



Labour led Government Co-operation Agreement with the Green Party

The Green Party agrees to provide stability to a Labour/Progressive coalition government by co-operating on agreed policy and budget initiatives and not opposing confidence or supply for the term of this Parliament.

The Green Party is committed to ecological sustainability, a self-reliant economy, a fairer society and a peaceful world.

The relationship between the Green Party and the government will be based on good faith and no surprises.

Consultation arrangements

The Government will consult with the Green party on issues including

- The broad outline of the legislative programme
- Key legislative measures
- Major policy issues
- Broad budget parameters

Consultation will occur in a timely fashion to ensure Green Party views can be incorporated into final decision-making.

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
- Regular 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
- Input into the budget process and inclusion of Green Party budget initiatives in each of the three years

Policy Programme

The government will ensure that the Green Party is briefed on a six monthly basis on the forward programme for policy development in environment, energy, sustainable economics, transport, conservation, health and social development, in order that specific areas for joint work can be agreed upon from time to time.

The government and the Green Party have agreed that involvement in the programme of policy development will occur at three different levels

Categorisation of issues at particular levels will occur by agreement between the Prime Minister and the Green Leadership.

Level 1

For issues identified as level 1 the Green Party spokesperson will be fully involved in the detailed development and implementation of policy proposals on the basis set out in appendix 1.

In the first instance it is agreed that two areas will be categorised as level 1

- An enhanced energy efficiency programme including promotion of a solar energy programme.
- A buy kiwi made programme.

Level 2

For issues identified as level 2 issues Green Party involvement will occur as set out in appendix 2

In the first instance, it is agreed that the following issues will be defined as level 2

- Environmental education.
- Initiatives to improve nutrition.
- Community and voluntary sector.

Level 3

For issues identified as level 3 there will be 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.

Other issues

For all other issues there will be consultation for the purposes of information sharing without any particular expectation of developing agreed positions.

Specific policy initiatives

The Green Party have identified a range of other issues which they see as priority issues to be addressed during this term of Parliament

The Labour/Progressive government is committed to ensuring these issues are addressed.

Budget initiatives

Specifically the government has agreed that budgets over this term of Parliament will include initiatives aimed at

- Building increased capacity for public passenger transport.
- Increasing the number of students eligible for student allowances by increasing parental income thresholds.
- Further reducing the levels of child poverty.
- Increasing ODA.
- Improving the nutritional environment, especially among children.
- Enhancing organics advisory services.
- Environmental education.
- Conservation - intensive, integrated habitat management at additional sites to restore populations of endangered species, in co-operation with local communities.

Details of these initiatives will be developed in consultation with the Green Party spokesperson.

Policy initiatives

Minimum Wage

The Green Party is committed to a minimum wage of \$12.00 an hour. The Labour/Progressive Government has raised the minimum wage each year it has been in office, and agrees to continue to increase the level on an annual basis in consultation with the Green Party, with a view to it being set at \$12.00 per hour by the end of 2008 if economic conditions permit.

GMOs

The Green Party remains opposed to the outdoors release of any GMOs. The Government has legislated for a process to ensure any such release is subject to strict conditions. Both parties to this agreement accept that it is important that New Zealand consumers and producers must maintain the right to grow and/or choose to consume GE free products. To this end it is agreed that during this term of Parliament work will be undertaken to increase the certainty around the ability of non GM producers to maintain GM Free production and be able to identify their product as such to meet market access requirements.

Peacemaking

The Green Party is committed to the development of New Zealand's capacity in international peacemaking and endorses what the Government has already done, and supports future work in this area. The Government agrees to maintain a dialogue with the Green Party on these issues at the leadership level.

Maori Seats

The Green Party believes that the Maori seats should be entrenched in the same way that the general seats are. The government agrees to retain the Maori seats until such time as Maori no longer choose to have them.

Direction of Policy

A broad outline of the directions the Green Party will be promoting in some areas of joint work are set out in appendix three. The government notes these directions and is committed to working in good faith to deliver programmes which are consistent with them. Further details of the initiatives will be developed in consultation with the Green Party spokesperson.

Government Policies

The government has identified the pledges on its commitment card along with their election policy to extend the working for families package as priorities for them and the Green Party agrees to support the legislation required to give effect to interest free loans, working for families extension, rates rebate, and KiwiSaver. The Greens reserve their position in relation to legislation relating to treaty claims deadlines.

Support for other legislation will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis.

House management

The Green Party will be consulted on the outline of the legislative programme on a regular basis, and support for procedural motions will be negotiated. The Green Party will support all procedural motions in the House and select committees where they have been consulted and they have worked with the government on legislation and agreed to support the legislation.

The Green Party and the government will consult on the make-up and operation of select committees and the distribution of officer of parliament positions with a view to reaching an agreed position.

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, 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.

Collective responsibility

The Green Party will not be bound by collective responsibility on government decisions. Where the Green Party has participated in the development of a policy initiative, and that participation has led to an agreed position, it is expected that all parties to this agreement will publicly support the process and the outcome.

Relationship to other agreements

Both parties to this agreement recognise that the government will be working with a range of parties both in terms of coalition and confidence and supply arrangements.

The government agrees that it will not enter into any other relationship agreement which is inconsistent with this agreement and the Green Party and the government agree that they will each act in good faith to allow all such agreements to be complied with.

Dated the 17th October 2005

Rt Hon Helen Clark
Labour Leader

Rod Donald Jeanette Fitzsimons
Green Party Co-Leaders

Appendix 1

Level 1 issues

Where an issue has been identified as a level 1 issue the following arrangements will be put in place, in addition to those set out in appendix 2.

1. the Minister will set out in writing the scope of the agreed area of involvement and the arrangements for interaction with officials
2. the agreed Green representative will have direct access to officials and will be able to request reports from officials
3. Budget documentation will specify the funding which is associated with the identified area
4. the Green Party representative will report regularly to the Minister on progress on policy development or implementation in the area
5. any Cabinet committee papers arising from work in the area will be presented by the responsible Minister
6. if such a paper is on a committee agenda the Green representative will be invited to the committee to take part in the discussion relating to the paper
7. the responsible Minister will keep the Green representative briefed on other aspects of the portfolio which may impinge on the designated area
8. the government will publicly acknowledge the area as being one of specific Green Party influence and the Green Party representative will be a designated spokesperson in the area

Appendix 2

Level 2 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 level 2 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, including negotiating any resources required to implement agreed policies.

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.

Appendix 3

Further details of Green Party proposed budget and policy initiatives.

These summaries set out the Green Party's initial outline for the development of some of the agreed budget and policy initiatives.

Energy Efficiency and Solar Initiative (level one)

The Green Party sees the energy efficiency and solar initiative as part of the Government's broader programme on sustainable energy and climate change and an important step to reducing New Zealand's energy use and preparing for the end of cheap oil.

Goals:

- significantly reduce the projected \$0.5b Kyoto deficit by 2008
- meet the government's NEECS target of 2% pa improved energy efficiency
- improve living conditions with warmer, drier homes and solar hot water
- slow the increase in the cost of oil imports

Main initiatives

- clarify the mandates, working relationships, gaps and overlaps between EECA, the Commission, the Climate change office and Ministry for the Environment
- build capacity in the solar water heating manufacturing and installing industry through economies of scale and bring down the price of units with a bulk order mediated by the government
- significantly raise the fuel efficiency of vehicles coming into NZ with a mandatory market based mechanism
- increase and extend support for insulating and damp proofing homes
- urgently upgrade the building standard for new homes to reflect what is efficient at today's electricity prices
- change the culture of energy efficiency with a greater sense of urgency and drive and spread the message that it has a whole of government support
- move beyond research into demonstration and commercial projects in biofuels in co-operation with industry

Requirements:

- A progressive increase in EECA's budget

"Buy Kiwi Made"

The Green Party see a "Buy Kiwi Made" programme being part of the broader programme of achieving sustainable development of the New Zealand economy.

Goals:

- Creating awareness of the employment, economic, environmental and social benefits of buying locally made products and services
- Building brand loyalty for New Zealand made products
- Reducing imports, especially of consumption goods
- Helping to reduce New Zealand's trade deficit
- Helping to increase New Zealand's manufacturing capability
- Helping to create employment

- Helping to reduce fuel consumption

Main initiatives:

- Media marketing campaign
- Investigation of ways of better distinguishing New Zealand made goods from imports
- Government leadership through public sector procurement policies and further development of the Industry Capability Network
- Audit of New Zealand imports

Requirements:

This programme would need to:

- Proceed in co-operation with business sector interests, especially Business New Zealand who operate the “Buy NZ Made” brand.
- Be consistent with New Zealand’s commitments under ILO, WTO, CER, *CEPs* and other international agreements.

Nutrition

The Green Party’s proposal is to expand current government budget and policy health initiatives aimed at improving children’s nutrition by encouraging healthy eating.

This could be done through a range of initiatives including:

- Expanding the nutrition section within the Ministry of Health
- Establishing a Nutrition fund administered by the Ministry of Health to fund initiatives aimed at creating a healthy eating environment. Funded proposals could include:
 - High profile, multi-media and other educational campaigns to encourage healthy eating
 - Helping schools and other public funding institutions to implement healthy eating guidelines.
 - Funding for educational and children’s sports organisations seeking to replace sponsorship of activities presently funded by food companies that promote unhealthy food to children.
- Developing and publishing nutritional criteria to identify which food or drinks are considered to be nutritious and would be recommended as a routine part of a healthy, balanced diet, and which would not be recommended as a routine part of children’s diet. While New Zealand has no criteria, much of this work is in development in the UK and New Zealand could draw heavily on this experience.
- Producing healthy eating policy and guidelines for schools and other publicly funded institutions, and setting a timetable for their implementation.
- Publishing an annual Children’s Food Promotion plan that sets out how the Ministry intends to develop an environment in New Zealand that supports children to make healthy eating choices. This would involve producing an annual report to Parliament outlining its strategies and plans
- Developing recommended daily intakes for children for fat, saturated fat, sugar, salt and key nutrients.

- Developing a 'traffic light' labelling system to enable consumers to quickly identify healthy food.

Organics Advisory Service

The Green Party proposes to work with the government to better support New Zealand's organic farmers through increased funding for advisory services for organic farmers. This could include:

- Financial and other assistance to support mentoring of new organic farmers by experienced farmers
- Funding of website or phone advisory service run by experienced farmers
- Education, research, or advocacy services

Environmental Education

The Green Party proposes to work with Government to build on the Greens' 2002 Budget initiative to enable the implementation of the 1998 national Strategy for Environmental Education and the 1999 Guidelines for Environmental Education in Schools. In particular the project would aim to:

- build capacity in the Colleges of Education and in schools to deliver environmental education, including in bilingual and total immersion schools
- co-ordinate the various environmental education initiatives occurring at present
- develop cross-curricula achievement standards in environmental education.