

Pathways to resilience: Future-proofing Crown land stewardship

Consultation on the topic and scope of Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand's Long-Term Insights Briefing 2025

Consultation period: 30 September to 27 October 2024

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Executive summary

Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand is responsible for managing public land comprising about 8 per cent of New Zealand's land area. Our management of this land supports a range of public and private uses, including farming, forestry, tourism and housing. Looking after this land will become more challenging in coming years as a result of climate change, the rapid pace technological change, and increasing competition between alternative land uses.

Proposed topic

We propose that the topic of our 2025 long-term insights briefing be: 'Pathways to resilience: Future-proofing Crown land stewardship'. This will investigate how Toitū Te Whenua can best position itself as a responsible steward of Crown land in an increasingly complex and uncertain environment.

We have selected this topic in our capacity as the steward of significant public land assets.

Proposed scope

The briefing could:

1. describe the land Toitū Te Whenua manages and its public value, including:
 - a. what we administer, and how we administer it
 - b. the tangible and intangible benefits of the land to our economy, society and environment
2. examine future opportunities and threats, including:
 - a. the key global and national trends, drivers and events that will impact on our Crown land over the next 10 years
 - b. the potential opportunities for increasing the value of Crown land and improving resilience
 - c. the threats that will need to be mitigated
 - d. the role technology and data could play in optimising land use and improving resilience
3. identify the key enabling factors which would help to future-proof Toitū Te Whenua's approach to land stewardship by addressing the opportunities and threats outlined.

Consultation questions

We'd like to know what you think

Toitū Te Whenua wants to hear from anyone interested in the future of how Crown land is managed. This is a great opportunity for you to share your thoughts on what challenges and opportunities might lie ahead, and how we could respond.

Your feedback will help shape the 2025 long-term insights briefing.

Please answer the following questions:

1. Is our proposed topic valuable and worth exploring?
2. Is the scope useful, relevant and clearly defined?
3. Are there any additional global or national trends that we should consider?
4. Are there any topics Toitū Te Whenua should consider for future briefings?
5. Is there anything else you would like to share with us on this subject?

How to send us your feedback

Submissions must be lodged by 5pm on Thursday 31 October 2024, and can be:

- completed online at <http://www.linz.govt.nz/LTIB>
- emailed to LTIB@linz.govt.nz
- posted to LTIB Consultation, PO Box 10420, Wellington 6143.

How we manage your personal information

Any submission you make will become public information, and anyone can ask for a copy of all submissions under the Official Information Act 1982.

We do not intend to identify or name individuals in publications about this consultation but might name groups or organisations.

If you think there are grounds for withholding specific information in your submission, please let us know. Possible reasons include the information being commercially sensitive or personal. Any decision made to withhold information can be reviewed by the Ombudsman, who may require the information to be released.

If you want to know more about the Official Information Act 1982 and the Privacy Act 2020, visit the websites of the Ombudsman and the Privacy Commissioner.

Our role in Crown land ownership

Toitū Te Whenua is the steward of significant public land assets

Toitū Te Whenua is the agency responsible for the Crown's residual interest in land. In this role, we hold and manage all Crown land not otherwise required by any other Crown agency (Table 1). This currently comprises around 1.7 million hectares of New Zealand's 26.8 million hectares, about 8 percent of New Zealand's land area.

This land is made up of around 8,200 properties supporting a wide range of uses including farming, forestry, tourism, and housing.

Table 1: Categories of land Toitū Te Whenua manages

Crown pastoral land	1.2 million hectares of Crown pastoral land leases held and managed under the Crown Pastoral Land Act 1998 and the Land Act 1948. Includes some of New Zealand's most iconic landscapes.
Crown land (Land Act)	Lakebeds, riverbeds and other land where ownership sits with the Crown. Administered by the Commissioner of Crown Lands under the Land Act 1948.
Other Crown-owned land	Land held by the Crown under a range of legislation. Includes former public works land, railway land, Crown forest licensed land, soil conservation reserves, state coal reserves and coastal reclamations.
Treaty Settlements Landbank land	A diverse portfolio of land available for Treaty settlements including forests, farms, and residential and commercial properties.

Some of the properties we manage were held by other parts of the Crown to deliver public services and then transferred to us following government decisions. This includes closed schools, hospitals and correctional facilities.

Our day-to-day management involves acquisition, property management, approving public use of land, maintenance and selling of Crown land. It also includes reducing risks to the Crown estate, such as protecting New Zealand's unique biodiversity from introduced pests. Supporting the Crown to meet its Treaty obligations, including Treaty claim settlement obligations, is also a key part of our land management.

A critical aspect of our land stewardship role involves adopting a forward-looking perspective which considers the implications of current trends, risks and opportunities.

About long-term insights briefings

Toitū Te Whenua must publish a long-term insights briefing every three years

The Public Service Act 2020 requires government departments to create a long-term insight briefing at least once every three years (see [Schedule 6, Clauses 8 and 9 of the Public Service Act 2020](#)).

This is a legal duty for department chief executives, independent of ministers. These briefings are different from the advice given to ministers and from the accountability and planning reports prepared for Parliament.

The purpose of long-term insights briefings is to provide the public with information about the medium- and long-term trends, risks and opportunities facing Aotearoa New Zealand and potential options for responding to them. Once finalised, long-term insight briefings must be presented to Parliament.

Departments choose the topics for these briefings. Chief executives must consult with the public on both the proposed topic and the draft version of their briefing.

To find out more about long-term insights briefings under the Public Services Act 2020 and see what other agencies have released:

- [Long-term insights briefings](#)
- [List of released consultations on proposed long-term insights briefing topics](#)

Proposed topic and scope of our 2025 briefing

What we are proposing

The proposed topic for our 2025 long-term insights briefing is: 'Pathways to resilience: Future-proofing Crown land stewardship'. This briefing aims to investigate ways that Toitū Te Whenua can better conduct its role as a steward of its land assets, embracing a forward-thinking approach to sustainable and resilient management.

Crown land stewardship refers to the responsible management and use of Crown land assets over the medium- to long-term. This includes identifying where land can be utilised most effectively to deliver government priorities, outcomes for Māori, and benefits to all New Zealanders.

A strategically resilient approach to land stewardship is one which is fiscally sustainable, environmentally sustainable, socially acceptable, legally robust and upholds the Crown's Treaty obligations. Above all, it must be flexible enough to endure across generations despite changing external conditions. To achieve this flexibility and endurance, Toitū Te Whenua will need to:

1. anticipate changes in its operating environment
2. develop and test its strategic plans in with these changes in mind
3. allocate its resources so that it can achieve its statutory obligations and strategic intentions across multiple potential futures.

Why we are proposing this topic

Our world is changing, with global drivers such as climate change, technology and economic uncertainty causing disruption both nationally and internationally.

- Climate change remains a pressing global issue, with significant impacts on land use and management. Most climate change modelling scenarios indicate New Zealand will experience on average drier, hotter summers in the east, heavier rainfall in the west, and generally more extreme weather events. These changes impact urban and rural areas, making communities more prone to inundation and some coastal communities more prone to coastal erosion, affect water resources, native ecosystems, and agricultural productivity, and increase wildfire risk. Adaptive strategies will be needed to mitigate adverse effects and promote resilience.
- Land use activities in core sectors of the economy including tourism, construction, food production, transport and energy generation all have environmental impacts, and understanding and reducing these presents both challenges and

opportunities. New Zealand has potential to leverage its natural resources and history of innovation to lead in these areas.

- Advances in technology, including AI and digitalisation, are reshaping land management and regulatory practices. These technologies can improve data collection, analysis, and decision-making processes, enabling more efficient and effective land-use strategies.
- In New Zealand, our growing population means increasing tension between competing uses of land, including housing, roading and energy infrastructure, and the preservation of productive land for farming and forestry. Where urban growth necessitates more intensive land-management practices, this may degrade soil health and broader environmental quality.

This uncertainty and complexity will continue to have an impact on the land and the way we look after it. Toitū Te Whenua will need to navigate this to protect the public assets in its care and deliver on its strategic goals.

What our briefing could cover

We propose that our briefing examine three areas:

1. **Examine our current state:** We will seek to improve our understanding of the land we currently manage, including describing the current users and uses of the Crown land we manage. This will identify the public benefits currently associated with the land, and its current constraints and limitations.
2. **Explore key opportunities and threats over the next decade and beyond:** We will work with stakeholders to develop future scenarios based on variables such as climate change and environmental trajectories, population growth, economic trends and technological advancements. We will create detailed narratives for each scenario, exploring how Crown land use and value might evolve.
3. **Identify opportunities for improvement:** Using the scenarios, we will explore opportunities to future-proof our stewardship by identifying key enabling factors that will allow Toitū Te Whenua to succeed across multiple possible futures. Examples of possible enabling factors we could explore are set out in Table 2.

Table 2: Examples of potential enabling factors we could explore.

Having good data and strategic intelligence	Reliable data is the cornerstone of resilience, allowing Toitū Te Whenua to anticipate changes and adapt proactively. By leveraging advanced data analytics and GIS, Toitū Te Whenua can make informed decisions that optimise land use, monitor environmental impacts, and predict future challenges.
Putting in place new revenue-	Sustainable stewardship of Crown land requires a financial model that supports long-term investment and innovation. Exploring and implementing new

generating sources	revenue-generating sources will be important to this goal and could include diversifying income streams.
Adopting sustainable land management practices	Sustainable land practices will be important for the long-term health of Crown land. This could include land-management techniques that protect soil health, enhance biodiversity, and reduce carbon emissions. Integrating Māori knowledge and values into land management is increasingly recognised as crucial for sustainable development. This emphasises the cultural and spiritual significance of land, promoting stewardship that respects both ecological health and indigenous heritage.
Resilience planning and climate mitigation	Climate change is a significant challenge for long-term land management, and we will need to look at resilience planning and climate mitigation strategies. This could involve developing climate adaptation plans and promoting land uses that contribute to carbon sequestration.
Agile regulatory and policy framework	A forward-thinking investment approach will require an agile regulatory and policy framework that can respond to emerging challenges and opportunities. For us, this could include streamlining land acquisition, leasing and disposal processes, enabling faster decision-making and fostering collaboration across government agencies.
Using new technologies	Cutting-edge technologies can revolutionise the way we manage Crown land. This could include enhanced satellite-based positioning systems (SouthPAN), LiDAR, drone surveillance, remote sensing, IoT and AI. These tools can help with monitoring and improve data accuracy.

The briefing will conclude by identifying policy options, next steps to respond to any gaps, and potential ways to implement or embed this work into existing Toitū Te Whenua workplans.

Thank you for your contribution

Thank you for taking the time to consider our proposal. We value your feedback and will use this to shape the final topic and scope of our long-term insights briefing. We will publish a summary of the feedback we receive later this year.

Feedback will be published on the Toitū Te Whenua website. This reflects our commitment to maintaining transparency and accountability throughout the long-term insights briefing process.