



Hon James Shaw  
Minister for Climate Change Issues  
Parliament Buildings  
Wellington

28 March 2018

Dear James

I am writing to you to request information regarding actions your Ministry may be undertaking in response to climate change issues highlighted in *Our atmosphere and climate 2017*, published by the Ministry for the Environment and Statistics New Zealand under the Environmental Reporting Act 2015.

This request is made in relation to my role under this Act. As set out in Section 18, I have a broad role to comment on national state of the environment reports, which includes discussing implications of environmental reports and recommending responses to the findings contained within those reports.

*Our atmosphere and climate 2017* contained information on significant increases in greenhouse gas emissions across the New Zealand economy since 1990. The report also highlighted a range of impacts from climate change that are either occurring now or will do so in the future.

I am aware that you have recently committed to the enactment of Zero Carbon legislation, so I will make no enquiry in that regard here. However, in light of the issues raised above, could you please provide an outline of the policies, work programme, and any other climate policy initiatives the Ministry for the Environment may be engaged in? In particular, could you please provide information on the following:

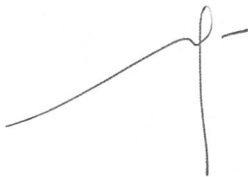
1. *What work has the Ministry done or is planning to do with other government agencies to address issues where greenhouse gas reductions require co-ordinated actions from multiple stakeholders?*
2. *What is the Ministry's strategic approach to dealing with the risks that climate change poses to New Zealand's built infrastructure? Is any work being done to estimate the cost of these risks?*
3. *What is the Ministry's strategic approach to dealing with the risks that climate change poses to New Zealand's natural resources? Is any work being done to estimate the cost of these risks?*
4. *What work has the Ministry done or is planning to do with other government agencies to address issues where effective adaptation responses require co-ordinated actions from multiple stakeholders?*

*Our atmosphere and climate 2017* also contains information on the impacts of ozone depleting substances (ODS) on ozone concentrations and subsequent UV light levels. Due to the effectiveness of the Montreal Protocol, nitrous oxide is now the most significant remaining ODS. Given that this is also a potent greenhouse gas, and management of it will also have implications for water quality, could you please provide information on what the Ministry has done or is planning to do regarding the following:

5. *What is the Ministry doing to ensure a coordinated approach to managing nitrous oxide with respect to climate change, ozone concentrations, and water quality?*

I would also welcome a meeting to discuss these issues with you following the reception of a reply to this letter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a long horizontal stroke followed by a vertical line and a small loop at the top.

Simon Upton  
Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment

CC: Clayton Mitchell, MP; Todd Muller, MP; David Seymour, MP