

20-D-00807

Alan Thompson
fyi-request-15206-061684b3@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Alan Thompson

Thank you for your email of 19 April 2021 requesting the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

In October 2020 the Ministry in conjunction with Statistics NZ published a paper titled "Our Atmosphere and Climate 2020". This paper made a number of claims with regard to the impact of climate change on fire danger and an increase in the risks of wildfire in NZ. The data used to support your claims was based upon an analysis of Fire Danger Class levels at twenty sites over a 17 year period.

Under the provisions of the Official Information Act I request from you the following information:

- *Copies of correspondence (letters, email, etc) received to date by the Ministry supporting the findings of this report with the respect to the increasing risks of wildfire as a consequence of climate change; and*
- *Copies of correspondence (letters, emails, etc) received to date by the Ministry challenging or disputing the findings of this report with respect to the increasing risk of wildfire as a consequence of climate change and/or the methodology and data used to arrive at this finding, and if any, what action has the Ministry taken to address any concerns raised.*

The Ministry for the Environment has identified seven documents in scope of your request, as listed in the attached table.

Some information within these documents has been withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act, to protect the privacy of natural persons.

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.

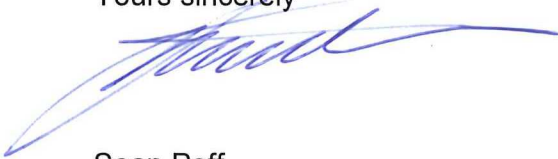
As you will note in the attachments, the Ministry for the Environment (the Ministry) received questions from a journalist regarding the report. While these were not specifically in support or dispute of claims made in the report, we have provided them as they may be of interest to you. Note the original questions were made via phone call, so we are only providing a copy of the Ministry's response.

You will also note in the attachments that a meeting was held between Fire and Emergency NZ, SCION and Stats NZ. The actions agreed upon in this meeting were that Stats NZ would reassess the data used in the report. No formal actions were agreed by the Ministry, and we do not hold any further information in scope.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Office of the Ombudsman of my decision to withhold information 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.

Yours sincerely



Sean Poff
Director, Environmental Reporting

Document schedule

Document no.	Document date	Content	Decisions	OIA sections applied
1	2 November 2020	[Email] Our Atmosphere and Climate 2020 - detailed feedback	Released in part	S9(2)(a)
2	6 November 202-	[Email] request to meet - Our Atmosphere and Climate 2020	Released in part	S9(2)(a)
3	22 November 2020	[Email] RE Question from MfE on their OAC2020 Report	Released in part	S9(2)(a)
3.1		Attachment to email - <i>Assessment of multiple climate change effects on plantation forests in New Zealand</i>	Released in full	N/A
4	13 January 2021	[Email] Gore fire danger Media	Released in part	S9(2)(a)
5	11 November 2020-	[Email] Recent NIWA-led research on wildfire risk	Released in part	S9(2)(a)
6	19 February 2021	[Letter] Ministry for the Environment Feb 2021	Released in part	S9(2)(a)
7	19 April 2021	[Letter] 21-M-00588 Response	Released in part	S9(2)(a)

