

Proactive Release

17/02/2023

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

Title	Reference
<i>Report on Overseas Travel: Hon James Shaw</i>	CAB-22-0596
<i>Cabinet Minute of Decision – Report on Overseas Travel: Hon James Shaw</i>	CAB-22-MIN-0596

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(b)(i): to avoid prejudicing the entrusting of information to the New Zealand Government by another country;
- 9(2)(a): to protect privacy.

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 Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt to attend the 27th Conference of the Parties (COP27) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) from 13 to 20 November 2022 (including two days in which the conference ran into overtime, departed New Zealand 11 November, returned 22 November).

Report

2 In seeking approval to travel to COP27 [CAB-22-MIN-0409], I described Aotearoa New Zealand's overarching priorities for the conference, consistent with the International Climate Change Engagement Plan, as:

- 2.1 Encourage global ambition on climate change;
- 2.2 Support and enhance Pacific resilience and participation;
- 2.3 Support New Zealand's own transition.

3 This paper also outlines engagement with Pacific countries in the lead up to and at COP27.

Encourage global ambition on climate change

4 Going into COP27, I was aware we would face challenges in our efforts to encourage global ambition. We expected resistance from some major emitters and more broadly due to the energy crisis sparked by Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

5 There were proposals put forward to include more ambitious language in the COP27 'cover text'. For example India proposed broadening the existing COP26 language from "phasedown of unabated coal power" to phasedown of "all fossil fuels". More than 80 Parties, including Aotearoa New Zealand, the European Union and United States, supported the proposal. However, the final negotiated COP27 'cover text' maintained the same position reached in the Glasgow Climate Pact (COP26) and referred only to the "phase down" of coal¹.

6 In the Closing Plenary, many Parties noted their disappointment that the text had made no progress on language used the previous year. I noted our own disappointment in the intervention I delivered on behalf of Aotearoa New Zealand.

7 However, the agreed text demonstrates that there remains unanimous support for the 1.5 degree goal and the reduction of coal use. This is a foundation to build from, with the view to expanding the language used at future negotiations.

8 The steps I took to encourage global ambition included participating in Ministerial consultations on Loss and Damage; delivery of our National Statement and remarks at the Closing Plenary; and announcing our \$15 million commitment to the Adaptation Fund.

¹ Perhaps relatedly, media reported a 25% rise in the number of fossil fuel lobbyists in attendance at COP27, compared with COP26 (to 636 attendees).

9 Other contributions by Aotearoa New Zealand to this priority was that our Climate Change Ambassador Kay Harrison facilitated negotiations on the mitigation work programme; Jacqueline Ruesga facilitated negotiations relating to non-market cooperation; and Deputy Head of Delegation, Helen Plume, facilitated negotiations related to support for reporting and capacity building.

10 Plume has represented Aotearoa New Zealand at 26 of the 27 COPs held since their inception in 1995, and was elected Chair of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice in 2008. Her service includes representing Aotearoa New Zealand at the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. In 2020 Plume was appointed a Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to the environment. ^{s9(2)(a)}

I commend Plume for her decades of public service, dedication and utmost professionalism in the advancement of Aotearoa New Zealand's international climate change mahi and the global fight against climate change.

11 We also joined initiatives such as the Net-Zero Government Initiative, the Global Carbon Pricing Challenge, the Article 6 Capacity Building initiative and the Food and Agriculture for Sustainable Transformation initiative.

Support and enhance Pacific resilience and participation

12 At COP26 in November 2021, Pacific countries called for the establishment of a separate financial mechanism to respond to Loss and Damage (L&D)² caused by climate change. While a process was agreed to “consider working towards” a L&D funding mechanism, small islands states made clear at the COP26 Closing Plenary that this outcome was unsatisfactory and that they would not accept a similar outcome at COP27 [CAB-21-SUB-0522 refers].

13 In July 2022, Pacific Islands Forum Leaders, including Prime Minister Ardern, declared a climate emergency and called for concrete action on L&D³. COP27 was an opportunity for Aotearoa New Zealand to put into practice our commitment to amplifying the Pacific's voice on climate issues.

14 In the lead up to COP27, officials met *kanohi ki te kanohi* with Pacific counterparts in Sāmoa. Officials received a clear message through those engagements that Pacific Small Island Developing States' (PSIDS) priority heading into COP27 was an outcome on funding for L&D. ^{s6(b)(i)} also raised concerns that the current energy crisis may give rise to backsliding on ambition and commitments made in the Glasgow Climate Pact (COP26) by major emitters.

15 Listening to our Pacific partners it was clear that to meet our priority objective of supporting and enhancing Pacific resilience and participation, we should:

- 15.1 Stand shoulder to shoulder with our Pacific partners;
- 15.2 Provide funding to support Pacific participation at COP27;
- 15.3 Advocate for a landing zone on L&D; and
- 15.4 Encourage increased global ambition.

Standing with the Pacific

16 I hosted the Pacific Policy Roundtable, which was attended by Niue, Tonga, Fiji, Tuvalu, Federated States of Micronesia, Sāmoa, Cook Islands and Australia. Many

² Loss and damage refers to the unavoidable harms that occur as a result of climate change. There are areas of loss and damage that are of acute concern in the Pacific, such as rebuilding livelihoods after disaster, preservation of language and culture, and supporting communities who are forced to move as a result of climate change.

³ Communiqué of the 51st Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting, July 2022 is available at: <https://www.forumsec.org/2022/07/17/report-communique-of-the-51st-pacific-islands-forum-leaders-meeting/>

attendees raised the desire to see a significant outcome on L&D, and welcomed our financial contribution (further details in paragraph 20) and forward-leaning negotiation position on the issue.

17 I undertook bilateral meetings with Cook Islands, Tuvalu, Sāmoa and Vanuatu. I also participated in a press conference in support of Vanuatu's International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion on the obligations of States in respect of climate change⁴, at the request of Vanuatu, where I reiterated Aotearoa New Zealand's support.

18 I co-hosted, with Australian Minister for Climate Change and Energy, Chris Bowen, a networking function at the Moana Blue Pacific Pavilion for Pacific Island country Ministers and Heads of Delegations.

Funding to support Pacific participation

19 Aotearoa New Zealand provided funding for the Moana Blue Pacific Pavilion and office at COP27. The Moana Blue Pacific delegation office provided a private and safe space for Pacific Island delegations to coordinate, strategise and prepare for enhanced, collective and united engagement during COP27. The Moana Blue Pacific Pavilion provided a space for events on issues important to the Pacific.

Advocacy for a landing zone on Loss and Damage

20 During COP27, Aotearoa New Zealand announced a \$20 million climate finance commitment to L&D, clearly signalling our support for this Pacific priority. Our announcement and subsequent advocacy for progress on this issue, was well received by the Pacific country representatives I spoke to.

21 I discussed L&D in bilateral meetings with the United States, European Union, Ireland, Switzerland and South Africa. While some Parties were initially hesitant to support the position proposed by the G77 on L&D, by the end of the conference positions had shifted. I also participated in Ministerial consultations on L&D, facilitated by Germany and Chile.

22 Negotiations at COP27 delivered a significant step forward on L&D. After being added to the official agenda for the first time, Parties reached an agreement to establish a specific fund for L&D caused by climate change in particularly vulnerable countries. Parties agreed to establish a transitional committee to make recommendations on how to operationalise both the new funding arrangements and the fund at COP28 next year. The first meeting of the transitional committee is expected to take place before the end of March 2023. Parties also agreed on the institutional arrangements to operationalise the Santiago Network for Loss and Damage⁵.

Increased global ambition

23 As outlined in paragraphs 4 to 7, COP27 delivered insufficient progress on global ambition. However, countries do remain committed to limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees and this is an important foundation for future COPs.

Support New Zealand's own transition

24 COPs provide an unparalleled opportunity to meet with, and learn from, climate policy experts, climate focused non-governmental organisations, climate finance specialists

⁴ Aotearoa New Zealand is a member of the Core Group of States supporting Vanuatu's initiative. The draft resolution is available online at <https://www.vanuatuicj.com/resolution>

⁵ The Santiago Network was established to connect providers of technical assistance, knowledge and resources for the implementation of approaches for averting, minimize and addressing loss and damage at the local, national and regional level, with developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change.

and businesses interested in the climate agenda, from around the world. COP27 was no exception. I engaged in a variety of meetings and events where I shared Aotearoa New Zealand's experiences and learned from the experiences of others.

25 Officials met with several Asia-Pacific counterparts to discuss possible carbon market cooperation. While still in the exploratory stages, these conversations are necessary steps towards establishing a pathway for Aotearoa New Zealand to meet our nationally determined contribution targets through international cooperation, given the expected shortfall in our domestic transition.

My engagements

26 I undertook a range of bilateral meetings, including with Australia, Canada, European Union, Ireland, Japan, Netherlands, Singapore, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and the United States. These discussions often focused on negotiating dynamics at COP, however some also explored opportunities to work more closely with other countries in areas such as international carbon market co-operation, environmental standards harmonisation and other modes of cooperation. s6(b)(i)

27 I spoke at the Ministerial roundtable on pre-2030 ambition, the High Ambition Coalition Ministerial, the Climate and Clean Air Coalition Ministerial and on the value of the Agreement in Climate Change, Trade and Sustainability.

28 The need for strategic alignment between Climate COP and Biodiversity COP was raised in multiple meetings. I shared key takeaways from the discussions I had at COP27, with Minister of Conservation, Hon. Poto Williams before her travel to Canada for the Convention on Biological Diversity COP15 in December.

29 I regularly met with members of the wider Aotearoa New Zealand delegation and also with members of the Aotearoa public attending COP27 as part of daily stakeholder briefings hosted by officials. I also met with Microsoft, Citi Bank and the Green Climate Fund and gave a number of media interviews.

Proactive release

30 This paper will be proactively 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



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 19 December 2022, Cabinet **noted** the report from Hon James Shaw under CAB-22-SUB-0596 on his travel, from 11 to 22 November 2022, to Sharm-El-Sheikh, Egypt to attend the United Nations Climate Change Conference 2022 (COP27).

Rachel Hayward
Secretary of the Cabinet