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Title:

Reinventing the New Zealand Treasury as a ministry of sustainable development

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Abstract:

This paper explores the case for reinventing the Treasury in Wellington as a ministry charged with advancing sustainable development. The current role and performance of Treasury are evaluated in the light of changing conceptions of the key strategic issues facing the New Zealand government, what New Zealanders value, emerging thinking on well-being, and the limitations of an economic orientation to the goals of an organisation at the heart of government. The roles and performance of other institutions in the New Zealand governance system, including the Ministry for the Environment, the Department of PM and Cabinet, the Ministry of Economic Development, and the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment, are considered, including the extent to which they currently provide a policy-integrative context, or might do so in future. In assessing how institutions might best advance integrative, long-term thinking on sustainability, we examine some international models. Lastly, the merit of a sustained conversation about the idea itself is assessed.