



20 August 2024

OIAD-1140

9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe 9(2)(a)

Thank you for your email of 28 June 2024 to the Ministry for the Environment (the Ministry) requesting the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

My questions within this OIA request are specifically related to the Climate Change and Agriculture Ministers announcement that an independent panel of experts will review agricultural biogenic methane science and targets for consistency with no additional warming.

The information I am requesting is for the time period of 1 December 2023 to the present date.

- 1. Policy Documents and Communications: Any policies, cabinet papers, briefs, public consultation documents, reports (for example long term insight briefings or other publicly available reports), and aide-mémoires to Chief Executive, ELT, ministers, or other agencies that discuss, reference, have been produced in support of, or to inform the review of biogenic methane science.*
- 2. Terms of Reference: the terms of reference for the review*

The terms of reference for the Methane Science and Target Review are published on the Ministry's website at: <https://environment.govt.nz/assets/news/Methane-Science-and-Target-Review-Terms-of-Reference.pdf>. As such, I must refuse part 2 of your request under section 18(d) of the Act, as the information requested is publicly available.

I have identified 10 documents in scope of part 1 of your request, as set out in the below document table. I am releasing all these documents in part, with information withheld or refused in accordance with the following sections of the Act:

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| 9(2)(a) | to protect the privacy of natural persons |
| 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 |
| 18(d) | as the information is publicly available. |

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 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.

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 Ministerial Services team: ministerials@mfe.govt.nz.

Nāku noa, nā



Hemi Smiler

General Manager – Climate Change Mitigation
Ministry for the Environment | Manatū Mō Te Taiao

Document schedule

Doc no.	Doc date	Content	Decision on release	OIA section/s applied
1.	1 March 2024	BRF-4278 – Briefing: Methane Science and Targets Review	Release in part	9(2)(a)
2.	15 March 2024	BRF-4449 – Cover brief & Cabinet paper – Announcing the Methane Science and Target Review	Release in part	9(2)(a)
3.	21 March 2024	BRF-4449/Sub24-0037 – Approval to lodge: Announcing the methane science and target review	Release in part	9(2)(a) 9(2)(g)(i)
4.	10 April 2024	BRF-4562 – Progressing the Methane Science and Target Review	Release in part	9(2)(a) 9(2)(f)(iv) 9(2)(g)(i)
5.	9 May 2024	BRF-4669 – For Ministerial Consultation – Initiating the Methane Science and Targets Review	Release in part	9(2)(a) 9(2)(g)(i)
6.	23 May 2024	BRF-4812 – Approval to lodge: Initiating the methane science and target review	Release in part	9(2)(a) 9(2)(g)(i) 18(d)
7.	23 May 2024	BRF-4710 – Memo: Proactive Release of Cabinet paper Announcing the Methane Science and Target Review Proposal	Release in part	9(2)(a) 18(d)
8.	13 June 2024	BRF-4905 – Finalising the Terms of Reference for the Methane Science and Target Review	Release in part	9(2)(a) 9(2)(g)(i)
9.	19 June 2024	BRF-4905 – Finalising the Terms of Reference for the Methane Science and Target Review	Release in part	9(2)(a) 9(2)(g)(i)
10.	24 June 2024	BRF-4947 – For approval: Methane Science and Target Review Terms of Reference	Release in part	18(d)