

Proactive Release

Published on or before: 10/12/2024

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 – Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Simon Watts - November 2024</i>	CAB-24-MIN-0417
<i>Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Simon Watts 13-24 November 2024</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 section of the OIA that would apply have been identified. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reason for withholding it.

Key to OIA redaction code:

- 6(a): to avoid prejudicing the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the New Zealand Government.



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.

Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Simon Watts - November 2024

Portfolio Climate Change

On 29 October 2024, Cabinet:

- 1 **authorised** the absence of Hon Simon Watts from New Zealand, subject to leave from Parliament being secured, from 13 to 24 November 2024, to travel to:
 - 1.1 London, England to meet with stakeholders on global insurance, renewable energy, and climate action;
 - 1.2 Baku, Azerbaijan to attend the United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP29);
- 2 **agreed** that he be accompanied by one member of staff and the Opposition spokesperson for Climate Change;
- 3 **approved** the estimated expenditure of up \$78,236 for the travel expenses of the ministerial party as a charge to Vote Internal Affairs (Members of the Executive – Travel);
- 4 **noted** that the Green Party spokesperson for Climate Change will also be invited to join the ministerial delegation, with their travel expenses to be covered by the Green Party;
- 5 **noted** that he will also be accompanied by officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Ministry for the Environment, and the Ministry for Primary Industries, whose costs will be met by their respective agencies;
- 6 **agreed** that in his absence:
 - 6.1 Hon Penny Simmonds act as Minister of Climate Change;
 - 6.2 Hon Andrew Bayly act as Minister of Revenue;
- 7 **noted** that leave from Parliament has been sought.

Rachel Hayward
Secretary of the Cabinet

Proactively Released by the Minister of Climate Change

~~In Confidence~~

Office of the Minister of Climate Change

Chair, Cabinet

Proposed Overseas Travel: Hon Simon Watts 13-24 November 2024

- 1 I seek Cabinet approval to travel to Baku, Azerbaijan via London, England from 13 November to 24 November to attend the United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP29) and meet with climate action stakeholders.
- 2 The Prime Minister has approved the travel in-principle, and House leave has been sought from the Party Whip.

Purpose of Travel

- 3 COP29 is the annual meeting that governs the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Kyoto Protocol and Paris Agreement. As a Party to these agreements, decisions taken at these meetings have implications for New Zealand. It is expected that New Zealand will participate at Ministerial level.
- 4 COP29 provides an opportunity for New Zealand to engage with partners to ensure our climate change story resonates internationally. I will focus on building relationships and cooperation with the Government's priority partners s6(a)
- 5 Eight Ministerial representatives from among 195 countries have been invited to chair negotiations at this year's COP29. I will co-chair negotiations on carbon markets, alongside Singapore's Minister for Sustainability and Environment, Grace Fu.
- 6 By participating in these multilateral negotiations, I will continue to signal New Zealand is playing its part in an effective global response to climate change. A major deliverable of COP29 will be agreement of the New Collective Quantified Goal on climate finance – this goal will form the context in which New Zealand will make its next climate finance commitment.
- 7 The COP also attracts the world's largest gathering of civil society and businesses that work on climate change and the economic transition to low emissions and climate resilience. At COP29 I will support and amplify the participation of New Zealand stakeholders and take the opportunity to engage with New Zealand businesses in attendance.
- 8 During my participation at COP29 I would undertake the following:

- 8.1 Represent New Zealand at Ministerial-level negotiations on high priority COP29 outcomes, including co-facilitating negotiations on carbon markets with my Singaporean counterpart;
 - 8.2 Host a Pacific Ministerial Roundtable event for Pacific Ministers in attendance;
 - 8.3 Host a briefing for New Zealand stakeholders attending COP29, and support New Zealand industry priority engagements/side events as appropriate;
 - 8.4 Speak at side events that profile New Zealand and our climate priorities;
 - 8.5 Participate in 'Umbrella Group' (including Australia, UK, US) Ministerial strategy and coordination discussions;
 - 8.6 Hold bilateral meetings with Pacific Ministers in attendance, and with Ministerial counterparts from countries with shared climate priorities.
- 9 During my stopover in London, I plan to meet with global insurance stakeholders, and key renewable energy and climate action stakeholders.

Ministerial Party

- 10 If my travel is approved, I propose to be accompanied by one member of staff and the opposition spokesperson for Climate Change, Hon Dr Megan Woods. Travel costs will be a charge to Vote Internal Affairs: Members of the Executive – Travel. The Green Party’s spokesperson for Climate Change will also be invited to join my Ministerial delegation. If accepted, her travel expenses will be covered by the Green Party.
- 11 The New Zealand delegation will be made up of officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Ministry of Environment, and the Ministry of Primary Industries. Officials’ travel expenses will be covered by their respective Ministries. The Minister of Foreign Affairs has approved the credentials for the proposed New Zealand delegation.

Travel Costs

- 12 List the estimated costs of the travel:

Airmfares:	\$44,260
Accommodation:	\$13,850
Transportation:	\$5,500
Meals:	\$4,600
Ministerial roundtable:	\$5,000

Miscellaneous: \$1,300

Contingency (5%) \$3,726

Total: \$78,236

Acting Ministers

13 If travel is approved, Hon Penny Simmonds will cover my Climate Change portfolio and Hon Andrew Bayly will cover my Revenue portfolio.

Proactive release

14 This Cabinet paper will be proactively released as per Cabinet Office Circular CO(18)4. Proactive release is subject to redaction as appropriate under the Official Information Act 1982.

Recommendations

1 I recommend that Cabinet:

1.1 authorise my absence from New Zealand, subject to leave from Parliament being secured, from 13 November to 24 November 2024 to travel to Baku, Azerbaijan via London, England to attend the United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP29) and meet with key climate action stakeholders;

1.2 agree that I be accompanied by one member of staff and the opposition spokesperson for climate change;

1.3 approve the estimated expenditure of \$78,236 for the travel expenses of the Ministerial party, as a charge to Vote: Internal Affairs [Members of the Executive – Travel];

1.4 note the Green Party's spokesperson for Climate Change will also be invited to join my Ministerial delegation. If accepted, her expenses will be covered by the Green Party;

1.5 note that I will be accompanied by a delegation made up of officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Ministry of Environment, and the Ministry of Primary Industries, whose costs will be met by their respective Ministries. The Minister of Foreign Affairs has approved the credentials for the proposed New Zealand delegation;

1.6 agree that in my absence:

1.6.1 Hon Penny Simmonds will cover my Climate Change portfolio;
and

1.6.2 Hon Andrew Bayly will cover my Revenue portfolio.

1.7 note that leave from Parliament has been sought from the Party Whip.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Simon Watts

Minister of Climate Change