



**Hon David Parker**  
Minister for the Environment

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## Funding for implementation of RMA reform

Budget 2021 provides significant funding for the implementation of the comprehensive reform of the resource management system that will enhance housing supply and economic development while protecting the environment.

Environment Minister David Parker said the reform is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to establish a resource management system that is fit for purpose.

“We are putting in place a system that protects and provides for the wellbeing of future generations. This comes at a crucial time for our economy as we recover from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic,” David Parker said.

“The success of the new system and its ability to hit the ground running depends not just on new legislation but proper implementation.

“The Government is investing \$131.8 million through Vote Environment in the design, enactment, transition, and initial implementation of the reforms through to mid-2024.

“This strong commitment to funding the reforms will allow them to be delivered effectively, something that did not happen when the original Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) was implemented.

“After the 1991 Act was passed the Environment Court was not funded properly, there was no standard formats for plans and the use of national direction, such as a national policy statement on freshwater, was too little too late.”

David Parker said there was broad consensus that the RMA had not adequately protected the environment or enabled development where needed.

“It takes too long, costs too much and has not adequately protected the environment.

“Ecosystems have been degraded, biodiversity has been lost, and the response to climate change challenges has been slow. It has also under-delivered for our urban areas. Our housing is now amongst the least affordable in the OECD.”

In 2019 the Government commissioned an expert review of the resource management system and the reforms are based on the Panel’s recommendations.

The Resource Management Act will be repealed and replaced by three new pieces of legislation. These are the Natural and Built Environments Act (NBA), Strategic Planning Act (SPA) and Climate Adaptation Act (CAA). The CAA is subject to a separate budget process.

“These new laws will create a faster, simpler way of protecting the natural environment, enabling development and helping improve housing supply while preserving valuable legal precedent such as the 2014 King Salmon decision, which confirmed the importance of maintaining environmental bottom lines.

“They will provide a more effective role for Māori in the system and reduce costs and time by simplifying planning and improving our response to the effects of climate change,” David Parker said.

The Government is working with local government to ensure there is no unnecessary disruption during the transition to the new system.

More information is available on the Ministry for the Environment’s website (<https://www.mfe.govt.nz/rma/resource-management-system>).

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