about matters outside of their portfolio responsibilities, they may speak as the Co-leader of the Green Party or as a Member of Parliament.
32. Agree to disagree provisions of the Cabinet Manual will be applied as necessary.

Confidentiality

33. Ministers from the Green Party will be bound by the principle of Cabinet confidentiality, as set out in the Cabinet Manual.
34. Where Cabinet papers or other briefings are provided to the Green Party, or where the Green Party is involved in consultation on legislation, policy or budgetary matters, all such material and discussions shall be confidential unless otherwise agreed.

35. In the event that Government or Cabinet papers are provided to the Green Party for the purposes of political consultation they shall be provided to a designated person with the office of the Green Party, who will take responsibility for ensuring they are treated with the appropriate degree of confidentiality.
36. Once confidential information is in the public domain, both parties are able to make comment on the information, subject to any constraints required by collective responsibility or this agreement.

Management of Parliamentary activities

37. Both parties commit to a 'no surprises' approach for House and Select Committee business. Protocols will be established for managing this.
38. The Leader of the House will keep the Green Party informed about the House programme in advance of each sitting session.
39. Consultation on legislation outside of the scope of this agreement will be conducted on a case by case basis. The Green Party will consider its position on each Bill in good faith and advise the relevant Minister and the Prime Minister's Office.
40. The Labour and Green Parties agree to a 'no surprises' approach to new Members' Bills. However, neither party is under any obligation to support the other party's Members' Bills.
41. The Green Party will support the Government on procedural motions in the House and in Select Committees, subject to consultation being undertaken. This excludes urgency, which will be negotiated on a case by case basis. The Labour Party Whip and Green Party Musterer will establish protocols to ensure these processes work effectively to meet the expectations of both parties.
42. The Green Party undertakes to keep full voting numbers present whenever the House is sitting where the Green Party has committed to support the Labour Government and on matters of confidence and supply. The Green Party also undertakes to keep full voting numbers in Select Committee, unless otherwise agreed.