

Submission on Adapt and Thrive: Building a climate-resilient New Zealand**May 2022****Submitter details:**

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Submission:**Introduction**

1. The New Zealand Recreation t/a Recreation Aotearoa is a professional association and industry body responsible for providing leadership, advocacy and professional development opportunities for those involved in the broader recreation sector. We work at an agency, industry and professional level to build capability, develop partnerships, and equip individuals and organisations with the skills they need to deliver high quality recreation experiences that engage participants.
2. Recreation Aotearoa's membership includes recreation policy makers, territorial local authorities, voluntary organisations, regional sports trusts, outdoor recreation businesses, and others involved in the delivery of recreation throughout New Zealand.
3. Our role is to champion high-quality recreation for the benefit of New Zealand.
4. Our vision is that by 2020 New Zealand will have a strong recreation industry that meets the needs of current and future participants, so that through recreation, New Zealanders are active, healthy, and connected
5. Recreation Aotearoa believes recreation is vital to New Zealand society. Recreation is not just about enjoyment, it is about being healthy, engaged, stimulated, and interacting with others, and this occurs via outdoor recreation, community recreation, parks, and aquatic and facility-based recreation centres.
6. Recreation is a major contributor to the physical and mental health of individuals, and to the resilience of our communities. 90 per cent of New Zealanders believe that by being active they are in turn maintaining a good level of health and fitness, and this helps to relieve stress.
7. A thriving recreation industry can also help our nation prosper socially and economically. Sport and active recreation contributes \$4.9 billion or 2.3% to

our annual GDP, and the sector employs more than 53,000 New Zealanders. The nation's recreation values and opportunities are fundamental to the nation's tourism industry. Approximately 50% of international visitors to New Zealand participate in one form of outdoor recreation or another.

8. Recreation is part of what it is to be a New Zealander. Many of us are members of clubs and groups that enjoy recreation for fun, health and social reasons. 84% of New Zealanders believe sport and physical activity bring people together and create a sense of belonging.
9. For individuals, recreation contributes to physical and mental wellbeing and provides an opportunity to meet new people. People define themselves and their communities through their recreation opportunities. Recreation fosters community cohesion and resilience and supports the integration of social groups such as diverse ethnic groups. 74% of New Zealanders agree that sport and physical activity help build vibrant and stimulating communities.
10. Investment in recreation generates tourism opportunities and supports regional development by encouraging skilled professionals and migrants to consider business options in and beyond the main centres.
11. Research shows that recreation makes a significant contribution to social resilience. It allows individuals to thrive, and to connect with each other. This, in turn, makes communities stronger. A society in which people are active and healthy is also more economically sound.
12. Physical inactivity is associated with loss of productivity and health costs, as well as associated costs such as pain and suffering. Healthier, happier individuals are more likely to do well in other areas of their lives, whether it is in social or professional situations. This has a positive flow-on effect for communities and society as a whole.
13. Greater understanding of these benefits and their downstream impacts, along with awareness of how laws and regulations can influence recreation delivery, are key to ensuring that New Zealand's recreation opportunities remain among the world's best.

General Comments:

14. Recreation Aotearoa has deep concerns about the effects on climate change on the Recreation Sector. Climate change is impacting on

recreation in numerous ways, including the increased frequency and severity of storm events, coastal erosion and less snowfall.

15. Recreation Aotearoa notes that Local Territorial Authorities make the largest contribution to recreation opportunities for New Zealanders and they will likely face the biggest financial and non-financial challenges, posed by Climate Change. Many of our members work for local authorities who have declared climate emergencies and will be looking for support and guidance on how to reduce emissions from recreation facilities including public pools and parks.
16. Recreation Aotearoa welcomes any initiative, legislative or otherwise, that will improve advice and support for organisations wishing to (a) reduce their greenhouse gas emissions (b) understand and mitigate risks associated with climate change and (c) adapt to the challenges posed by climate change.
17. Recreation Aotearoa believes that the challenges for meeting targets will lie in quantifying current emission levels and availability of technical expertise to determine strategies to reduce emissions. Any central government efforts that would address these challenges are welcome.

Feedback in detail:

18. In our submission to the second reading of the Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Bill, Recreation Aotearoa supported the requirement of the Minister to prepare a national adaptation plan. We supported the requirement that the adaptation plan is made publicly available and reported on regularly.
19. Of the three key areas of the National Adaption Plan, Recreation Aotearoa regards focus area two as the most important. It is essential that organisations and individuals are provided data, information and guidance to enable everyone to assess and reduce their own climate risks.
20. Recognising that all New Zealanders have a role to play in building resilience to climate change, Recreation Aotearoa is concerned that some New Zealanders may be more affected and less able to respond, thus exacerbating existing inequities for different groups in society.

21. Of the actions listed in Appendix 3 of the consultation document, Recreation Aotearoa regards the following as the most important (in order of priority):

- (1) The future for Local Government Review;
- (2) Produce guidance for preparing adaptation plans;
- (3) Regularly update adaption guidance for local government;
- (4) Design and develop an Adaption Information Portal;
- (5) Produce and adaption professional development programme for key practitioners;
- (6) Produce new tools and guidance specific to mātauranga Māori and mātauranga indicators;
- (7) Public investment in climate change initiatives;
- (8) Integrate nature-based solutions into the urban environment; and (
- 9) Implement the DOC Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan (CCAAP).