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Covid-19: Govt announces plans to transform tourism industry

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The industry has been one of the [hardest hit](#), haemorrhaging staff and money as visitors dried up and the lockdown started.

Tourism Minister Kelvin Davis said the industry needed to be rebooted to face new challenges, opportunities and a different way of working.

Tourism New Zealand will lead the project, working with the government, industry and businesses.

The project will include reimagining the way tourism is governed, how its marketed domestically and internationally, and how visitors are managed.

"A post-Covid tourism industry will play an important role in New Zealand's economic recovery, but it will be different to the one that we are accustomed to. There will be new challenges, new opportunities and a new way of working," Davis said.

"We have an opportunity to rethink the entire way we approach tourism to ensure that it will make New Zealand a more sustainable place, enrich the lives of all our people and deliver a sector which is financially self-sustaining in the longer term.

"Given international travel is likely to be heavily restricted for some time, and features of our tourism industry such as cruise ships are currently banned, this will need to be a phased approach, looking at how we can focus on and promote domestic tourism in the short term and how we can target an international offering.

The International Visitor levy will be reviewed by Davis and Conservation Minister Eugenie Sage to focus on how it can help rebuild the tourism industry.

"This plan was prepared at a different time, for a different future. We are now looking at what aspects of the plan remain fit for purpose, and how the IVL can be best used to help rebuild the tourism industry as part of a restart package," Davis said.

"This has been an immensely challenging situation for our tourism industry."

Tourism New Zealand chief executive Stephen England-Hall said it was an opportunity to listen to communities and design the future of tourism in New Zealand.

"We'll be working with key partners to ask questions, listen, and create something we can all be proud of, something that genuinely gives back more than it takes to Aotearoa and plays a key role in our economic success," he said.