



6 NOV 2012

12-O-01695

Alex Harris  
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Dear Alex Harris

Thank you for your email of 20 October 2012 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

*'all advice and communications (including emails) on the decision to scrap the "State of the Environment" report. I'm particularly interested in learning when the scrapping [sic] was first proposed and the immediate reasons for it, whether it originated from the Ministry or Minister, and whether it was in reaction to recent media stories which highlighted unflattering aspects of the data.'*

The Government is committed to providing high-quality and timely information on the state of New Zealand's environment. Comprehensive reports on the state of the environment were produced in 1997 and 2007. These reports provided detailed information across a number of environmental indicators.

Since the last State of the Environment Report in 2007, the Ministry for the Environment has produced regular environmental updates for the indicators included in the 2007 State of the Environment Report. The frequency of these varies depending on the particular indicator. For example, in 2012 the Ministry for the Environment released six indicator updates including air quality (particulate matter PM10); stratospheric ozone; recreational water quality in New Zealand, household consumption expenditure; solid waste disposal; and greenhouse gases (emissions and removals).

The Government had previously signalled that a State of the Environment Report would be produced in 2012. Work to produce this report would have commenced in 2011 but was deferred because decisions needed to be made on a number of matters to ensure that future environmental reporting is robust and credible. These decisions directly affect the approach taken to the next State of the Environment report. No decision has been made to cease publication of the State of the Environment report. Therefore, no information falls within the scope of your OIA request.

The Government continues to place a high level of importance on environmental reporting. This is reflected in the decision earlier this year to include an additional 10 environmental indicators as Tier One statistics, which are the most important and enduring measures of New Zealand's performance across economic, environmental, social and cultural domains. These new statistics will be phased in from 2013. In the meantime, please be assured that the Ministry for the Environment will continue to produce regular indicator updates.

Under section 28(3) of the OIA, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review my response to your request.

Yours sincerely

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