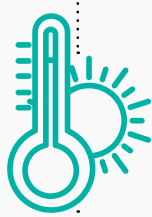


8 April



National direction on climate change

The Ministry for the Environment (MfE) released a [discussion document](#) setting out the proposed approach to greenhouse gases under the Resource Management Act. Greenhouse gases will be considered under the RMA from early next year, meaning that consent applicants will be required to address the greenhouse gases produced by their activities (and councils will be required to assess those greenhouse gas emissions).

29 July



Exposure draft of the Natural and Built Environments Act

The Government released an [exposure draft](#) of the Natural and Built Environments Act. This contained the purpose and principles provisions of the new legislation. It set out a new framework moving away from a focus on effects-based management to a system of environmental outcomes and limits. The [Environment Select Committee's inquiry](#) received over 3,000 submissions.

1 September



Wetlands U-turn

MfE announced a proposal to backtrack on the rules relating to development in and around wetlands. The proposal sought feedback on a pathway for infrastructure and other urban development through the prohibited activity status attached to development around wetlands as well as clarification to the definition of wetland.

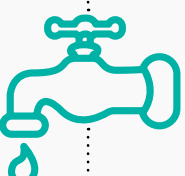
19 October



New Bill introduced to tackle housing crisis in New Zealand

Significant reform to require councils to better provide for intensification, jointly announced by the Government and National, was introduced. The Bill proposed new rules to enable medium density residential development. Those new rules together with the provisions of the National Policy Statement on Urban Development will be incorporated via an intensification streamlined planning process (ISPP). The Bill has now received royal assent. See our update on this [here](#).

28 October



Three Waters Reform is proceeding

[Minister Nanaia Mahuta confirmed](#) that the Government will push on to create four publicly-owned water entities and that the three waters reforms will be mandatory for all councils. An exposure draft of the Water Services Act has now been released for feedback from a three waters working group.

2 November



Fast-track consenting process now extended

The [fast-track consenting process](#) under the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020 was extended on 2 November 2021 to give applicants until 8 July 2023 to apply for projects under this simplified and streamlined consenting route. A number of parties have already used the fast-track process to consent large projects that contribute to New Zealand's economic recovery.

On the horizon for the new year...

Resource Management Reform

The big-ticket item for next year is the release of the Natural and Built Environments Bill and the Strategic Planning Bill. These are expected to be introduced to the House in June. This will mark the future of resource management and environmental law in New Zealand.

Medium Density Housing Changes

2022 will be a big year for urban development with a range of councils notifying plan changes to deliver on the medium density housing requirements through ISPPs.

Further opportunities for getting on the fast-track

With the success of the fast-track consenting pathway this year, and its recent extension until July 2023, we expect many more applicants will make the most of this favourable process. So far, there have been a range of applications for housing, infrastructure and commercial uses showing the adaptability of this process.

Three Waters reorganisation

2022 will be critical for Three Waters Reform, with the legislation to establish the four Water Services Entities expected to be introduced to the House early next year.

Climate change

The Government will release the Emissions Reduction Plan in May 2022. This will be the policy bedrock for emissions reductions in New Zealand and will flow through to the Resource Management Act by way of legislative changes due to come into effect early next year.

Any questions? Talk to one of our experts



Allison Arthur-Young

+64 (09) 367 8224

allison.arthur-young@russellmcveagh.com



Daniel Minhinnick

+64 (09) 367 8714

daniel.minhinnick@russellmcveagh.com



Simon Pilkinton

+64 (09) 367 8374

simon.pilkinton@russellmcveagh.com



Kristen Gunnell

+64 (09) 367 8295

kristen.gunnell@russellmcveagh.com



Lauren Rapley

+64 (09) 367 8885

lauren.rapley@russellmcveagh.com



Patrick Senior

+64 (09) 367 8130

patrick.senior@russellmcveagh.com