



Ref: OIA 2023-016



29 August 2023

Tēnā koe



Thank you for your request of 18 July 2023 seeking the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

1. *All correspondence, received and sent, all information and advice received and given and all information that is held by the Climate Change Commission on the work of scientists, Will Happer, Tom Sheahan, William van Wijngaarden*
2. *All correspondence received and sent, all information and advice received and given and all information that is held by the Climate Change Commission related to the statement of the IPCC in its 6th Assessment Report The Physical Science Basis, that expressing methane emissions as CO2 equivalent emissions overstates the effect of a constant emission by a factor of 3-4. (See Climate Change 2021 The Physical Science Basis Working Group 1 Contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report of the IPCC Page 1016 Chapter 7)*
3. *All correspondence received and sent, all information and advice received and given and all information held by the Climate Change Commission, since the statement by the IPCC in the sixth Assessment Report confirmed the inaccuracy of the CO2 equivalent system to express methane emissions, on the risks to New Zealand of it pursuing at COP 28 a different way to quantify and express methane emissions.*

On 11 August 2023 we provided you with a response to question 3 above and advised you that we were extending the timeframe for the remainder of the response under section 15(1)(a) of the Act. This was as the request necessitated searching through a large quantity of information and meeting the original time limit would have unreasonably interfered with the operations of the Commission.

This letter provides a response to the remainder of your request (questions 1 and 2 above), which we have considered in accordance with the Act. Information within scope of your request includes those the Commission held at the date of your request, with copies attached at Appendix A.



*Question 1*

The full list of documents within scope of this part of your request is attached in the document schedule at Appendix A. Some names and contact information have been withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act, to protect the privacy of natural persons. Where this is the case, we have also detailed it in the schedule attached.

Where there is a small amount of information within scope of your request included in a much larger document that is out of scope, we have compiled the information within scope in a separate document (document X in the attached schedule).

*Question 2*

We interpreted this part of your request as asking about the topic of methane emissions being overstated when expressed as CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent emissions (CO<sub>2</sub>e). The Commission has produced a lot of work that relates to the broader issues surrounding greenhouse gas accounting metrics, including advantages and disadvantages that come with certain models or metrics. We have considered within scope of your request only information created since the release of the 6<sup>th</sup> Assessment Report (AR6), that directly refers to methane being overstated when expressed as CO<sub>2</sub>e. For an in-depth discussion of how Aotearoa New Zealand measures emissions, I refer you to *Ināia Tonu Nei* "[Chapter Three: How to measure progress](#)".

The full list of documents within scope of this part of your request is attached in the document schedule at Appendix A. Some names and contact information have been withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act, to protect the privacy of natural persons, and information has been withheld from one document under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the Act in order to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by or between members of an organisation. Where information has been withheld it is also noted in the schedule attached.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review of this response by the Office of the Ombudsman, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. Contact details for the Ombudsman can be found on their website at: [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz)

Please note that the Commission proactively releases its responses to requests made under the Act. This is to help ensure others can also have access to this information. As such, this letter will shortly be published on our website with your name and contact details redacted to protect your privacy.

Ngā mihi



Dr Grant Blackwell,  
Chief Science Advisor

## Appendix A – document schedules

### Question 1

Document	Date	Name/Description
1	20 April 2021	<p>“RE: Listen to Happer. He is a whole lot smarter than Renwick.”</p> <p>An email containing a link to video of William Happer talk, <i>“Is there a climate crisis?”</i></p> <p>Released with information withheld under section 9(2)(a)</p>
X	24 January 2022	<p>“Fwd: Why the climate fraud Jacinda and James take credit for is too obvious for words...”</p> <p>An email from an individual that mentions Happer and Wijngaarden as part of a broader discussion. Information within scope of your request has been included in document X attached.</p>
X	8 February 2022	<p>“HWEN consultation webinar”</p> <p>A transcript of an online question and answer session with He Waka E Noa where Happer is briefly mentioned by a member of the public. Information within scope of your request has been included in document X attached.</p>
2	6 May 2021	<p>“Still believe CO2 is a problem?”</p> <p>Email from an individual containing a link to a William Happer article “There is no climate emergency” on electeverse.net. The article is no longer available.</p> <p>Released with information withheld under section 9(2)(a).</p>
3	1 July 2022	<p>“Fwd: WV v. EPA: A Huge Win at the Supreme Court”</p> <p>An email from an individual that includes Happer commentary as part of a CO2 Coalition newsletter on an American legal proceeding.</p> <p>Released with information withheld under section 9(2)(a).</p>

4	1 August 2022	<p>“Managing Exotic Afforestation Incentives’ The Warming in U.S. for at Least 17 Years According to Rarely Referenced Urban Heat-Free Database”</p> <p>An email from an individual that the Commission was copied into containing the text of an article written by Chris Morrison and published in the Daily Sceptic on 31 July 2022. The article references the work of William Happer on temperature measurements.</p> <p>Released with information withheld under section 9(2)(a).</p>
5	15 September 2022	<p>"RE: Question please"</p> <p>An email from an individual inquiring whether the Commission has reviewed a paper by Happer &amp; Wijngaarden titled "<i>Relative Potency of Greenhouse Molecules</i>". This document includes internal emails discussing the Commission's response, and the Commission's final response.</p> <p>Released with information withheld under Section 9(2)(a).</p>
6	14 December 2022	<p>"Fwd: Carbon Taxes and a Test"</p> <p>An email from an individual that the Commission was copied into that includes a CO2 Coalition newsletter, which includes a link to an article by Happer titled "<i>Why carbon taxes are a bad idea</i>".</p> <p>Released with information withheld under section 9(2)(a).</p>
7,8	30 June 2023	<p>"Media Inquiry (the Ensign, Gore)"</p> <p>"Ensign inquiry response"</p> <p>A media inquiry from a Gore newspaper and the Commission's response. William Happer/William van Wijngaarden are mentioned in the inquiry.</p> <p>Released with information withheld under section 9(2)(a).</p>
9, 10	4 July 2023	<p>"Tom Sheahan talking points"</p> <p>Document drafted in preparation for engagement with Groundswell NZ.</p> <p>Released with information withheld under section 9(2)(a).</p>

## Question 2

Document	Date	Name/Description
11	1 February 2022	<p>“RE: DairyNZ HWEN meetings”</p> <p>Correspondence between Dairy New Zealand and the Commission re international reporting via the national GHG inventory.</p> <p>Released with information withheld under section 9(2)(a).</p>
12	19 October 2022	<p>“Frame Macey 2 pager”</p> <p>Board paper entitled “Summary of key points from the Businessdesk series by Adrian Macey and David Frame (Sept-Oct 2022)</p> <p>Released in full.</p>
13	25 October 2022	<p>“RE on written submissions”</p> <p>Internal correspondence discussing an email the Commission was copied into regarding WPQ <a href="#">36891 (2022)</a>.</p> <p>Released with information withheld under sections 9(2)(a) and 9(2)(g)(i).</p>
14	27 October 2022	<p>Email: “GWP* is a model, not a metric”</p> <p>Internal email with attached paper titled “<i>GWP* is a model, not a metric</i>”, Malte Meinshausen and Zebedee Nicholls (paper is publicly available at <a href="#">GWP* is a model, not a metric - IOPscience</a>)</p> <p>Released with information withheld under section 9(2)(a).</p>
15, 16	25 May 2023	<p>“FW: presentation to Fonterra Council”</p> <p>A presentation made by Dr Reisinger (in his private capacity) to the Fonterra Shareholders Board Meeting, which was emailed to the Commission as an FYI.</p>
X	20 June 2023	<p>“DairyNZ submission: Draft advice on the second Emissions Reduction Plan”</p> <p>A submission from DairyNZ to the draft advice on the second Emissions Reduction Plan. Due to the length of this document, information in scope has been included in Document X.</p>
17	20 June 2023	<p>“Submission 5”</p> <p>A submission from a private individual to the draft advice on the second Emissions Reduction Plan. The submission references the relevant IPCC statement and the methane overstatement effect.</p> <p>Released with information withheld under section 9(2)(a).</p>
18, 19	17 July 2023	<p>“Fwd PCE roundtable on offsetting livestock methane with trees”</p> <p>Correspondence between Dr Reisinger (acting in a personal capacity), and Simon Upton, following a roundtable event which discussed, among other</p>

		<p>things, metrics for measuring methane emissions – emailed to the Commission as an FYI.</p> <p>Email released with information withheld under section 9(2)(a). Note the Technical report and the slideshow are publicly available:</p> <p><a href="#">In-session technical workshop on findings on emission metrics contained in the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Technical report by the secretariat   UNFCCC</a></p> <p><a href="#">GHG emission metrics-Findings from WGIII   UNFCCC</a></p> <p>This email contained an attached document that discussed methane offsetting in greater depth. Sections of this document that are in scope are included in Document X.</p>
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