

19-D-02258 s 9(2)(a)

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Dear s 9(2)(a)

In an email of 24 September 2019 to the Department of Conservation (DOC) you requested the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

- "...the same report that stated that New Zealand would be carbon neutral by 2020.
- Given the current reports are stating carbon neutrality is now set for 2050, I am looking into what went wrong with the first target."
- "Are you in fact carbon neutral?"
- "What are you doing to offset/manage your carbon production?"
- "What plans do you have in place (if any) in regards to achieving carbon neutrality, and what are your yearly carbon outputs?"

DOC has transferred your request to us, as one of the lead six agencies in the former Carbon Neutral Public Service programme that is referred to here: <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/carbon-neutral-public-service-programme-update>

The information you've requested is publicly available.

You can find more detail on the Carbon Neutral Public Service programme here:

<https://www.mfe.govt.nz/more/cabinet-papers-and-related-material-search/cabinet-papers/pol-07-131-towards-sustainable-new>

The programme, and so any targets associated with it, was discontinued in March 2009. You'll find reference to this decision here: <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/government-committed-real-solutions-not-slogans>

This evaluation of the programme also falls within scope:

http://media.cbsm.com/comments/169056/New_Zealand_Govt3_programme_lessons_learned_2003-2008.pdf

Sustainability at the Ministry for the Environment

We have recently released our Annual Report 2018/19: <https://www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/about-us/ministry-environment-annual-report-2019>. The report details our sustainability strategy and targets.

In brief, sustainability for us as an organisation means operating within our baseline, minimising our environmental footprint, and giving our people what they need to thrive. In addition to the Annual Report 2018/19, detail on our sustainability strategy is available here:

<https://www.mfe.govt.nz/about-us/about-ministry/sustainability-mfe>.

Certified Emissions Measurement and Reduction Scheme certification

Our sustainability strategy commits us to measuring, reducing and reporting on our emissions profile and having it externally verified. We are also committed to emissions-reduction goals on our travel (20 per cent), head office energy use (10 per cent), and waste to landfill (50 per cent).

In late 2018, we obtained our Certified Emissions Measurement and Reduction Scheme (CEMARS) certificate through Enviro-Mark Solutions' accreditation scheme. Our emissions profile is publicly available here: <https://www.enviro-mark.com/our-members/members/ministry-for-the-environment>

Does the Ministry offset carbon emissions to reach carbon neutrality?

The Ministry for the Environment does not currently offset carbon emissions from staff air travel. However, the Ministry is currently reviewing this. The Ministry's primary focus to date has been on making essential reductions across the organisation, and decoupling growth in our full-time equivalent staff (FTEs) and work programmes from our emissions.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Office of the Ombudsman of my decision to withhold information relating to this request, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. The relevant details can be found on their website at: www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Please note that due to the public interest in our work the Ministry for the Environment will publish responses to most of our requests for official information on our web site on our [OIA responses page](#) shortly after the response has been sent to you.

If you have any queries about this, please feel free to contact our Executive Relations team.

Yours sincerely



Vicki Connor
Director, Partnerships and Engagement

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