

Draft Declaration of Direct Democracy of NZ (DoDD) August 2026

Community-Led · Regionally Governed · Constitutionally Supreme

PREAMBLE

We, the people of New Zealand,

Affirm that Governance authority derives from all the people.

Declare that governance exists to protect dignity, liberty, fairness, and the well-being of present and future generations.

Establish this Declaration as the supreme law of the land, binding all institutions and persons exercising public power.

Establish this Declaration to create and protect NZ Sovereignty as an independent country including financially, economically, health and well-being, and environmentally protected for the people of NZ, where NZs best interests are held above all others for now and into the future.

PART I — SUPREMACY AND FOUNDATIONS

Article 1 — Sovereignty of the People

Sovereignty resides in the people collectively.

All public authority exists only by consent of the people and under this Declaration.

Article 2 — Supremacy of the Declaration

This Declaration is the supreme law of New Zealand.

Any law, decision, or action inconsistent with this Declaration is invalid to the extent of inconsistency.

No governance body may suspend or override this Declaration except as expressly provided herein.

Article 3 — Te Tiriti o Waitangi, He Whakaputenga and Sovereign Beings

He Whakaputenga, Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the mana of early settlers are recognised as foundational civic covenants, mutual responsibility, and equal dignity and align with the Declaration.

All rights exercised operate within the universal human rights protections of this Declaration.

No authority exercised under Te Tiriti may diminish the equal fundamental rights of any other person.

Article 4 — Subsidiarity

Governance decisions shall be made at the lowest practical level closest to the people affected.

Article 5 — Limited and Accountable Power

No governance body may exercise powers not expressly granted by this Declaration.

PART II — RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

Rights are inherent and not granted by the State.

Article 6 — Human Dignity and Equality

All persons are equal in dignity and rights.

No person shall be discriminated against on any unjustifiable ground.

The law applies equally to all.

Article 7 — Civil and Political Rights

Every person has the right to:

- Life and security of person
- Bodily autonomy and informed consent
- Freedom from torture or degrading treatment
- Freedom of thought, conscience, belief, and religion
- Freedom of expression
- Freedom of peaceful assembly and association
- Freedom of movement
- Privacy and protection of personal information
- Protection from arbitrary detention
- Fair trial and natural justice
- Equal political participation and equal vote value

Article 8 — Social and Economic Rights

Every person has the right to reasonable access to:

- Healthcare
- Education
- Sufficient food and clean water
- Adequate housing
- Safe working conditions
- Participation in economic life

These rights guarantee access and opportunity, not equal outcome.

Article 9 — Environmental and Intergenerational Rights

All persons have the right to a healthy natural environment.

Natural resources are held in trust for present and future generations.

Governance bodies, businesses and communities owe a duty of ecological stewardship.

Article 10 — Cultural and Collective Rights

Cultural, linguistic, and community identities are protected.

Collective rights may not diminish the equal individual rights of any person.

Regional and iwi governance arrangements must comply with fundamental rights protections.

Article 11 — Limitation of Rights

Rights may be limited only where:

The limitation is prescribed by clear law.

The limitation serves a legitimate objective in a free and democratic society.

The limitation is necessary and proportionate.

The limitation is publicly justified with evidence.

Article 12 — Emergency Powers

Core rights to life, dignity, and protection from torture may never be suspended.

Any declared national emergency must:

- Be time limited
- Be subject to judicial review
- Be ratified by referendum if extended beyond three months

PART III — NATIONAL COMMUNITY BOARD (NCB)

Article 13 — Establishment

The NCB is the sole national governance body.

It operates strictly within powers granted by this Declaration.

The NCB is subordinate to this Declaration and subject to constitutional review.

Article 14 — Composition

The NCB shall consist of 16 members and one Chair.

Members serve one non-renewable term of five years.

Members may not hold office more than once unless agreed by the people through referendum.

Article 15 — Powers

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The NCB may act only in matters of national necessity, including:

- Defence and international relations
- Currency and macroeconomic stability
- National infrastructure of significance
- National emergency coordination
- Establishing national minimum rights standards

Article 16 — Limits

Expansion of NCB powers requires:

- 75% NCB approval, and
- Binding national referendum approval.

PART IV — REGIONAL COMMUNITY BOARD GOVERNANCE

Article 17 — Regional Community Boards (RCBs)

Regions hold primary authority over:

- Health systems
- Education delivery
- Housing and land use
- Environmental management
- Social and economic development
- Policing consistent with constitutional rights

Article 18 — Autonomy

Regions may design governance structures reflecting local culture and needs, provided constitutional rights are upheld.

PART V — CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Article 19 — Local Community Boards (LCBs)

Regions shall convene LCBs selected by sortition to:

- Review governance decisions
- Propose legislation
- Trigger referenda

And lead local strategy and planning workshops to encourage people's engagement in decision-making.

Article 20 — Quarterly Binding Referenda

Quarterly referenda are binding and required for:

- Constitutional amendments
- Expansion of national powers
- Structural governance changes

And any important National and Regional issues.

PART VI — JUDICIAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW

Article 21 — Independent Judiciary

The judiciary is independent and bound only by this Declaration.

Article 22 — Constitutional Court

A Constitutional Court shall review the consistency of laws and actions with this Declaration.

Its decisions are binding on all governance bodies.

Judges serve single 5 year fixed terms and may not be reappointed.

The Judiciary are answerable to a separate independent body.

PART VII — FINANCE AND PUBLIC TRUST

Article 23 — Public Finance

National revenue may fund only projects, services and investments to support NZ Sovereignty defined in National and Regional Strategic Plans.

Article 24 — Resource Trust

Natural resources and State-Owned Enterprises are held in trust for present and future generations and may not be permanently alienated without the approval of a referendum.

Article 25 — Planning Architecture

Clause 1 — Mandatory Strategic Planning

National and Regional Tiers shall maintain published strategic plans covering no less than ten years and reviewed every three years.

Clause 2 — Operational Alignment

Annual operational plans must demonstrate alignment with:

- a) Constitutional rights
- b) Fiscal sustainability thresholds
- c) Environmental floor standards
- d) Treaty commitments

Clause 3 — Major Project Discipline

Any capital project exceeding a defined constitutional threshold must:

- a) Publish feasibility and cost assumptions
- b) Undergo public consultation
- c) Demonstrate long-term affordability
- d) Be entered into the public dashboard

Clause 4 — Emergency Planning

Emergency activation must:

- a) State duration
- b) Define scope
- c) Contain an automatic sunset clause
- d) Trigger independent constitutional review

Clause 5 — Cross-Tier Consistency

No Regional plan may contradict constitutional protections.

No National plan may override devolved service authority except under defined emergency provisions.

Part VIII — Vision, Strategy and Operational Planning

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Article is to ensure that decisions, public spending and government activity are guided by:

- a. a shared long-term vision;
- b. clear national, regional and community priorities;
- c. practical and properly funded plans;
- d. meaningful participation by the people; and
- e. open reporting on progress and results.

Planning at every level must protect the rights, sovereignty, wellbeing and security of the people, while recognising responsibilities to future generations.

Article 26 — Meaning of key terms

For the purposes of this Declaration:

- a. Vision means the shared future the people want to create and protect.
- b. Strategy means the broad choices and priorities for moving from the present position towards that vision.
- c. Strategic planning means the public and evidence-based process used to agree those choices and priorities.

d. Operational planning means turning agreed priorities into specific, funded and measurable work.

e. Operational plan means the published record of what will be done, who is responsible, what it will cost, when it will be completed and how success will be measured.

Article 27 — National vision

The people of New Zealand shall establish a national vision describing the future they want for the country as a whole. The national vision shall express the country's long-term aspirations for:

- a. democracy and public participation;
- b. national sovereignty and resilience;
- c. the well-being, security and opportunities of the people;
- d. the protection of rights and freedoms;
- e. responsible stewardship of land, water, natural resources and strategic assets;
- f. economic and financial stability;
- g. the relationship between communities and regions; and
- h. the interests of future generations.

The national vision shall be developed through informed public deliberation and approved by the people through a binding nationwide vote.

The national vision shall guide national and regional planning but shall not be used to remove protected rights or unnecessarily take decision-making away from regions and communities.

The national vision shall be reviewed at least once every ten years. Any material change must be openly considered and approved by the people.

Article 28 — Regional visions

Each region shall establish its own regional vision through an open and inclusive process involving the people and communities of that region. A regional vision shall describe:

- a. the future the region wants to create;
- b. its identity, history, culture and values;
- c. its economic, environmental and social aspirations;
- d. its strengths, needs, risks and opportunities; and
- e. the places, resources and features it wishes to protect or strengthen.

A regional vision may recognise a distinctive geographical feature—including a mountain, river, lake, harbour, coastline, forest, geothermal area or fertile plain—as an important part of the region's identity and inheritance.

Where the people identify such a feature as significant, the regional vision and plans may provide for its protection, restoration, responsible use and long-term stewardship.

A regional vision must respect this Declaration, protected rights and matters that properly require national coordination. Within those boundaries, each region shall be free to establish priorities reflecting its own circumstances.

A regional vision shall be approved by the people of the region and reviewed at least once every ten years.

Article 29 — -Principles of strategic planning

National and regional strategic planning must:

- a. begin with an honest stocktake of present conditions;
- b. use reliable evidence and local knowledge;
- c. identify long-term risks, needs and opportunities;
- d. consider different options and their likely consequences;
- e. involve the people affected by the decisions;
- f. establish a limited number of clear priorities;
- g. distinguish national, regional and community responsibilities;
- h. assess costs, benefits, resources and funding requirements;
- i. establish measurable outcomes; and
- j. protect the interests of future generations.

Article 30 — National strategy

The National Community Board shall prepare a national strategy to give practical direction to the national vision.

The national strategy shall be limited to matters that genuinely require nationwide or cross-regional coordination, including:

- a. national sovereignty and security;
- b. constitutional and democratic integrity;
- c. financial stability and national debt;
- d. nationally significant infrastructure;
- e. international relations and trade;
- f. protection of strategic assets;
- g. national emergency preparedness;
- h. national supply and resilience systems;
- i. matters crossing regional boundaries; and

j. minimum rights and service standards applying throughout the country.

The national strategy shall explain why each priority requires national involvement and how it supports the national vision.

The national strategy shall be prepared in partnership with the regions and through public participation.

It shall include long-term outcomes, priorities, responsibilities, funding requirements, timeframes and measures of progress.

Article 31 — Regional strategies

Each Regional Community Board shall prepare a regional strategy that translates the regional vision into agreed priorities. The regional strategy shall reflect the region's:

- a. people and communities;
- b. geography and natural environment;
- c. culture and identity;
- d. public-service needs;
- e. infrastructure;
- f. industries, skills and productive capability;
- g. natural hazards and resilience needs; and
- h. important geographical and cultural features.

Local Community Board plans shall form part of the evidence and foundation for the regional strategy. The Regional Community Board must identify:

- a. priorities shared by several communities;
- b. matters best managed regionally;
- c. matters that should remain locally managed;
- d. matters requiring cooperation with neighbouring regions; and
- e. matters requiring national assistance or coordination.

Regional strategies must be developed through public deliberation and published before final decisions are made.

Article 32 — National operational planning

The National Community Board shall translate the national strategy into a nationwide operational plan.

The nationwide operational plan shall cover only work that requires national responsibility, investment or coordination.

For every programme, project or commitment, the plan must state:

- a. the priority being supported;
- b. the work to be completed;
- c. the body responsible;
- d. the regions and organisations involved;
- e. the approved funding and resources;
- f. the commencement and completion dates;
- g. important milestones;
- h. the expected result;
- i. the measures of success; and
- j. the principal risks and how they will be managed.

No proposed action shall be presented as a confirmed commitment unless responsibility and funding have been identified.

Article 33 — Regional operational planning

Each Regional Community Board shall prepare a regional operational plan bringing together regional responsibilities and the plans of its Local Community Boards.

The regional operational plan shall determine:

- a. what work will be delivered regionally;
- b. what work will remain under community control;
- c. how funding and resources will be shared;
- d. how services and infrastructure will be coordinated;
- e. who is responsible for delivery; and
- f. how progress will be measured and publicly reported.

Regional operational planning must identify and resolve unnecessary duplication, gaps or conflicts between community plans.

Where the Regional Community Board does not include a community priority in the regional plan, it must publicly explain the reasons and identify any alternative response.

Article 34 — Local Community Board plans

Each Local Community Board shall prepare a local operational plan through direct engagement with its community.

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A local operational plan shall identify:

- a. the practical needs and priorities of the community;
- b. work the community can undertake or oversee itself;
- c. work requiring regional coordination or funding;
- d. work involving neighbouring communities; and
- e. work requiring national assistance.

Local plans shall be the starting point for regional planning, not an afterthought added after regional decisions have been made.

Local Community Boards shall receive a clear and reasoned response to the priorities they submit for regional or national consideration.

Article 35 — Planning from the community upwards

Planning shall operate both from the community upwards and from the national level downwards.

Local communities shall identify local needs and actions.

Regions shall bring community plans together, coordinate shared priorities and identify matters requiring wider support.

The national level shall address countrywide and cross-regional responsibilities and provide agreed funding, standards and coordination.

National decisions affecting a region or community must be communicated back to the people affected, together with the reasons, funding commitments and expected results.

Article 36 — Decisions made at the closest practical level

Decisions, services and resources shall be managed as close as reasonably possible to the people and communities affected.

A higher tier may assume responsibility only where coordination, scale, national protection, cross-boundary effects or fairness between regions makes this necessary.

Any transfer of responsibility to a higher tier must be publicly explained, proportionate to the need and subject to review.

Article 37 — Public participation and democratic oversight

The people shall have meaningful opportunities to participate before national, regional and community strategies are adopted or materially changed.

Information required for informed participation must be:

- a. publicly available;
- b. written in understandable language;
- c. supported by relevant evidence;

- d. clear about costs, risks and alternatives; and
- e. made available early enough to influence the decision.

The people shall have the right, through procedures established by law, to initiate the reconsideration of a significant priority or proposed change.

Material changes to an approved national or regional vision must be referred to the affected people for decision.

Article 38 — Budgets, plans and public dashboards

National, regional and community budgets must clearly connect public spending with the priorities and commitments contained in their operational plans.

Each tier shall maintain a public dashboard showing:

- a. what was promised;
- b. who is responsible;
- c. the funding approved and spent;
- d. the work completed;
- e. progress against milestones;
- f. the results achieved;
- g. delays, cost increases or failures; and
- h. the action being taken to address problems.

Reporting must be regular, understandable and accessible to the public.

Where performance falls materially behind the published plan, the responsible body must publish an explanation and a corrective action plan.

Article 39 — Review and continuity

Strategies and operational plans shall be reviewed regularly so they can respond to new evidence, changing conditions and emerging risks.

A change in the membership of a National, Regional or Local Community Board shall not automatically cancel an agreed long-term strategy or committed public project.

Any significant departure from an agreed strategy must be publicly explained and supported by evidence.

Emergency changes must be necessary, proportionate, time-limited and reviewed once the emergency has passed.

16. Protection of rights and future generations

No vision, strategy or operational plan may:

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- a. override the rights and protections contained in this Declaration;
- b. unfairly exclude or disadvantage a community or minority;
- c. transfer responsibilities between tiers without proper authority and justification;
- d. conceal public costs, liabilities or material risks; or
- e. knowingly impose serious and avoidable harm on future generations.

PART IX — ACCOUNTABILITY AND INTEGRITY

Article 40 — Recall and Term Limits

All representatives are subject to job descriptions, accountability requirements and recall by constituents.

Article 41 — Anti-Corruption

Independent oversight bodies shall monitor governance integrity.

Conflicts of interest must be publicly declared at all three Governance levels.

PART X — AMENDMENT

Article 42 — Amendment Procedure

Amendments require:

- Two-thirds approval of affected governance bodies
- Binding national referendum approval

No amendment may abolish fundamental rights protections.

CLOSING DECLARATION

This Declaration affirms that governance is a public trust.

It protects liberty without fragmentation, unity without domination, and shared authority without hierarchy.

All power is limited.

All people are equal in dignity.

All governance is accountable to the people.