

Notes for Individual Submissions on the Crown Minerals Amendment Bill

Due at 11.59pm on Tuesday, 01 October 2024

Make your submission [here](#)

Read the proposed amendments [here](#)

Below are resources to help you create your own brief submission:

- [Suggestions from Jessica Palairet from Lawyers for Climate Action NZ + Webinar Recording](#)
- [Submission Template from Sophie Handford of the Kapiti Coast District Council](#)
- [Note from The Environment and Conservation Organisations \(ECO\)](#)
- [Note from Greenpeace](#)
- [Note and submission from Robert McLachlan \(Massey Uni\)](#)
- [Short response to the bill amendment from WWF](#)

Suggestions from Jessica Palairet - Lawyers for Climate Action NZ

Our duty to meet international legal obligations could be at risk: The IPCC and the UN have quite clearly said, and given reputable evidence, that extracting more resources is incompatible with what is required to meet our Paris Agreement Target requirements and to avoid the work of the climate crisis. This Bill is the opposite of what we need to be doing to meet these international requirements. We have international legal obligations, and under the Climate Change Response Act, the NZ Minister for Climate Change has a duty to ensure that each emissions budget is met. Decisions such as those suggested in this bill would be inconsistent with our domestic emissions budget and 2050 targets.

NZ could be subject to European trade sanctions: We have signed the European Union Free Trade Agreement which has a provision that states that any nation could be subject to trade sanctions if not seen to be meeting its obligations under the Paris Agreement.

Submission Template from Sophie Handford of Kapiti Coast District Council

Crown Minerals Amendment Bill

Feel free to use this to guide what you submit, but also personalise it based on your whakaaro and feelings on the issue.

To the Economic Development, Science and Innovation Committee,

I am *insert your name and background here*. Ngā mihi for the opportunity to submit on the Crown Minerals Amendment Bill. I am writing to strongly oppose this bill, as it represents a significant step backward in Aotearoa's commitment to addressing the climate crisis and securing a sustainable future for all.

Insert why action on the climate crisis is important to you

Opposition to Petroleum Exploration Expansion

The proposal to reverse the 2018 ban on new petroleum exploration permits outside onshore Taranaki is both short-sighted and dangerous. This move disregards the scientific consensus on climate change, which unequivocally shows that continued fossil fuel exploration and extraction are incompatible with the urgent need to limit global warming to 1.5°C. Expanding petroleum exploration undermines New Zealand's commitments under the Paris Agreement and betrays the leadership we have previously shown on the international stage. Petroleum is not a "transition fuel" in the current context of rapid renewable energy development. Investment in fossil fuel infrastructure will lock us into a high-emissions future, delaying the shift to genuinely clean, renewable energy sources. Gas and oil are not bridges to the future—they are barriers to the rapid decarbonisation we desperately need.

Failure to Address the Climate Crisis

The return of the Act's purpose statement to "promote prospecting for, exploration for, and mining of Crown-owned minerals for the benefit of New Zealand" is a regressive step that prioritises short-term economic gain over long-term sustainability. This approach is outdated and does not reflect the reality of the climate crisis we are facing today. We cannot afford to continue down this path of fossil fuel dependency. Instead, we must promote a vision for New Zealand's future that embraces green innovation, renewable energy, and a circular economy.

Responsibility to Future Generations and the Pacific

We have a moral obligation to protect the environment, not only for ourselves but also for future generations and our Pacific neighbours, who are already experiencing the severe impacts of climate change. As a Pacific nation, our actions have far-reaching consequences for the region. Rising sea levels, extreme weather events, and environmental degradation are not abstract issues—they are real threats that are affecting people's lives today. We have a duty to stand in solidarity with the Pacific and be a leader in climate action, not a contributor to the problem.

Weakening the Decommissioning Regime

Providing greater flexibility to the decommissioning regime risks leaving New Zealand taxpayers to foot the bill for the environmental clean-up of fossil fuel infrastructure. Companies that profit from exploiting our natural resources should be held fully accountable for their decommissioning obligations. Weakening

these provisions only serves to protect corporate interests at the expense of the environment and future generations.

Misaligned Priorities: Investor Confidence Over Climate Action

The focus on improving investor confidence in the New Zealand petroleum sector sends the wrong signal. The priority should be on investing in a just transition to a low-carbon economy, not propping up industries that contribute to climate instability. Supporting industries that harm the environment may yield short-term financial benefits, but it undermines the long-term resilience of New Zealand's economy. Investor confidence should be built on sustainable, future-focused sectors such as renewable energy, green technology, and sustainable agriculture.

Conclusion

This Bill must be stopped. It is the opposite of climate leadership, ignores our responsibility to future generations, and undermines our relationships with our Pacific neighbours. Instead of doubling down on fossil fuels, New Zealand should be investing in a future that is resilient, sustainable, and just. We are already seeing the impacts of climate change today—more frequent and severe storms, rising sea levels, and environmental degradation. To pass this Bill is to willingly ignore these warnings, choosing profit over people and planet.

I urge the Committee to reject the Crown Minerals Amendment Bill and instead support policies that align with a future free from fossil fuels and grounded in sustainability, equity, and responsibility; a future we can feel proud of.

Ngā manaakitanga,

Insert your name here

Note from The Environment and Conservation Organisations (ECO)

Crown Minerals Bill is environmentally regressive, risks NZ's fiscal future

The Crown Minerals Bill will put at risk the nation's energy transition and future by taking us back to fossil fuels by reopening exploration for oil and gas and promoting mining.

The Bill was introduced to Parliament today, Wednesday 25 September 2024.

ECO's Cath Wallace said climate change, our global commitments and our obligations to future generations mean that this Bill should be rejected.

The reason for not promoting fossil fuels is precisely because they put at risk New Zealand's and the planet's future. If fossil fuel explorers ever do find more gas or oil, it would take well over a decade to bring this to market.

Continuing fossil fuel supply will also crowd out renewable energy and innovation. Any investment in fossil fuels will reinforce misallocation of investment and cause more stranded assets. There will be too little investment in renewable energy and batteries to establish a resilient electricity system.

The Bill ignores the flaws in the electricity market which have prevented the construction of many hundreds of megawatts of renewable energy projects that have already been consented under the Resource Management Act.

There is also a huge risk to New Zealand as a nation from Resources Minister Shane Jones who seems to be drunk on his own rhetoric. In declaring that miners are welcome, he misleads investors.

Prime Minister Luxon and Finance Minister Willis should both publicly reject this Bill and specifically rule out expectations for exploration and mining of fossil fuels; and minerals activity on, in or under conservation land or other sensitive environments.

They should also ensure that there is no scope for Jones' rhetoric to create expectations such that would-be miners can sue New Zealand if permits are denied.

This Bill takes us backwards, not forwards. It should be withdrawn. That would put New Zealand first, not New Zealand last.

"This Bill has been introduced in the same week that world leaders at the UN are calling for transitioning away from fossil fuels and greater investment in renewable energy to tackle climate change."¹

"The Bill contains many different provisions which should not be accepted. These include:

- large scale "hobby" gold mining in waterways and coastal areas covering up to 50 hectares: which is clearly not small-scale;
- Allowing mineral activity in conservation land in Taranaki;
- Weakening the 2021 obligations on permit holders to decommission and clean-up petroleum mining sites;
- Extending the secrecy provisions in the Act to 21 years;
- Making the Minister an advocate for the mining Industry when actually the government's role is regulation and management;
- Provisions for establishing Government Policy Statements with no public process or engagement process contrary to good public practice.";

"The Government parties have restricted the report-back date to 31 October 2024. This would allow at most 2 weeks for public submissions. That is grossly undemocratic and inadequate given the complexity of the issues raised in the Bill.

These issues include the impact of the Bill on: our climate change obligations, risks to the environment, disruption of existing businesses and communities, and risks to the public purse.

Select Committee consideration is supposed to take 6 months including public submissions, consideration of evidence and argument, advice and responses from officials, deliberations, and the report back."

For further information, contact Cath Wallace, or Barry Weeber (043847545)

ECO has had a long involvement in mining issues and has pressed for the need for legislation that protects biodiversity, phases out fossil fuels, and recognises alternative sources of minerals including recycling.

1. UN Summit for the Future, Pact for the Future, Global Digital Compact, and Declaration on Future Generations. September 2024.

The statement recognises:

“Climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time, with adverse impacts that are disproportionately felt by developing countries, especially those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. We commit to accelerate meeting our obligations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement.”

“Further recognize the need for deep, rapid and sustained reductions in greenhouse gas emissions in line with 1.5 degrees Celsius pathways and call on parties to contribute to the following global efforts, in a nationally determined manner, taking into account the Paris Agreement and their different national circumstances, pathways and approaches: tripling renewable energy capacity globally and doubling the global average annual rate of energy efficiency improvements by 2030; accelerating efforts towards the phase-down of unabated coal power; accelerating efforts globally towards net zero emission energy systems, utilizing zero- and low-carbon fuels well before or by around mid-century; transitioning away from fossil fuels in energy systems, in a just, orderly and equitable manner, accelerating action in this critical decade, so as to achieve net zero by 2050 in keeping with the science;” etc.

Nga mihi,

Barry Webber, Chairperson

Environment and Conservation Organisations of Aotearoa, New Zealand Inc.

Note from Greenpeace on Crown Minerals Amendment Bill

Luxon Govt shows total disregard for public concerns about climate change. By: Russel Norman; [link](#).

Showing a profound disregard for the people of New Zealand, the Government has allowed only five days for the public to make submissions on the Government’s climate-denying law to restart oil and gas exploration.

The Crown Minerals Amendment Bill was only introduced into Parliament on Tuesday, September 24. Today, the chair of the Economic Development Select Committee decided the closing date for public submissions is Tuesday night October 1st. The Bill aims to restart offshore oil and gas exploration and weaken the requirement for oil companies to pay for the clean-up after they finish work.

Greenpeace Aotearoa executive director Russel Norman says, “The Government has already shown complete disregard for climate science in proposing to restart oil and gas exploration.

“The decision to allow only five days for public submissions on the bill, three working days, shows they also have complete disregard for the people of New Zealand who care about climate change.

“Regardless of whether this climate denying bill passes through Parliament, the Government is dreaming if they think oil and gas exploration will restart. The people of New Zealand mobilised in their tens of thousands to end oil and gas exploration and they will again.

“Whatever Chris Luxon might think, the future of Aotearoa is in clean energy not climate destroying fossil fuels.”

Over thirty thousand people have signed on to an [‘open letter of resistance’](#) to the oil industry published by Greenpeace.