

Mackenzie Basin Agreement

In 2011, the Mackenzie Sustainable Futures Trust sought to bring together a wide range of interest groups to discuss approaches to managing the basin. This has led to the Mackenzie Agreement which proposes to create a new trust, known as the Mackenzie Country Trust, to oversee land use in the Mackenzie Basin through the passage of new legislation.

The Agreement would see the new trust managing up to 100,000 ha of the basin for protection through joint management agreements with landowners. Rather than purchase the land the new trust would reach agreements with landowners or leaseholders, then essentially pay them to manage the land for conservation. It is also proposed in the Agreement, as a sort of trade off, that up to 26,000 ha could be opened up for irrigation. The Agreement also proposes that applications for resource consents, that have the support of the new trust, would receive special consideration under the Resource Management Act 1991.

The Agreement now sits before the Minister for the Environment and it still has some hurdles to get over before becoming a reality. It still requires the introduction and passage of legislation, funding for the trust which is estimated to cost around \$3.7 million a year, technical information to make decisions, and identification of areas for development and conservation. There is no indication in the public arena of when these matters might be advanced.

If you would like more information you can find it [here](#) or contact our specialist resource management team.