

OVERVIEW OF THE CROWN PASTORAL LAND ACT AND LAND ACT TARGETED REVIEW

CONTEXT FOR THE REVIEW

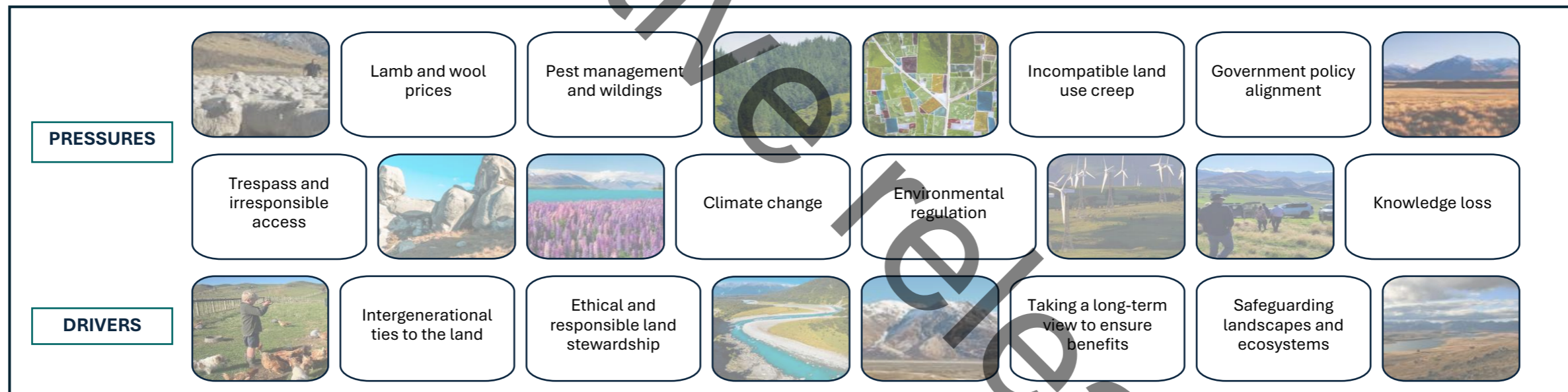
The South Island high country has long underpinned the region’s economy and identity, supporting pastoral farming for generations while also contributing to New Zealand’s unique natural landscape. Around 1.2 million hectares of this land is currently managed as Crown pastoral land, reflecting its significance for both farming and wider national interests.

Legislation was updated in 2022 to strengthen environmental management and provide certainty for leaseholders. Land use continues to evolve, however, and the pressures and opportunities facing the high country are changing. It is important that the regulatory framework keeps pace.

This review is focused on practical options to support diversification alongside pastoral farming. New secondary uses can lift productivity, create jobs, and strengthen resilience while ensuring the land continues to be well managed for the future.

THE PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED

Current legislation for Crown pastoral land, including pastoral leases, constrains both the Crown and lessees from realising the full potential of the estate. Processes may limit flexibility and responsiveness, making it difficult to adapt to new opportunities or optimise long-term value. Legislative change is needed to build a modern, efficient framework that supports innovation, economic growth and sustainable stewardship.



AIMS OF THE REVIEW

To increase economic opportunity by making provision for other land uses on Crown Pastoral Land where appropriate.
 To stream-line and update regulatory processes in the Land Act to more efficiently manage Crown land in a modern context.

THE OUTCOMES WE WANT TO SEE

- A modernised legislative framework that supports timely, cost-effective and evidence-based land management decisions
- Reduced compliance burden and greater certainty for Crown pastoral lessees
- Efficient systems for enabling and regulating secondary land uses on Crown pastoral land
- Stronger alignment between Crown land management practices and wider government priorities
- Improved ability for the Crown to recover costs and receive a fair return on public land assets

HOW THE CROWN PASTORAL LAND ACT AND LAND ACT WORK TOGETHER

Crown pastoral land is Crown-owned land leased to farmers for pastoral livestock grazing. The use and management of the land is regulated under the Crown Pastoral Land Act 1998 and the Land Act 1948, protecting the Crown's ownership interest in the land's inherent values, and the vulnerability of it to pests and over-grazing.

The Land Act is the foundational legislation and governs all Crown land, including pastoral land. The CPLA is a specialised regime that overlays additional rules on a subset of land (pastoral leases and licences). It sits alongside the Land Act and the two work together, which is why some reforms to pastoral land management may require changes to the Land Act.

The review is also looking at the Land Act to modernise some processes for the management and disposal of Crown land other than Crown pastoral land.

LAND ACT 1948

The Land Act is the overarching legislation governing most Crown-owned land outside the Conservation Estate. Crown land is managed by the Commissioner of Crown Lands, a statutory appointed officer within LINZ. The Land Act sets the overarching framework for the Commissioner to classify, manage, lease and dispose of Crown land.

CROWN PASTORAL LAND ACT 1998

The CPLA applies to Crown pastoral land alongside the Land Act. The CPLA regulates land use, development and sustainability on Crown pastoral land with a particular focus on responsible stewardship of the high country through the maintenance and enhancement of inherent values alongside pastoral farming.

The core provisions of the Crown tenant relationship, including the powers of the Commissioner of Crown Lands and the rights and obligations of lessees, sit across both the Land Act and the CPLA.

