



COVERSHEET

Minister	Hon Dr Megan Woods	Portfolio	Energy and Resources
Title of Cabinet paper	Proposed Overseas Travel Hon Dr Megan Wood	Date to be published	5 July 2022

List of documents that have been proactively released

Date	Title	Author
May 2022	<i>Cabinet paper - Proposed Overseas Travel Hon Dr Megan Woods</i>	<i>Office of the Minister of Energy and Resources</i>
23 May 2022	CAB-22-MIN-0187 Minute	Cabinet Office

Information redacted

YES / NO

Any information redacted in this document is redacted in accordance with MBIE's policy on Proactive Release and is labelled with the reason for redaction. This may include information that would be redacted if this information was requested under Official Information Act 1982. Where this is the case, the reasons for withholding information are listed below. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Some information has been withheld for the reasons of commercially sensitive information.

In Confidence

Office of the Minister of Energy and Resources, Minister of Research, Science and Innovation, Minister of Housing and Associate Minister of Finance

Chair, Cabinet

Proposed overseas travel: Hon Dr Megan Woods, 5 – 17 June 2022

- 1 I seek Cabinet approval to travel to Denmark, Sweden, Germany, Belgium, and the United Kingdom (UK) from 5 - 17 June 2022.
- 2 I have been invited to participate in the International Energy Agency's (IEA) 7th Annual Global Conference on Energy Efficiency that is being held in Denmark from 7 – 9 June. I was a founding member of the IEA's Global Commission for Urgent Action on Energy Efficiency and attending this conference will enable us to signal New Zealand's continued support for this initiative. Improving energy efficiency will help this Government in achieving emissions reductions and its net zero 2050 target. New Zealand's attendance at this conference will also signal to other countries the importance that they also include policies and actions for energy efficiency in their measures to stop climate change.
- 3 The proposed travel will re-establish and strengthen connections with strategic partners in Europe, across both my Energy and Resources, and Research, Science and Innovation portfolios. These engagements will help reconnect New Zealand with likeminded countries by sharing knowledge and experiences, progress agreements, and confirm commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- 4 During this travel I will engage in meetings that support the progress of bilateral cooperation agreements with the UK (Science) and Germany (hydrogen) and reinforce the benefits of existing relationships with other European partners as part of our Aotearoa New Zealand reconnecting with the world.
- 5 I will undertake a range of meetings and engagements with key companies to highlight New Zealand's recent successes in climate action and supporting our innovation ecosystem. My proposed travel will provide the opportunity to engage with key organisations to support delivery of the Emissions Reduction Plan (ERP). Securing international connections to support areas such as renewable electricity generation, energy efficiency technologies and green hydrogen production aligns with Aotearoa New Zealand's International Climate Change Engagement Plan (2022), currently under development. This includes:

- 5.1 Gather insights and best practice in other countries, including via the International Energy Agency;
 - 5.2 promote global ambition to decarbonise the energy sector;
 - 5.3 support the ERP through accessing technology and innovation supporting energy efficiency technologies, offshore renewable energy and hydrogen supplies.
- 6 The Prime Minister has approved the travel in-principle, and House leave has been sought from the Party Whip.

Purpose of Travel

- 7 This trip presents an opportunity to combine a number of high priority engagements across multiple portfolios. By combining these into one trip we achieve cost efficiencies, secure important international connections, and highlight the Government's recent successes in climate action.

Denmark

- 8 I propose to spend three days in Denmark - Sønderberg and Esbjerg.
- 9 The principal objective of my proposed trip is to attend the IEA 7th Annual Global Conference on Energy Efficiency in Sønderberg, and the associated Ministerial meeting. I have also been invited to provide an address to the conference on 8 May 2022. New Zealand is a member of the Global Commission for Urgent Action on Energy Efficiency, which was established by the IEA to examine how progress on energy efficiency can be rapidly accelerated through new and stronger policy action. I will participate in the first ever closed-door session for Ministers to share knowledge and experience, providing a greater opportunity to strengthen relationships with my overseas counterparts.
- 10 Attending this conference will signal New Zealand's continued support for energy efficiency policies and strengthen relationships with overseas counterparts. I intend to demonstrate how energy efficiency will help the Government in achieving its ambitious renewable electricity and climate change goals. I will also highlight the Government's recent successes relating to improving energy efficiency such as Warmer Kiwi Homes and the Government Investment in Decarbonising Industry Fund. I will also collect valuable insights regarding the energy efficiency policies of other countries.
- 11 I also expect my attendance at the IEA conference to provide a number of opportunities to engage with IEA members on the response to the current global energy crisis. I am seeking a bilateral meeting with the Executive Director of the IEA, Faith Birol, to discuss ongoing efforts by the IEA and member states to respond to the global energy crisis caused by Russia's invasion of Ukraine. This will include New Zealand's continued participation in emergency measures to address the great deal of volatility in global oil markets.

- 12 While in Denmark I will also visit a offshore wind project. I have committed to reviewing whether regulatory settings are fit for purpose for offshore wind development, so the experience of other countries will prove useful for New Zealand to learn from as we undertake this review. This will also be an opportunity to further understand the potential for green hydrogen production in New Zealand through offshore wind Power-to-X (the means to convert renewably generated energy into green hydrogen or ammonia) opportunities.

Sweden

- 13 While in Sweden, I will visit H2 Green Steel in Sweden, a company that is planning to build a large-scale hydrogen-based greenfield steel mill in Boden. The project will eliminate almost all emissions from the steel production process. This is a good opportunity to share insights about the steel industry, and to understand if there are lessons to be implemented in the New Zealand context.
- 14 I will also visit Heart Aerospace, a company that is electrifying regional aircraft to mitigate the high emissions associated from air travel. I believe that this visit will have relevant learnings that can be applied to the New Zealand regional aerospace context. My recent meeting with New Zealand based airline Sounds Air, was supported by the Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment's (MBIE) Innovative Partnerships team, who are exploring the potential partnership between Heart and Sounds Air in which Heart may locate some of its business activity to New Zealand.

Germany

- 15 While in Germany, I will visit Berlin to meet with the German Minister for Economic Affairs and Climate Action and Vice Chancellor. At this meeting I would like to sign an arrangement with the German Government for cooperation on hydrogen and other renewable energy issues. Strong links between New Zealand and Germany will enable greater investment and access to European Union (EU) funding for hydrogen and offshore renewable energy. This will also be an opportunity to showcase New Zealand policies for decarbonising industry.
- 16 I will also meet with my counterpart, the German Minister of Education and Research to build support for strengthening and deepening RSI collaboration. The German Government has recently established a government agency to support the transfer of research outputs to industry and other users - the German Agency for Transfer and Innovation (DATI). This is of interest to me given New Zealand's RSI landscape reform. New Zealand and Germany share an active and productive research relationship and stronger links can be forged through this meeting.
- 17 While in Berlin I will also meet with the Chair of the German Aerospace Centre (DLR) Executive Board to strengthen the space technology development partnership between the New Zealand Space Agency and DLR. MBIE has funded eight ongoing (three year-long) space technology projects that span from future communications to climate change monitoring. I will

also discuss broadening the relationship to cover a wider range of technologies, given the initial success of the partnership.

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Commercial Information



United Kingdom

- 19 While in the UK I will meet with my counterparts, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Science, Research and Innovation, and Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. These meetings will provide an opportunity to discuss synergies between the UK Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and MBIE's science and transitioning to a low emissions economy work programmes. Establishing an RSI bilateral cooperation arrangement with the UK is of strategic importance to New Zealand.
- 20 While I am in the UK, I will also meet with representatives from Crown Estate Scotland to discuss the Scotwind Offshore Wind Leasing Project. The UK is the world leader in generating electricity from offshore wind, boasting seven of the world's 10 largest offshore wind sites. Through this meeting I will obtain insight into the UK's offshore renewable energy regulatory settings, skills development, and global supply chain issues. I will also seek learnings from this meeting to apply in the New Zealand context as their work programmes will provide useful insight into regulatory settings for offshore wind.
- 21 I will also visit Glasgow, Scotland to meet with ORE (Offshore Renewable Energy) Catapult, the UK's leading ORE technology innovation and research centre. This meeting will strengthen ORE Catapult's relationship with New Zealand following its engagement with Are Ake and the offshore wind forum. These meetings and visits regarding offshore wind are important due to the significant interest of overseas capital in offshore wind in New Zealand.

Belgium

- 22 While in Brussels I will meet with the European Union Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth. This meeting will demonstrate, at ministerial level, New Zealand's interests in research engagement and can support ongoing negotiations about taking up an associate membership of Horizon Europe, the EU's research and innovation programme. This meeting will also be an opportunity to send a broader message on the value of strategic technology cooperation between New Zealand and the EU. I will also meet with the EU Commissioner for Energy, to discuss collaboration on renewable energy projects, including offshore wind and hydrogen.

Ministerial Party

- 23 I will be accompanied by one staff member from my Office, whose costs will be met by Vote: Internal Affairs: Members of the Executive – Travel.
- 24 I expect that I will also be accompanied by three officials from MBIE, from the Energy and RSI teams. Travel costs for MBIE officials will be met by MBIE (Vote: Energy (Business, Science and Innovation)).
- 25 I also expect that I will be joined by one official from the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA). These travel costs will be met by EECA.

Travel Costs

- 26 I propose to leave New Zealand on Sunday 5 June and return on Friday 17 June, allowing me 10 days on the ground in Europe.
- 27 The estimated cost for my travel is \$94,588.65, including airfares, meals, accommodation, and miscellaneous costs, as follows:

Airfares:	\$54,000.00
Accommodation:	\$11,251.00
Miscellaneous:	\$17,000.00
Contingency (5%)	\$12,337.65
Total:	\$94,588.65

Acting Ministers

- 28 The following Ministers will be acting for me:
- 28.1 The acting Minister for Housing will be Hon Poto Williams from 5 to 14 May inclusive, and Hon Carmel Sepuloni 15 to 17 May inclusive;
- 28.2 The acting Minister for Energy and Resources will be Hon Stewart Nash;
- 28.3 The acting Minister for Research, Science and Innovation will be Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall;
- 28.4 The acting Associate Minister of Finance will be Hon David Parker
- 29 The House is sitting during my absence, and I am seeking leave from the Party Whip.

Proactive release

30 I plan to release this paper in part within 30 business days. All redactions will be made in line with the Official Information Act 1982.

Recommendations

1. I recommend that Cabinet:

- 1.1. **authorise** my absence from New Zealand, subject to leave from Parliament being secured, from 5 June to 17 June to travel to Denmark, Sweden, Germany, Belgium and the United Kingdom to participate in the International Energy Agency's (IEA) 7th Annual Global Conference on Energy Efficiency, engage in a number of bilateral ministerial meetings with my counterparts, and undertake a range of meetings and engagements to secure international connections that support areas such as renewable electricity generation, energy efficiency technologies and green hydrogen production.
- 1.2. **note** that I will be accompanied by one member of staff from my office whose costs will be met by Vote: Internal Affairs: Members of the Executive – Travel;
- 1.3. **note** that I will be accompanied by three officials from MBIE and one official from EECA, and their costs will be met by MBIE (Vote: Energy (Business, Science and Innovation)) and EECA respectively;
- 1.4. **approve** the estimated expenditure of \$94,588.65 for the travel expenses of the Ministerial party, as a charge to Vote: Internal Affairs [Members of the Executive – Travel];
- 1.5. **agree** that in my absence:
 - 1.5.1. Hon Poto Williams from 5 to 14 May inclusive, and Hon Carmel Sepuloni 15 to 17 May inclusive, acts as Minister for Housing,
 - 1.5.2. Hon Stewart Nash acts as Minister of Energy and Resources,
 - 1.5.3. Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall acts and Minister for Research, Science and Innovation,
 - 1.5.4. Hon David Parker acts as Associate Minister of Finance
- 1.6. **note** that the House is sitting during my absence from 7 to 9 June, and I am seeking leave from the Party Whip;
- 1.7. **note** that I will be absent from Cabinet on 7 June and 13 June 2022.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Dr Megan Woods
Minister of Energy and Resources
Minister of Research, Science and Innovation
Minister of Housing
Associate Minister of Finance