

28 November 2023

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I refer to your email of 31 October 2023 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

*'Can you please tell me what interactions MFAT has with the WEF on an ongoing basis, if any, and what interactions it has had during the last 2 years and the broad details of any costs associated with those interactions?'*

We have responded to your questions in turn below.

***Can you please tell me what interactions MFAT has with the WEF on an ongoing basis?***

We have interpreted this part of your request to mean regularly scheduled meetings or interactions held by officials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT).

MFAT does not have regular scheduled meetings with World Economic Forum (WEF) officials, meetings are organised on an ad hoc basis, as required.

***If any, and what interactions it has had during the last 2 years?***

We have interpreted this part of your request to be for scheduled meetings or interactions held by MFAT officials.

WEF officials periodically visit New Zealand and MFAT meets with them while they are here. Over the past 2 years, WEF officials visited in September 2022 and April 2023.

- On 2 September 2022, WEF Head of Regional Agenda, Asia-Pacific and WEF Deputy Head of Regional Agenda, Asia-Pacific met with MFAT's Deputy Secretary, Trade and Economic Group (DS TEG).
- WEF Deputy Head of Regional Agenda, Asia-Pacific met with MFAT's Pacific Oceans and Fisheries team on 26 April 2023, and with DS TEG on 28 April 2023.

MFAT posts in Geneva and Beijing also met with WEF officials to prepare for upcoming Ministerial attendance at meetings such as the Minister for Trade and Export Growth's attendance at the WEF Annual Meeting in Davos-Klosters, Switzerland in January 2023, and the Prime Minister and Minister for Trade and Export Growth's attendance at the WEF Annual Meeting of the New Champions in Tianjin, China in June 2023.

Further details of these meetings are set out below organised by region:

### **China**

- On 24 May 2023, officials from the New Zealand Embassy in Beijing met with WEF's Deputy Head, Regional Agenda, Asia Pacific and WEF Lead, Business Engagement, Asia Pacific.
- On 26 June 2023, officials from the New Zealand Embassy in Beijing met with WEF's Deputy Head, Regional Agenda, Asia Pacific.

### **Geneva**

- On 14 December 2022, New Zealand's Permanent Representative to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) attended a pre-Davos ambassadors briefing hosted by WEF.
- On 2 June 2023, officials from the New Zealand Permanent Mission in Geneva met with the WEFs Policy Lead, International Trade and Investment and Deputy Head, Regional Agenda, Asia Pacific.
- On 6 June 2023 officials from the New Zealand Permanent Mission in Geneva met with WEFs Deputy Head, Regional Agenda, Asia Pacific.

Finally, MFAT staff accompany New Zealand Ministers during conferences in an advisory capacity and were present during the following meetings with WEF:

- Minister for Trade and Export Growth, Hon Damien O'Connor's meeting with WEF President Borge Brende in Geneva on 3 March 2022.
- Minister O'Connor's attendance at the WEF Annual Meeting in Davos-Klosters 18-19 January 2023.
- The Prime Minister, Rt Hon Chris Hipkins and Minister O'Connor's attendance at the WEF Annual Meeting of the New Champions in Tianjin, China on 27 June 2023.

### ***The broad details of any costs associated with those interactions?***

Meetings with no Ministerial presence were attended by locally based MFAT staff, i.e. meetings held in New Zealand were attended by New Zealand based staff, meetings held in China were attended by China based staff and meetings held in Geneva were attended by Geneva based staff. No costs were accrued by MFAT for these meetings.

For Ministerial engagements with WEF there were travel-related costs incurred by Wellington-based MFAT officials, although travel to WEF events were always part of a wider Ministerial travel programme.

Please note that it is our policy to proactively release our responses to official information requests where possible. Therefore, our response to your request (with your personal information removed) may be published on the Ministry website: [www.mfat.govt.nz/en/about-us/contact-us/official-information-act-responses/](http://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/about-us/contact-us/official-information-act-responses/).

If you have any questions about this decision, you can contact us by email at: [DM-ESD@mfat.govt.nz](mailto: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](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'SC', written on a light blue grid background.

Sarah Corbett  
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade