



# Cabinet Economic Development Committee

## Minute of Decision

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### Landfills Vulnerable to the Effects of Climate Change

Portfolio **Environment / Associate Environment (Hon Eugenie Sage)**

On 13 November 2019, the Cabinet Economic Development Committee:

- 1 **noted** that there are at least six known landfills where waste is currently being exposed and discharged to the environment by coastal erosion or storm events;
- 2 **noted** that a landfill's owner (historically mostly territorial authorities) is responsible for repairing damaged or compromised vulnerable landfills and the remediation of any waste materials discharged to the environment;
- 3 **agreed** to confirm that the position outlined in paragraph 2 above continue to be the government's position;
- 4 **noted** that the Contaminated Sites Remediation Fund and the Waste Minimisation Fund are currently not designed to include landfill remediation, and at current funding levels could not be readily reconfigured to do so;
- 5 **noted** that vulnerable landfills are only one of territorial authorities' many infrastructure/assets that may be impacted by the effects of climate change;
- 6 **noted** that responding to damaged or compromised vulnerable landfills is placing pressure on local government finances and, in some cases, may exceed councils' available resources;
- 7 **noted** that as part of the Community Resilience Work Programme, the Treasury, Department of Internal Affairs and the Ministry for the Environment are developing a framework for the funding and financing of risk mitigation and adaptive behaviours to inform decisions, including decisions to address vulnerable landfills;
- 8 **invited** the Minister of Local Government to consider the ability of the most vulnerable councils to pay for climate change adaptation;

9 noted that:

- 9.1 the Ministry for the Environment will investigate available options to assist small territorial authorities lacking the financial reserves and resources to address their vulnerable closed landfills via the Waste Minimisation Fund;
- 9.2 in practice, this will only be possible if the levy rate increases and/or breadth of landfills covered by the levy increases.

Janine Harvey  
Committee Secretary

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**Present:**

Rt Hon Winston Peters  
Hon Kelvin Davis  
Hon Grant Robertson (Chair)  
Hon Dr Megan Woods  
Hon Chris Hipkins  
Hon David Parker  
Hon Nanaia Mahuta  
Hon Stuart Nash  
Hon Iain Lees-Galloway  
Hon Jenny Salesa  
Hon Shane Jones  
Hon Kris Faafoi  
Hon Willie Jackson (part of item)  
Hon James Shaw  
Hon Julie Anne Genter (part of item)  
Hon Eugenie Sage

**Officials present from:**

Officials Committee for DEV

**Hard-copy distribution:**

Minister for the Environment  
Minister of Local Government  
Associate Minister for the Environment (Hon Eugenie Sage)

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