

# Crown Minerals Amendment Bill

Submission from

Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) of

Aotearoa New Zealand Te Hāhi Tūhauwiri

1 October 2024

## **Economic Development Science and Innovation Committee Members: *Crown Minerals Amendment Bill***

Tēnā koutou

Thank you for the opportunity to submit on the *Crown Minerals Amendment Bill*. The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) of Aotearoa New Zealand Te Hāhi Tūhauwiri is disappointed with the Bill and requests that it is withdrawn.

Quakers have been in this land since the early days of European settlement. We have Christian roots and welcome and include people of all / no religious backgrounds and beliefs.<sup>1</sup> We also share a strong and long history of environmental concern.

Quaker worship is based on silence and listening to the Spirit. Quakers practise truth and integrity, simplicity, and sustainability, and pursue paths leading to peace and equality. These are sometimes referred to as our testimonies, and it is for these reasons we seek the withdrawal of the *Crown Minerals Amendment Bill*.

We have three main concerns:

1. Respect for the people and environment of Aotearoa NZ
2. Respect for the people and environment of the wider Pacific region
3. Integrity around Aotearoa NZ international agreements

### **Respect for the people and environment of Aotearoa NZ**

Quakers regard integrity, information sharing based on evidence and community engagement prior to decision-making as important aspects of Government.<sup>2</sup> This is not happening with this Bill as the brief time for submissions and submission hearing is less than a fortnight, making any meaningful engagement around the Bill impossible.

We read that the Bill's objectives include *to promote petroleum exploration and production, ... to ensure that gas remains a transition fuel until viable and cost-effective alternatives are in place*. The Bill also makes changes to *... improve investor confidence in the New Zealand petroleum sector*.

Instead of the objectives above, the Bill would do well to consider how we can:

- live within our natural sustainable boundaries;
- reduce emissions;
- reduce reliance on fossil fuels;
- best engage communities;
- honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi commitments; and,
- best meet Aotearoa NZ's energy needs.

### **Respect for the people and environment of the wider Pacific region**

Pacific peoples are making frequent calls for effective action around climate change. Last year (2023), [Aotearoa NZ](#) supported Tuvalu and Vanuatu's successful UN *request for an advisory*

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<sup>1</sup> There are around 1000 Quakers in Aotearoa New Zealand

<sup>2</sup> <https://quakers.nz/ym/news/quaker-call-action-after-covid-19>

*opinion of the International Court of Justice on obligations of States in respect of climate change.* The Crown Minerals Amendment Bill is inimical to our earlier commitments to our Pacific neighbours.

Aotearoa NZ Quakers have supported the concerns raised by Pacific peoples and has joined with other faith organisations in calling for a [Fossil Fuels Non-Proliferation Treaty](#). This call has also been supported by Vanuatu, Tuvalu, Fiji, Tonga, Solomon Islands, Niue, Timor-Leste, Antigua and Barbuda, Palau, Colombia, Sydney, Canberra, Los Angeles, Birmingham, Rome, Warsaw, Kāpiti, Wellington, and many other cities, regions, organisations and groups including the World Health Organisation. Quakers' world body, Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) has also supported that call. Given where our Pacific neighbours are heading, the Crown Minerals Amendment Bill gives the impression Aotearoa NZ is heading in the opposite direction.

### **Integrity around Aotearoa NZ international agreements**

Aotearoa NZ Quakers are pleased Government is maintaining its agreement to meet its [2050 net zero climate change targets](#). The *Crown Minerals Amendment Bill* detracts from these 2050 goals and does not fit well with Aotearoa NZ's international agreements.

Recently, Aotearoa NZ's permanent representative at the UN announced at the *Summit for the Future* that New Zealand embraced the possibility of the [Pact for the Future, Global Digital Compact, and Declaration on Future Generations](#) as *an opportunity to drive action on pressing and emerging global challenges*. Action 9 of the *Pact for the Future* is about strengthening actions to address climate change which includes [transitioning away from fossil fuels](#). (p.9)

In December 2023, [Climate Change Minister, Simon Watts provided New Zealand's UN Conference of the Parties \(COP\) 28 Statement](#). He announced, among other things, that:

*... my Government is committed to doubling the overall volume [electricity to come from renewable sources ] by 2050 and we're starting work in our first 100 days in office to enable decarbonisation. ... Our experiences [Cyclone Gabrielle] are compounded by what the IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report has made all too clear - the world is not on track to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement. That's why New Zealand remains resolutely focused on transitioning to a low-emissions future; to supporting Pacific resilience and collectively decarbonising the global economy. ... We're also committed to collaborating with our Pacific neighbours on climate change. It is the number one security threat to our region. ... The commitment of New Zealanders from across all levels of government, the private sector, NGOs, iwi Māori, is clear.*

This Bill appears to contradict Aotearoa New Zealand's recent international statements and commitments.

### **Conclusion**

Aotearoa NZ Quakers acknowledges that issues around energy production and consumption are difficult. Our population has grown, the multilateral environment has become more challenging, and energy demand has increased. This is why our desire for discussion and

careful consideration with integrity, information sharing based on evidence and community engagement prior to decision-making is more important than ever.<sup>3</sup>

In 2020, Quakers called *on every person in Aotearoa New Zealand to bring about whatever changes they can to enable us to live in harmony with one another and with the planet.*<sup>4</sup> We stand by that request and hope our politicians can do their best to help bring it about. The current draft *Crown Minerals Amendment Bill* is not in keeping with us living in harmony with either the planet or one another. We want something better. The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) of Aotearoa New Zealand Te Hāhi Tūhauwiri opposes the Bill and recommends that it is withdrawn.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://quakers.nz/ym/news/quaker-call-action-after-covid-19>

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