



12 September 2024

OIAD-1119

9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe 9(2)(a)

Thank you for your email of 6 June 2024 to the Ministry for the Environment (the Ministry) requesting the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

*Following the programme cuts/changes in the Budget, please provide ministerial advice related to programmes which had their budgets reduced/cut/changed. See list below. I'm assuming multiple reductions/savings/changes will be covered in single reports. On top of that, when it comes to the waste disposal levy, please provide technical advice about proposed amendments to the Waste Minimisation Act 2008 enabling the central government allocation of the waste disposal levy to be spent on a broader range of environmental outcomes and help achieve fiscal savings.*

*To be clear, here are the programmes I'm interested in:*

- \$22.3m reduction in departmental back-office functions and services, including less spending on contractors and consultants, and back-office capacity*
- \$10.6m reduction for departmental freshwater work programmes including the Jobs for Nature Secretariat and freshwater investment programmes*
- \$9.7m reduction in departmental evidence and data funding associated with the production of environmental reporting and monitoring*
- \$9.7m in non-levy-related waste savings, which will reduce funding for waste minimisation activities delivered by the Ministry (a further \$15.2m in departmental waste savings is offset by the waste levy)*
- \$14.3m in departmental climate change savings relating to the Climate Change Chief Executives Board and the Ministry's climate change work programme*
- \$6.1m in departmental partnerships and engagement savings relating to the Ministry's communications, engagement and partnership functions.*
- \$15.6m returned from Climate Change Commission*
- \$21.2m from climate change initiatives including for Māori Climate Resilience initiatives and the Climate Change Development Fund*
- \$13m from three Essential Freshwater Fund initiatives: Freshwater Farm Plans; Te Tuatara o Pukekohe – Integrated Catchment Management Plan; and Tangata Whenua resource management training programme*
- \$31.7m from partnerships and engagement work including the Community Environment Fund, the Environmental Legal Assistance Fund, Indigenous Biodiversity, and Regional Planning (non-governmental organisations)*
- \$16.7 from the Climate Emergency Response Fund for reducing emissions from waste*

- *\$10.4m from the Contaminated Sites Remediation Fund (offset by the waste levy so the work will continue).*

The Ministry has identified 43 documents in scope of your request, as per the attached document schedule.

I am releasing 16 documents to you in full.

I am releasing 15 documents to you with some information withheld under the following sections of the Act:

- 9(2)(a) - to protect the privacy of natural persons;
- 9(2)(b)(ii) - to protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information;
- 9(2)(ba)(i) - to protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence or which any person has been or could be compelled to provide under the authority of any enactment, where the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information, or information from the same source, and it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied;
- 9(2)(f)(iv) - to maintain the constitutional conventions for the time being which protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials;
- 9(2)(g)(i) - to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by or between or to Ministers of the Crown or members of an organisation or officers and employees of any public service agency or organisation in the course of their duty;
- 9(2)(h) - to maintain legal professional privilege; and
- 9(2)(i) - to enable a Minister of the Crown or any public service agency or organisation holding the information to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities.

I am withholding one document in full under section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the Act in order to protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information.

I am refusing 11 documents under section 18(d) of the Act as the information requested is already, or will soon be, publicly available. I have provided links to information that is already publicly available in the attached document schedule.

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 decisions 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 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 Ministerial Services team: [ministerials@mfe.govt.nz](mailto:ministerials@mfe.govt.nz).

Nāku noa, nā,



**Arun Patel**

General Manager – Finance & Procurement  
Ministry for the Environment | Manatū Mō Te Taiao

### Document schedule

Doc no.	Document date	Content	Decisions	OIA sections applied
1	29-Jan-24	BRF-4127 – Budget 2024 Initial Baseline Exercise	Released in part	9(2)(f)(iv)
2	29-Jan-24	BRF-4127 Attachment 1: Letter from the Minister of Finance – 23 December 2023	Refused in full (to be released by the New Zealand Treasury)	18(d)
3	29-Jan-24	BRF-4127 Attachment 2: Summary table – Proposed cost savings package	Released in full	N/A
4	5-Feb-24	BRF-4168 – Further information on baseline savings	Released in part	9(2)(f)(iv)
5	5-Feb-24	BRF-4168 Attachment 1: Impact on the Ministry's FTE capability and capacity (updated)	Released in full	N/A
6	7-Feb-24	BRF-4168 Attachment 2: Summary of intended changes to the existing work programme	Released in full	N/A
7	5-Feb-24	BRF-4168 Attachment 3: Complete list of non-departmental eligible baseline savings	Released in full	N/A
8	2-Feb-24	BRF-4169 – Further advice on Waste savings options - Budget 2024	Refused in full (available <a href="#">here</a> )	18(d)
9	13-Feb-24	BRF-4237 – Revised baseline savings package	Released in part	9(2)(f)(iv)
10	13-Feb-24	BRF-4237 Attachment 1: Revised baseline savings package	Released in full	N/A
11	13-Feb-24	BRF-4237 Attachment 2: Recent Environmental Legal Assistance Fund applications and panel decisions	Released in full	N/A
12	13-Feb-24	RM Budget bid – summary tables (sent via email to be read alongside BRF-4237)	Released in part	9(2)(f)(iv)
13	13-Feb-24	Targeted savings from the waste levy (sent via email to be read alongside BRF-4237)	Released in part	9(2)(f)(iv)
14	13-Feb-24	BRF-4346 Aide Memoire: Funding queries	Released in part	9(2)(f)(iv); 9(2)(g)(i)

15	29-Jan-24	BRF-4083 Budget 2024 Initiative: Resource management reforms – replacement	Released in full	N/A
16	9-Feb-24	BRF-4150 Māori Climate Platform Initiative	Released in part	9(2)(f)(iv); 9(2)(h); 9(2)(i)
17	10-Mar-24	BRF-4418 Further advice on the waste levy	Released in part	9(2)(f)(iv); 9(2)(h)
18	8-May-24	Vote Environment Key messages and Final Draft SOIs	Released in full	N/A
19	9-May-24	BRF 4621 Aide memoire: Next steps following Budget 24 Decisions	Released in part	9(2)(a); 9(2)(f)(iv); 9(2)(i)
20	20-May-24	Additional info on BRF-4621 - for Minister Bishop - 20 May 2024	Released in part	9(2)(f)(iv)
21	20-May-24	CEF Report Final (attached to the above)	Released in part	9(2)(ba)(i)
22	29-May-24	MfE Budget 2024 Communications Plan	Released in full	N/A
23	29-May-24	Summary of initiatives	Released in full	N/A
24	17-May-24	Savings – Slides – Budget 24 Comms	Released in full	N/A
25	17-May-24	MfE Budget and change key facts (final version)	Released in full	N/A
26	20-Mar-24	BRF-4478 Briefing to Minister of Climate Change on CERF-funded Climate Initiatives	Released in part	9(2)(a); 9(2)(f)(iv)
27	2-Feb-24	BRF-4162 Aide Memoire on Key ENGO's	Released in full	N/A
28	2-Feb-24	BRF-4162 Appendix One	Released in full	N/A
29	28-Mar-24	BRF-4553 Additional CERF savings, implications, and next steps	Released in part	9(2)(a); 9(2)(f)(iv)
30	28-Mar-24	BRF-4553 Appendix 1 – CERF initiatives contracted vs uncontracted funding (summary)	Released in full	N/A
31	28-Mar-24	BRF-4553 Appendix 2 – Statutory obligations and reporting requirements driven by the CCRA	Released in full	N/A
32	28-Mar-24	BRF-4553 Appendix 3 – Budget 2024 initial baseline exercise summary template	Released in part	9(2)(f)(iv)
33	2-Apr-24	BRF-4548 Aide Memoire - Waste levy advice	Refused in full (available <a href="#">here</a> )	18(d)
34	2-Apr-24	BRF-4548 Appendix A - Waste Disposal Levy Expansion 2021- 2024	Refused in full (available <a href="#">here</a> )	18(d)

35	2-Apr-24	BRF-4544 Aide Memoire - Investment of the waste disposal levy	Released in part	9(2)(b)(ii)
36	2-Apr-24	BRF-4544 Appendix one – Background on the levy and how it flows through to investment by central government	Withheld in full	9(2)(b)(ii)
37	29-Apr-24	Cabinet paper: Investment of the waste disposal levy to achieve Government priorities (CAB-413)	Refused in full (available <a href="#">here</a> )	18(d)
38	25-May-24	Cabinet paper: Waste Minimisation (Waste Disposal Levy) Amendment Bill: approval for introduction (CAB-437)	Refused in full (available <a href="#">here</a> )	18(d)
39	21-Mar-24	BRF-4313 - Waste Minimisation (Waste Disposal Levy) Amendment Bill: Scope and timeline	Refused in full (available <a href="#">here</a> )	18(d)
40	3-Apr-24	BRF-4559 - Draft Cabinet paper: Investment of the waste disposal levy to achieve Government priorities	Refused in full (available <a href="#">here</a> )	18(d)
41	11-Apr-24	BRF-4591 - Revised Cabinet paper: Investment of the waste disposal levy to achieve Government priorities	Refused in full (available <a href="#">here</a> )	18(d)
42	24-Apr-24	BRF-4614 - Talking points for the Budget Sensitive Cabinet paper: Investment of the waste disposal levy to achieve Government priorities	Refused in full (available <a href="#">here</a> )	18(d)
43	7-May-24	BRF-4684 - Cover briefing for CAB-437 Waste Minimisation (Waste Disposal Levy) Amendment Bill: approval for introduction	Refused in full (available <a href="#">here</a> )	18(d)