

Hon Andrew Hoggard

Minister for Biosecurity
Minister for Food Safety
Associate Minister of Agriculture (Animal Welfare, Skills)
Associate Minister for the Environment



AM25-0783

Elliott Dennet
Fast-track Team
Environmental Protection Authority
By email: Substantive@fasttrack.govt.nz

Dear Elliott,

Thank you and the expert panel for the opportunity to provide comments on Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 project 2504-1048 Taranaki VTM Project in my capacity as Minister for Biosecurity. My comments on this application are outlined below.

The application proposes to extract approximately 50 million tonnes of seabed material per year (over 20 years), recover up to approximately five million tonnes of vanadium-rich titanomagnetite concentrate, return the de-ored material to the seabed, and monitor environmental recovery for up to five years post-extraction.

I have not identified any immediate biosecurity issues for this project. It is expected that any marine vessels entering New Zealand's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) comply with New Zealand's regulation relating to biofouling to ensure any biosecurity risks are addressed. All overseas marine vessels coming into New Zealand must comply with New Zealand's biofouling requirements and provide evidence of this before arriving in the country.

Prior to arrival at their location in the EEZ, each vessel will need to follow standard arrival procedures (including submitting all arrival forms and supporting documents). Given the projected vessel numbers in the application, this is unlikely to impact Biosecurity New Zealand's (BNZ) capacity. Any non-compliance will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis and is also unlikely to impact BNZ capacity.

BNZ has managed such operations previously with no noticeable impact on BNZ resources; typically these craft are cleaned prior to arrival. Once the vessels have been cleared at time of set up, vessels moving between the site and our ports are considered domestic movements and do not trigger the Craft Risk Management Standard for vessel requirements.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback. I look forward to learning about the outcome of this application in due course.

Yours sincerely,



Hon Andrew Hoggard
Minister for Biosecurity