



MEDIA RELEASE

Government proposals for foreshore and seabed trample democracy says LGNZ

30 April 2010

Proposals for iwi planning documents and activities which would override the Resource Management and Local Government Acts trample on democracy, says *Local Government New Zealand*.

In its submission to the Review of the Foreshore and Seabed Act, LGNZ says iwi planning documents will create tensions for councils and their communities.

“We are glad regional councils’ role in coastal planning is confirmed, but they must be able to work under laws that protect democracy. The rights of communities to have a say over how their natural resources are used or protected is critical.

“To create mechanisms which essentially walk over due process beggars belief.

“Not only do these proposed iwi planning documents rub out community rights, they bring additional costs to councils, and of course ultimately, ratepayers,” said LGNZ spokesperson John Cronin.

Mr Cronin says an example would be that councils would have to include an iwi planning document in its regional coastal plan.

“The coastal plan might set aside space for recreational use, or for commercial aquaculture activities. The iwi planning document could have different ways of managing those coastal areas and the councils would have to adopt that into the coastal plan.

“What’s worse is councils then have to take the iwi plan approach to the public, ultimately defending it in court if someone disagrees.

“This simply doesn’t make sense, adds more bureaucratic burden to councils and is inconsistent with what everyone does.”

LGNZ is also urging the review to enshrine protection of community assets.

“There are extensive community facilities, infrastructure and land in the foreshore and seabed area including port infrastructure. These community assets must be protected.”

Finally Mr Cronin urges the Government not to rush through changes to the Act for the sake of political expediency.

“The previous act was a monumental failure. Let’s take our time and get it right this time.”

Submissions for the Review close today. [editors – 30 April]

-ENDS -

To read LGNZ’s submissions go to www.lgnz.co.nz/

John Cronin will be available from 1pm on 021 578 001.