

2 February 2023

Personal information
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release

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I refer to your email of 13 November 2022 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

For each of COP 24-27, inclusive, what was the Approved and Actual costs, where available, of attendance of officials supporting the Minister of Climate Change, and how many NZ officials attended.

On 25 November 2022, you were informed that your request was partially transferred to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade for response.

On 21 December 2023, you were informed that the timeframe for responding to your request was extended by 20 working days to 13 February 2023. Thank you for your patience while this process was completed.

Please note that other NZ Agencies also attend this conference. This response is limited to MFATs costs and attendance only.

The United Nations Climate Change Conference is the most significant climate change related convention each year. It is vital that the interests of New Zealanders are represented at this conference. To reduce costs, only the minimum viable number of staff needed to fulfil the Ministry's key responsibilities attend COP each year. To further reduce the number travelling, where possible, roles are filled by staff working at New Zealand Embassies close to conference locations. Staff members attend COP sessions as either negotiators or in support roles. As both roles incur a cost to the Ministry, "officials" will be defined as all Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade employees and therefore the costs of support staff are included.

In addition to staff members, MFAT has allocated funding for Māori representation on its delegations to Conferences of the Parties (COP) for a number of years. Their participation demonstrates the New Zealand Government's commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the Māori-Crown relationship, and advances facilitating te ao Māori perspectives on the delegation. These costs are included under non-MFAT participants.

COP27

Eight staff members from MFAT travelled to COP27. Two additional roles were filled by staff from the New Zealand Embassy in Cairo. The ten staff included eight negotiators and two support people. A grant was provided for two Iwi Māori delegates.

COP26

Five staff members, all negotiators, from MFAT travelled to COP26. Costs below include those associated with MIQ. Four additional roles were filled by staff from New Zealand Embassies in Europe. As an exception, MFAT funded one New Zealand based representative from the Government of Tokelau. A grant was provided for two Iwi Māori delegates.

COP25

Eight staff members and one consultant from MFAT travelled to COP25. One staff member joined from the New Zealand Embassy in Madrid. This included seven negotiators and three support staff. A grant was provided for two Iwi Māori delegates.

COP24

Nine staff members from MFAT travelled to COP24. Two staff joined from the New Zealand Embassy in Brussels. Of this eleven, seven were negotiators and four were support staff. As New Zealand ran a significant side event on agriculture, four extra staff members adjacent to the core delegation were required. Therefore, a total of fifteen MFAT staff attended COP24. For consistency and overall accuracy, only costs for core delegation members are included, staff who were required for the agriculture event are excluded. A grant was provided for two Iwi Māori delegates.

Total costs incurred by MFAT staff (officials and support staff) and grants for non-MFAT participants (as of 19th December 2022) for COP 24-27 are as follows:

COP	Expense	Total cost (NZ\$)
COP27	MFAT Staff	230,504
	Non-MFAT participants	27,000
		= 257,504
COP26	MFAT Staff	222,472
	Non-MFAT participants	56,609
		= 279,081
COP25	MFAT Staff	173,251
	Non-MFAT participants	30,000
		= 203,251
COP24	MFAT Staff	= 215,933
	Non-MFAT participants	20,000
		= 235,933

Please note that we may publish this letter (with your personal details redacted) on the MFAT website.

If you have any questions about this decision, you can contact us by email at: DM-ESD@mfat.govt.nz. You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision by contacting www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā



Owen Thornber
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade