Data Sovereignty! Essentially means that, wherever your digital information is hosted, it is subject to the laws, or legal jurisdiction, of the country in which it is hosted.

Many of the current concerns that surround data sovereignty relate to enforcing privacy regulations and preventing data that is stored in a foreign country from being appropriated by the government of the host country.

The increasing acceptance of cloud computing services, as well as new approaches to data storage including object storage, have broken down traditional geopolitical barriers more than ever before. In response, many countries have regulated new compliance requirements by amending their laws or enacted new legislation that requires customer data to be stored within the country the customer resides.

Verifying that data exists only at allowed locations can be difficult. It requires the cloud customer to trust that their cloud provider is completely honest and open about where (which country) their servers are hosted.

It is the data owner's responsibility to make sure everything complies with the local laws in the country or countries where the data is stored. For example, by storing your data in the US, means the US government can access your information without a warrant whenever it chooses. Store your data there and you could be in breach of privacy legislation elsewhere.

US laws apply to US companies even when they host data from other countries in other countries. The way US law works means it’s possible the cloud company may be forced to hand over information to the US authorities without seeking your consent or even letting you know that it happened.

So, does that mean if all of your data resides in New Zealand the only law to be concerned with is New Zealand law? The answer depends on what organisation stores it. Be aware that, if your data is stored by a U.S. company or a subsidiary of a U.S.-based company, your data will likely be subject to the Patriot Act, even if it resides in New Zealand.

If you do not know where your data resides, you should find out for your own protection. You will also need to understand how many parties hold your data.

By contrast, if you use a New Zealand-owned cloud service provider, who performs the hosting service within New Zealand, your legal jurisdiction is for that of New Zealand alone.

Cloud.IT Services Ltd (Cloud.IT) is 100% New Zealand owned and operated, with all data being held with Cloud.IT hosted exclusively within New Zealand.