Election 2026: your environmental policy snapshot

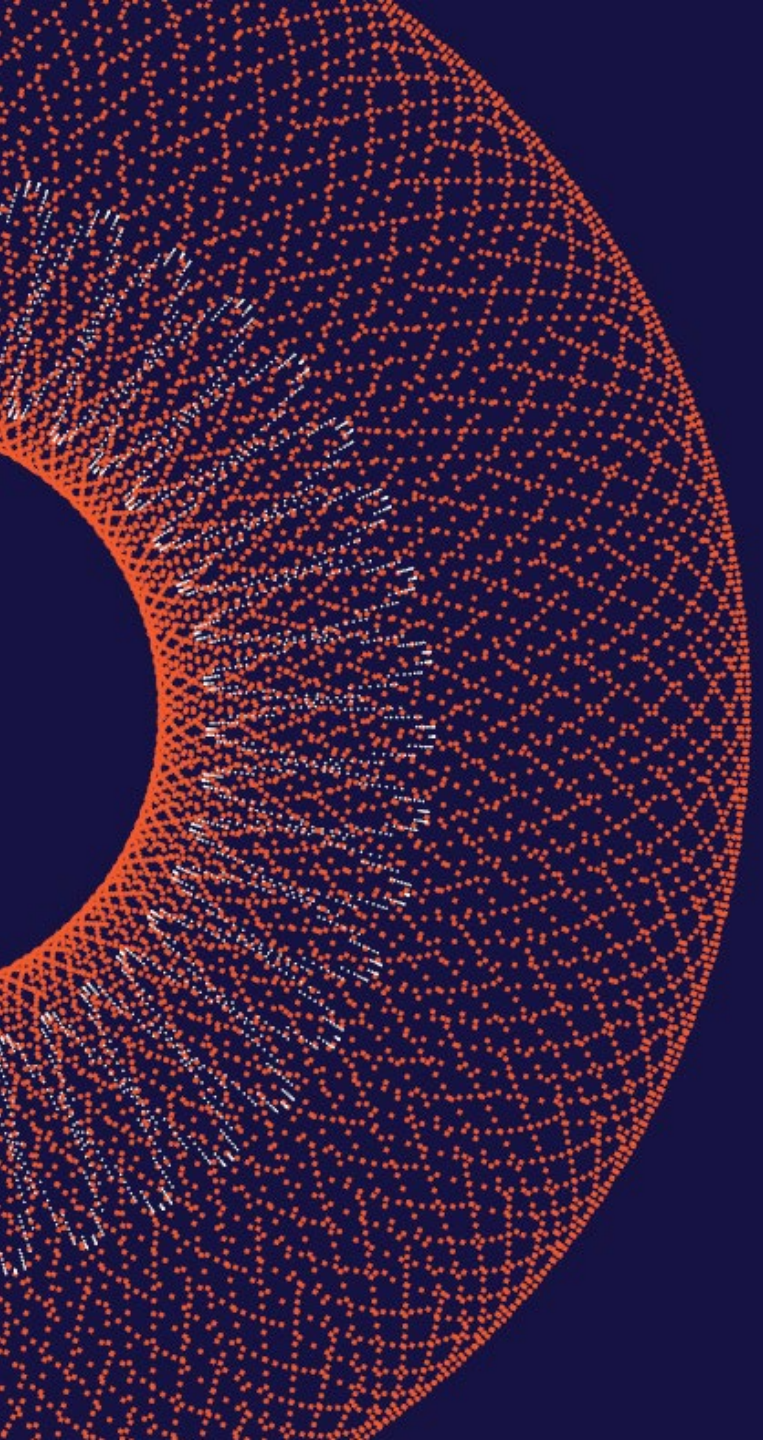
SEVEN QUESTIONS, SEVEN PARTIES – POSITIONS AS PUBLISHED OR STATED AT 3 NOVEMBER 2026

	PLANNING LAW Repeal the new Planning Act and Natural Environment Act?	**REGULATORY RELIEF** Remove 'regulatory relief' from the Planning Act and Natural Environment Act?	**FRESHWATER PLANNING** Reinstate Te Mana o te Wai?	**FAST-TRACK** Repeal the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024?	**INFRASTRUCTURE** Create a new national fund for infrastructure investment?	**CLIMATE** Stay in the Paris Agreement and keep the 2050 net zero target?	**ADAPTATION** Create a dedicated national climate adaptation fund?
National	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No[8]
Labour	No[1]	Yes	No[3]	No	Yes	Yes	Yes[8]
Green	No[1]	Yes	Yes	Yes	No[6]	Yes	Yes
ACT	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
NZ First	No	No[2]	No	No	Yes	No	No[8]
Te Pāti Māori	No[1]	Yes[4]	Yes[4]	Yes	Yes[6]	Yes[7]	Yes[8]
Opportunity	No[1]	Yes	Yes	No[5]	Yes	Yes	Yes

■ Supports ☐ Does not support Superscript number = qualified or inferred answer (see notes)

1. No party proposes repeal, but four would change the Acts. Labour: amend rather than repeal including new purpose statements, restore Mana Whakahono ā Rohe. Greens: strong evidence-based environmental limits, tangata whenua as shared decision-makers. Te Pāti Māori: opposed both Acts; has indicated it would reinstate Te Tiriti clauses. Opportunity: overhaul both Acts including to strip back Ministerial powers. National, ACT and NZ First passed both Acts and propose no amendments.
2. NZ First: inferred – voted for both Acts and has not proposed amendments.
3. Labour: supports Te Mana o te Wai but has not committed to reinstating it; would use the 2020 freshwater framework as a starting point.
4. Te Pāti Māori: based on its 'Yes' answers to Greenpeace's 2026 election survey; its manifesto asserts Māori authority over freshwater but does not use these terms.
5. Opportunity: no manifesto position on repeal, however supports 'overhaul'; would limit Ministerial powers, and candidates favour narrowing eligibility.
6. Green: propose Kiwipower, a Crown energy entity, rather than an investment fund. Te Pāti Māori: propose the $1b Energy Sovereignty Fund, limited to energy assets.
7. Te Pāti Māori: retains the Paris Agreement; no stated position on the net zero target.
8. Labour: would investigate an ETS-funded climate fund. Te Pāti Māori: proposes Māori-specific funds (e.g. $100m Māori Taiao relief fund). National: leaves cost-sharing decisions open. NZ First: supports flood protection through mining royalties policy.

Sources: party manifestos, policy releases and media reports; Greenpeace Aotearoa 2026 election scorecard methodology; see theme slides for detail.



Policy by theme

Planning/RMA law reform

National

- Implement Planning Act (PA) and Natural Environment Act (NEA); no amendments proposed
- $294m over four years in Budget 2026 to roll out the new system
- 19 new National Standards for farming (including water storage, farm quarries, gravel extraction)

Labour

- Retain PA and NEA but amend to:
  - revise purpose and goals
  - goal hierarchy not set by Minister
  - repeal regulatory relief
  - restore Mana Whakahono ā Rohe
- Manifesto silent on Te Mana o te Wai

Green

- No commitment to repeal PA and NEA (has floated merging them). Manifesto commits to:
  - strong ecosystem health limits
  - tangata whenua as shared decision-makers
  - reinstate Te Mana o te Wai
- Repeal regulatory relief

Act

- Manifesto: implement PA and NEA with clear, property-rights-based national instruments
- Strong support for regulatory relief, including compensation for Significant Natural Area (SNA) overlays
- 10+ farming National Standards; national method for freshwater limits

NZ First

- Voted for PA and NEA; no amendments proposed
- Targeted carve-outs for mining and energy: new mining zones with clearer rules (e.g. Marsden Point Special Economic Zone)

Te Pāti Māori

- Opposed PA and NEA; no amendment package published. Policy seeks Māori authority over freshwater and no decisions without Māori consent
- Repeal regulatory relief
- End mining in SNAs and conservation land

Opportunity

- Overhaul PA and NEA to:
  - adopt 10 national planning zones
  - repeal regulatory relief
  - strip back Ministerial override powers
  - reinstate Te Mana o te Wai
  - require councils to identify SNAs

KEY TAKEAWAY

No party is campaigning to repeal the PA and NEA. Labour, the Greens, Te Pāti Māori and Opportunity all back removing ‘regulatory relief’ and want firmer environmental limits. Coalition parties favour accelerated national standards for farming and extraction, with National and ACT proposing farm standards to reduce consenting burden.

Fast-track consenting

National

- Retain Fast-track Approvals Act (FTAA) (as amended in 2025)
- New FTAA Government Policy Statement (GPS) on Mining and Extraction
- Local Government Act changes allow councils to recover fast-track infrastructure costs

Labour

- Retain but reform FTAA to put at its core:
  - environmental protection
  - public benefit and public participation
- Housing to have supporting infrastructure
- Won't revoke consents; may review

Green

- Repeal FTAA entirely
- Revoke FTAA consents for new coal, hard-rock gold and seabed mining (sand mining also criticised)

Act

- Not in manifesto, but mining policy keeps fast-track available, with clear decision deadlines
- Supermarket fast-track (one-stop consenting shop, including liquor licences), unclear if via FTAA

NZ First

- Amend FTAA for housing developments:
  - show infrastructure exists, is funded and deliverable
  - housing panels able to decline
  - Removal of listed projects not lodged by end of 2028

Te Pāti Māori

- 2026 manifesto commits to repeal FTAA and retrospectively revoke all fast-tracked mining consents
- Ban seabed mining (Member's Bill would close FTAA pathway)

Opportunity

- No specific manifesto position but FTAA appears to be retained
- Candidate statements (rather than party policy) indicate a potential appetite to limit eligible projects to those with clear social, economic and environmental benefit (rather than large-scale housing)

KEY TAKEAWAY

FTAA likely here to stay. Only the Greens and Te Pāti Māori campaign for its repeal. Labour, NZ First and Opportunity would amend it. National would add a mining GPS; ACT wants a supermarket fast-track.

Infrastructure funding and planning

National

- Back the Infrastructure Commission's plan; GPS to provide critical links
- Complete Roads of National Significance (RoNS) 'over time' (first-term funding: Mill Road Stage 1, Belfast–Pegasus)
- Let private investors build and own transmission

Labour

- Won't cancel contracted or funded projects; Infrastruture Commission to review all new ones
- Cross-party long-term road, rail and public transport priorities
- $4.3b 'Start Work Now' social build (housing, schools, hospitals)
- NZ Future Fund ($200m seed) to invest in infrastructure

Green

- Back the Infrastructure Commission's plan; major investments through its assurance process
- Shift investment from state highways to public transport and rail, National Land Transport Fund shift and wealth tax to fund
- Kiwipower for renewable firming

Act

- Reward councils for growth; enable private infrastructure financing
- Local Tourism Dividend: $1 per guest night (~$40m a year)
- Protect maintenance funding; publish lowest-cost safe option
- Allow private transmission investment

NZ First

- Up to $100b ring-fenced Future Fund for long-term infrastructure
- ~$4b rail plan: maintain network, fix bottlenecks (e.g. Kaimai, Marsden Point link)
- Council–government Auckland and Wellington rail companies
- Tax incentives for foreign infrastructure investment

Te Pāti Māori

- $1b Energy Sovereignty Fund for Māori and community-owned energy assets
- More public homes; easier building on Māori land (2,000 papakāinga homes)

Opportunity

- Legislate the 30-year Infrastructure Plan; 60% of spend to maintenance
- Up to $60b over 5-10 years via NZ Infrastructure Fund (subsuming LGFA and NIFFCo)
- New council tools: congestion charges, visitor levies, value capture

KEY TAKEAWAY

Most parties back the Infrastructure Commission's 30-year plan. Labour and the Greens would put new projects through Commission review; National would keep building RoNS. Labour and NZ First propose Future Funds; Opportunity proposes a $60b Infrastructure Fund.

Climate and emissions trading

National

- Retain Paris Agreement (a coalition bottom line), net zero target and Climate Change Commission
- Retain stable Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) settings (price floor extended to 2031)
- No agricultural emissions pricing

Labour

- Retain Paris Agreement, net zero target and Climate Change Commission
- Urgent ETS review (price too low); reduce reliance on exotic forestry offsets
- Manifesto silent on agricultural pricing
- Repeal climate tort bar (2026 Act)

Green

- Retain Paris Agreement; strengthen Zero Carbon Act (gross targets) and Climate Change Commission role
- Require Budgets to be consistent with 1.5°C
- Reform ETS: phase out free allocation, remove forestry offsetting
- Price agricultural emissions

Act

- Renegotiate or leave the Paris Agreement
- Repeal Zero Carbon Act and net zero target; abolish Climate Change Commission
- Remove ETS price floor; return revenue via Carbon Tax Refund
- No agricultural emissions pricing

NZ First

- Exit the Paris Agreement and net zero targets
- Remove ETS charge on fuel, cutting 12–14c a litre
- No emissions pricing unless trading partners adopt it

Te Pāti Māori

- Retain Paris Agreement commitment
- No manifesto ETS policy; told Greenpeace it would bring agriculture into ETS by mid-2027
- Transition Māori-owned businesses off coal and gas

Opportunity

- Retain Paris Agreement, net zero target and Climate Change Commission (with stronger role)
- Amend ETS: raising carbon price, refine forestry settings, faster free-allocation phase-out
- Explore methane cap-and-trade or levy, pricing if tools exist
- Repeal climate tort bar (2026 Act)

KEY TAKEAWAY

National, Labour, the Greens, Te Pāti Māori and Opportunity back the Paris Agreement; ACT and NZ First would leave or renegotiate. The ETS is the battleground: National wants stability; Labour, the Greens and Opportunity want reform; ACT and NZ First want lower costs.

Natural hazards: adaptation and resilience

National

- Government Bill requires councils to plan for high-risk areas (Bill, pending)
- Government Bill framework (2025) leaves cost-sharing undecided; Crown a contributor, not sole funder
- Flood map 2027; river gravel extraction standard

Labour

- Pass national Adaptation Act; nationwide approach to adaptation and managed retreat
- Costs: beneficiary, exacerbator and public (central/local govt) pay
- Investigate ETS-funded climate fund; work with banks/insurers on resilience finance
- Stop building in highest-risk areas

Green

- Expand Natural Hazards Commission to cover climate events and help manage retreat
- Dedicated adaptation fund for central and local government
- Māori Climate Resilience Fund; $2.4b marae trust
- Prioritise nature-based solutions over engineering

Act

- No formal adaptation policy; favours protection works (stopbanks, raising roads and homes)
- Opposes councils using extreme climate scenarios to restrict property use

NZ First

- Economy first; favours practical resilience works over adaptation planning
- 50% of mining royalties to regions, including for flood protection

Te Pāti Māori

- Resource marae and hapū as resilience hubs; strengthen flood protection, water and food security
- $100m Māori National Service Defence framework (council-level disaster resources)
- $100m Māori Taiao relief fund for marae, urupā and papakāinga

Opportunity

- $5b Climate Resilience Fund for transport, energy and water ($500m nature-based)
- Natural Hazards Commission to fund resilience works or, as last resort, relocation
- Insurance framework sharing costs: government, councils, insurers and owners

KEY TAKEAWAY

No party policy definitively addresses “who pays” for adaptation / resilience. Who pays remains unresolved. National leaves cost-sharing undecided. Labour, the Greens and Opportunity offer national frameworks and funds; ACT and NZ First favour protection works and council or regional funding. Te Pāti Māori backs Māori-led resilience.