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A FRAMEWORK FOR
MARINE PROTECTION IN NEW ZEALAND

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ABSTRACT

Increased recognition of the need to protect New Zealand's marine environment for its ecological, social-cultural and economic values has occurred over the last decade. Knowledge of the Marine Reserves Act 1971 as a tool for marine protection has become widespread in recent years, partly as a result of the Department of Conservation's public education campaign. However, there is a lack of awareness of alternative statutory mechanisms available to protect New Zealand's marine environment in response to different requirements.

This thesis identifies and analyses selected statutory mechanisms for protecting New Zealand's marine environment in order to develop a process of use to various groups to protect marine areas. Guidelines are developed to assist users in the application of this process, particularly the selection of the most appropriate mechanism for protection.

Methods used in the development of this process included the conduct of interviews with staff in central and local government, analysis of statutes, review of government reports, and site visits to areas proposed for protection. The process was then tested in relation to two recent cases, Pollen Island and the Whanganui Inlet.

A key contribution of this thesis is that it draws together a range of previously uncoordinated statutory mechanisms for marine protection and presents a process to assist groups in selecting the most appropriate means of marine protection. An important element of the process is its degree of flexibility in that it can be readily adapted to accommodate different requirements of marine protection and the mechanisms involved. In this respect, the thesis has contributed to the dissemination of knowledge about statutory mechanisms and their application for marine protection in New Zealand.

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