



PROACTIVE RELEASE COVERSHEET

Minister	Hon Simon Watts	Portfolio	Climate
Name of package	Government response to the Report of the Māori Affairs Committee on Māori Climate Adaptation	Date to be published	By 1/03/2024

List of documents that have been proactively released

Date	Title	Author
20 December 2023	Cabinet paper: Government Response to the Report of the Māori Affairs Committee on the briefing on Māori climate adaptation	Ministry for the Environment
13 February 2024	Government response to Report of Māori Affairs Committee on Māori climate adaptation	Ministry for the Environment
20 December 2023	CAB-23-MIN-0502 – Cabinet Minute of Decision	Cabinet Office

Information redacted

NO

Any information redacted in this document is redacted in accordance with the Ministry for the Environment's policy on proactive release and is labelled with the reason for redaction. This may include information that would be redacted if this information was requested under Official Information Act 1982. Where this is the case, the reasons for withholding information are listed below. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Summary of reasons for redaction

No redactions

In Confidence

Office of the Minister of Climate Change

Chair, Cabinet Business Committee

Government Response to the Report of the Māori Affairs Committee on the briefing on Māori climate adaptation

Proposal

1. This paper seeks Cabinet approval of the Government's response to the Māori Affairs Committee (the Committee) briefing on Māori climate adaptation.

Background

Impacts of climate change on Māori

2. Due to New Zealand's geography, many communities are severely exposed to natural hazards that are exacerbated by climate change. This includes increasing severity and frequency of flooding, landslips, sea level rise and drought. The resulting risk to life and livelihood, property and infrastructure, wellbeing, taonga and places of cultural significance including wāhi tapu and marae, is also growing.
3. While all New Zealanders will experience the impacts of climate change, the ability of communities to adapt and their resilience will vary considerably across the country. In particular, Māori communities face heightened risks due to their geographical locations, the industries they work in, and current socio-economic circumstances.
4. Many Māori communities are located in rural and remote locations. Climate change will affect these rural Māori communities, their infrastructure, whenua and sites of cultural significance including marae, urupā (burial grounds), wāhi tapu (sacred sites) and mahinga kai (food-gathering sites).¹

Māori Affairs Committee briefing and recommendations

5. On 22 February 2023, the Māori Affairs Committee initiated a briefing to receive information on how climate change adaptation may affect Māori, with a particular focus on managed retreat. The Committee received 23 written submissions and heard oral evidence from 17 of these submitters. The Committee received support from the Ministry for the Environment and Te Puni Kōkiri.
6. The Committee briefing makes a recommendation of 22 principles for the Government to take into account when developing and implementing law and policy related to climate change adaptation, rather than specific policy recommendations. The principles cover matters such as upholding the Treaty of Waitangi, addressing challenges associated with Māori climate adaptation such as resourcing, joint

¹ Ministry for the Environment. 2022. National Adaptation Plan. Retrieved from [Urutau, ka taurikura: Kia tū pakari a Aotearoa i ngā huringa āhuarangi | Adapt and thrive: Building a climate-resilient New Zealand \(environment.govt.nz\)](https://www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/national-adaptation-plan)

decision making, utilising mātauranga Māori, and acknowledging and protecting Māori rights and interests.

7. To inform their recommendation, the Committee invited a targeted group of individuals and organisations with significant interest or expertise in climate adaptation to make submissions. Submitters included academics, researchers, Māori enterprises and representatives from iwi and local authorities.
8. The Committee's Report was published on the Parliament website on 5 July 2023. It makes one recommendation to the Government (see appendix 1). Standing Order 256 requires the Government to present a response within 60 working days (by 22 December 2023).

Proposed response to the Committee's recommendations

9. The Committee's recommended principles are broad which provide flexibility in how they are responded to.
10. There are several initiatives underway across government which provide opportunities to assess the Committee's recommended principles. These include:
 - 10.1. adaptation framework legislation;
 - 10.2. actions being progressed from the National Adaptation Plan;
 - 10.3. the Future of Severely Affected Locations work programme within the overall recovery to the severe weather events of early 2023;
 - 10.4. the Environment Select Committee inquiry into climate adaptation;
11. I therefore propose that the Government responds by noting the Committee's recommendation and advising that it will consider them as part of our overall work programme on climate change adaptation.
12. Appendix 2 sets out the proposed text of the draft Government Response.

Timing of the Government response

13. The Government response must be presented to the House 14 days after Parliament reconvenes after the 2023 election.

Cost of living implications

14. There are no cost-of-living implications arising from this paper.

Financial implications

15. There are no financial implications arising from this paper.

Legislative implications

16. There are no legislative implications arising from this paper.

Impact analysis

17. Regulatory impact analysis requirements do not apply to this paper.

Population implications

18. Decisions on how we adapt to natural hazard risks will affect communities vulnerable to natural hazards and the impacts of climate change.
19. The Committee's report on Māori climate adaptation will contribute to positive outcomes for iwi, hapū and Māori, through providing an insight into the perspectives of Māori on adaptation and climate change impacts.

Human rights

20. Proposals in this paper regarding the Government's response to the Committee's report are consistent with the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 and the Human Rights Act 1993.

Use of external resources

21. There were no external resources used in relation to this paper.

Engagement

22. The Committee briefing was developed with support from 27 submissions.
23. The Environment Committee inquiry into climate adaptation was also open for submissions between August and November 2023.
24. Officials are conducting and planning further engagement on workstreams that are related to climate adaptation and Māori.

Agency consultation

25. Consultation has been carried out with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development; Ministry for Culture and Heritage; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Transport; Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment; Ministry of Primary Industries; Ministry of Social Development; the Department of Internal Affairs; the Department of Conservation; the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet; Kainga Ora; the Treasury; the National Emergency Management Agency; Te Puni Kōkiri; Te Waihanga; NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi; Land Information New Zealand; Toka Tū Ake EQC; Public Service Commission and Te Arawhiti.

Communications

26. There are no communications needed for this Government response.

Proactive release

27. I intend to proactively release this Cabinet paper within the required 30 business days of a Cabinet decision, subject to Official Information Act considerations.

Recommendations

The Minister of Climate Change recommends that the Cabinet Business Committee:

1. note that 18 December, Cabinet granted the Committee Power to Act;
2. **note** that on 5 July the Māori Affairs Committee presented its report to the House entitled “Briefing on Māori climate adaptation”;
3. **note** that the Committee recommended that the Government take into account 22 principles related to adaptation planning and engagement processes, and adaptation funding policies and frameworks, when developing and implementing law and policy related to climate adaptation;
4. **approve** the Government response (Appendix 2) to the Report of the Māori Affairs Committee entitled “Briefing on Māori climate adaptation”;
5. **note** that the Government response must be presented to the House 14 working days after Parliament reconvenes after the 2023 election, on 22 December;
6. **invite** the Minister of Climate Change to present the Government response to the House in accordance with Standing Order 256.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Simon Watts

Minister of Climate Change