

Reference number:

CBC Min 06 17/19

RELEASED UNDER THE OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT

On 2 October 2006, the Cabinet Business Committee (CBC), having been authorised by Cabinet with Power to Act [CAB Min (06) 36/6]:

Background

1 **noted** that on 11 September 2006 Cabinet:

1.1 agreed that New Zealand's participation in the Asia Pacific partnership on Clean Development and Climate would be desirable;

1.2 invited the Minister Responsible for Climate Change Issues to seek further advice on how New Zealand should pursue this, and to report to CBC on 25 September 2006;

[CAB Min (06) 34/3 A]

2 **noted** that the six founding members of the Asia Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate (Australia, China, India, Japan, Republic of Korea and the United States) represent half of the world's economy, population and energy use;

3 **noted** that:

3.1 joint government/industry Task Forces are at the core of the Partnership;

3.2 the Partnership's work will be driven by private sector involvement;

3.3 [withheld OIA s 6 (b)]

4 **noted** that the Partnership members have emphasised its complementarity to the Kyoto Protocol, but that it has, nevertheless, attracted criticism by some, including within New Zealand, for detracting from emission reduction efforts in the Kyoto Protocol;

5 [withheld OIA s 6 (a), 6 (b), 9 (2) (g) (i)]

Opportunities for New Zealand participation

6 **noted** that while New Zealand remains committed to meeting its international commitments on climate change under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its Kyoto Protocol, in view of the scale of the challenge posed by climate change and New Zealand's desire to use all possible means to respond to it, New Zealand sees value in exploring participation in the Partnership;

7 **noted** that:

7.1 engagement with the work of one or more of the Partnership Task Forces could provide a route for New Zealand participation;

7.2 this would require agreement by the Task Force/s themselves, and would require a commitment from the New Zealand private sector as well as a demonstration of the value that New Zealand could add;

8 **noted** that participation in the Partnership would entail, as yet unquantified, financial resource costs for any interested New Zealand companies and the government (these are likely to reflect New Zealand's size and areas of expertise), and that a careful assessment of the costs and benefits of participation would be required;

9 **agreed** that any public comments on the Partnership should:

9.1 reiterate New Zealand's resolve to meet its international commitments on climate change;

9.2 note that New Zealand sees the Partnership as a useful initiative to complement other avenues to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;

9.3 signal that New Zealand will be looking at opportunities for co-operation with the Partnership;

Next steps

10 **agreed** to the following next steps for exploring the prospects for New Zealand participation in the Partnership:

10.1 officials to engage with Partnership members to discuss the Task Force Action Plans after these are finalised [**withheld OIA s 6 (b)**];

10.2 [**withheld OIA s 6 (a)**]

10.3 officials, and key interested New Zealand companies, to review the Task Force Actions Plans, by end of January 2007, to consider any opportunities for New Zealand engagement, and begin to investigate the scope of associated costs and benefits of engagement for the government and private sector;

10.4 should specific areas of interest be identified, officials to explore further with key interested New Zealand companies, by end of March 2007, what those companies would specifically be prepared to contribute by way of financial and other resources;

10.5 Ministry for the Environment and other relevant officials to engage concurrently with New Zealand Trade and Enterprise and the Ministry of Research, Science and Technology to explore potential alignment of engagement in the Partnership with existing business promotion and Research and Development initiatives;

10.6 officials to continue a watching brief on developments of the Partnership, including through the existing bilateral climate change partnerships New Zealand has with Australia and the United States;

11 **noted** that the Minister Responsible for Climate Change Issues indicates that consultation is not required with the government caucuses or other parties represented in Parliament.