

**NZPHGA
NZ Game Animal Council
Media Statement
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Safe domestic travel should be considered at level 2

The New Zealand Professional Hunting Guides Association and Game Animal Council are joining other tourism and recreation organisations in calling for an easing of domestic travel restrictions at Alert Level 2.

“Hunting guides, helicopter operators, accommodation providers and outfitters have suffered considerably through the lockdown,” says New Zealand Professional Hunting Guides Association President James Cagney. “Domestic travel will allow some of these businesses to restructure their offerings to New Zealand customers and keep operating.”

“While the industry has missed out on this year’s roar there is still fantastic late-autumn and winter hunting available, particularly for bull tahr, chamois, red stags and late rut sika. It would be fantastic if New Zealand hunters were able to get out and enjoy these opportunities and at the same time support the livelihoods of those in the industry.”

“Alert Level 2 can provide a much-needed opportunity for people to undertake hunting and other recreational activities after many weeks of severe lockdown restrictions,” says Game Animal Council General Manager Tim Gale. “Unfortunately for many New Zealanders this opportunity will be severely limited if non-essential inter-regional travel remains restricted.”

“We believe under Level 2 domestic travel can be undertaken safely and contact tracing and rigorous limitations on interpersonal contact are achievable in the remote setting of hunting activities.”

Not only is hunting important from a physical and mental health point of view but it is critical for good conservation outcomes as well as supporting a multi-million-dollar industry that employs hundreds of people.

“The quicker we can get hunters back out in the hills and back to business, the better our overall recovery will be,” says Gale.

New Zealand is still at COVID-19 Alert Level 3. For information on current restrictions and guidance go to <https://covid19.govt.nz>.

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