



## Aide memoire: Emerging themes from the Inquiry into Climate Adaptation submissions and summer reading material

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Actions sought from ministers	
<i>Name and position</i>	<i>Action sought</i>
To Hon Simon WATTS <b>Minister of Climate Change</b>	For noting only
CC Hon Nicola WILLIS <b>Associate Minister of Climate Change</b>	For noting only

Appendices and attachments
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Terms of Reference for the Environment Committee inquiry into climate adaptation</li><li>2. Community-led retreat and adaptation funding: Issues and options</li><li>3. Report of the Expert Working Group on Managed Retreat: A Proposed System for Te Hekenga Rauora/ Planned Relocation</li><li>4. A selection of submissions to the Environment Committee inquiry into climate adaptation</li><li>5. Climate Economic and Fiscal Assessment 2023</li><li>6. Insuring Property under Climate Change – Belinda Storey and Ilan Noy (Policy Quarterly)</li><li>7. Insurance Retreat– Deep South National Science Challenge December 2020</li><li>8. NZIER natural hazards mitigation report 2020</li></ol>

Key contacts at Ministry for the Environment			
<i>Position</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Cell phone</i>	<i>First contact</i>
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# Emerging themes from the Inquiry into Climate Adaptation submissions and summer reading material

## Purpose

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1. This aide memoire provides an update on the submissions received as part of the Environment Committee's (the Committee's) inquiry into climate adaptation. It notes the demographics of the submitters, key emerging themes, progress on the analysis of content, and attaches some background summer reading for you.
2. Following our meeting with you on 20 December, we have begun work on options for establishing a special committee on adaptation. We will come back to you in January 2024 with further advice on its purpose and how it could operate.

## Inquiry into Climate Adaptation

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3. On 14 December 2023, the Committee agreed to reestablish the inquiry into climate adaptation. The terms of reference are found at Appendix 1.
4. The Inquiry was open for submissions between 25 August – 1 November 2023, and 145 submissions were received. These submissions are now being analysed by Ministry for the Environment, as appointed advisors to the Committee.
5. The Committee is yet to consider late submissions and share these with the Ministry.
6. Submissions were based on the Committee's terms of reference (Appendix One), the Ministry's issues and options paper (Appendix Two), and the Report of the Expert Working Group on Managed Retreat (Appendix Three).
7. A non-representative selection of 20 submissions is attached in Appendix Four. These submissions provide a cross-section to provide you with some interim feedback ahead of submissions being made publicly available.
8. We have also appended a range of other summer reading for you (see Appendices Five-Eight)

## Submitter demographics

9. Table 1 outlines the submissions received by the Ministry to date. Some stakeholders fall into multiple categories, however, for the purpose of this exercise have only been counted in one category.

**Table 1: Submitter demographics to date**

<b>Groups</b>	<b>Number of submissions</b>
Local government	29
Iwi, hapū and Māori communities	10
Individuals	20
Businesses	12
NGOs and community groups	40
Researchers/academics	11
Adaptation practitioners	12
Crown entities	5

## Emerging key themes

10. As part of the early analysis of submissions, officials have identified several key themes within the submissions received.

11. Most submitters agree that:

- there is a need for accelerated adaptation action
- “community-led retreat” is not the most appropriate terminology
- comprehensive risk assessments must be the basis for adaptation planning
- adaptation planning should be a requirement, consider a range of scenarios overtime and prioritise pre-emptive action. They should also include planning for post-event responses.
- central government has a core role such as in the provision of national direction, funding and oversight
- retreat is not currently an option (beyond voluntary buy-outs) due to inadequate powers, lack of a decision-making framework and lack of clarity about adaptation funding. There is general concern about an expectation that councils will continue to pay for losses experienced by asset owners.
- there is a need for strong legislative integration, including between the resource management system, Local Government Act, Emergency Management Act and Public Works Act
- strengthened powers should enable the acquisition of land where appropriate
- there is a need for powers to allow for the withdrawal of infrastructure and services
- there are many lessons that can be learned from the recent North Island Severe Weather events and other recoveries.

12. Overall, submitters identified a range of choices, tensions and trade-offs that will need to be made as part of the system design.
13. There is a strong desire for meaningful engagement with communities, Treaty partners and other stakeholders, but also awareness of resourcing constraints and timeliness considerations. Submitters also express the need for more resourcing for adaptation planning and implementation at a local level by local government, iwi, hapū, Māori, and communities. Some submitters provided projections of costs associated with adaptation planning processes.
14. Submitters highlighted some specific opportunities for wider resilience-building through land use changes, such as nature-based solutions.
15. There is a general view that there needs to be some degree of personal responsibility. However, many submitters proposed that this be balanced against achieving equitable outcomes, the material impact of climate change on individuals now because of decisions made in the past, and the overall scale of the issue.

## Next steps

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16. We will provide you with further advice on the formation of a special committee early in 2025.

## Signatures

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Katherine Wilson  
**General Manager – Adaptation**  
**21 December 2023**

Hon Simon WATTS  
**Minister of Climate Change**  
Date

## Appendices

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Please see appendices as attached via email to the Minister's office.