

Proactive Release

Published on or before: 14 February 2025

The following Cabinet paper has been proactively released by the Minister of Climate Change

Title	Reference
<i>Cabinet Minute of Decision: Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Simon Watts – September/October 2024</i>	CAB-24-MIN-0480
<i>Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Simon Watts – September - October 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 Act). Where this is the case, the relevant sections of the Act 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 redaction codes:

- 6(a): to avoid prejudicing the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the New Zealand Government; and
- 9(2)(f)(iv): to protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials.



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 Simon Watts – September/October 2024

Portfolio **Climate Change**

On 9 December 2024, Cabinet **noted** the report from Hon Simon Watts under CAB-24-SUB-0480 on his travel, from 30 September to 2 October 2024, to Nadi, Fiji to attend the Pacific Island Countries' Climate Change Ministerial Talanoa and to hold bilateral meetings.

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

Report on Overseas Travel: Hon Simon Watts – September - October 2024

I recommend that Cabinet note this report on my travel to Nadi, Fiji to attend the *Pacific Island Countries' Climate Change Ministerial Talanoa with Australia and New Zealand* on 30 September – 2 October 2024.

Report

- 1 The Talanoa focused on Australia's bid to host COP31 in 2026 in partnership with the Pacific. The South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) Director-General Sefa Nawadra co-facilitated the Talanoa, with Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) Deputy Secretary-General Esala Nayasi.
- 2 There was a strong level of Ministerial participation, particularly from countries that have taken on Pacific Political Climate Champion roles. This included Fiji, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.
- 3 Australia and Turkey have competing bids to host COP31 in 2026. A decision on which country will host the annual UN Climate event requires consensus by the relevant regional grouping whose turn it is to host under the rotational system – the 'Western Europe and Others Group'. s6(a)
s6(a)
- 4 At the Talanoa, there was strong regional support for Australia's bid, including from New Zealand. I emphasised that a 'Pacific COP' in Australia would be a significant opportunity to increase representation and participation for our region and deliver on Pacific priorities. I also reinforced New Zealand's commitment to supporting climate resilience in the Pacific and global climate action.
- 5 s6(a), s9(2)(f)(iv)
- 6

7 s6(a)

- 8 The Talanoa offered an opportunity to hear directly from Pacific partners on their climate change priorities in advance of COP29 in Baku Azerbaijan, following the first Pacific Small Island Developing States Ministerial-level pre-COP in many years.
- 9 The Talanoa presented an opportunity to deepen relationships with my counterparts in the Pacific. I hosted a dinner for my Ministerial counterparts. I also held a series of bilateral meetings with Ministers from the region, including from Australia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. The bilateral meetings were a useful opportunity to engage with partners and discuss our key regional priorities for climate action.

Proactive release

- 10 I propose to proactively release this paper within 30 business days in accordance with Cabinet Office Circular CO (18) 4. Proactive release is subject to redactions as appropriate under the Official Information Act.

Recommendation

I recommend that Cabinet note this report.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Simon Watts

Minister of Climate Change