



Hi there,

Last year the National Party put the demands of the Maori Party ahead of the rights of all New Zealanders by passing the Marine and Coastal Area Act to repeal Crown ownership of the foreshore and seabed so it can be privatised to the tribal elite. The law change means that the vast mineral wealth that is found in the marine and coastal area that should belong to all New Zealanders to fund hospitals, schools and the like, can now be claimed by corporate iwi.

To reassure the public the Prime Minister had promised that the new law would not go ahead unless there was widespread support. Yet, in spite of the overwhelming opposition of those who looked into it - including the vast majority of submitters and most political parties - John Key passed the law anyway.

Once we realised that National was intending to divide up the coast along racial lines we formed the Coastal Coalition as an umbrella group to lead the fight against the law change. We were supported by tens of thousands of New Zealanders who were also horrified by what was going on. But in spite of our best efforts, National rushed the law through. As a result, corporate iwi will now be able to gain ownership of the beaches and Territorial Sea through secret negotiations with a friendly Minister - instead of having to prove their claims in a court of law. Meanwhile tribes are already lining up to claim, not remote areas that they allege they have used exclusively since 1840 - as the Minister led us to believe - but iconic coastal areas like 90 Mile Beach in the Far North and the massive Kaipara Harbour. To make matters worse, iwi are already talking about charging commercial operators like tourist guides and fishing charters for using "their" coastline. How long will it be before they try to demand koha from the public?

Coastal Coalition supporters believe that our foreshore and seabed belongs to all New Zealanders equally as our birthright and common heritage, and that National had no mandate to give it away to Maori. By repealing Crown ownership they have opened the floodgates for claims, with the Maori Party saying they won't stop until the whole coast is under tribal ownership. Accordingly, we have launched a Citizens Initiated Referendum to give the public a chance to have their say on whether Crown ownership of the coast should be restored, or whether they are happy for it to be divvied up to the tribal aristocracy. Background details and copies of the petition form can be found on the Coastal Coalition's website at [www.CoastalCoalition.co.nz](http://www.CoastalCoalition.co.nz).

To succeed with our CIR, we need to gain the support of 10 percent of New Zealand voters by the end of June. That's around 320,000 signatures. It's such a massive challenge that we are calling on all concerned citizens to help us trigger a Referendum. All signatures must be collected on the approved petition form. Signatories must be on the electoral roll and must only sign once. If people want to be kept informed on the progress of the referendum, there is a space on the form for them to provide their email address.

This CIR is real grassroots democracy in action. A CIR would allow New Zealanders to send the strongest possible message to the government that we don't want their racist law. What we do want is New Zealand's coastline to be returned to Crown ownership so that every future generation can enjoy the same unfettered rights and freedoms to swim, fish, surf and enjoy the coastline as past generations.

I do hope you can help us with our bid for a Referendum to return the coastline back to Crown ownership - and thanks so much for your help and support.

Kindest regards,

Dr Muriel Newman  
Coastal Coalition

[www.CoastalCoalition.co.nz](http://www.CoastalCoalition.co.nz)