



## **Co-operation Agreement between the Labour/Progressive Government and the Green Parliamentary Caucus**

The Green Party Parliamentary caucus (Green Party) and the Labour/Progressive government are committed to having a constructive relationship based on good faith for this term of Parliament.

The commitment of the Labour/Progressive government is to:

Provide stable government over the next term of Parliament, so as to implement a comprehensive policy programme aimed at increasing economic growth, reducing inequality and improving the social and economic well-being of all New Zealanders and their families in a manner which is environmentally, socially and economically sustainable.

The Green Party is committed to building an ecologically sustainable, socially just, participatory and peaceful society.

The Government and the Green Party share many similar goals and will co-operate on agreed areas of policy development and legislation in order to facilitate the implementation of a shared agenda.

### **Co-operation on Policy and Legislation**

The Government will consult with the Green Party on a range of issues including:

- The broad outline of the legislative programme and the priorities within it
- Key legislative measures
- Major policy issues

The Government and the Green Party will engage on the detail of policy via a number of categories:

#### **Category A**

- Full participation of Green Party spokespeople in the development of policy positions with the expectation of developing joint positions.

#### **Category B**

- Consultation on the broad direction of policy, and the development of related legislation, with the aim of achieving support for legislative measures and/or policy proposals.

#### **Category C**

- Consultation for the purposes of information sharing without any particular expectation of developing agreed positions.

Issues will be assigned to a category by agreement and the procedures which will be followed will be dependent on that assignment. The initial procedures are set out in the attachment to this agreement.

Formal consultation will be managed between the Prime Minister's Office and the Office of the Co-Leaders of the Green Party.

Other co-operation will include:

- Access to relevant Ministers by designated Green Party MPs
- Quarterly meetings between the Prime Minister and the Green Party Co-Leaders
- Advance notification to the other party of significant announcements by either the Government or the Green Party
- Briefings by the Government on significant issues before any public announcement.
- Ongoing input by the Green Party into the implementation of previously agreed budget initiatives

Both parties agree that it is desirable to review certain aspects of ERMA's (Environmental Risk Management Authority's) operation to ensure it is capable of providing a robust mechanism to fully implement those parts of the HSNO (Hazardous Substances and New Organisms) Act relevant to new organisms, in a manner consistent with the purpose of the Act. The Government intends to initiate such a review and will consult with the Green Party on the terms of reference and personnel.

**Confidentiality**

It is agreed that where briefings are provided to the Green Party or where the Green Party are involved in a consultative arrangement with regard to legislation or policy, (i.e. Category A or B issues), all such discussions shall be confidential unless otherwise agreed.

In the event that government papers are provided to the Green Party in the course of consultation or briefings they shall be treated as confidential and shall not be released or the information used for any public purpose without the express agreement of the relevant Minister.

Once confidential information is in the public domain, the Green Party is able to make comment on the information.

In the event that Cabinet or Cabinet committee papers are provided to the Green Party for the purposes of consultation they shall be provided to a designated person within the Office of the Co-Leaders who will provide a formal receipt and take responsibility for ensuring they are accorded the appropriate degree of confidentiality.

All papers provided to the Green Party shall be copied to the Prime Minister's Office.

**Signed this 26th day of August 2002**

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**Rt Hon Helen Clark**  
**Prime Minister**

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**Rod Donald**                      **Jeanette Fitzsimons**  
**Green Party Co-Leaders**

## **Minimum consultation expectations**

### **Category A**

Category A policy areas and legislation will be specified and jointly agreed by the parties at quarterly meetings of Green Party Co-Leaders and the Prime Minister.

Where the Green Party and government have agreed to work together on Category A policy areas and legislation it is expected that the parties will work in good faith towards an agreed outcome that advances the policies of both parties.

To this end there will be:

- full participation by the Green Party in the policy development process and development of legislation with the aim of developing jointly agreed positions
- access to relevant Cabinet Ministers and, through the Minister to officials where appropriate, for designated Green Party MPs
- access to relevant papers
- public acknowledgement of the Green Party's contribution through measures such as: press releases; speeches; or supporting agreed Green Party amendments to legislation
- agreement on the timetable for policy development and passage of legislation through Parliament
- advance notification of any significant announcements by either party
- support from the Green Party for procedural motions in the House or select committees on any legislation coming out of this process
- full confidentiality, in line with the provisions in the agreement

Where a policy and/or legislation has been developed within the guidelines set out above, and both parties have agreed on the outcome, both parties will publicly support the process and the outcome.

## **Category B**

Category B policy areas and legislation will be specified by agreement between the offices of the Prime Minister and the Green Party Co-Leaders.

In Category B areas

both parties will:

- act in good faith towards achieving a legislative outcome able to be supported in the House.

The Green Party spokesperson can expect to

- be briefed on policy development and consulted on options before decisions are taken.
- be invited to make submissions into the policy process.
- be consulted on legislation drafting.
- be consulted on the timeframe and timetabling of legislation and policy.

The Green Party will:

- in relation to agreed legislation coming out of this process, support government procedural motions in the House and in select committees unless previously advised otherwise.

The Government will

- operate a no surprises policy in terms of procedural motions it intends to put before the House or a select committee in such circumstances.

## **Category C**

Category C will include all other issues. On these issues the parties will act in good faith to provide each other with sufficient information on issues to allow for informed responses, and to maximise co-operation.