

Questions and Answers

How long is the consultation running?

The consultation opened on 17 February and runs for eight weeks until 12 April.

How can I contribute to the consultation?

You can fill in an online submission form via the Land Information New Zealand (LINZ) website: www.linz.govt.nz/cplc

You can also download a submission form via the LINZ website which can be posted to us or handed in to one of our offices in Wellington, Hamilton or Christchurch.

Will feedback be provided?

LINZ will provide a summary of the submissions following the consultation.

What is Crown pastoral land?

The Crown owns around 1.2 million hectares of Crown pastoral land, mostly located in the South Island high country.

The Commissioner of Crown Lands is the landlord and leases this land for pastoral grazing. The Commissioner is an independent statutory officer who approves activities on Crown pastoral land and oversees the tenure review process. Each lease lasts for 33 years but farmers have a perpetual right of renewal. LINZ manages these leases on behalf of the Commissioner.

Crown pastoral land has traditionally been used for grazing sheep and cattle, but over time this has diversified into different types of farming, as well as tourism ventures such as lodges and helicopter tours.

What is tenure review?

Tenure review is a voluntary process by which some Crown pastoral land can be freeholded and sold to the leaseholder. At the same time, areas with high ecological or other values, or required by the Crown for another purpose are returned to full Crown ownership.

Why is tenure review ending?

While tenure review has resulted in the creation of new conservation parks, there has been increasing public concern about the loss of biodiversity and landscape values and increased intensification occurring on land that has been freeholded. In effect, the tenure review process has reduced the environmental protection for this land.

Tenure review has not resulted in the Crown exiting its role as a lessor of Crown pastoral land, as was intended. Ending tenure review will secure the Crown's long-term ability to protect the natural and cultural values of the land by keeping Crown pastoral land in Crown ownership.

This will also end a time-consuming and costly process and prevent further freeholding through tenure review, while still providing for appropriate economic land use.

When will tenure review end and what will happen to those leaseholders already in tenure review?

Tenure review is a statutory process administered by an independent statutory officer. Once legislation is passed, there will be a number of reviews still going through the process. These will end at this point, except for reviews where the Crown and leaseholders have reached a contractual agreement known as an accepted substantive proposal. Tenure reviews that have reached this stage when the legislation is enacted will continue through to completion.

There are currently 34 leases in tenure review. Until legislation is passed to end tenure review, the Commissioner and LINZ will continue to carry out the review process.

How will land be transferred to the conservation estate without tenure review?

There are still mechanisms for protecting inherent values on Crown pastoral land or transferring land to the conservation estate, including:

- using alternative tools to negotiate the purchase of part of a pastoral lease (or whole leases) from lessees
- using legal mechanisms such as covenants to support the protection of biodiversity on private land (through negotiation with leaseholders these can be applied to Crown pastoral land)

When tenure review ends, how will public access be secured?

One of the objectives of tenure review is to secure public access so people can enjoy the land or travel across it into more remote public conservation areas for recreation. Without tenure review, access across Crown pastoral land can still be secured on a case-by-case basis through negotiated agreements or legal instruments such as an easement.

The Government wants to understand the implications of ending tenure review and is interested in public views on access. The discussion document seeks feedback on other ways of securing public access to or across Crown pastoral land.

Why is the Government not consulting on ending tenure review?

Cabinet has made the decision to end tenure review to make a clear commitment to the long-term role the Crown has in managing areas of our most important land. Ending tenure review sends a clear message that the Crown is committed to the ongoing ownership and stewardship of Crown pastoral land.

Public consultation is being sought on a number of proposals to improve the management of Crown pastoral land, including ways the Crown could take on leasehold land outside of the tenure review process.

Why is the Government consulting on the proposed changes to how the Crown manages pastoral land?

Stewardship of Crown pastoral land is a shared responsibility with pastoral leaseholders, iwi, and other interested parties. It is critical to understand and reflect their views in this process.

There is strong interest in the Crown's management of pastoral land and in decisions made during tenure review. The Government wants to help these parties build an understanding of the issues, including the case for change, and ensure they have sufficient opportunity to provide feedback. This will be used to inform final proposals for changes to the Crown pastoral land regulatory system.

Do these proposals suggest that the environment is more important than farming?

The purpose of the legislation that governs Crown pastoral land has always been to protect environmental outcomes. How we understand those outcomes has shifted over time. There is also increasing public concern regarding the loss of biodiversity and landscape values on current and former Crown pastoral land due to changes in farming practices and diversity of commercial activities.

The Government has a responsibility to respond to the changes in the wider context of the high country over the last 70 years and to ensure the regulatory system reflects a modern understanding of ecology and sustainable management and supports effective land management.

Why is legislative change needed?

Tenure review is a statutory process and requires legislative change to formally remove the mechanism enabling the process.

Ending tenure review means the remaining Crown pastoral estate will continue to be managed under the existing regulatory regime. This makes it even more important to address the issues recently identified in LINZ's assessment of the Crown Pastoral Land Regulatory System. You can read that document [here](#) (hyperlink).

What are the likely impacts of the proposals?

The impacts of the proposals in relation to the Crown and leaseholders, as well as iwi, broader stakeholders and the public have been considered, and this initial assessment is set out in the discussion document. Feedback via consultation will inform a more comprehensive understanding of the nature and scope of the likely impacts of the proposed changes.

- **Impacts on leaseholders?** The Government is confident that the proposals respect leaseholders' current property rights for quiet enjoyment and pastoral farming. However, some of the proposals may impact how some leaseholders can use the land in the future, which is why the Government is seeking feedback via consultation to better understand how this will impact leaseholders.
- **Impacts on communities and economic activity?** Pastoralism will still be core. The viability of economic activity on Crown pastoral leases, including farming and tourism ventures, heavily depends on the health of the environment and landscapes, which these proposals seek to protect and enhance.