

## **GREEN PARTY'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.

**Yes. Work on reform of the outdated Marine Reserves Act 1971 and new marine protected area legislation began last term when a Green MP was Minister of Conservation. The Green Party strongly supports the Kunming Montreal Biodiversity Framework to implement the Convention on Biological Diversity and the target of protecting 30% of land and sea environments by 2030 and similar commitments in the Global Oceans Treaty for the high seas.**

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

**Yes. A Treaty based approach must be the foundation or any reform of marine protected areas legislation, oceans governance and fisheries management.**

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.

**Yes. The Biosecurity Act is in need of review to ensure a greater focus on pests and diseases which threaten indigenous species, habitats and ecosystems; and on marine invasives. The Green Party would increase funding for biosecurity risk assessment, surveillance for, and monitoring of invasive species and effective control programmes for species such as Caulerpa working with mana whenua and communities.**

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.

**Yes. Rangitāhua/ the Kermadecs is an extraordinary and internationally important marine area for biodiversity and its geology. With less than half a per cent of our marine environment protected, and no protected areas in our huge EEZ, protection at Rangitāhua is long overdue. It would help implement the commitments made when the Government agreed to the Kunming Montreal Biodiversity Framework last year and its target of 30% protection on land and sea**

**by 2030. The Green Party has long supported and campaigned for much more extensive protection of the Kermadecs Rangitāhua than the existing small marine reserve; while recognising Māori fishing rights and mana whenua. We had our own member's bill in the ballot.**

**The Green Party supports the Hauraki Gulf Tikapa Moana Marine Protection Bill recently introduced to Parliament and believes it needs to go further and enable the creation of additional protected areas in the Gulf.**

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.

**Yes. Allowing fish stocks to be fished down to 10 or 20% of their original estimated biomass does not promote resilience. We want abundant fisheries and healthy oceans. This requires legislative change and a shift from a focus on sustainable utilisation of fisheries to managing fisheries to promote healthy marine and coastal ecosystems and avoid bycatch of corals and protected species.**

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

**Yes. When bottom trawlers drag huge, weighted nets along the sea floor, they destroy ancient communities of deep sea corals, sea sponges and other marine life. Sea mounts, hills and knolls are often biodiversity hotspots and where fish congregate to spawn. Around 50% of seamounts and similar features in New Zealand waters are unprotected and need to be. The Green Party would not issue permits to NZ vessels for bottom trawling on vulnerable marine ecosystems in the South Pacific.**

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.

**Yes. The goal in the National Plan of Action for Seabirds needs to be zero bycatch by 2030. A stronger regulatory framework should require the use of best practice mitigation measures across all fisheries to prevent the deaths of seabirds, fur seals, NZ sea lions, dolphins and other protected species.**

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.

**Yes. The rollout of cameras has been too slow and the reduction in observers because of watch safety requirements needs to change.**

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

**Yes . The Green Party would establish a Minister for Zero Waste to increase work to avoid plastic waste and plastic pollution. A container return scheme for beverage containers would help reduce plastic pollution. Our Climate Safe Communities package [https://www.greens.org.nz/climate\\_communities](https://www.greens.org.nz/climate_communities) includes measures to encourage green infrastructure and more compliance monitoring and enforcement to avoid sediment pollution.**

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.

**Yes. The dual crises of climate and nature are best addressed by actions which benefit both nature and the climate such as wider use of nature-based infrastructure in our cities and towns to help adapt to a changing climate and implement sponge city thinking. Emissions reduction is a priority to prevent further ocean warming and die off of kelp and other species and ocean acidification. The oceans can only protect us if we stop harming them.**