

20-D-00672

s 9(2)(a)

Dear s 9(2)(a)

Thank you for your email of 23 April requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

*"a copy of any economic analysis, including any draft economic analysis, conducted by Treasury related to the Government's Essential Freshwater package."*

This request was transferred to the Ministry for the Environment from Treasury on 4 May. We have considered this request and identified a very large amount of information that would need substantial collation and research before it could be released. We therefore refuse this request under section 18(f) of the Act.

We thank you for your willingness to discuss and refine the scope and note that following our conversations we are able to provide you with information pertaining to your second request of 5 May (20-D-00683).

We would be happy to help you refine your requirements should you seek further information on the economic impact analysis for Action for healthy waterways package, note this would be treated as a new request under the Act.

All final reports commissioned for the economic impact assessment have been proactively released, along with final Cabinet papers and the Regulatory Impact Analysis. Final-stage feedback on the economic impact reports from external peer reviewers has also been proactively released. Reports and briefings that have been proactively released are refused under section 18(d) of the Act on the grounds that they are already publicly available. These documents can be accessed on the Ministry for the Environment website. Please refer to the links provided in the attached document schedule.

Decisions on the Action for healthy waterways package were supported by comprehensive environmental and economic impact analysis by leading New Zealand research institutes, universities, and private sector firms.

Studies produced include national as well as catchment and farm-level policy impacts on key groups (including farmers, regional councils and Māori) and analysis of industry, regional and national costs and benefits.

Since it was first released for consultation in September 2019 there have been significant changes made to the package, which take into account more than 17,500 submissions, other advice and consultation as well as the impact of COVID-19.

The package has been estimated to bring net benefits of \$193 million a year over 30 years (3.8 billion Present Value). While many important benefits can't be quantified, those that could be quantified have an aggregate average annual value of \$359 million per annum up to 2050.

Changes made to the package since consultation and in light of Covid-19 have reduced the costs of the package by an estimated \$3.4 billion (PV).

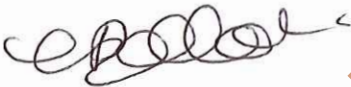
Estimated average annual costs are approximately \$166 million per annum (about \$3.2 billion PV) up to 2050. Of this, about \$124 million per annum (\$1.8 billion PV), will be borne by the primary sector, stemming mainly from proposals on stock exclusion, Freshwater Farm Plans, and strengthened nitrogen attributes, and the remainder will be borne by local government and ratepayers.

In terms of section 9(1) of the Act, I am satisfied that, in the circumstances, the withholding of this information is not outweighed by other considerations that render it desirable to make the information available in the public interest.

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](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz).

Please note that due to the public interest in our work the Ministry for the Environment publishes responses to requests for official information on our [OIA responses page](#) shortly after the response has been sent. If you have any queries about this, please feel free to contact our Executive Relations team: [ministerials@mfe.govt.nz](mailto:ministerials@mfe.govt.nz).

Yours sincerely



Lucy Bolton  
Acting Director, Freshwater Policy

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**Document Schedule – proactively released briefings**

Document no.	Document date	Content	Decisions	OIA sections applied
1	September 2019	<a href="#">Cabinet paper: Essential freshwater – public consultation on national direction for freshwater management</a>	Refused	S 18(d)
2	September 2019	<a href="#">Interim regulatory impact analysis for consultation: Essential Freshwater part I: summary and overview</a>	Refused	S 18(d)
3	September 2019	<a href="#">Interim regulatory impact analysis for consultation: Essential Freshwater part II: detailed analysis</a>	Refused	S 18(d)
4	May 2020	<a href="#">Cabinet paper: Action for healthy waterways – Decisions on national direction and regulations for freshwater management</a>	Refused	S 18(d)
5	May 2020	<a href="#">Regulatory impact statement: Action for healthy waterways – Part I: Summary and overall impacts</a>	Refused	S 18(d)
6	May 2020	<a href="#">Regulatory impact statement: Action for healthy waterways – Part II: Detailed analysis</a>	Refused	S 18(d)

**Document schedule – proactively released externally commissioned economic analysis and related data and commentary**

Document no.	Document date	Content	Decisions	OIA sections applied
1	September 2019	<a href="#">Modelling of mitigation strategies on farm profitability testing Ag package regulations on farm</a>	Refused	S 18(d)
2	September 2019	<a href="#">Impact of possible environmental policy interventions on case study farms</a> <a href="#">Impact of possible environmental policy interventions on case study farms appendices</a>  See also the <a href="#">peer review of this report</a> conducted By Dr Richard Muirhead and a <a href="#">response to this peer review</a> by MRB.	Refused	S 18(d)
3	September 2019	<a href="#">A review of New Zealand studies into the cost of degradation of freshwater ecosystems</a>	Refused	S 18(d)
4	September 2019	<a href="#">A review of integrated assessment frameworks for environmental management</a>	Refused	S 18(d)

5	September 2019	<a href="#">Impact testing of proposed sediment attribute: identifying erosion and sediment control interventions to meet proposed sediment attribute bottom lines and the costs and benefits of those interventions</a>	Refused	S 18(d)
6	September 2019	<a href="#">Modelling the impact of freshwater mitigation scenarios: results for the Ruamahanga catchment</a>	Refused	S 18(d)
7	September 2019	<a href="#">Cost estimates for upgrading wastewater treatment plants to meet objectives of the NPS freshwater</a>	Refused	S 18(d)
8	May 2020	<a href="#">The economic effects of water quality proposals: Modelling scenarios</a>	Refused	S 18(d)
9	May 2020	<a href="#">Overview of the impact analysis undertaken to inform decisions on freshwater policy</a>	Refused	S 18(d)
10	May 2020	<a href="#">Impacts of climate and freshwater policies: Literature review</a>	Refused	S 18(d)
11	May 2020	<a href="#">Impacts of climate and freshwater policies: Literature review</a>	Refused	S 18(d)
12	May 2020	<a href="#">Consumer willingness to pay – results from AERU research</a>	Refused	S 18(d)
13	May 2020	<a href="#">Essential Freshwater Package: Benefits analysis</a>	Refused	S 18(d)
14	May 2020	<a href="#">Star Economics review of Essential Freshwater Package benefits analysis</a>	Refused	S 18(d)
15	May 2020	<a href="#">Resource Economics response to Star Economics peer review</a>	Refused	S 18(d)
16	May 2020	<a href="#">Essential Freshwater Package: Costs analysis</a>	Refused	S 18(d)
17	May 2020	<a href="#">Infometrics review of cost model</a>	Refused	S 18(d)
18	May 2020	<a href="#">Sense Partners review of cost report</a>	Refused	S 18(d)
19	May 2020	<a href="#">Response to Sense Partners and Infometrics peer review of cost analysis</a>	Refused	S 18(d)
20	May 2020	<a href="#">Essential Freshwater regulations – Industry impact analysis</a>	Refused	S 18(d)
21	May 2020	<a href="#">Sense Partners peer review of Sapere report</a>	Refused	S 18(d)
22	May 2020	<a href="#">Infometrics peer review of Sapere report</a>	Refused	S 18(d)
23	May 2020	<a href="#">Sapere's response to peer review feedback</a>	Refused	S 18(d)
24	May 2020	<a href="#">Estimated on-farm economic impacts of selected mitigation options</a>	Refused	S 18(d)

25	May 2020	<u>Report one: Options for estimating effects of proposed freshwater water policies on Māori land use potential</u>  <u>LUCAS (LUC) layer and land-use name (NA) as of 2016</u>  <u>LUC (Land-use capability) data</u>  <u>Māori Land Court published data</u>	Refused	S 18(d)
26	May 2020	<u>Report two: Preliminary estimate of the cost of the Essential Freshwater proposals on Māori land use potential</u>  <u>LUCAS (LUC) layer and land-use name (NA) as of 2016</u>  <u>LUC (Land-use capability) data</u>  <u>Māori Land Court published data</u>	Refused	S 18(d)
27	May 2020	<u>Administrative costs of proposed Essential Freshwater Package on regional councils</u>	Refused	S 18(d)
28	May 2020	<u>Peter Winder peer review of Administrative costs impact report</u>	Refused	S 18(d)
29	May 2020	<u>Castalia's response to peer review of report</u>	Refused	S 18(d)
30	May 2020	<u>Proposed changes to freshwater attributes relating to upgrading wastewater treatment plants</u>	Refused	S 18(d)

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