

**From:** Matt Adams <Matt.Adams@mfe.govt.nz>  
**Sent:** Thursday, 26 February 2026 3:04 pm  
**To:** Matthew.Barbati-Ross@mfe.govt.nz; Bonnie.Hartfield@mfe.govt.nz  
**Subject:** RE: **CLASSIFICATION** RE: Commissioning: Meeting note | Ministers Simmonds and Watts meeting | Due Thurs 5 March

Whoops, forgot to mention that we would work with Removals team, but can go broader as well

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**From:** Matthew Barbati-Ross <Matthew.Barbati-Ross@mfe.govt.nz>  
**Sent:** Thursday, 26 February 2026 3:02 pm  
**To:** Matt Adams <Matt.Adams@mfe.govt.nz>; Bonnie Hartfield <Bonnie.Hartfield@mfe.govt.nz>  
**Subject:** RE: **CLASSIFICATION** RE: Commissioning: Meeting note | Ministers Simmonds and Watts meeting | Due Thurs 5 March

Kia ora – please progress. Thanks. Can you make sure you link with climate on the climate TPs please.

Kā mihi, Matthew

**Matthew Barbati-Ross (he/him)**

*Manager | Kaiwhakahaere*

*Marine Policy Team | Kaupapahere Moana*

Ministry for the Environment | Manatū Mō Te Taiao

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*Ministry staff work flexibly by default. For me, this means I work from Te Pātaka-o-Rākaihautū/Banks Peninsula.*



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**From:** Matt Adams <[Matt.Adams@mfe.govt.nz](mailto:Matt.Adams@mfe.govt.nz)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, 26 February 2026 2:44 pm  
**To:** Matthew Barbati-Ross <[Matthew.Barbati-Ross@mfe.govt.nz](mailto:Matthew.Barbati-Ross@mfe.govt.nz)>; Bonnie Hartfield <[Bonnie.Hartfield@mfe.govt.nz](mailto:Bonnie.Hartfield@mfe.govt.nz)>  
**Subject:** RE: **CLASSIFICATION** RE: Commissioning: Meeting note | Ministers Simmonds and Watts meeting | Due Thurs 5 March

Hi Matthew,

Bonnie and I have worked on the overview below. 3 key things we want to get across/achieve are: (1) we are invited to provide further advice on a work programme to better manage MFE/mCDR in NZ, (2) show linkages between portfolios and how we are working together, and (3) provide an update on GB

### **Background:**

- Increasing interest in mCDR activities internationally and in NZ (including media).
- 25-BRF-00199 provides information to Ministers on mCDR and how this is regulated in NZ.
- Officials have been working to develop understanding of the technology, how regulations currently manage and risks/opportunities for NZ.
- mCDR, particularly marine geoengineering, is considered to have potential to remove significant amounts of carbon from the atmosphere, but research is yet to prove its efficacy and that it is environmentally safe to be used
- while commercial application of MGE technology is prohibited under international agreements, 'legitimate scientific research' is better enabled (for ocean fertilisation, but other methods being considered).

### **Progress:**

- Officials have been considering how mCDR activities are managed as part of climate frameworks (e.g. non-forest removals framework)
- We understand Gigablue are still committed to undertaking research in NZ's EEZ. OIA recently released.
- We have been actively monitoring London Protocol intersessional work ahead of the next meeting of Contracting Parties in October, which will discuss marine geoengineering activities and how they are regulated.

### **Next steps:**

- We can provide further advice on how we could achieve better management of mCDR/MGE in New Zealand if you would like. This could consider our engagement in international fora, amending our domestic approach to consenting activities and permitting legitimate scientific research, and how a national assessment of mCDR could guide research and inform our regulatory approach.

**Sticking point:** There is an obvious need to reduce/remove carbon from the atmosphere to mitigate the effects of climate change, however some of the methods that have potential to address this carry high level of uncertainty around their effect in our marine environment *\*note: talking points for James P include "sticking points" which are like tradeoffs, could be worth considering including here.*

### **Talking points Climate:**

- mCDR is being discussed in response to the scale of the climate challenge and the limits of land-based mitigation.
- At the same time, it raises environmental, legal, and reputational risks that may outweigh its benefits.
- [1/2 points from briefing on climate stuff]

Q: What potential does NZ's oceans have for mCDR – chance to pitch an AMCF type assessment/further work

Q: Do the new RM Bills enable mCDR activities? (could invite a deeper look into RMA for Blue carbon/OAE in the CMA)

### **Talking points Env:**

- International law points strongly towards precaution and environmental protection in the oceans.
- mCDR differs from many land-based interventions in that effects could be widespread/transboundary and may be difficult to reverse.
- [1/2 points from briefing on env stuff]

Q: Do you see mCDR as something that could inform New Zealand's climate strategy, now or in the future?

**For both:** What do we want officials to focus on next?

e.g. advice on an enabling research framework, engagement at international fora, looking at LC/LP amendment, more detailed info on mCDR

Cheers,

Matt

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**From:** Matthew Barbati-Ross <[Matthew.Barbati-Ross@mfe.govt.nz](mailto:Matthew.Barbati-Ross@mfe.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, 25 February 2026 5:07 pm

**To:** Matt Adams <[Matt.Adams@mfe.govt.nz](mailto:Matt.Adams@mfe.govt.nz)>; Bonnie Hartfield <[Bonnie.Hartfield@mfe.govt.nz](mailto:Bonnie.Hartfield@mfe.govt.nz)>

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Kia ora kōrua

See below. Should be straight forward. Happy for you to agree between you as to who'd like to pen hold on our content?

Can you come back to me with high level bullets on what to cover in the meeting note 1 page, and talking points? Quick and dirty is ok so I can agree?

Kā mihi, Matthew

**Matthew Barbati-Ross (he/him)**

*Manager | Kaiwhakahaere*

*Marine Policy Team | Kaupapahere Moana*

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He taiao tōnui mō ngā  
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