National Environmental Standards

National Environmental Standards (NESs) are prepared by central government and can prescribe technical standards, methods (including rules) and/or other requirements for environmental matters throughout the country or specific areas.

If an activity does not comply with an NES, it is likely to require a resource consent. NESs must be observed and enforced by local authorities.

The following NESs are currently in force:

- Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Air Quality) Regulations 2004
- Resource Management (National Environmental Standard for Sources of Drinking Water) Regulations 2007
- Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Electricity Transmission Activities) Regulations 2009
- Resource Management (National Environmental Standard for Assessing and Managing Contaminants in Soil to Protect Human Health) Regulations 2011
- Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Telecommunication Facilities) Regulations 2016
- Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Marine Aquaculture) Regulations 2020
- Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Freshwater) Regulations 2020
- Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Storing Tyres Outdoors) Regulations 2021
- Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Commercial Forestry) Amendment Regulations 2023