



Ref: OIA 2024-035

13 September 2024

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request of 20 August 2024 seeking the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

*"I see the Commission Chair, Rod Carr, is reported in the media here [New Zealand isn't adapting to climate change fast enough - commission | RNZ News](#) stating that:*

*"Climate change is making severe weather events like those felt across the motu in recent years more frequent and intense."*

*This statement is out of line with research I have seen from the IPCC and data that informs the Stats NZ's climate indicator reports and other independent peer reviewed papers.*

*Could you please provide the official information upon which this statement is based?"*

The Commission has considered your request in accordance with the Act, and I am able to advise as follows.

### Response

The information you have requested is publicly available in the hyperlinked documents referenced below.

The Climate Change Response Act 2002 requires us to draw from the best available evidence and analysis and to think broadly about the impacts of climate change and the implications for Aotearoa New Zealand over time. Climate change is bringing more frequent and extreme weather events to Aotearoa New Zealand, as outlined in the Commission's assessment report on the Government's progress against its national adaptation plan (NAPPA), available [here](#).

I have included some particularly relevant sections from this below.

At page 24 of the NAPPA report, it states: *"The country has warmed by just over 1°C since 1909. Eight out of the ten warmest years on record have happened within the last decade, with record-breaking heatwaves becoming four to five times more likely over that time. The country is also seeing less snow and ice and having fewer frost days."*



The report also notes that the frequency and severity of climate impacts will increase in the future.

*“The frequency and severity of extreme weather events will increase in Aotearoa New Zealand with climate change. The country is expected to get more storms and periods of extreme rainfall, as well as more droughts and heatwaves. These events make other hazards more likely, including flooding, landslides and wildfires. The last year provided examples of what the country is likely to face as average temperatures continue to increase. In January 2023, central Auckland received almost half its usual annual rainfall in a single month. On 27 January parts of Auckland experienced 280 millimetres of rain in less than 24 hours, with 211 millimetres falling in less than six hours – leading to widespread flooding, landslides, and devastation. Less than one month later, Cyclone Gabrielle brought torrential rain and flooding to many parts of the North Island. Parts of Hawke’s Bay recorded around a quarter of their usual annual rainfall over the course of the storm, with more than 500 millimetres of rain falling in some areas.”* (from page 25)

Further, the NAPPA report also says: *“The warming the world has already experienced has made extreme rainfall events more likely and more intense. Researchers estimate the extreme rainfall experienced during Cyclone Gabrielle was up to 20–30% more intense and up to four times more likely because of climate change. Global analysis indicates that extreme rainfall events that may once have been expected to occur once every 100 years in Aotearoa New Zealand are projected to happen on average every 72–80 years by about 2025, and every 45–76 years by 2050 – depending on how quickly the world reduces emissions.ii,23 Extreme wind speeds around the country are also expected to increase with climate change.”* (from page 25).

Additionally, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPPC) says in Chapter 11 of its [AR6 report](#): *“It is an established fact that human-induced greenhouse gas emissions have led to an increased frequency and/or intensity of some weather and climate extremes since pre-industrial time, in particular for temperature extremes. Evidence of observed changes in extremes and their attribution to human influence (including greenhouse gas and aerosol emissions and land-use changes) has strengthened since AR5, in particular for extreme precipitation, droughts, tropical cyclones and compound extremes (including dry/hot events and fire weather). Some recent hot extreme events would have been extremely unlikely to occur without human influence on the climate system.”*

The information you have requested is available publicly in the documents, as referenced above. We rely on section 18(d) of the Act to support our decision to not provide it to you directly, as it is able to be accessed via the above links.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review of this response by the Office of the Ombudsman, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. Contact details for the Ombudsman can be found on their website at: [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz)

Please note that the Commission proactively releases its responses to requests made under the Act. This is to help ensure others can also have access to this information. As such, this letter will shortly be published on our website with your name and contact details redacted to protect your privacy.

Nāku noa, nā



Astrid Nunns  
**General Manager, Strategic Operations**