



Safe, sovereign AI

An AI Plan for Aotearoa

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Green

AI regulation is needed to protect New Zealanders' creativity, data and jobs and ensure that the benefits of AI are shared and not captured by the massive technology companies running the AI sector.

The Green Party will make sure the right AI protections are in place.

The growing pressures to adopt and embrace AI are unprecedented, but AI is not a force of nature that we have to surrender to. Government has a role to safeguard the interests of our creatives, our workers, our environment, and the New Zealand public.

New Zealanders are understandably cautious about AI. The Green Party shares this caution. When AI is used thoughtfully and with well-designed safeguards there can be legitimate benefits, but the rapid and unregulated explosion of AI technologies presents significant risks across our society and our economy.

The enormous investments being made in AI are cause for concern. Trillions of dollars have been invested in new AI tools, and companies cannot hope to see the returns they expect.

This growing bubble presents risks to jobs and economic stability.

We don't have to surrender control of our data, our privacy and the things we create to massive overseas tech companies that don't support the public interest.

The best way to protect us, our economy, and our sovereignty from an uncertain future is to ensure that AI is regulated properly. We should and will implement the right safeguards, before it's too late to put it back in the box.

AI must serve people, not replace human judgement or democratic decision-making

Artificial intelligence should support human judgement, not replace it. Decisions that affect people's rights, welfare, health, education, employment, or access to public services must remain subject to meaningful human oversight and appeal.

Policy implications

- No fully automated decisions for anything that could make a substantive difference to people's lives in any public services. Humans managing AI tools must be able to make decisions with integrity and appropriate workloads.
 - People are accountable and will be held accountable for AI decisions.
 - Require public registers of AI systems used by government agencies – full transparency around AI use, including where in policy processes it has been used, and where or how it has been used to inform decisions.
- Everyone has a right to challenge AI-assisted decisions, and to opt out of being subject to AI assisted decision-making.
 - New Zealand should refuse to purchase or deploy autonomous weapons systems and support an international ban on these, in the same way the international community has banned chemical and biological weapons.

Data is a taonga: protect data sovereignty and community consent

The raw material of AI is data. New Zealanders, iwi, hapū, communities, and creators should retain meaningful control over how data about them is used. Language in particular is crucial to identity and culture, and must be protected.

Policy implications

- Explicit consent standards for AI training data.
- Appropriate remuneration for any IP used for training AI models, and genuinely deterrent fines for breaches.
- Strong protection of Māori data sovereignty – specific regulation requiring co-governance and co-development of Māori data and IP.
- Transparency regarding datasets used by government AI systems.
- Neither people's private information which they have entrusted to the government, nor classified government data, shall be sent to third parties, particularly for model training or inference. Onshoring public data should be prioritised.
- Strengthen the ability of the Privacy Commissioner to enforce our privacy laws, including codes relating to biometric processing and facial recognition technology, and introduce penalties for serious privacy breaches.

AI must operate within environmental limits

AI is not a virtual technology. It consumes large amounts of electricity, water, land, and materials. New infrastructure should only proceed where environmental and community benefits are clear.

Policy implications

- Mandatory environmental impact assessments for hyperscale AI data centres.
- New AI facilities must provide new renewable generation to cover full energy use rather than competing for existing electricity supply.
- Water-use limits and public reporting requirements.
- Community consultation and local consent requirements.
- A pause on consenting new hyperscale data centres until the regulatory framework is established.

Ensure AI benefits are shared, not concentrated

AI is creating unprecedented concentrations of economic power, as well as enormous risks to the stability of the financial system. Government should ensure gains benefit workers and communities rather than being captured by global tech giants, and that the risks are not socialised.

Policy implications

- Strong enforcement of tax law, including application of withholding tax rules so tech companies do not offshore their profits.
- Update and pass the Fair Digital News Bargaining Bill to ensure that AI companies pay local media outlets for data used in their AI summaries.
- Copyright and licensing protections – in the first instance enforcing current ones but look to develop more if required.
- Use public-interest and open-source alternatives wherever these are available and viable.
- Prevent vendor lock-in by mandating multiple and interchangeable AI providers when using third-party models.
- Worker participation in decisions about workplace AI adoption.
- Children should not be forced to use AI, particularly at school, and protect the rights of children in line with the UNCRC's Joint Statement on Artificial Intelligence and the Rights of the Child.
- Collaborate globally with like-minded countries to align AI regulation and governance, establishing New Zealand as a moral leader, building on our work on the Christchurch Call.
- Government will encourage research towards the development of Aotearoa based and focused LLMs to avoid dependence on foreign vendors.

Require transparent, trustworthy, and accountable AI

People have a right to know when they are interacting with AI and how it is being used.

Policy implications

- Labelling requirements for AI-generated content.
- Establish an AI office, in the first instance sitting within DPMC, and looking over time to establish an independent AI Commission with appropriate powers to conduct assurance, audits, and education.
- Algorithm audits for high-risk systems – public oversight of some algorithms through the AI regulator.
- Align and cooperate with international best practice, including key aspects of the EU AI Act, around disclosure requirements, labelling requirements, and audits of AI systems.



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