

Proactive Release

31 October 2023

The following Cabinet papers and related Cabinet minutes have been proactively released by the Minister of Climate Change

Title	Reference
<i>Cabinet Minute of Decision – Report on Overseas Travel: Hon James Shaw</i>	CAB-23-MIN-0433
<i>Report on Overseas Travel: Hon James Shaw</i>	

Some parts of this information release would not be appropriate to release and, if requested, would be withheld under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA). Where this is the case, the relevant sections of the OIA that would apply have been identified. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Key to OIA redaction codes:

- 6(a): to avoid prejudicing the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the New Zealand Government; and
- 6(b)(i): to protect the passing of information from another government on a confidential basis.



Cabinet

Minute of Decision

This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.

Report on Overseas Travel: Hon James Shaw

Portfolio Climate Change

On 18 September 2023, Cabinet **noted** the report from Hon James Shaw under CAB-23-SUB-0433 on his travel, from 20 to 23 August 2023, to Suva, Fiji to attend the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Pacific High Level Climate Dialogue and the Pacific Climate Change Ministers' Roundtable.

Rachel Hayward
Secretary of the Cabinet

Proactively Released by the Minister of Climate Change

~~In Confidence~~

Office of the Minister for Climate Change

Chair, Cabinet

Report on Overseas Travel: Hon James Shaw

I recommend that Cabinet note this report on my travel to Suva, Fiji to attend the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Pacific High Level Climate Dialogue and Pacific Climate Change Ministers' Roundtable from 20 to 23 August 2023.

Report

- 1 In seeking approval to travel to these meetings [CAB-23-MIN-0368], I indicated that the purpose of my attendance was to:
 - 1.1 Deepen relationships with Pacific climate change ministers, and position Aotearoa New Zealand as an advocate for Pacific interests;
 - 1.2 Lend profile and support to New Zealand's UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP) objectives and priorities that seek to drive ambitious action on climate change;
 - 1.3 Demonstrate our support for Australia's bid to co-host COP31 in partnership with the Pacific and participate in discussions on how to deliver COP31 in a way that reflects regional interests.

Standing with the Pacific

- 2 Cabinet recently agreed an updated mandate to guide New Zealand's engagement in international climate change negotiations [CAB-23-MIN-0317¹]. This mandate recognises our whanaungatanga with Pacific countries, which are among the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Cabinet agreed that New Zealand will advocate for outcomes that are responsive to the needs of the Pacific and support the interests of Pacific countries.
- 3 The UNFCCC Pacific High Level Climate Dialogue, in which I participated as an observer², was an important opportunity to hear from Pacific Small Island Developing States on their priorities for COP28 in Dubai. These priorities included:

¹ Proactively released online at <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/assets/OIA/OIA-2023/PR-2023-0317-Update-to-Aotearoa-New-Zealands-Approach-to-International-Climate-Change-Negotiations.pdf>

² Hosted by the Hon Sitiveni Rabuka, Prime Minister of the Republic of Fiji, participants included Prime Minister of Tonga, Deputy Prime Minister of Fiji, Ministers from Cook Islands, Niue, Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Tuvalu. Both myself and the Australian Minister of Climate Change attended as observers. Other PSIDS member countries including FSM, New Caledonia, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu were represented at Senior Officials level.

- 3.1 Urgent prioritisation of mitigation efforts to keep temperature increases to below 1.5 degrees by all nations, developed and developing, including the need for the Global Stocktake to facilitate course correction;
 - 3.2 Phase out fossil fuels, including the elimination of fossil fuel subsidies and support for a regional moratorium on new fossil fuel exploration and extractive licences;
 - 3.3 Ensuring that climate finance responds to the needs and priorities of the Pacific, including for loss and damage, adaptation and funding to support ocean health; and
 - 3.4 Ensuring that operationalisation of the COP27 decision on a fund and funding arrangements for addressing loss and damage, is responsive to the needs and circumstances of the Pacific.
- 4 There was convergence amongst Pacific counterparts on the importance of a strong and unified Pacific voice for ambitious climate action at COP28. The dialogue highlighted the importance of ensuring we head into COP, and other international fora, with a coalition of countries ready to fight every tonne of carbon pollution - immovable, uncompromising and consistent on limiting warming to 1.5C.
- 5 Pacific counterparts emphasised the importance of using every political opportunity, at the regional and international level, to ensure that COP28 provides a strong political directive to increase global mitigation efforts. Ministers agreed that, where there had been a convergence of views, these provide the foundation for an ambitious Pacific call to action which amplifies Pacific voices and advocates for Pacific priorities on the global stage. ^{s6(b)(i)}
- 6 ^{s6(a)}
- 7 I also undertook bilateral meetings with Australia, Cook Islands, Niue, Marshall Islands, Tonga and Tuvalu. Pacific counterparts reiterated that the Pacific is on the front lines of the climate crisis and will be among those hardest hit. Discussions reaffirmed that Pacific nations are amongst our most important allies to influence global ambition.
- 8 These meetings were opportunities to strengthen relationships and express New Zealand's support for a strong and unified Pacific voice on climate change. I intend to take these views into account in further considering New Zealand's objectives and priorities for COP28, and beyond.

Encouraging ambitious action on climate change at COP28

- 9 Effective global action has been, and remains, New Zealand's primary objective for international climate change engagement. We are at a once in five-year

point in the Paris Agreement architecture, to secure a global course correction through the 'Global Stocktake' of progress in implementing the Agreement.

- 10 In my various engagements I outlined New Zealand's priorities for COP28 and the Global Stocktake to deliver:
 - 10.1 Concrete commitments and actions, backed by accountability and follow-up.
 - 10.2 Comprehensive (all sectors and gases) and 1.5 degree aligned NDCs.
 - 10.3 A commitment to phase out fossil fuels, and a tangible plan for how this will occur.
 - 10.4 Sectoral measures and action on non-CO₂ gases.
 - 10.5 Measures on nature and halting deforestation.
 - 10.6 To make financial flows consistent with low emissions and climate resilient development.
- 11 I proposed to Pacific Ministerial counterparts that we work together to build a "coalition of coalitions" across our various networks, calling for ambitious climate change action. Pacific counterparts were supportive of this proposal.
- 12 I intend to take this forward in the coming months, in the lead up to COP28, by reaching out to international counterparts urging ambitious action. This targeted outreach will support our shared Pacific goals to strengthen global mitigation action.
- 13 I also met with representatives from the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the host nation for COP28, including UAE Ambassador Majid Al Suwaidi, Director General and Special Representative for the COP28 President, to outline New Zealand's objectives for COP28. I relayed that New Zealand intends to advocate at COP28 for alignment of global mitigation efforts with the 1.5 degree temperature goal and for the global phase out of fossil fuels. I encouraged COP28 President Al Jaber to engage directly with the Pacific,^{s6(a)}

COP31 – a vision for a Pacific COP

- 14 Australia is bidding to co-host COP31, in 2026, in partnership with the Pacific. The Pacific Climate Change Ministers' Roundtable was convened to discuss how COP31 might showcase Pacific climate leadership and secure ambitious outcomes that align with Pacific interests.
- 15 A COP in our region would be an opportunity to bring the realities of the impacts of the climate crisis in the Pacific to the global stage. It will also be an opportunity for more New Zealanders to be involved, including Māori, youth and our business community, and to showcase New Zealand as a green investment destination, as well as for innovative New Zealand clean-tech and carbon-efficient exporters.

- 16 Discussions highlighted the importance of Pacific diplomacy in support of successfully securing the bid; ensuring the partnership model could navigate across developing and developed country positioning; and continued engagement as planning progresses.

Proactive release

- 17 This paper will be proactively released as per Cabinet Office Circular CO (18) 4, on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade's website. Proactive release will be subject to redaction as appropriate under the Official Information Act 1982.

Recommendation

I recommend that Cabinet note this report.

Authorised for lodgement.

Hon. James Shaw

Minister of Climate Change

Proactively Released by the Minister of Climate Change