



30 May 2025

Ref: OIAD-5177 and OIAD-5188

Tēnā koe 

We refer to your requests to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) and the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI), who each transferred the request they had received to the Department of Conservation for response, on 2 May 2025 and 6 May 2025 respectively.

In your request to MFAT (MFAT request), you asked for:

*“All advice, representations and reports New Zealand has made to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) on its progress towards achieving 30% protection of the marine environment by 2030 (as stipulated in Target 3 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework).”*

Meanwhile, your request to MPI (MPI request) sought:

*“The New Zealand Government's official position in response to Seafood New Zealand's recent claim that 30% of New Zealand's ocean is already designated as marine protected areas (MPAs).*

*Does Fisheries New Zealand consider New Zealand has already met its commitment to protect 30% of the marine environment by 2030 (Target 3 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework)?”*

We have considered your requests under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

Your requests were transferred to the Department as we are the agency responsible for reporting on New Zealand's contribution to the global targets, including the one to which your requests refer.

Before proceeding to the Department's responses to your two requests, please note that a distinction under the OIA exists between a request for information already known to and held by an agency (official information); and a request to an agency to form an opinion or provide an explanation or comment and thus create new information to answer a request (not official information).

There is no obligation on an agency, such as the Department, to form an opinion, provide an official position, or create information to answer a request or question - or respond to commentary. Consequently, the Department's responses will generally not respond to any perspective or view espoused but be specific to fact only.

Our responses, to your two requests, are set out below.

### **General context**

New Zealand remains committed to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) and its component goals and targets, including achieving 30% protection of land and of oceans globally by 2030.

The global target to protect 30% of terrestrial and inland water areas, and of marine and coastal areas, as part of the GBF is global in nature. It does not require New Zealand, or any one Party to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), to protect 30% of its domestic land and marine environment.

The percentage is just one element of the global target. There are also several qualitative elements. It is not just about how much we protect, but where and how.

New Zealand submitted its national targets to contribute to implementation of the GBF. These are based on Te Mana o te Taiao – Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy 2020 (ANZBS), with some adjustment to reflect this Government's priorities. The targets cover the sustainable management of natural resources, nature-based solutions to climate change, the protection and restoration of ecosystems and species, and empowering iwi, hapū and whānau to exercise rangatiratanga and kaitiaki.

### **MFAT request**

New Zealand has not yet provided any advice, representations or reports to the CBD specifically on progress towards achieving the GBF global targets. Provision of this information is thus refused, per section 18(e) of the OIA, as it does not yet exist.

New Zealand is due to report on progress towards our national targets and the global goals in 2026 using the monitoring indicators of the GBF.

In implementing the GBF, New Zealand has choices that will provide a meaningful contribution to the GBF, while ensuring they are feasible and reflect New Zealand's priorities.

### **MPI request**

There is no official position in response to the specific claim noted in your request.

We note there are a range of databases and reports globally that apply differing methodologies and datasets to assess protected area coverage and differences in the base maps used to measure terrestrial and marine area of a country or territory.

Of New Zealand's marine environment:

- 0.4% is in Type 1 marine protected areas (MPAs) (highly protected marine reserves);
- 0.1% is in Type 2 MPAs (partially protected areas);
- 27.9% is protected from fishing impacts on the seabed and an additional 2% is over seamounts protected from trawling;

- 1.1% is in marine mammal sanctuaries;
- other protection measures are also in place.

New Zealand has not adopted the 30% by 2030 global target for protection of its land and marine environments at a national level. It has also not formally assessed the extent to which New Zealand's current protection measures contribute to elements of the global target.

As noted above, the next national reports to the CBD are due in 2026.

While responsible for reporting on New Zealand's contribution to the global targets, we note that the percentage is just one element of the global target. The target is also broader than protected areas. It can include, for example, other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) and indigenous and traditional territories (where these are protected areas or OECMs).

You are entitled to seek an investigation and review of my decisions by writing to an Ombudsman as provided by section 28(3) of the OIA.

Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) may be published on the Department's website.

If you would like to discuss this response, please contact me by email to [abell@doc.govt.nz](mailto:abell@doc.govt.nz).

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'ABell', with a stylized, cursive script.

Angela Bell  
Acting Director Policy  
Department of Conservation | *Te Papa Atawhai*