



# Cabinet Economic Policy Committee

## Minute of Decision

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### Fish and Game Governance and Organisational Improvements Amendment Bill: Policy Approvals

**Portfolio**                      **Hunting and Fishing**

On 14 May 2025, following reference from Cabinet, the Cabinet Economic Policy Committee:

- 1        **noted** that Fish and Game New Zealand (Fish and Game) have a statutory role for the management of recreational sports fish and game bird species;
- 2        **noted** that the Minister for Hunting and Fishing intends to progress legislative change to support Fish and Game to be a more trusted, accountable, and cohesive organisation that provides value for money for its licence holders;
- 3        **noted** that legislative changes will contribute towards tackling the cost-of-living challenges and support tourism and economic activity in New Zealand's regions;
- 4        **agreed** to create a stand-alone Fish and Game Act, similar to the Game Animal Council Act 2013, to raise the profile of the organisation, noting that the Department of Conservation will work with the Legislation Design and Advisory Committee on this, and any other matter contained in the paper under ECO-25-SUB-0063;
- 5        **agreed** to the package of proposals to be drafted into legislation, as set out in Appendix One to the paper under ECO-25-SUB-0063, that improve Fish and Game's efficiency and effectiveness and value-for-money for licence holders, with the overall intention to:
  - 5.1        maintain regional Fish and Game council decision-making over local matters, which is the cornerstone of the organisation, by focusing local knowledge and resource on improving hunting and fishing opportunities for their region;
  - 5.2        no longer require individual regional Fish and Game councils to spend time on some administrative activities, where they are more effectively done by the National Council;
  - 5.3        strengthen the leadership role of the National Council to set clear, coherent direction, collect the licence fee, and disperse it so it better supports the core functions of the organisation, including getting funds to where they are needed to support angler and hunter activity;
  - 5.4        improve the "user pays, user says" system and how Fish and Game make decisions, including how it considers non-hunting and fishing interests in decision-making;

- 5.5 strengthen checks and balances to improve accountabilities and transparency and provide adequate backstops so that the responsible Minister can intervene as necessary in exceptional circumstances;
- 5.6 more generally modernise the organisation in line with other entities to support further efficiencies and effectiveness;
- 6 **agreed** that court proceedings, other than enforcing offences, may only be filed by regional Fish and Game councils with the authorisation of the National Council (or the responsible Minister as appropriate);
- 7 **invited** the Minister for Hunting and Fishing to issue drafting instructions to the Parliamentary Counsel Office to give effect to the proposals in Appendix One;
- 8 **authorised** the Minister for Hunting and Fishing to approve other minor and technical changes as necessary, within the overall policy intent described in the paper under ECO-25-SUB-0063;
- 9 **noted** that the Fish and Game Governance and Organisational Improvements Amendment Bill holds a category 5 priority on the 2025 Legislation Programme (to proceed to select committee by the end of 2025).

Rachel Clarke  
Committee Secretary

*Secretary's note: This minute replaces ECO-25-MIN-0063.*

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**Present:**

Rt Hon Winston Peters  
Hon David Seymour  
Hon Nicola Willis (Chair)  
Hon Chris Bishop  
Hon Simeon Brown  
Hon Brooke van Velden  
Hon Shane Jones  
Hon Paul Goldsmith  
Hon Louise Upston  
Hon Tama Potaka  
Hon Simon Watts  
Hon Chris Penk  
Hon Penny Simmonds  
Hon Andrew Hoggard  
Hon Nicola Grigg  
Hon Scott Simpson  
Hon Mark Patterson  
Hon James Meager  
Simon Court MP

**Officials present from:**

Office of the Prime Minister  
Office of Hon Chris Bishop  
Office of Hon James Meager  
Officials Committee for ECO