

## Meet with your MP to Stop Deep Sea Oil

There are several key things everyone can do to actively and effectively stop deep sea oil drilling. One of the least demanding yet incredibly beneficial is meeting with your local Member of Parliament (MP).

In short, MPs are your representatives in Parliament, they vote on Bills and make decisions **on behalf** of their constituency (that's you) which means that meetings like this have the potential to influence decisions made in parliament.



Through actively engaging with your MP, you can ensure they understand deep sea oil drilling is an issue affecting their constituency and the wider public. Few people take the time to visit an MP so they do take notice!

Below is a guide explaining how to go about meeting with your MP. It only takes 3 easy steps: set up your meeting, turn up to it and then follow up afterwards.

### Step 1. Setting up and preparing for the meeting

To find out which electorate you live in and who your elected MP is - visit the contact list [here](#).

MPs will organise regular times where you can either give them a call and book an appointment to visit them, or (sometimes) simply drop in. MPs with ministerial responsibilities have less time to meet with constituents so it may be difficult to book. Polite persistence is the best strategy.

Don't worry too much about preparation. It is good to be knowledgeable on the subject and take some examples to back up what you say but you don't need to be an expert or know all the answers beforehand. In fact, you may find that even with little preparation you are the one who is the expert in the room during your meeting!

If you do want to get up to date with the issue then check out the links under '[Get Informed](#)' for some useful information resources.

### Step 2. Turn up to the meeting

If you have a friend or two who also want to stop deep sea oil then you are allowed to bring them along to your meeting too. The more people meeting their MPs the more they will see the extent of opposition to the drilling agenda!

Below are some good tips and examples for successful communication with your MP:

**Don't beat around the bush.** Tell your MP up front what you think they should do about deep sea oil.

E.g. "I ask that you publicly oppose deep sea oil drilling off the coast of Aotearoa NZ"

### **Make some specific policy asks.**

Very specific policy requests can be useful such as:

- I want no more of our deep sea areas offered for oil drilling and all current drilling permits revoked,
- I want all subsidies and tax breaks to the oil industry removed,
- I want a 100% driller liability regime in place,
- I want the government to invest more in supporting our clean energy innovations and industries

### **Briefly state your argument as to why you think they should do what you ask.**

E.g: "The risks to our environment and economy are not worth it.

We can have more jobs and prosperity with clean economic development - and that's the future I want for New Zealand.

Climate change means we can't afford to burn the oil reserves the world currently has let alone open new frontiers of oil.

I ask that you make the political decisions which will lead us to a safe, clean and prosperous future."

"A deep sea oil spill could harm our community by polluting the beautiful oceans and coastlines that are crucial to our economic success and our way of life. I am not convinced that the claimed economic benefits from drilling can ever outweigh the economic and environmental risks and costs to our community if there was to be a spill."

"Drilling for more dirty fossil fuels is the wrong direction for this country and increases the likelihood of catastrophic climate change. New Zealand belongs on the forefront of clean energy solutions not risky deep sea drilling."

### **Remind them that that public opposition to deep sea oil is widespread.**

Show you MP that you are not alone and that this is an issue affecting their constituency and the wider public.

If you want some examples to back you up have a look through these articles and videos.

[Raglan](#), [Wellington](#), [Tauranga](#), [Wanganui](#), [Christchurch](#), [Auckland](#), [Otago](#), [Notable New Zealanders](#), [Banners on the Beach Protest](#) and [the Oil Free Seas flotilla](#) which spent 2 weeks peacefully protesting the arrival of Anadarko's drill ship in the Tasman.

**Go prepared to have a conversation.** Be fair, and listen to their reasons for not agreeing with you immediately. Ear bashing your local MP is not a good approach you are more likely to convince your MP to change their mind or do what you ask by coming across as knowledgeable, reasonable, and passionate.

Remember, MPs are humans too, and have human reactions to what you do. If you show you are prepared to build a relationship rather than approaching your MP confrontationally you will be more successful.

And last but not least try to get a **clear commitment** from your MP, even if it just to meet you again in the coming months to discuss the issue further.

### **Step 3. After the meeting**

Write or email to thank the MP for meeting with you and outline what you discussed. In particular, don't let them forget any promises they made.

Set up your next meeting, whether it's with same MP or another one. There may also be list MPs in your area worth meeting, particularly if they are high up in the party ranks or have a relevant portfolio.

If you didn't convince your MP that drilling for deep sea oil is a bad idea that's OK! You have sown the seed and made sure they know there is opposition out there. The power of that can never be underestimated.