

Cluster Overview

Natural Resources Sector

The Natural Resources Sector is made up of three core agencies: Department of Conservation, the Ministry for the Environment, and the Ministry for Primary Industries.

Natural Resources Sector Ministers

Ministers whose core agencies are in the Natural Resources Sector are part of the Natural Resources Sector Ministers grouping. Collectively, Natural Resources Sector Ministers contribute to setting the direction for the whole natural resources system, with access to the levers of the three Natural Resource Sector agencies.

Natural Resources Cluster

The previous Government established two clusters in the lead up to Budget 2022 as part of the work programme to modernise New Zealand's public finance system. The Natural Resources Cluster covers all aspects of the natural environment. The Cluster includes the Ministerial portfolios and Votes associated with Department of Conservation, the Ministry for the Environment, and the Ministry for Primary Industries.

These three Cluster agencies have complementary and separate roles in supporting the management, use, protection and enjoyment of our natural capital. The agencies also have critical stewardship and regulatory roles and responsibilities, and work together to proactively address strategic challenges and opportunities that will impact New Zealand.

Cluster Delegations

Cluster Ministers have been delegated authority, agreed by Cabinet, to approve fiscally neutral changes for the retention and use of departmental underspends up to a prescribed limit; reprioritisation of departmental operating funding; and shifting the timing of operating baseline and general contingency funding.

Estimates Volumes

The Natural Resource Cluster Votes are grouped together in the Natural Resources sector Estimates Volume immediately after this cluster overview. These include Vote Agriculture, Biosecurity, Fisheries and Food Safety; Vote Conservation; Vote Environment; and Vote Forestry. They are followed by non-cluster but related Votes (Vote Lands and Vote Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment).

Existing Vote and appropriation structures have not changed and accountabilities for appropriations and delivery still sit with the relevant appropriation Ministers and agencies.

How the Cluster will Monitor and Report on Performance

Cluster agencies will report on the initiatives they are delivering to support the Cluster priorities in their 2024/2025 Annual Reports.

Future performance reporting will need to align with the current Government's priorities for the Natural Resources Sector. As the Natural Resource Cluster approach is adapted to better fit the current environment, a key consideration will be ensuring the continuation of improved monitoring and reporting for the Natural Resources Cluster.