

s 9(2)(a)

19-D-02426

19 November 2019

Dear s 9(2)(a)

Thank you for your email of 16 October 2019 requesting the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

1. *The total amount of money (NZ\$) the New Zealand Government has paid out to any and all entities, foreign and domestic, at any and all times (from 1990-2020) with respect to greenhouse gas (GHG) NZ Emissions Trading Scheme (however it may be called)*

This could be set out in a table as below (with many more rows).

Year	Entity National	Entity International	Amount CO2e	NZ\$/unit	Amount NZ\$
<i>Total</i>					

Include:

- *NZ has sent overseas over NZ \$2 billion/y from 2008 on. Exactly when, to whom (e.g., what country) and for what was the money sent (e.g., to build a dam)?*
- *NZ has spent domestically similar amounts. Exactly when, to whom and for what was the money spent?*
- *List the money has transferred between entities (including the government or government-owned entities or private parties, etc.) in NZ, e.g., from, say oil companies to land holders to 'retire' their land and so forth?*
- *Include the record of money transferred domestically between GHG emitters and non-emitters.*

2. *How much have NZ greenhouse gas emissions increased from 1990 to 2020. This could be set out in a table as below:*

Greenhouse gas (GHG)	Year 1990	Year 2020
Carbon dioxide CO ₂		
Methane CH ₄		
Nitrous Oxide N ₂ O		
Sulphur hexafluoride (SF ₆)		
Other GHG		
<i>Total</i>		

Your original request to the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) was transferred to the Ministry for the Environment (the Ministry) as the information you requested falls under the Ministry's operational responsibilities.

The information that you have requested is publicly available. Therefore, under section 18(d) your request is declined. I have outlined below where to find the information. Also, some of the information you have requested does not exist, therefore that part of your request is declined under section 19(e) of the Act.

Regarding your first series of questions, the New Zealand Emissions Trading Scheme (NZ ETS) was created in 2008 so there were no relevant transactions or payments before that time. Also, the NZ ETS is not a scheme in which the Government pays money to any entities, either foreign or domestic. It requires entities with substantial emissions to surrender emission units, which are either allocated by the Government or can be bought from other participants, usually forest owners.

In regards to money sent overseas, as mentioned above, the Government does not send money overseas as part of the NZ ETS. Before 2015, NZ ETS participants were able to purchase units on the international market and surrender them. Since these units were purchased directly by participants, the Government does not have records of the amounts paid for them. However the overall price levels at the time show that the amounts paid were relatively small.

Information on transactions and unit flows is published annually by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) and can be found on their website in a series of annual reports: <https://www.epa.govt.nz/industry-areas/emissions-trading-scheme/ets-reports/annual-ets-reports/>.

The Government allocates units to various domestic sectors, and gets them back when they are surrendered against emissions. These unit flows have fiscal value and are recorded in the Government's accounts which are publicly available on the Treasury website: <https://treasury.govt.nz/publications/efu/budget-economic-and-fiscal-update-2019>.

The Government does raise money through the Synthetic Greenhouse Gas (SGG) levy for the importing of goods and motor vehicles that contain hydrofluorocarbons (HFC) and perfluorocarbons (PFC). The SGG levy is collected by the New Zealand Customs Service and the New Zealand Transport Agency. All money collected is paid to a consolidated Crown account administered by the Ministry for the Environment. The amount of money made from the SGG levy is publicly available information accessible via the same link as above.

The Government does not record the monetary value of transactions between registered ETS participants.

Regarding your second question, this information is also publicly accessible on the Ministry website at: <https://www.mfe.govt.nz/climate-change/emissions-reduction-targets/our-targets-and-emissions-projections>.

A summary table is below with relevant metrics.

Greenhouse gas emissions from 1990 and 2020 projections

Greenhouse gas (GHG) expressed in kt CO ₂ -e	Year 1990	Year 2020	Absolute difference (kt CO ₂ -e)	Per cent change
Carbon dioxide, CO ₂	25,455.2	37,028.2	11,573.1	45.5%
Methane, CH ₄	32,150.0	34,210.2	2,060.2	6.4%
Nitrous Oxide, N ₂ O	7,133.2	8,381.7	1,248.5	17.5%
Sulphur hexafluoride, SF ₆	20.0	22.1	2.1	10.4%
Hydrofluorocarbons, HFCs	0.0	1,703.2	1,703.2	n/a
Perfluorocarbons, PFCs	910.0	23.9	-886.1	-97.4%
Total gross emissions	65,668.3	81,369.2	15,700.9	23.9%
Net carbon dioxide removals from LULUCF	-31,466.8	-15,881.4	15,585.4	-49.5%
Methane from LULUCF	97.9	79.3	-18.7	-19.0%
Nitrous oxide emissions from LULUCF	207.1	107.9	-99.2	-47.9%
Net total including LULUCF	34,506.5	65,674.9	31,168.5	90.3%

Note: kt CO₂-e = kilotonnes carbon dioxide equivalent; LULUCF = land use, land-use change and forestry; rounding may give rise to slight differences to numbers published elsewhere

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 OIA responses page shortly after the response has been sent to you.

If you have any queries about this response, please feel free to contact our Executive Relations team at ministerials@mfe.govt.nz

Yours sincerely

Roger Lincoln
Director – Climate Change

Released under the provision of
the Official Information Act 1982