

Rt Hon Chris Hipkins
Prime Minister of New Zealand

Protect the Marine Environment - Support Debbie Ngarewa-Packer's Bill to ban seabed mining

Dear Prime Minister

In the coming weeks we will see Te Pāti Māori's Debbie Ngarewa-Packer MP's bill to ban seabed mining in Aotearoa being debated in Parliament. We call on you to support this bill at First Reading and enable the people of Aotearoa to have their voice heard during the select committee process.

As you know, Aotearoa is an island nation full of coastal whānau, hapū, iwi and communities who depend upon healthy, thriving moana. The whakapapa connections of tangata whenua and the marine environment are inextricable. We hold dear our coastlines and our uniquely diverse marine areas out to the ocean depths. As we face unprecedented and profound environmental crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, we must steer away from destructive activities, such as seabed mining, and seize every opportunity to enable the protection and restoration of local, regional and global marine environments.

In Aotearoa, seabed mining has been consistently rejected in the courts. The Supreme Court rejected it because of seabed mining's material harm to the ocean and because it did not comply with Aotearoa's Te Tiriti o Waitangi obligations. Today, corporate interest off our shores has all but vanished, with only a few remnant exploration permits.

In the court of public opinion, the proposed activity has been subject to sustained rejection across the board by tangata whenua, coastal communities, environmental groups, fishing interests and the public at large. Efforts to oppose seabed mining applications have been long, arduous and expensive, imposing great cost to these sectors of society over the last decade. More than 35,000 people have signed a petition addressed to your predecessor Prime Minister Ardern, calling on the Government to ban this destructive practice.

Removing this threat to Aotearoa's marine areas would provide many benefits and many winners with minimal losses. A ban exercises our cultural and legal obligations under domestic and international law, to protect and preserve the marine environment. It expresses common values that we as a nation hold, at a time when we need reminding.

On the global stage we could hold our heads high as we advocate for clean oceans, thriving marine life, and giving effect to indigenous rights.

We note that several jurisdictions have implemented bans on seabed mining including [Northern Territory](#), [New South Wales](#), [Oregon](#) and very recently [French Polynesia](#) and [California](#) are undergoing processes of implementing such bans.

It seems extraordinary that Aotearoa now lags behind these jurisdictions, despite us having given this industry the most detailed scrutiny of any country in the world, and found it wanting.

The environment, the ocean, and future generations need us to take decisive action to ban seabed mining now.

We call on you, our Prime Minister, to seize this opportunity and support Debbie Ngarewa-Packer's Member's Bill. It is the only responsible course of action. And it's time.



Ngāti Ruanui
Rachel Rae

Rangitāwhi
Ngapari Nui

Wai-o-turi Marae
Wheturangi Walsh-Tapiata

Kasm
kiwis against seabed mining

Kiwis Against Seabed Mining
Cindy Baxter
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Jim Yeoman

NEW ZEALAND Underwater ASSOCIATION

NZ Underwater Association
Allan Davidson



TE KOROWAI O
NGĀRUAHINE
TRUST

Te Korowai o Ngāruahine
Te Aorangi Dillon
Tumu Whakarae

Hāpotiki & Hāmua
Rukutai Watene & Turangapito
Parata

Taiporohenui Marae
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deepsea conservation coalition

Deep Sea Conservation Coalition
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