

OIA26-0250

29 April 2026

Nigel Gray
fyi-request-34279-70bc0d53@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear, Nigel

Thank you for your email of 30 March 2026 requesting information relating to hydrological cycle and rainfall system assessments. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

You requested the following:

1. *Rainfall system and moisture recycling assessments - All documents, reports, modelling, internal advice, briefing notes, emails, meeting records, or scientific assessments held by MPI that relate to:*
 - a. *the impact of reforestation or afforestation on regional rainfall, precipitation patterns, or moisture recycling systems*
 - b. *the role of indigenous forests and exotic plantation species in atmospheric moisture generation, evapotranspiration, or cloud formation processes*
 - c. *any consideration of rainfall restoration, hydrological cycle repair, or rain system resilience in the context of the One Billion Trees programme*
2. *Development of the One Billion Trees science priorities - All documents that informed the development of the "Science Priorities to Support One Billion Trees", including:*
 - a. *any analysis of whether rainfall system or atmospheric hydrology functions should be included*
 - b. *any discussion of the omission of rainfall system impacts*
 - c. *any advice received from internal or external experts on moisture recycling, forest driven rainfall, or atmospheric hydrology*
3. *Internal and external correspondence - All internal MPI correspondence (including emails, memos, Teams/Slack messages, and meeting notes) and all correspondence with external parties (including NIWA, universities, consultants, and forestry sector organisations) that discuss:*
 - a. *rainfall impacts of reforestation*
 - b. *hydrological cycle implications of large scale planting*
 - c. *comparative rainfall system effects of indigenous versus exotic forest systems*
4. *Programme level assessments - All environmental assessments, risk assessments, or programme level evaluations that address — or explicitly decline to address — the rainfall system consequences of the One Billion Trees programme.*

There is no documentation pertaining to the subjects listed in this request. Our priorities have been on successful afforestation of carbon sinks in forests and understanding factors influencing carbon flux within those forests.

Therefore your request is declined under section 18(g)(i) of the OIA, *that the information requested is not held by the department or venture or Minister of the Crown or organisation*

and the person dealing with the request has no grounds for believing that the information is either held by another department (for itself and for a departmental agency hosted by it or an interdepartmental executive board serviced by it) or interdepartmental venture or Minister of the Crown or organisation, or by a local authority

Should you have any concerns with this response, I would encourage you to raise these with the Ministry for Primary Industries at Official.InformationAct@mpi.govt.nz. Alternatively, you are advised of your right to also raise any concerns with the Office of the Ombudsman. Contact details are: Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143 or at info@ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'RB' followed by a flourish.

Rebecca Burson
Acting Director, Forestry Insights