

21 January 2025

Adam Irish

Email: fyi-request-29764-efe07abd@requests.fyi.org.nz

Tēnā koe Adam,

Response to your official information request

Thank you for your request received on 16 January 2025 via the FYI website.

You requested:

- *'When did the name change from Zealandia to Te Riu-a-Māui occur?*
- *Who actually came up with this revisionist name?*
- *Were New Caledonia and Norfolk Island consulted on this change, or was the decision made unilaterally by New Zealand authorities?'*

Your request is refused under Sections 18(d) and (e) of the Official Information Act 1982 because the information requested is already publicly available for your second and third questions, or does not exist for your first question.

The names Zealandia and Te Riu-a-Māui do not come under the jurisdiction of the New Zealand Geographic Board (Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa) Act 2008. No existing name is officially or unofficially recognised, and no official alteration has occurred under New Zealand's place naming legislation.

However, Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa New Zealand Geographic Board (the Board) recently considered a proposal to officially assign a dual name, Te Riu-a-Māui / Zealandia, to the continent. For a dual name, both parts of the name would be required to be used together as one official name string.

The proposal was for just that part of the continent within New Zealand's Extended Continental Shelf (ECS) boundary. The Board's naming jurisdiction only extends to New Zealand's ECS limit, other than for naming in Antarctica. Approximately 1/3rd of the physical continent extends beyond New Zealand's (ECS) limits into Australian and French territories and Exclusive Economic Zones.

Following advice from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade | Te Manatū Aorere (MFAT), the Board agreed that any proposal to name the continent needed to be handled at a diplomatic level, and agreed to by the governments of New Zealand, Australia and France. The Board agreed that the whole feature would need to be named, not just the New Zealand part of it. At its 18 June 2024

hui the Board declined the proposal. Please refer to the minutes, pp4-5, posted on the [Toitū te Whenua Land Information New Zealand website](#).

The minutes state 'that not officially naming the feature will not be an impediment to the proposer using the unofficial dual name in scientific publications, and in time it may come into common use.'

GNS Science Te Pū Ao made the proposal to the Board. The Board's minutes for 20 April 2016, 11 April 2019, 3 October 2023, 30 April 2024, and 18 June 2024 record the Board's full discussion of the proposal and who was consulted. These are all available on the [Toitū te Whenua Land Information New Zealand website](#).

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact Wendy Shaw, Secretary for Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa New Zealand Geographic Board.

Your request with your personal details withheld, will be proactively released on the Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand website.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this response. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz of freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā



Anselm Haanen,
Chairperson, Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa New Zealand Geographic Board