

ACT'S RESPONSE TO THE 10 'ASKS' FOR THE OCEAN 2023

1. Commit to protecting at least 30% of New Zealand's ocean territory by 2030 through a representative network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) – and to delivering the legislative reform and implementation funding needed to achieve this.

ACT currently has no policy on changing the network of marine protected areas and marine reserves. We do support enforcing fishing bans in existing protected areas however, including ensuring that customary fishing rights are not abused in a commercial capacity.

2. Ensure that Aotearoa's marine management regime upholds the rights of tangata whenua and recognises indigenous approaches to ocean conservation.

ACT recognises the need to include iwi and hapū in consultation on marine management and listen to their contributions and insights on ocean conservation. We also acknowledge that a diverse range of New Zealanders use and benefit from our oceans and marine management should seek to reflect this.

3. Commit to restoring our declining marine biodiversity by implementing an effective ecosystem-based management system, which also provides for the effective control of invasive species like caulerpa.

ACT is open to exploring management options to protect and restore marine biodiversity as part of the next government.

4. Ensure the protection of ecologically significant or particularly vulnerable marine habitats, including through the creation of a Kermadec / Rangitāhua Ocean Sanctuary and new MPAs in the Hauraki Gulf / Tīkapa Moana.

ACT currently has no policy on changing the network of marine protected areas and marine reserves. We do support enforcing fishing bans in existing protected areas however to ensure customary fishing rights are not being abused in a commercial capacity.

5. Reform the Quota Management System to require our fisheries stocks to be managed for abundance and resilience, and to safeguard them for future generations.

ACT currently has no policy on amending the Quota Management System for fisheries but we recognise the need to sustainably manage fishery stocks and are open to reform in this area.

6. Ban bottom-impact fishing methods and seabed mining on vulnerable and highly biodiverse marine ecosystems, including seamounts and similar features.

ACT currently does not plan to ban bottom-impact fishing methods.

7. Improve protection for our endangered, threatened, and protected marine species – including by mandating the use of best practice mitigation technology to reduce fisheries bycatch to a target of zero by 2030.

ACT is very supportive of the uptake of best-practice technology in commercial fishing to minimise the impact on marine species. We will continue to support the adoption of better technology to reduce the bycatch of fisheries.

8. Implement fully transparent and traceable fisheries management through the use of monitoring systems (e.g. cameras or observers) across all commercial fishing fleets, and by making captured data publicly accessible.

ACT currently has no position on this issue.

9. Address the land-based impacts threatening our coastal and marine ecosystems, including sedimentation, forestry slash, plastic pollution, and nutrient runoff.

ACT recognises the threat that poor infrastructure poses to our marine environment. Currently outdated and broken water infrastructure in Auckland results in wastewater entering the Hauraki Gulf every time it rains, with similar issues in Canterbury and around the rest of the country. That's why ACT proposes that 50% of the GST from new residential property should be shared with the local council which consented the development in order to fund infrastructure. This would allow the pipes to be upgraded to support new homes and reduce the amount of wastewater which ends up in our marine areas where it poses a risk to biodiversity.

10. Prioritise the uptake of conservation initiatives and nature-based solutions to improve our ocean's resilience to climate change and to prevent and reverse biodiversity loss.

ACT supports the adoption of science-based conservation initiatives and resilience to climate change.

More broadly ACT proposes partnerships between local government, farmers, and tangata whenua to manage wetlands and areas of indigenous bush. These are already working well in example such as the QEII Trust and the Kaipara Moana Remediation Programme and ACT would like to see these expanded upon.

ACT will also establish a fund available for local government to allow local government to enter into covenants with landowners to ensure critical wetlands and indigenous bush is protected.