



Date:

3 June 2022

Name of submitter:

Electricity Networks Association

Industry/area of interest:

Utilities/infrastructure

Contact details

Richard Le Gros, Policy and Innovation Manager

Address:

Level 5, Legal House

101 Lambton Quay

WELLINGTON 6011

Telephone:

64 4 555 0075

Email:

richard@electricity.org.nz

Submission on draft National Adaptation Plan and Managed Retreat

Submission to the Ministry for the Environment

From the Electricity Networks Association

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1. Introduction

The Electricity Networks Association (**ENA**) appreciates the opportunity to make a submission to the Ministry for the Environment on the draft national adaptation plan (NAP) and managed retreat. The ENA represents the 27 electricity distribution businesses (EDBs) in New Zealand (see Appendix A) which provide local and regional electricity networks. We have restricted our response to those sections of the consultation most relevant to our member companies. These are general questions, system-wide actions, infrastructure and managed retreat.

2. Executive Summary

ENA supports the broad direction of the NAP – to ensure the machinery of government (policy, legislation, regulation, etc) are fit for purpose for adaptation to climate change, and that there are clear, consistent and high-quality information and tools available for helping adapt to climate change. We have focussed our response on highlighting those issues which are largely unique to regulated infrastructure providers such as EDBs.

3. Draft National Adaptation Strategy

3.1. General questions

1. Climate change is already impacting New Zealanders. Some examples include extreme weather events such as storms, heatwaves and heavy rainfall which affects lives, livelihoods, health and wellbeing, ecosystems and species, economic, social and cultural assets, services (including ecosystem services) and infrastructure. How is climate change impacting you? This could be within your community and/or hapū and iwi, and/or your business/organisation, and/or your region.

The electricity distribution sector is already affected by the impacts of climate change in several ways. The most significant and obvious of these is the growing intensity and frequency of extreme weather events – in particular severe storms. The sector also anticipates more periods of drought which can have the effect of drying vegetation, enhancing the risk of wildfires. Events such as severe storms have an immediate impact on the security and reliability of the electricity lines service that EDBs provide to their customers, and impact on the cost of the service, as response and repair costs mount up. This leads to greater expenses for EDBs as they prepare to respond to these events.

Looking further ahead, the anticipated rise in sea levels and subsequent coastal inundation will mean that electricity distribution infrastructure located in vulnerable coastal areas will be impacted. In the short term this might mean interruptions of supply to communities served by these assets, and increased costs incurred in repair and maintenance. In the longer term it may mean relocating those assets away from coastal areas, which can incur very significant costs and disruption as new routes for electricity lines are secured, resource consents obtained, and construction carried out.

Also further ahead, increased ambient temperatures will mean longer duration growing seasons for vegetation, which in turn will require greater expenditure by the EDB to ensure vegetation is kept well clear of overhead lines. ENA has long advocated that the Electricity (Hazards from Trees) Regulations 2003 impose an inefficient and ineffective method of managing vegetation close to overhead powerlines.

Higher ambient temperatures may also mean that the performance and capability of some plant and equipment (overhead lines, transformers and switchgear, etc) may be effectively downgraded as less thermal headroom is available for the equipment to operate safely. However, it is anticipated that any de-rating of assets due to higher ambient temperatures would be massively outweighed by growth in demand (driving network capacity increases) to accommodate electrification of New Zealand.

We note that the draft NAP focusses heavily on biophysical impact (built environment and natural environment) but less focus on the human, economy and governance domains (as identified in the National Risk Assessment). Of considerable importance across these domains, and for EDBs, are the transitional risks, and how the NAP interacts with these. For example, while the NAP focuses on reforming institutions and government policy to be fit for climate change, this doesn't necessarily reflect the impact of unprecedented change at an organisation and workforce level. We encourage the government to consider how these transitional risks can be addressed in future adaptation work.

2. The national adaptation plan focuses on three key areas. Please indicate which area is most important for you (tick box).

focus area one: reform institutions to be fit for a changing climate. This means updating the legislative settings so that those who are responsible for preparing for and reducing exposure to changing climate risk will be better equipped.

focus area two: provide data, information and guidance to enable everyone to assess and reduce their own climate risks. This means that all New Zealanders will have access to information about the climate risks that are relevant to them

focus area three: embed climate resilience across government strategies and policies. This means that Government agencies will be considering climate risks in their strategies and proposals.

other? Please explain.

We have selected 'reform of institutions to be fit for a changing climate' as our most important focus area, as having fit-for-purpose regulation and regulators is critical to the sector's ability to adapt to climate change impacts. We also want to make clear that the other focus areas presented are also of significant importance to the distribution sector.

3. We all have a role to play in building resilience to climate change, but some New Zealanders may be more affected and less able to respond. There is a risk that climate change could exacerbate existing inequities for different groups in society. Appendix 3 sets out the full list of actions in this national adaptation plan.

a) What are the key actions that are essential to help you adapt? Please list them.

The electricity distribution sector requires high-quality, nationally consistent information on projected climate change impacts to enable it to plan and respond to these effects as efficiently and effectively as possible. In addition, the economic regulation of the sector by the Commerce Commission (under Part 4 of the Commerce Act 1986) needs to be reviewed and, if necessary, updated to ensure it is sufficiently flexible to account for these emerging risks and opportunities.

Some of the obligations placed on the electricity distribution sector by the Electricity Act 1992, in particular Section 105 (Continuance of distributors' supply obligation), should be reviewed to ensure they are compatible with the more dynamic and uncertain environment the sector finds itself operating in. This will be relevant in the context of managed retreat from vulnerable coastal areas.

b) Which actions do you consider to be most urgent? Please list them.

The most immediately important actions, and these are largely recognised in the draft NAP, is for central government to provide clear and consistent information to the infrastructure sector on where and how the effects of climate change are likely to manifest, and over what timeframes (i.e. produce national climate change projections). Then, a national strategy on how New Zealand will adapt to these impacts is crucial. Private-sector infrastructure providers, such as the EDBs, can then align their own adaptation strategies to that of central and local government. These projections and strategies should be reflected clearly in the content of District Plans and Regional Spatial Strategies (under the incoming Natural and Built Environments Act).

c) Are there any actions that would help ensure that existing inequities are not exacerbated? Please list them.

Currently regulators and regulatory settings (including the Electricity Industry Participation Code) strongly encourage EDBs to design their tariffs to be as cost reflective as possible. Notwithstanding this, there is, and has historically been, a strong element of cross-subsidisation from urban electricity consumers to rural and remote-rural consumers, the latter two of which have much higher costs to serve on a per customer basis.

As the sector adapts to impacts of climate change, there will likely be a significantly greater level of investment needed, on a per customer basis, in rural and remote-rural areas. The government, and sector regulators such as the Commerce Commission and Electricity Authority (EA), should think carefully about where these new costs should fall to ensure a just and equitable response to climate change adaptation, while not placing undue additional costs on those who will not see a benefit from the investments made. The outcome of such a review should permeate through all layers of government policy related to the electricity distribution sector, and could arguably be a useful feature of the forthcoming national energy strategy.

d) Are there any actions not included in this draft national adaptation plan that would enable you to assess your risk and help you adapt?

No.

4. Central government cannot bear all the risks and costs of adaptation. What role do you think asset owners, banks and insurers, the private sector, local government and central government should play in:

a) improving resilience to the future impacts of climate change?

It is appropriate that infrastructure owners should make decisions about how to improve the resilience of their assets and bear the risk and costs associated with those decisions. However, in the case of regulated utilities such as EDBs, the model of economic regulation must be able to accommodate and allow for the additional revenue required to put those decisions into effect. As we've noted in our response to question 3a above, the current model of economic regulation is built on a premise of steady-state, incremental improvements to efficiency and performance of regulated businesses over time. The impacts of climate change, and some of the actions being taken to mitigate it (e.g. electrification), do not conform well to that model.

b) sharing the costs of adaptation?

It is likely that EDBs will absorb the cost of climate change adaptation measures into their general costs to serve. Under the status quo, those costs would then be shared across the mass of their customers. As we explain in our response to question 3c, a change would be required to EDB pricing methods, and the EA pricing principles, and possibly primary legislation, to enable the costs of adaptation measures to fall more directly on those customers that benefit (e.g. customers in vulnerable coastal communities).

5. The National Climate Change Risk Assessment recognised that there may be economic opportunities in adapting to a changing climate.

a) What opportunities do you think could exist for your community or sector?

New Zealand may see ambient temperature rise as a result of climate change, and this may in turn reduce overall heating load on the electricity system and peaks in heating demand. Conversely, it may also drive an increase in air conditioning load.

b) What role could central government play in harnessing those opportunities?

No comment.

3.2. System-wide actions

6. Do you agree with the objectives in this chapter? (Yes / No / Partially)

ENA agrees with the objectives in this chapter.

While we support the provision of greater adaptation information and guidance from central government, we note the objectives in this chapter related to regulation do not adequately address arrangements for regulated sectors such as EDBs. When considering the system of regulation in play in the electricity distribution sector, government needs to consider the key regulators themselves (the Commerce Commission and Electricity Authority) and how their enabling legislation and mandates allow for climate change adaptation in the sectors they regulate.

7. What else should guide the whole-of-government approach to help New Zealand adapt and build resilience to a changing climate?

We have nothing further to add.

8. Do you agree that the new tools, guidance and methodologies set out in this chapter will be useful for you, your community and/or iwi and hapū, business or organisation to assess climate risks and plan for adaptation? (Yes / No / Partially) Please explain your answer.

ENA agrees that the new tools, guidance and methodologies set out in this chapter will be useful for the electricity distribution sector. A single set of climate change projections produced by an authoritative source (i.e. central government) will give confidence to EDBs that they are assessing their infrastructure for climate change risks and impacts using the best possible data. This will make conversations with regulators such as the Commerce Commission and planning authorities more straightforward, when the source of climate change projections is already known and trusted by those parties.

The proposed guidance for preparing adaptation plans could also be helpful for the electricity distribution sector. It would allow a consistent response from the sector and evidence-supported discussions with key regulators. It may also enable greater collaboration opportunities, as EDBs and other utilities can work more closely when planning for a single set of risks.

9. Are there other actions central government should consider to:

a) enable you to access and understand the information you need to adapt to climate change? (Yes / No / Unsure). Please explain your answer.

At this stage we don't consider that there is any further information required from central government, beyond what is proposed in this draft national adaptation plan.

b) provide further tools, guidance and methodologies to assist you to adapt to climate change? (Yes / No / Unsure). Please explain your answer.

At this stage we don't see a need for any further guidance from central government, beyond what is proposed in this draft national adaptation plan.

c) remove barriers to greater investment in climate resilience? (Yes / No / Unsure). Please explain your answer.

At present, the EDBs and Commerce Commission are grappling with the inflexible nature of Part 4 of the Commerce Act – which guides the Commission's price-quality regime - when trying to enable a fundamental shift in how electricity distribution networks are funded and designed. If not addressed, this same inflexibility will also present challenges for investments in climate change adaptation. Central government should actively review and consider whether enabling legislation for key sector regulators (the Commerce Commission and Electricity Authority) will adequately empower those agencies to support sector adaptation plans and investments.

d) support local planning and risk reduction measures while the resource management and emergency management system reforms progress? (Yes / No / Unsure). Please explain your answer.

Unsure.

10. What actions do you think will have the most widespread and long-term benefit for New Zealand?

The most critical actions proposed are those related to reform of the planning system and establishing a national system for managed retreat. The planning system reform is absolutely critical to the infrastructure sector. Without an enabling framework for planning in New Zealand, many adaptation measures that the infrastructure sector must take will be frustrated, adding delay and expense or preventing projects going ahead.

11. Are there additional actions that would strengthen climate resilience? (Yes / No / Unsure). Please explain your answer.

Unsure.

12. There are several Government reform programmes underway that can address some barriers to adaptation, including the Resource Management (RM) reform. Are there any additional actions that we could include in the national adaptation plan that would help to address barriers in the short-term before we transition to a new resource management system?

It is difficult to comment. It is hard to know how long the transition to the new planning system, including implementation by planning authorities, will take. If this were to take a relatively long time (say more than two years), we would encourage government to develop national policy direction either specific to the electricity distribution sector, or more generically to utility providers, to support the build, maintenance and repair of their networks, which could include actions associated with climate change adaptation.

Government could also expedite legislative changes to the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 to enable natural hazard information to be applied consistently to Land Information Memoranda nation-wide. This change is planned for but will not take effect until 2024.

13. In addition to clarifying roles and providing data, information, tools and guidance, how can central government unlock greater investment in resilience?

As noted above, ensuring that the regime for economic regulation of regulated utilities such as EDBs is structured such to allow adaptation-related investments to be justified to the economic regulator will be critical to allow investments to proceed.

a) Would a taxonomy of 'green activities' for New Zealand help to unlock investment for climate resilience? (Yes / No / Unsure). Please explain your answer.

We are unsure if a taxonomy of 'green activities' would help to unlock investment, but we do think there would be significant complexity involved in developing a useful definition for these sorts of activities.

3.3. Homes, buildings and places

19. Do you agree with the outcome and objectives in this chapter? (Yes / No / Partially) Please explain your answer.

We have no comments on the specific questions under the 'Homes, buildings and places' section of this consultation. We do however wish to make an overarching comment supporting the commentary on page 60 of the draft NAP that:

"Infrastructure plays a key role in supporting the resilience of homes, buildings and places by connecting communities and places and allowing for goods and services to travel. It also supports new development and housing and helps communities to thrive."

Infrastructure is critical to achieving some of the objectives described in this section of the draft NAP, which in turn lends greater importance to the areas of the NAP that focus more specifically on infrastructure.

3.4. Infrastructure

26. Do you agree with the outcome and objectives in this chapter? (Yes / No / Partially) Please explain your answer.

ENA agrees with the objectives outlined in this chapter. They seem appropriate in the context of the infrastructure assets that electricity distribution networks own and operate.

27. What else should guide central government's actions to prepare infrastructure for a changing climate?

Government should examine the regulatory regime that governs electricity distribution and other regulated natural monopolies. The enabling legislation for regulators of these sectors (particularly the Commerce Commission) has a very strong influence on the kinds of activities and investments that can be made by these businesses, including in climate change adaptation.

28. Do you agree with the actions set out in this chapter? (Yes / No / Partially) Please explain your answer.

ENA agrees with the actions set out in this chapter, however we want to sound a note of caution on the actions associated with central government (or central government agencies) developing methodologies, guidance, codes, etc. Where these new tools impact on privately-owned and operated infrastructure, it is critical that the expertise of those businesses has a strong influence on the content of those tools. Specifically, the proposed "methodology for assessing impacts on physical assets and the services" and the "resilience standard or code for infrastructure" need to be influenced heavily by the expertise of the sectors impacted, to ensure these tools are fit for purpose.

ENA and its members would welcome the opportunity to work with Te Waihangā on this material.

29. The national adaptation plan has identified several actions to support adaptation in all infrastructure types and all regions of Aotearoa.

a) Do you see potential for further aligning actions across local government, central government and private sector asset owners? (Yes / No / Unsure). Please explain your answer.

As we noted in our answer to question 28, we strongly encourage agencies tasked with developing new guidance materials, methodologies, codes, standards, etc related to the adaptation of infrastructure to climate change, to engage fully with the owners and operators of that infrastructure.

b) Do you see any further opportunities to include local mana whenua perspectives and mātauranga Māori in infrastructure adaptation decision-making? (Yes / No / Unsure). Please explain your answer.

No comment.

c) Do you see any further opportunities to include local community perspectives in infrastructure adaptation decision-making? (Yes / No / Unsure). Please explain your answer.

As local authorities begin to undertake Dynamic Adaptive Pathways Planning (DAPP) with at-risk communities, it is essential it is carried out in conjunction with other lifeline utilities providers. Engaging with, and informing, local communities about the challenges faced by utilities providers, and for utility providers to hear community expectations and aspirations in high-risk areas, will be critical to the success of DAPP. Existing DAPP advice to

local authorities needs to be updated to better reflect the importance of utilities providers in the development of these community plans.

d) Do you see any further opportunities to ensure that groups who may be disproportionately impacted by climate change, or who are less able to adapt (such as those on low incomes, beneficiaries, disabled people, women, older people, youth, migrant communities) have continued and improved access to infrastructure services as we adapt? (Yes / No / Unsure). Please explain your answer.

No comment.

e) Do you think we have prioritized the right tools and guidance to help infrastructure asset owners understand and manage climate risk? (Yes / No / Unsure). Please explain your answer.

We think the right tools and guidance have been prioritised to help infrastructure asset owners understand and manage climate risk. Generally speaking, EDBs are well equipped to manage impacts of climate change on their networks. But the provision of high quality, consistent, best-practice guidance material from authoritative sources (such as central government and their agencies) helps to ensure that these decisions are well-informed and taken with a common understanding of the anticipated impacts.

30. Are there additional infrastructure actions that would help to strengthen Māori climate resilience? (Yes / No / Unsure). Please explain your answer.

Unsure.

31. Are there any other tools or data that would help infrastructure asset owners make better decisions?

There are no additional data or tools we can suggest that would be helpful at this time.

3.5. Closing general question

51. Do you have any other thoughts about the draft national adaptation plan that you would like to share?

ENA supports the government's efforts to develop a clear, long-term strategy for how New Zealand will adapt to the effects of climate change. The electricity distribution sector is very aware of the risks climate change poses to its assets, and is working to ensure the vital services it delivers to businesses and communities is assured in the long term.

4. Managed retreat

52. Do you agree with the proposed principles and objectives for managed retreat? Please explain why or why not.

ENA agrees that the proposed principles and objectives for managed retreat are appropriate.

53. Are there other principles and objectives you think would be useful? Please explain why.

The only additional principle or objective we would propose is that central government should be mindful of regulatory and contractual obligations placed on businesses, that may need to be altered or removed in a situation where managed retreat is enacted. In the same way that the liabilities of local government should be clarified, it should also be made clear to infrastructure providers what their ongoing obligations, both regulatory and contractual, are in a situation of managed retreat.

54. Do you agree with the process outlined and what would be required to make it most effective?

The proposed process appears reasonable, provided flexibility is preserved for individual circumstances. We suggest that in step B, where councils, iwi/Māori and the community in the affected area explore options for reducing risk, infrastructure providers should be party to these conversations. The decisions taken at this stage in the process could be significantly influenced by the adaptation measures that are or are not available to key infrastructure providers. Where infrastructure providers are operating and maintaining very long-lived assets, it is important they have as early notice as possible that a managed retreat may be enacted, so they can manage their infrastructure in that area as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Currently, the guidance available relating to managed retreat and DAPP has been very focused on local government. Expanding this focus to other infrastructure providers will benefit the process. There is also value in continuing to highlight that managed retreat does not explicitly relate to coastal communities, or will always be the result of sea level rise or inundation.

55. What do you think could trigger the process? What data and information would be needed?

We note that commencing, or even openly discussing, a potential managed retreat process, could no doubt lead to very strongly feelings for communities that are resident in or value that particular area. With that in mind, central government should be very careful that the system of managed retreat is invoked only when there is a high degree of certainty that it is warranted.

A managed retreat process should be considered only when it is known, to a high degree of confidence, that it is either impractical or unaffordable to protect a community from inundation via adaptation measures (e.g. coastal defences, etc). It may be that some critical sites (e.g. ports, airports, etc) may be defended from coastal inundation in the longer term, rather than retreated from. As such infrastructure providers serving these sites must have certainty around their long-term viability.

56. What other processes do you think might be needed, and in what circumstances?

No comment.

57. What roles and responsibilities do you think central government, local government, iwi/Māori, affected communities, individuals, businesses, and the wider public should have in

a) a managed retreat process?

Infrastructure providers such as EDBs need clarity and certainty around the long-term requirements for their networks. EDBs should be responsible for adapting their infrastructure to the effects of climate change and removing it, when appropriate, from areas subject to managed retreat. These outcomes will be delivered most efficiently when the EDB has the longest possible notice that such measures are necessary. The other authorities in the managed retreat process – particularly central and local government – should have clear responsibilities to ensure that other parties are kept well-informed of decisions around managed retreat.

b) sharing the costs of managed retreat?

EDBs will incur additional costs when carrying out works to adapt their networks to the effects of climate change, or to relocate those networks in the case of managed retreat. There needs to be clarity from the key industry regulators (Commerce Commission and Electricity Authority) as to where these new additional costs should fall within the EDB customer base.

58. What support may be needed to help iwi/Māori, affected communities, individuals, businesses and the wider public participate in a managed retreat process?

EDBs recognise they must have the responsibility and capability to adapt or remove their networks in response to a situation of managed retreat. The best support that can be provided to them in carrying out this role is to ensure that EDBs have access to good quality, clear information at as early a stage as possible in the managed retreat process. In addition, as noted in our response to question 53, central government should consider whether EDBs should be relieved of some regulatory obligations (e.g. section 105 of the Electricity Act) where it become infeasible to continue to impose them on EDBs.

59. A typical managed retreat will have many costs, including those arising from preparation (including gathering data and information), the need to participate in the process, relocating costs and the costs of looking after the land post-retreat. In light of your feedback on roles and responsibilities (Q57), who do you think should be responsible for or contribute to these costs?

Speaking for the EDB sector, costs associated with managed retreat of assets should fall to electricity consumers. But there is a conversation that needs to take place between the sector, central government and regulators as to which sub-set of electricity consumers that should be. This could be the whole network customer base (i.e. smearing the cost) or just the affected community. Alternatively, central or local government could make a fund available to support infrastructure owners such as EDBs in carrying out managed retreat of their assets. However this would represent a cross-subsidy from either taxpayers or ratepayers to electricity consumers directly impacted by a managed retreat process.

60. What do you consider the key criteria for central government involvement in managed retreat?

Ideally, other than simply establishing the national policy and legislative framework for managed retreat, central government should not need to be actively involved in individual instances of managed retreat. There may need to be exceptions to this when nationally significant sites and assets are involved (e.g. ports, airports, the defence estate, etc). Central government may also have an enduring role in funding some aspects of managed retreat.

61. There may be fewer options for homes and community buildings (eg, schools, churches, community halls) to move than businesses (eg, retail and office buildings, factories, utilities) for financial, social, emotional and cultural reasons. That may suggest a different process for retreat, and different roles and responsibilities for these actors. Should commercial properties/areas and residential properties/areas be treated differently in the managed retreat process? Please explain why.

No comment.

62. Even in areas where communities are safe, local services and infrastructure, such as roads, power lines and pipes may become damaged more frequently and be more expensive to maintain because of erosion or increases in storms and rainfall, for example. Local councils may decide to stop maintaining these services. Are there circumstances in which people shouldn't be able to stay in an area after community services are withdrawn?

ENA stresses that, contrary to the impression given in this question, local councils have no role in whether electricity distribution infrastructure and the associated service is maintained. EDBs are subject to a continuity of service obligation under section 105 of the Electricity Act, and unless relieved of this obligation will need to maintain their assets while there are still customers who wish to receive it. Clearly this can and does lead to situations where significant expense is incurred by the EDB in maintaining, repairing and re-instating assets which they would not otherwise do based on economic reality. Even in a situation where local authorities and other infrastructure providers removed all services from an area threatened by coastal inundation, under this existing legislation EDBs will still be required to maintain their service even if only for the benefit of a single customer. In such circumstances EDBs should be relieved of their obligations under this legislation.

63. In what situations do you think it would be fair for you to be required to move from where you live?

In situations where your presence as a resident places your life at significant and obvious risk, and the lives of those who may be called upon to render aid to you in an emergency.

64. Many residential communities are made up of a combination of renters, owner/occupiers and people who own a property and use it as a second/holiday house. Do you think there are reasons for these groups to have different levels of involvement in a managed retreat process?

No comment.

65. It is not always obvious that an area is at high risk from natural hazards or the impacts of climate change. However, council risk assessments and increased data and information should make these risks clearer. Do you think there different approaches should be taken for those who purchased properties before a risk was identified (or the extent or severity of the risk was known) and those who bought after the risk became clear?

No comment.

66. Under what circumstances do you think it would be fair or necessary for government to take different approaches with a greater or lesser degree of intervention or support?

No comment.

67. How do you think land with historical, cultural, social or religious significance (eg, cemeteries or churches) should be treated?

No comment.

68. Some Māori communities, both inland and coastal, have needed to relocate as a result of events (including natural disasters) that have impacted their marae and wāhi tapu. These examples show that Māori communities are aware of the ways that climate change is affecting their marae, papa kāinga and wāhi tapu, and how relocation can be approached as a community, with engagement from iwi, hapū, and whānau. The examples also demonstrate that climate change is impacting coastal communities as well as inland communities located closer to rivers and lakes. How do you think managed retreat would affect Māori?

No comment.

69. Managed retreat has rarely occurred in Aotearoa, especially within Māori communities. However, there are examples of Māori proactively working to protect their marae, papa kāinga and wāhi tapu by either relocating or protecting and developing their current sites. In these instances, the focus was on protecting and preserving their taonga for future generations. What do you see as being most important in developing a managed retreat system for iwi/hapū/Māori?

No comment.

70. Māori land and Treaty settlement land have unique legislative arrangements. Restrictions and protections are placed on Māori land to meet a clear set of principles and objectives that recognise the cultural connection Māori have with the land and a specific focus on land retention and utilisation. Treaty settlement land that has been acquired through Treaty settlement processes is most likely to have cultural significance to a particular iwi or hapū and used to support the aspirations of their people. How do you think Māori land (including Treaty settlement land) should be treated?

No comment.

71. How do you think post event insurance payments could help support managed retreat?

No comment.

72. Should insurability be a factor in considering whether the Government should initiate managed retreat from an area?

No comment.

5. Conclusion

ENA supports the approach taken in the draft national adaptation plan. We are encouraged to see the government begin the conversation on managed retreat. It is in New Zealand's interests to have a clear and consistent process, supported by legislation where appropriate, to manage these types of situations as they arise.

The electricity distribution sector, regulated firmly and with expensive, long-lived assets providing critical services to customers, requires two key things from the government:

- I. Regulation and regulators that are enabling of the investments needs to respond to the impacts of climate change, including appropriate reform of the planning system; and
- II. Clear and consistent information and direction about what those impacts are and how the trade-offs involved in responding to them should be managed.

Armed with the above elements, the distribution sector is well-equipped and willing to adapt their networks and businesses to the impacts of climate change, for the long-term benefit of their customers.

The ENA's contact person for this submission is Richard Le Gros (richard@electricity.org.nz or 04 555 0075).

6. Appendix A

The Electricity Networks Association makes this submission along with the explicit support of its members, listed below.

Alpine Energy
Aurora Energy
Buller Electricity
Centralines
Counties Energy
Eastland Network
Electra
EA Networks
Horizon Energy Distribution
MainPower NZ
Marlborough Lines
Nelson Electricity
Network Tasman
Network Waitaki
Northpower
Orion New Zealand
Powerco
PowerNet
Scanpower
The Lines Company
Top Energy
Unison Networks
Vector
Waipa Networks
WEL Networks
Wellington Electricity Lines
Westpower