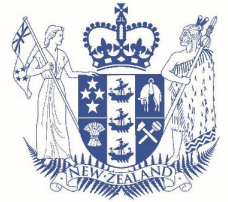


# Hon Penny Simmonds

Minister for Tertiary Education  
Minister of Science, Innovation and Technology  
Associate Minister for Social Development and Employment



10 June 2026

Tobias Corbett

[fyi-request-34716-a95a8eee@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-34716-a95a8eee@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Ref: PSOIA-002

Dear Tobias Corbett

## RE: Official Information Act Request

Thank you for your email of 18 May 2026 to my Office requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- 1) *During the merger to create the New Zealand Institute for Earth Sciences, were any research programs (including individual studies or grants given to universities and private research organizations) being conducted the institute's predecessor agencies, NIWA and GNS Science, cut, downsized or otherwise effected by the reforms.*
- 2) *If yes, please list what these programs were and what reason was given for their disestablishment.*

I can confirm that no active research programmes or contracts were cut or downsized during the merger to create Earth Sciences New Zealand. However, they may be impact by the changes to future funding.

The recently released Prime Ministers Science, Innovation, and Technology Advisory Council report (found [here](#)) indicates that future funding will be rebalanced across four priority pillars, with a greater focus on mission-led investment and directing resources toward areas of highest system impact, including advanced technologies. This is expected to influence the future composition and structure of investments, including those with Earth Sciences New Zealand.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Penny Simmonds', written over a large, stylized, cursive flourish.

Hon Penny Simmonds

**Minister of Science, Innovation and Technology**