

18-D-02130

s 9(2)(a)

Dear s 9(2)(a)

Thank you for your request of 14 October 2018 for the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (Act):

With decision-making under the Resource Management Act primarily undertaken at local and regional levels, it is important that these bodies have adequate National framework/policies to use as a yardstick when measuring potential adverse environmental effects in resource consent proposals. Unfortunately, when it comes to greenhouse gas emissions, New Zealand still does not have a National Policy Standard.

Regional authorities are barred by sections 104E and 70A of the Resource Management Act from considering the negative effects of climate change when creating rules or dealing with discharge permits and resource consents to take or use non-renewable resources. The reasoning being that we are awaiting a national policy on climate change so a consistent national approach to greenhouse gas reduction can be achieved.

As a result, regional authorities decision-making powers in relation to resource consents are limited to the potential positive effects of renewable energy (as opposed to negative effects caused by using non-renewable resources). This creates a large inconsistency between the purpose of sustainable management inherent in the RMA and how the RMA works in practice.

In short:

- 1) What steps have the Government taken in alleviating this inconsistency?*
- 2) Why do we still not have a National Policy Statement on Climate Change and greenhouse gas emissions?*
- 3) Can we expect a National Policy Statement on Climate Change and greenhouse gas emissions in the near future?*

Your request has been declined under section 18(e) of the Act, as documents containing the information requested do not exist. The Government has no work underway to introduce a National Policy Statement on climate change, so the Ministry for the Environment holds no information relating specifically to this.

However, the Government is working on establishing the national institutional framework for New Zealand's transition to a low-emissions, climate-resilient future, which will help to alleviate your concerns about what you see as "inconsistency". The Zero Carbon Bill will introduce an emission reduction target, a series of emission budgets to reach that target, a range of adaptation measures and an independent Climate Change Commission. The specific policies which would be used to achieve particular targets and budgets alongside the existing Emissions Trading Scheme have not yet been decided.

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

Yours sincerely



Janine Smith
Director, Climate Change

