

20-D-01715

s9(2)(a)

Dear s9(2)(a)

I am following up on your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request of 3 September 2020 for the following information:

Copies of the final Climate Change Weekly Updates for the same time period, including any correspondence relating to decisions made for the final versions.'

Documents and correspondence (excluding emails deemed to be of a clearly administrative nature) relating to decisions made for final versions of the national climate change risk assessment, within the time period of 1 May 2020 to 5 August 2020.

As you will be aware, the Ministry for the Environment (the Ministry) responded to the first part of your request relating to the Climate Change Weekly Updates on 2 October 2020. The response to the second part of your request relating to the National Climate Change Risk Assessment was extended by 10 working days.

The Ministry has identified two documents that fall within scope of your request, as listed in the attached document schedule. This information has been provided to you in full.

Document one is correspondence related to decisions made for the final versions of the National Climate Change Risk Assessment (NCCRA). The attachment referred to in document one does not fall within scope of your request as it relates to draft versions of the NCCRA.

Document two is a briefing note related to the final version of the NCCRA. The cabinet paper referred to in the briefing note has not been attached as it is publicly available: www.mfe.govt.nz/more/briefings-cabinet-papers-and-related-material-search/cabinet-papers/national-climate-change.

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.

Yours sincerely



Katherine Wilson
Director, Climate Change

Document schedule

Document No.	Document Date	Content	Decision	OIA Section/s applied
1.	07 May 2020	Email: Collated feedback on the draft NCCRA reports	Release in full	n/a
2.	04 June 2020	Briefing Note: New Zealand's first National Climate Change Risk Assessment: release and initial government response	Release in full	n/a

Released under the provision of
the Official Information Act 1982

Attachment 1 - Collated feedback on draft NCCRA Reports

From: [Emma Lemire](#)
To: [Thomson, Nicola \(Nicola.Thomson@aecom.com\)](#)
Cc: [Fiona Newlove](#); [Mark Storey](#); [Criggy Haas](#); [Sarany Pan](#)
Subject: Collated feedback on the draft NCCRA reports
Date: Thursday, 7 May 2020 4:50:00 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[Register of comments on draft final reports.xlsx](#)

Kia ora Nicola,

First of all, thank you for these reports. They are very comprehensive and an impressive piece of work given the timeframe, and many people acknowledged this in their feedback.

Please see attached the comments register containing the collated material comments from MfE, stakeholders and iwi/Maori on the three draft NCCRA reports. We have only included in the spreadsheet the comments which we would like you to address. In some cases we have also included notes on how we expect the comments to be addressed. Please note that this comments register does not include the feedback from Te Arawa (Te Urunga o Kea) as you have that already.

Below we have also highlighted the key areas to be addressed based on the overall feedback, and our recommended actions in response to these themes. We expect the feedback relating to the key areas to be addressed and implemented in the final report, and we expect that all comments in the comments register will be considered and implemented as appropriate (and a record of the action taken provided to MfE).

Key areas to be addressed:

- 1) The reports are very long and very dense. In particular, the main report needs to be edited down, particularly removing unnecessary repetition both within this report and across the three reports (as the other two reports repeat some of the same material). Sections that could be cut down are section 4.0 – Climate Change in New Zealand (which is covered in more detail in the Technical report) and the “other priority risks” sections for each of the domains – in particular the risk summaries for the Natural and Built Environment domains. Refer to our comments in the spreadsheet.
- 2) Report 1 needs a clearer summary at the start - with the 10 risks presented in a self-contained way with descriptions. The key messages section should be able to stand alone, and to provide someone who is engaging with the NCCRA for the first time with a good understanding of the top 10 risks. It also needs to briefly explain the rationale for choosing the top 2 risks from each domain rather than the top 10 most urgent risks overall (see point 3 below). Refer to our comments on the key messages section in the spreadsheet.
- 3) The rationale for taking the top two risks from each domain needs to be clear and explicit in the main report and the method report. We had a fair amount of feedback about the most urgent risks and about taking the top two from each domain. This needs to be very clear in the report why this decision was made and the rationale for it. The way the urgency ratings were calculated also needs to be clearly and transparently explained in the method report.
- 4) In the feedback, there is a lack of understanding on what research priorities mean going forward and how they have been prioritised. What are the specific research priorities that need to be urgently addressed? The report may need a discussion of the top research priorities.
- 5) The opportunities either need to be revisited and worked through more, or the limitations to the analysis undertaken and the gaps in knowledge and need for further research need to be more explicitly stated. It needs to be clear that the opportunities

listed in this report are not comprehensive. It also needs to be clear that the opportunities identified result from the direct physical impacts of climate change, and do not include flow-on opportunities from actions taken to address the risks.

- 6) To address the feedback we have received from iwi/Maori, we ask that you make changes to the reports to:
- Be clearer on how the engagement with iwi/Maori has influenced the risk assessment.
 - Emphasise the interconnectedness across the risks and across the domains, and the fact that separating the risks into domains does not align with a Te Ao Maori worldview.

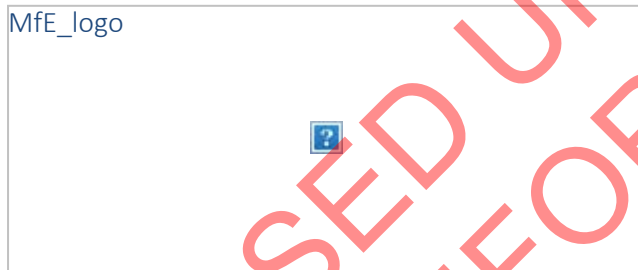
Refer to comments from Ngati Awa, Te Wai Maori Trust and Waikato-Tainui in the spreadsheet. We also note that the Te Arawa work may address some of this.

Please let us know if you have any questions about this feedback. Happy to talk you through any aspect you want to clarify.

We look forward to receiving the Final reports on 18 May.

Kind regards,
Emma

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Attachment 2 - 2020-B-06782

New Zealand's first National Climate Change Risk Assessment: release and initial government response

Date Submitted:	4 June 2020	Tracking #: 2020-B-06782	
Security Level	In confidence	MfE Priority:	Urgent

	Action sought:	Response by:
To Hon James Shaw, Minister for Climate Change	Agree to circulate the attached Cabinet paper to Community Resilience Ministers by 8 June at the latest, ahead of their meeting on 9 June	Friday 5 June 2020

Actions for Minister's Office Staff	Return the signed report to MfE.
Number of appendices and attachments 4	Titles of appendices and attachments (ie separate attached documents): 1. Final National Climate Change Risk Assessment - assessment report 2. NCCRA technical report 3. NCCRA method report 4. Draft Cabinet paper – "National Climate Change Risk Assessment – public release and initial government response" (including 2 appendices)

Ministry for the Environment contacts

Position	Name	Cell phone	1 st contact
Principal Author	Lisa Niven		
Responsible Manager	Emma Corbett	022 360 5691	✓
Director	Mark Storey	022 068 7443	

New Zealand's first National Climate Change Risk Assessment: release and initial government response

1. This briefing provides you with the draft National Climate Change Risk Assessment (NCCRA) and the draft Cabinet paper "*National Climate Change Risk Assessment – public release and initial government response*" for you to present to the Cabinet Economic Development (DEV) Committee for consideration on 1 July.
2. We need your feedback on the draft Cabinet paper by midday on Friday 5 June so that we can circulate to Community Resilience Ministers ahead of their meeting on Tuesday 9 June. Ideally, we would circulate the paper on Friday 5 June.

The final NCCRA comprises three reports

3. The final NCCRA consists of:
 - a. The Assessment Report – Pūrongo Whakatōpū. This is the main report. It presents the findings of the risk assessment with a focus on the 10 most significant risks (Appendix 1)
 - b. The Technical Report - Pūrongo Whaihanga. This provides additional detail on the risk assessment findings, and includes risk profiles for all 43 priority risks. This is the evidence base (Appendix 2)
 - c. The Method Report - Pūrongo Whakararangi. This details the approach to the risk assessment and engagement methodology and results. (Appendix 3)
4. The final drafts of these reports are being edited and prepared for publication. The assessment report will be renamed the 'main report'.
5. You are seeking agreement from Cabinet for all three reports to be tabled together in Parliament and made publicly available.

The final NCCRA identifies the 10 most significant climate change risks New Zealand faces

6. The NCCRA identified 43 priority risks across the five value domains (natural environment, human, economy, built environment and governance). The 10 most significant risks are made up of the two most urgent risks from each domain.
7. While the NCCRA identifies the 10 most significant risks, the report notes all 43 priority risks require action.
8. The NCCRA has applied international best practice in national climate change risk assessment and followed the Framework (Arotakenga Huringa Āhuarangi: A Framework for the National Climate Change Risk Assessment for Aotearoa New Zealand), which was published by the Ministry for the Environment in 2019.
9. The risks identified are high level and draw on the considerable body of work available at a national and regional level.
10. As well as iwi/hapū partners, over 400 people have provided input from a broad range of sectors and interest groups including: local government, central government, private sector, primary sector and universities/research institutes.
11. The risk assessment was undertaken over nine months by a diverse, multi-disciplinary team including 13 leaders in climate risk assessment from across a suite of disciplines in New Zealand (Governance, Economy, Social Science, Natural Environment, Built Environment and Māori/Iwi engagement).

12. The 10 most significant risks comprise the top two risks from each domain that need to be addressed most urgently. They are:

Domain	Risk
Natural Environment	Risks to coastal ecosystems, including the intertidal zone, estuaries, dunes, coastal lakes and wetlands, due to ongoing sea level rise and extreme weather events.
	Risks to indigenous ecosystems and species from the enhanced spread, survival and establishment of invasive species due to climate change.
Human	Risks to social cohesion and community wellbeing from displacement of individuals, families and communities due to climate change impacts.
	Risks of exacerbating existing inequities and creating new and additional inequities due to differential distribution of climate change impacts.
Economy	Risks to governments from economic costs associated with lost productivity, disaster relief expenditure and unfunded contingent liabilities due to extreme events and ongoing, gradual changes.
	Risks to the financial system from instability due to extreme weather events and ongoing, gradual changes.
Built Environment	Risk to potable water supplies (availability and quality) due to changes in rainfall, temperature, drought, extreme weather events and ongoing sea level rise.
	Risks to buildings due to extreme weather events, drought, increased fire weather and ongoing sea level rise.
Governance	Risk of maladaptation across all domains due to the application of practices, processes and tools that do not account for uncertainty and change over long timeframes.
	Risk that climate change impacts across all domains will be exacerbated because current institutional arrangements are not fit for climate change adaptation. Institutional arrangements include legislative and decision-making frameworks, coordination within and across levels of government and funding mechanisms.

13. The NCCRA also identifies knowledge gaps that reduce New Zealand's ability to assess and manage climate change risks and opportunities. The report notes that work will need to begin now to address these gaps.

The domains and risks are highly interconnected - recognising this is key to exploring climate risks from a Māori point of view

14. Feedback from iwi and hapū emphasised that the domains and risks are highly

interconnected. An explanatory note has been added to the karakia at the start of the report to emphasise the connectedness of ecosystems and society, as well as the interdependencies of actions and consequences across domains.

15. The AECOM-led team worked with iwi technicians from Te Urunga O Kea (Te Arawa Climate Change Working Group) to improve the te ao Māori framing of the priority risks in the final report.
16. The NCCRA report notes specific risks that are highly relevant to Māori (Section 3 of appendix 1). However, it also acknowledges that all risks affecting Aotearoa are relevant to Māori as kaitiaki of their ancestral and cultural landscapes.
17. The report notes the tight timeframe has limited the ability to bring Mātauranga Māori into the risk assessment but notes it will be critical in developing a greater cultural understanding of these risks.
18. Some iwi have also noted their support for the development of a subsequent report for Māori, by Māori. We are currently exploring the potential scope and timing of such a report, which could bridge to the National Adaptation Plan.
19. Central government agencies, the NCCRA Reference Group and iwi/Māori reviewed the draft NCCRA reports. The main themes to come out of the feedback were:
 - The NCCRA is a robust and comprehensive piece of work, and an impressive achievement given the time constraints
 - The reports are quite long and not very accessible to the general public. We are addressing this through a Plain English edit of the main report, and are also working to produce a short summary of the NCCRA's findings that will be aimed at a general audience
 - There was some confusion among reviewers relating to the decision to take the top two most urgent risks from each domain, the difference between research priorities and knowledge gaps, and the level of analysis undertaken on opportunities. These have been clarified in the final reports.
20. The NCCRA reports are comprehensive and less likely to be read in full by the public. MfE is developing products to support communication of the material to the public and other users, for example a visual summary or other materials to be made available on MfE's website and through social media channels.

A reminder of timeframes for tabling the NCCRA prior to the election

21. The Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Act requires you to table the NCCRA in Parliament and make it publicly available by 14 November 2020 (1 year after the commencement of the Zero Carbon Amendment Act).
22. As previously discussed with you, we recommend the NCCRA and Cabinet paper are presented to DEV for consideration on 1 July.
23. If for any reason the 1 July date is pushed out, there are two other timing options which would still allow for tabling in Parliament before the House rises on 6 August for the 2020 election. The options are as follows:

Cabinet committee	Cabinet	Tabling in parliament
1 July (DEV)	6 July	Any sitting day up until 6 August
22/23 July (DEV/ENV)	27 July	
29 July (DEV)	3 August	

The Cabinet paper seeks approval to table and publish the NCCRA, and sets out initial recommendations for responding to New Zealand's climate risks

24. The NCCRA response paper seeks Cabinet approval to table and publicly release the NCCRA.
25. The paper also provides recommendations for how the Government should respond to the first NCCRA including:
 - a. setting out the actions the government is already taking or planning (both underway or proposed) to respond to the risks from climate change identified in the NCCRA
 - b. establishing a policy framework which includes a stronger role for central government in supporting a proactive local government adaptation response, and a system of sub-national risk assessments and adaptation planning.
26. The Cabinet paper is an opportunity to draw attention to the risks highlighted by the NCCRA, and highlight that these risks sit across all sectors and portfolios.
27. Buy-in and support from a range of Ministers and their agencies will be critical to delivering and implementing the National Adaptation Plan. The 'actions underway' table has been developed by MfE with input from other government agencies, and these agencies will be consulted on the final wording before this table is circulated more widely.

This Cabinet paper will accompany the flood risk paper led by the Minister for Local Government

28. This paper will accompany the paper "Improving resilience to flood risk and supporting the COVID-19 recovery" which will be taken to DEV by the Minister of Local Government on the same date.
29. The two papers respond to the two elements of a report back requested by Cabinet in October 2019 [CAB-19-MIN-0588 refers].
30. The Minister of Local Government's paper focuses on flood risk as a specific example to test a framework and set of principles that are applicable to all natural hazards, including those exacerbated by climate change. The paper has a strong focus on options to strengthen resilience significantly in the short term (through 'shovel-ready projects').
31. Both papers make the case for a stronger central government role to support the operation of the system. This will involve a more active role in data provision, co-investment and improving the legislative framework through the RMA and other acts. In addition, there may be situations where the risks are great enough that central government takes an active hand in particular situations, whether providing funding, or by being involved in decision-making.

Next steps

32. We will continue to prepare the final NCCRA reports for publication and in time to be lodged with the Cabinet paper on 25 June.
33. We will work with your office to provide you with communications material in the lead up to public release of the NCCRA.
34. Community resilience Ministers are meeting on 9 June to discuss the report back to DEV. We will continue to align the language of the two Cabinet papers in discussion with DIA as the papers are finalised.
35. We request your feedback on the draft Cabinet paper as soon as you are able to provide it, and ideally by midday on 5 June, so that your comments can be incorporated and the paper provided to Community Resilience Ministers prior to the meeting.
36. Proposed next steps following the meeting with Community Resilience Ministers include:
 - **Wednesday 10 June:** Officials update Cabinet Paper based on comments from CRG Ministers and send to you.
 - **Thursday 11 June:** Wider Ministerial Consultation begins
 - **Friday 19 June:** Ministerial consultation closes and you provide officials with feedback received
 - **Wednesday 24 June:** You receive final Cabinet Paper
 - **Thursday 25 June:** Your Office lodges Cabinet Paper
 - **Wednesday 1 July:** DEV Committee considers paper
 - **Monday 6 July:** Cabinet considers paper

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Recommendations

37. We recommend that you:

- a. **Note** that the final NCCRA is now complete and being prepared for publication
- b. **Note** that you will be tabling the NCCRA at DEV on 1 July and seeking Cabinet agreement for it to be tabled and published before the 2020 election
- c. **Note** the proposed next steps for this Cabinet paper following the meeting with Community Resilience Ministers
- d. **Agree** to circulate the attached Cabinet paper to Community Resilience Ministers ahead of their meeting on 9 June (and ideally on 5 June)
- e. **Agree** to discuss the Cabinet Paper and NCCRA at the officials' meeting on Monday 8 June

Yes/No

Yes/No

Signature

This briefing has been approved electronically by Mark Storey – (Acting) Director, Climate Change on 4 June 2020

Hon James Shaw
Minister for Climate Change

Date