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**Media release for immediate
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TIA backs concession reform, calls for stronger safeguards in Conservation Bill

Tourism Industry Aotearoa (TIA) has made a submission on the Government's Conservation Amendment Bill, calling it a "once-in-a-generation" chance to modernise outdated legislation.

TIA Chief Executive Rebecca Ingram says the Bill largely reflects changes to the concession system that TIA has long advocated for, but change is also needed.

"We support the Government's commitment to reforming New Zealand's conservation framework; there are aspects of the Bill we agree on, and a few things we'd like to see changed and strengthened," says Ingram.

"The law DOC currently used to manage tourism activity is obsolete and it creates unnecessary barriers to decisions. Modernisation is long overdue.

"However, modernisation cannot come at the cost of conservation primacy. That is a fundamental principle of the legislation, and it must stay."

TIA's submission supports aspects of the Bill but makes substantive recommendations for change in several areas.

- On the proposed functions of DOC, TIA believes the shift toward economic development 'to the greatest extent practicable' is too far. The Act should include a purpose clause confirming that conservation remains the overriding purpose of the Act, while enabling positive economic development.
- On the proposed access levy for international visitors at certain high-visitation sites, TIA supports practical international visitor access charges, provided revenue is reinvested at the site of collection.
- TIA supports modernising the concession system but wants greater clarity on competitive allocation, pre-approved concessions, and protections for existing operators who've invested heavily in conservation-based businesses.

TIA's submission was developed following extensive consultation with members, including reference groups, surveys and targeted engagement with tourism businesses. Many of TIA's 1,200 member businesses hold a concession or operate on conservation lands and waters.

View TIA's submission [here](#).

For more information, please contact TIA Communications Manager James Craw – james.craw@tia.org.nz or 021 224 8056.

KEY FACTS

- Tourism Industry Aotearoa (TIA) is Aotearoa New Zealand tourism's peak industry body. We are the only independent association that represents all sectors of the country's large and diverse tourism industry.
- TIA has about 1,200 member businesses from across the industry, ranging from small owner/operators to large publicly listed tourism corporates and international hotel chains.
- Our natural environment is a key motivation for visiting New Zealand. In the year to March 2026, more than 80% of New Zealanders — and over half of international visitors — visit protected natural areas each year.
- TIA leads implementation of the industry's Tourism Sustainability Commitment, which aims to see every tourism business in Aotearoa New Zealand contributing positively to our people and cultures, our environment and our economy.
- TIA delivers a comprehensive range of industry events including TRENZ, New Zealand Tourism Awards, Discussing Tourism regional events and Tourism Summit Aotearoa.
- Visit www.tia.org.nz for more information.