

New Zealand DataCentre Strategy

Empowering Aotearoa New Zealand's Digital Future
with Data Centres the New Zealand Way

August 2026





Executive Summary

New Zealand has an opportunity to build essential infrastructure for our economy, create thousands of jobs for Kiwis, and develop a new, environmentally sustainable export industry for future generations.

This strategy will help New Zealand shape its data centre future in a way that benefits our economy, people and environment. But in a very competitive world we must move at pace, or we will miss the opportunity.

Why data centres are so important

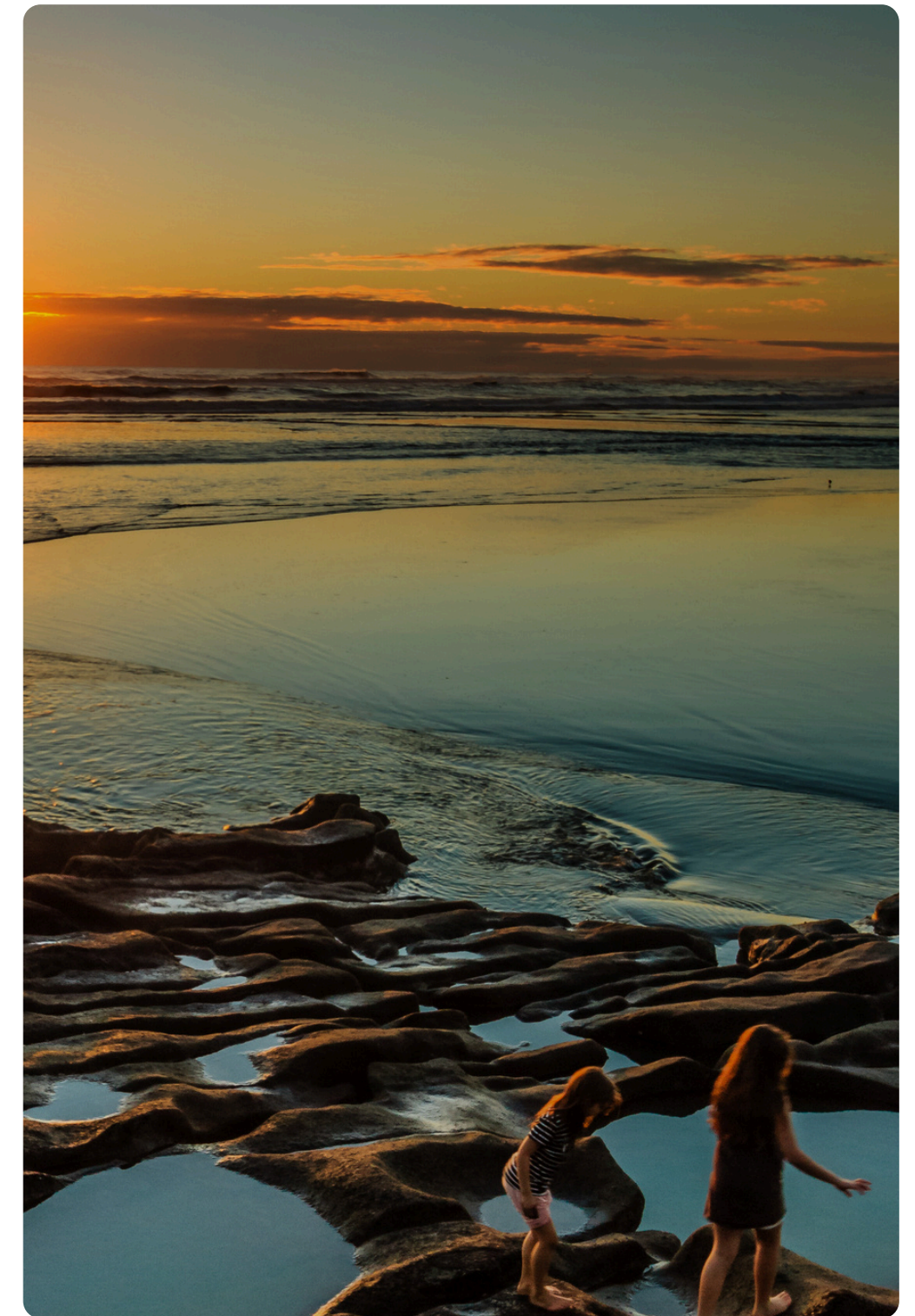
Data centres are the infrastructure upon which New Zealand's digital future depends. Every time we access a mobile application, join a video conference, stream media, conduct an online transaction, or interact with a connected device, New Zealanders rely on servers within a data centre to process, store and deliver that experience.

Collectively, these facilities underpin our digital economy, our public services, our research and education systems, our start ups, our enterprises, and drive digital innovation. Day in and day out data centres are our digital backbone, supporting the productivity, security, connectivity and creativity that New Zealanders rely on.

New Zealand data centres are world class

Our modern data centre facilities are energy-efficient, delivering greater computing capacity using proportionally less power than alternative means. Data centres support our national resilience, contribute to economic productivity and attract investment.

Data centres support thousands of skilled trades and technical roles across the country as well as many tens of thousands of digital professional roles. A forward looking, pragmatic and sustainable approach to data centres enables New Zealand to participate in the substantial global investment now flowing into digital infrastructure and services.





Executive Summary

If we collaborate as a country, at pace, we should be able to access some of the massive global investment underway - creating a new export industry and thousands of jobs, while planning the build out in a way that helps drive a better electricity supply for all Kiwis.

Local investment will provide resilience

New Zealand is not yet capturing the full economic and strategic value of the data centre infrastructure required to support its growing digital economy. Currently, much of the processing that supports New Zealand businesses and services takes place offshore. Comparable countries have recognised that data centres are essential infrastructure and have developed more domestic capacity.

Rapid growth in demand for cloud and AI infrastructure presents a significant opportunity for New Zealand. Our highly renewable electricity system, trusted reputation and political stability provide a strong basis for attracting sustainable data centre investment. This could strengthen domestic resilience and capability, support productivity growth, and create new investment, employment and export opportunities.

Growth will need to be carefully managed

New data centre development is already supporting investment in additional renewable generation and enabling infrastructure. With the right planning, it can complement, rather than displace, the needs of households and other productive sectors.

This strategy identifies a broader programme of actions to support both domestic capability and export growth. Within this programme, three immediate areas of focus are proposed for Government:

- **Strengthen coordination to support growth**
- **Promote NZ data centres locally and internationally**
- **Attract investment in capability and capacity**

Demand for data processing, AI infrastructure and data centres will only increase. This strategy will help New Zealand shape its data centre future in a way that benefits our economy, people and environment.



New Export Opportunity

US\$6.7 trillion will be invested in building data centres globally by 2030; some could be invested here.



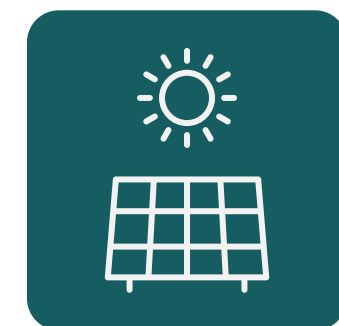
1000s of Jobs

Forecast data centre construction will create thousands of construction roles for many years.



High Value Jobs

Data centres and the services supporting them employ 6,800 people and this is expected to double.



Increased Electricity

Data centres are driving investment in new electricity supply.



The Vision

New Zealand will be a trusted and sustainable hub for data centre and AI infrastructure investment, with the capacity to strengthen national advantage and create new export opportunities.

Why this strategy, and why now?

Digital technologies are changing quickly. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is accelerating the development of new tools, and digital technology now reaches almost every part of society and the economy. These technologies are now ubiquitous and part of everyday life for New Zealanders.

Behind every digital interaction are data centres. They are essential infrastructure for modern life, like electricity and water. Without well-run data centres, much of the economy would be disrupted, including banking, communications, trade, healthcare, education and government services.

New Zealand has a relatively small data centre footprint by international standards, with most facilities modest in scale and distributed through the country. Much of our economic

activity is currently processed in data centres outside New Zealand.

Comparable countries have been investing in data centres to maintain the domestic digital infrastructure needed to support critical services, national resilience and economic continuity. However, in many countries, electricity and water availability are major constraints. New Zealand's highly renewable electricity system, cool climate and stable economy offer a strong foundation for sustainable data centre growth.

In New Zealand, we can maintain a high bar for the data centres we want developed here – energy efficient, supportive of our renewable energy transition, secure and resilient.



National Resilience

Data centres are essential national infrastructure, keeping critical services operating.



Essential for Trade

Access to AI infrastructure is a prerequisite for economic productivity and trade.



Economic Growth

\$70b of new economic growth from every 600MW of new data centres built.



Low water usage

New data centres in New Zealand use about the same amount of water as a large family home.



The Case for a Strategy

Data centres provide the secure, resilient digital infrastructure that powers New Zealand's financial services, commerce, logistics, communications, healthcare, education and government services.

Access to AI infrastructure is also becoming essential. For New Zealand businesses, communities and public services to thrive in the future, we need trusted, secure access to high-quality digital infrastructure.

New Zealand's current position

New Zealand has an established data centre sector, but our overall capacity remains modest by international standards. The low share of electricity used by data centres suggests we are not yet capturing the full value of digital processing generated by our own economy. As a result, New Zealand organisations increasingly rely on offshore processing and platforms. This means other countries capture more of the infrastructure investment, technical capability and skilled jobs created by our digital demand.

Put simply: if New Zealand does not build modern data centres and the supporting digital infrastructure we need, we will still use digital services, but more of the value will sit offshore, including in markets that may be less sustainable or more costly.

The opportunity

This national strategy will help align decisions across infrastructure, energy, investment, skills and economic development, creating benefits for New Zealand across several areas:



PRODUCTIVITY & CAPABILITY

Enabling innovation, faster adoption and deployment of digital services and AI tools.



RESILIENCE

Stronger continuity for critical services, with fewer single points of failure.



THOUSANDS OF JOBS

New roles in construction, generation, engineering, operations, cybersecurity, managed services and facilities.



REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Growth in regions as data centre investment aligns with infrastructure and community outcomes.



EXPORT POTENTIAL

Opportunity to position New Zealand as a trusted and sustainable location for digital infrastructure.



INVESTMENT IN NEW ENERGY

Investment that can help support new renewable electricity generation and related infrastructure.

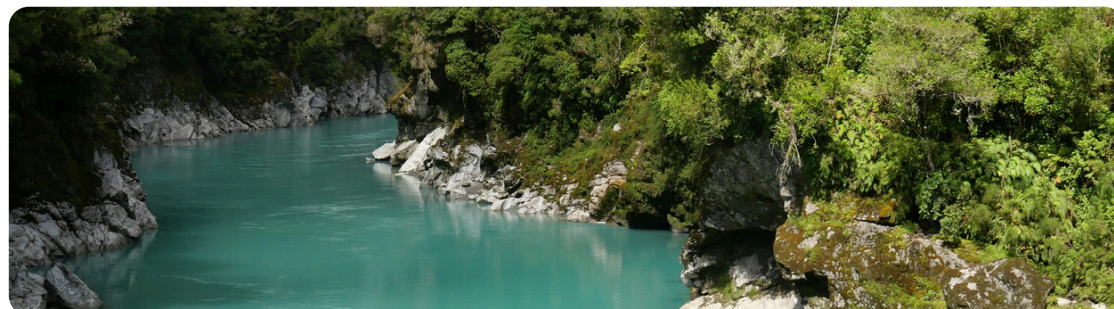


Preparing the Strategy

What this strategy aims to achieve

This strategy is framed from two perspectives:

- **Domestic growth - a national necessity:** Ensure New Zealand has the data centre and AI infrastructure needed to lift productivity, strengthen resilience, build capability and support competitiveness across every sector.
- **Export growth - new opportunities:** Build a credible global proposition to attract trusted and sustainable data centre investment, enable new digital export opportunities, and support growth in New Zealand's engineering and construction, connectivity and renewable energy industries.



What success looks like

The aims of this strategy are:

- **Coordination:** More predictable consenting and grid-connection timeframes.
- **Increased capacity:** Greater domestic capacity to support critical services and economic growth.
- **Investment:** New investment commitments in data centres and the infrastructure that enables them.
- **Better information:** Clear, credible information on sustainability, energy use and low-carbon performance.
- **Increased productivity:** Stronger uptake of cloud and AI tools to lift business productivity.
- **New jobs:** Jobs across construction, electricity generation, ongoing data centre operations and supporting regional industries.
- **Career pathways:** Visible and attractive career pathways, supported by a growing workforce pipeline.
- **Export growth:** Early export wins, new partnerships and growing international credibility.

This strategy is guided by these principles

This national strategy is guided by the following principles:

- **Digital infrastructure is critical:** Data centres are the backbone of New Zealand's digital economy.
- **Trust and security:** Infrastructure must be governed and operated in ways that build confidence.
- **Sustainability:** Growth should align with responsible energy use, efficient resource use and New Zealand's climate objectives.
- **Reliability and resilience:** New Zealand should plan for continuity, reduce risk and strengthen our infrastructure.
- **Transparency:** Clear reporting, clear standards and clear expectations are essential.
- **Partnership:** Data centre operators, the energy sector, telecommunications providers, government, iwi, regions and communities need to work together.
- **Move with pace:** Many countries are also working to attract investment, to succeed we must move at pace.



New Zealand's Data Centre Strategy





About DataCentres New Zealand

The united voice for Aotearoa New Zealand's data centre ecosystem.

DataCentres New Zealand is a nationally connected tech community within the Tech New Zealand group. Connecting data centre operators and the broader data centre ecosystem to strengthen New Zealand's data centre industry, promote its capabilities and achievements, and help advance national policy and investment.

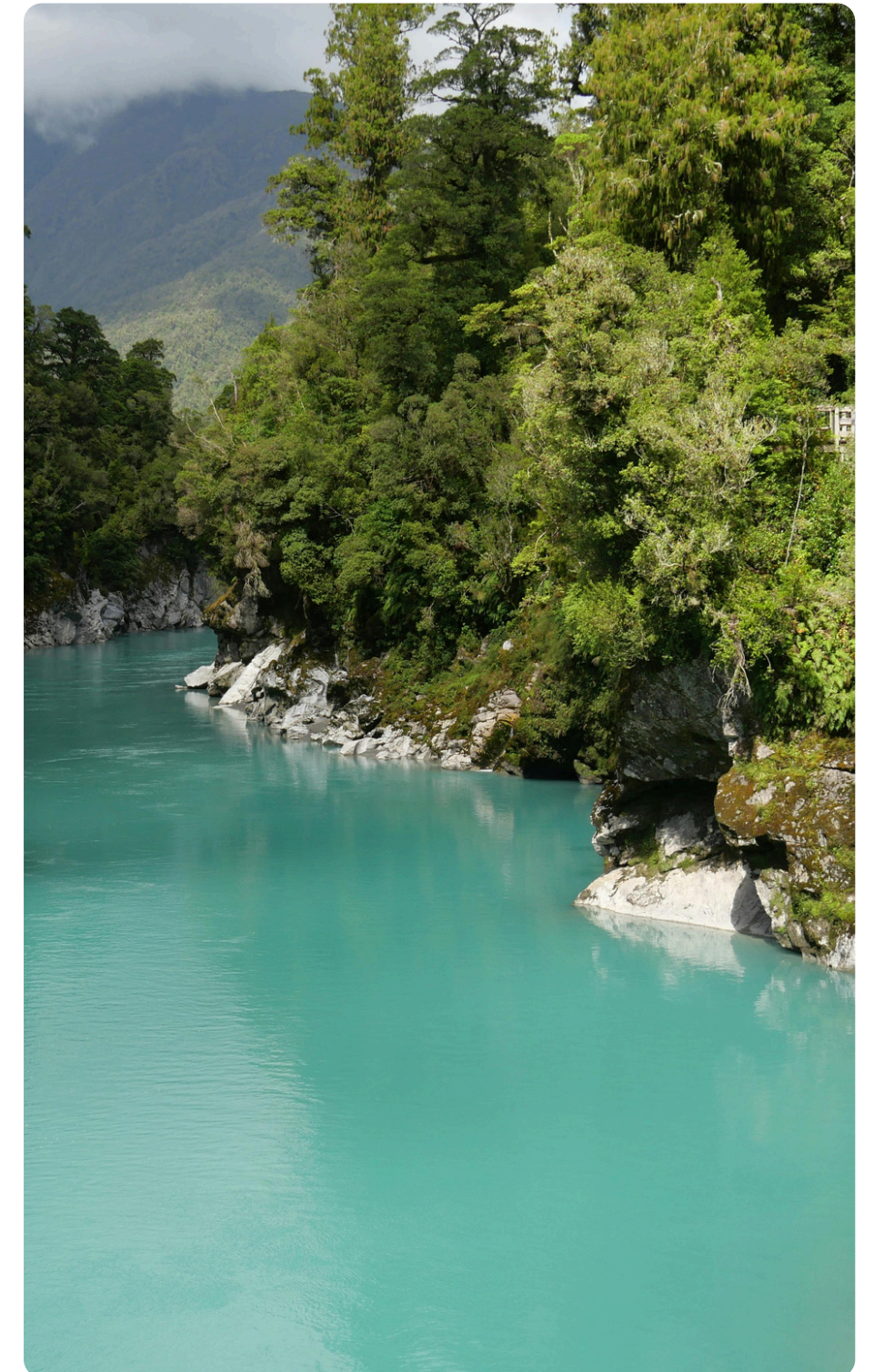
Our vision is for New Zealand to be a hub for trusted and sustainable data centre and AI infrastructure investment, growing capacity to support national advantage and create new export opportunities.

Together with our members – data centre developers and operators, and the expanding data centre ecosystem – we work collaboratively with government and stakeholders to raise awareness and proactively advance our vision.

Founding Members

Contributors to the New Zealand Data Centre Strategy

- AWS
- CDC
- Chorus
- Datacentre220
- Datacom
- Datagrid
- DCI
- Google
- Microsoft
- TeamIM
- TenPeaks
- Vector Fibre



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