



29 September 2017

Rt. Hon. Bill English  
Leader, National Party

Jacinda Ardern MP  
Leader, Labour Party

Rt. Hon. Winston Peters  
Leader, New Zealand First Party

James Shaw MP  
Co Leader, Green Party

Dear Party leaders,

A winner in this year's election was the New Zealand environment. It featured as a bigger concern amongst the electorate than ever before. All of you through your party manifestos made commitments to improve the state of our environment. We congratulate you for those promises.

As environmental leaders, we wish to offer our congratulations to all parties and to both sitting and new MPs for their election success. We also wish to acknowledge those parties and MPs who are departing Parliament and thank them for their work.

There is now a strong public expectation that whichever parties form the next Government, there must be clear gains for fresh water, the climate and conservation in the next three years.

We offer our help in achieving these gains:

## FRESHWATER

It is clear that ecologically healthy freshwaters, and the ability of New Zealanders to safely swim in their rivers and lakes, will be a key measure of environmental success for the new Government. This can only be achieved if government facilitates and supports a transformation of the primary sector toward new, environmentally-friendly land uses and practices, coupled with tougher regulation and market signals which reflect the true costs of resource use.

## CLIMATE

There must be a more structured and transparent approach to tackling the greatest challenge of our time – climate change. New Zealand's emissions have continued to climb and we need an ambitious plan on how to reduce them. Transformative change is required through a new law to establish a statutory carbon budgeting process overseen by an independent Climate Commission to plan, monitor and report on the transition to net zero by 2050. Anything less betrays this and future generations.

## CONSERVATION

The jewels in the crown of our national identity are the unique species which inhabit our lands, waters and wild places. We need the new Government to institute real measures to protect and enhance the viability of our precious species. This includes the health of the diverse and invaluable terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems that sustain both them and valued introduced species. An increase in funding of DOC's core budget must be a key component in that strategy.

These issues, and the many others that fall under the umbrella of "environment", are at the heart of the richness of our quality of life in New Zealand, and underpin our international reputation. They are also at the core of a genuinely sustainable future and are therefore true legacy issues. The natural world is our home and there are few greater gifts we can bestow our children than a vibrant, vital and healthy natural world.

We promise to continue our strong advocacy for the environment and look forward to working with all political parties, both in the next government and in the opposition, to achieve positive gains for our environment.

Yours sincerely

**Kevin Hague**  
Forest and Bird

**Russel Norman**  
Greenpeace New Zealand

**Livia Esterhazy**  
WWF New Zealand

**Bryce Johnson**  
Fish & Game New Zealand

**Gary Taylor**  
Environmental Defence Society

**Guy Salmon**  
Ecologic

**Lisa McLaren**  
Generation Zero