

# Policy 2017



## Environment

### Our Bluegreen approach

New Zealand's environment is at the core of our quality of life, our national identity and our competitive advantage.

Good environmental practice is not only important to protect our natural heritage, but crucial in securing the type of future we want for our children and grandchildren.

That's why National is providing real leadership on environmental issues in a sensible, Bluegreen way that also supports increased employment, better jobs and a growing economy.

National's environmental priorities are improved freshwater quality, cleaner air, a reduction in harmful waste, better management of our oceans and the facilitation of urban development.

To achieve this we are working together with all New Zealanders on science-based solutions that enhance our environment while working for our economy.

**"National is a party of practical environmentalists. We are delivering better management of our environment while ensuring we deliver a growing economy and more jobs."**

– Environment spokesperson Nick Smith

### Policy highlights

- Reforming the Resource Management Act to improve environmental management and deliver more homes and infrastructure at pace
- Investing a record \$400m in freshwater clean-ups
- Introducing new standards for ecological and human health that limit nutrients and E-coli in waterways
- Producing robust, independent information on New Zealand's environment to enhance the integrity of our clean green brand and direct our focus
- Having the cleanest air quality on record, saving hundreds of lives
- Making kerbside recycling accessible to 97 per cent of New Zealanders
- Establishing New Zealand as a world leader in managing our oceans
- Working alongside all New Zealanders to ensure progress on our environmental goals

# National is...

## Improving freshwater management

- Committed to improving our water quality and invested a record \$400m to do so
- Introduced an ambitious new target of 90 per cent of rivers and lakes being swimmable by 2040
- Implemented New Zealand's first National Policy Statement on Freshwater, requiring regional councils to set limits on nutrients
- Developed national regulations requiring stock exclusion from waterways, achieved through 56,000km of new fencing
- Required 95 per cent of water takes to be measured, compared to 20 per cent in 2008

## Improving marine protection

- Passed the Exclusive Economic Zone and Continental Shelf (Environmental Effects) Act to better protect New Zealand's oceans
- Created 11 new marine reserves, protected 17 surf breaks and banned shark finning
- Successfully negotiated with the US the largest marine protected area in the world, in the Ross Sea
- Committed to establishing the Kermadec Marine Sanctuary, one of the world's largest and most significant fully protected marine areas

## Addressing harmful waste

- Implemented an ambitious programme to expand New Zealand's recycling infrastructure and minimise waste to landfill
- Approved 13 new industry product stewardship schemes, ensuring more products are recycled
- Funded over 130 recycling projects through the Waste Minimisation Fund
- Funded a comprehensive work plan to progressively clean-up New Zealand's most contaminated sites
- Invested \$4m in new technology to recycle over 200 million plastic drink bottles a year into food-safe packaging and introduced national collection of soft plastic
- Banned plastic microbeads to safeguard our aquatic environment

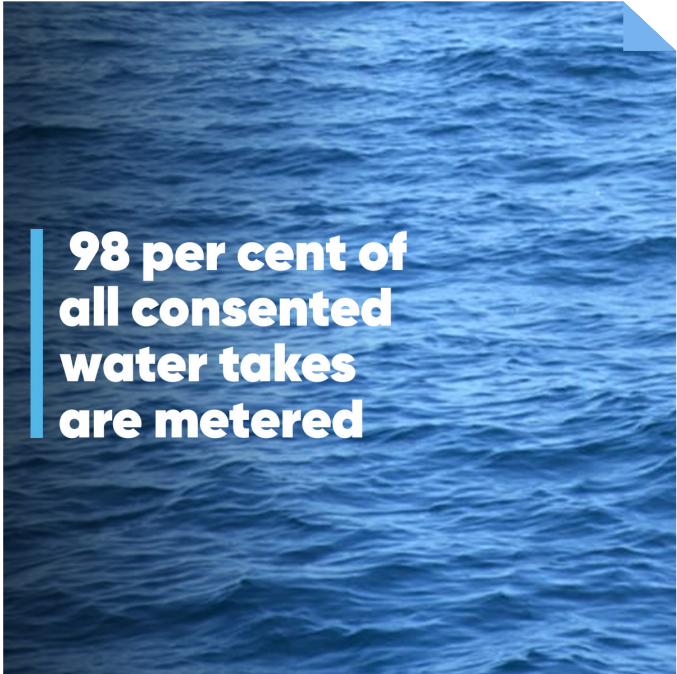
## Improving air quality

- Struck a careful balance between improving air quality and the impacts on household costs
- Halved the number of air quality standard breaches from 360 to 170 per year, saving 400 lives a year
- Toughened vehicle exhaust standards to reduce pollutions by 90 per cent

# National is...

## Improving monitoring & reporting

- Passed the Environmental Reporting Act, requiring robust, independent reporting on air, freshwater, land, marine, atmosphere and climate
- Improved the consistency of environmental data collected from councils on key issues, such as health of waterways and metered use of consented water takes



**98 per cent of  
all consented  
water takes  
are metered**

## Reforming resource management

- Amended the RMA to deliver simpler consenting, faster plan changes and better environmental management
- Introduced national planning standards to reduce complexity and cost
- New streamlined and collaborative planning processes to help councils respond to growth
- Introduced national consenting to ensure projects of national significance like the Waterview Tunnel and Transmission Gully are processed in a timely fashion
- Limited the right to be consulted on a consent to those parties immediately affected and removed the right of parties to lodge frivolous, vexatious or anti-competitive objections to consents
- Given councils discretion to waive the need for consent for minor activities or to shorten processes
- Made significant natural hazards a matter of national importance to allow councils to respond better
- Provided more generous compensation for homeowners affected by the Public Works Act
- Required councils to maintain adequate land zoned for new housing development in line with predicted population growth
- Clarified the existing requirements in the RMA for council engagement with iwi to assist both parties to meet their obligations



# What we will do next...

## Planning and development

- National will review existing urban planning legislation to assess the benefits of integrating the Local Government Act, Land Transport Act and Resource Management Act
- Provide greater central Government leadership over the provision of storm water, drinking water and wastewater infrastructure
- Introduce legislation similar to that adopted internationally to enable the establishment of Urban Development Authorities to facilitate redevelopment of existing urban areas

**"Helping our country build the infrastructure to support a growing economy."**

- Environment spokesperson  
Nick Smith



**90 per cent of rivers to be swimmable by 2040**

## Freshwater management

- National will work with regional councils and communities to deliver on our target for 90 per cent of rivers and lakes to be swimmable by 2040
- Implement practical regulations to ensure stock are excluded from waterways
- Improve the allocation of freshwater and introduce a system to allocate nutrient discharges to ensure the system is fair and equitable for all New Zealanders
- Implement national Best Practice Management Standards for our agricultural sectors

# What we will do next...

## Waste and contamination

- Continue to provide leadership to increase recycling and reduce harmful waste
- Set up a nationwide network for tyre recycling and provide funding assistance to implement disposal options
- Continue the clean-up of contaminated sites such as Calwell Slipway in Nelson and Kopeopeo Canal in Whakatāne
- Introduce tougher fines for illegal dumping
- Refresh the successful Keep New Zealand Beautiful and Be a Tidy Kiwi campaigns

## Resource management

- National will provide stronger direction through national standards to get consistent environmental and economic outcomes
- Deliver new National Environmental Standards for waste tyres, aquaculture and dam safety
- Align air quality standards with international trends while achieving an economic balance for home heating
- Develop new National Policy Statements on biodiversity protection and natural hazards

## Air quality

- Consult on changes to our air quality standards to align with international science based policy while balancing home heating needs
- Tighten fuel standards for petrol by July 2018 to reduce pollutants

## Marine environment

- National will advance world leading marine management through improved fisheries monitoring and integrated marine protection legislation
- Consult on changes to the Marine Protected Areas Act
- Work to resolve the commercial and Treaty issues that arose when we announced our intention to legislate for the Kermadec Ocean Sanctuary to be no-take which is necessary to ensure protection of this unique 620,000 km<sup>2</sup> area of ocean

# Don't put it all at risk

## The opposition have committed to:

- Introducing a water tax that unfairly discriminates between different types of users and will drive up prices
- Taxing our agricultural sector for livestock emissions when no other country in the world does
- Reversing our pragmatic RMA changes, increasing cost and delaying projects including the building of new affordable homes
- Undoing the collaborative work of all stakeholders who have participated in the Land and Water Forum and reverting back to sectoral conflict
- Politicising the environmental regulations controlling tools such as 1080, which the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment has stated is the only option available to save our threatened native birds from extinction
- Replacing our science-based environmental policy with political ideology
- Opposing the creation of the Kermadec Marine Sanctuary because they believe it impacts upon the property rights of fishing companies even when they don't fish in the area
- Damaging economic growth by creating mammal and/or marine sanctuaries to prohibit the development of resources like iron sands, oil and gas even when the environmental impacts have been assessed independently as minor