

Reference: 20160377

24 November 2016



Thank you for your Official Information Act request, received on 27 October 2016. You requested:

“...copies of any memoranda, briefings, minutes and correspondence to and from any Minister(s) regarding the increase in funding provided to the Department of Conservation to eradicate rats. There are two increases in funding we are particularly interested in; \$25 million dollars in or about 2013/14 and \$21million dollars in 2016 both of which are in response to predictions of a masting year in relation to beech forests and therefore a consequent increase in the number of rats.”

On 2 November 2016, you revised the request to:

*“Advice to/from Ministers and Treasury on the reasons for increasing funding for pest control in recent years.”*

### **Information Being Released**

Please find enclosed the following documents:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Document Description</b>	<b>Decision</b>
1.	4 February 2016	Draft Natural Resources proposed package of Budget initiatives	Release in part
2.	4 February 2016	Aide Memoire: Budget 2016 Initiatives in the BGA Natural Resources workstream	Release in part

I have decided to release the relevant parts of the documents listed above.

Some of the release information has been withheld because it is not covered by the scope of your request.

## Information Publicly Available

The following information is also covered by your request and is publicly available on the Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment website:

Item	Date	Document Description	Website Address
3.	November 2015	Business Growth Agenda – priorities for Building Natural Resources	<a href="http://www.mbie.govt.nz/info-services/business/business-growth-agenda/towards-2025">http://www.mbie.govt.nz/info-services/business/business-growth-agenda/towards-2025</a>

Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) and enclosed documents may be published on the Treasury website.

This fully covers the information you requested. You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision.

Yours sincerely

Libby Masterton  
**Manager, Natural Resources**

# Information for Release 20160377

---

1.	<a href="#">FEB16 Item 2 BGA NR 16 17 Budget paper 4 February version</a>	1
2.	<a href="#">Aide Memoire Aide Memoire Budget 2016 Initiatives in the BGA Natural Resources workstream</a>	3

# Natural Resources Sector Budget 2016/17 Updated Package

4 February 2016

**BUDGET SENSITIVE**  
**DRAFT – NOT GOVERNMENT POLICY**

1. There are Building Natural Resources priority investments... <small>4yrs \$m</small>	2. Choices of packages related to Building Natural Resources priorities... <small>4yrs \$m</small>	3. Initiatives which contribute to all of the Business Growth Agenda work streams... <small>4yrs \$m</small>	4. Initiatives which do not significantly contribute Building Natural Resources priorities. <small>4yrs \$m</small>								
Deleted - not covered by your request	Deleted - not covered by your request  <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Pests</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>TB Management</td> <td>69.8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Accelerating Predator Free</td> <td>38</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Battle for our Birds</td> <td>19.8</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> Deleted - not covered by your request	Pests		TB Management	69.8	Accelerating Predator Free	38	Battle for our Birds	19.8	Deleted - not covered by your request	Deleted - not covered by your request
Pests											
TB Management	69.8										
Accelerating Predator Free	38										
Battle for our Birds	19.8										
Deleted - not covered by your request	<table border="1"> <tr> <td colspan="2">Pests: Treasury recommends funding all of TB Management and Battle for our Birds;</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Deleted - not covered by your request</td> <td>and identified \$4m of Accelerating Predator Free (science component) as having merit, but not high priority.</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Deleted - not covered by your request</td> </tr> </table>	Pests: Treasury recommends funding all of TB Management and Battle for our Birds;		Deleted - not covered by your request	and identified \$4m of Accelerating Predator Free (science component) as having merit, but not high priority.	Deleted - not covered by your request		Deleted - not covered by your request	Deleted - not covered by your request		
Pests: Treasury recommends funding all of TB Management and Battle for our Birds;											
Deleted - not covered by your request	and identified \$4m of Accelerating Predator Free (science component) as having merit, but not high priority.										
Deleted - not covered by your request											

Initial Treasury Packages <small>4yrs \$m</small>	
<b>Recommended package</b>	
TB Management	69.8
Battle for our Birds	19.8
Deleted - not covered by your request	
<b>Initiatives with merit, but not high priority</b>	
Deleted - not covered by your request	
Accelerating Predator Free	4
Deleted - not covered by your request	

Deleted - not covered by your request

Detail of initiatives as submitted to Treasury

4 February 2016 version

**DRAFT – NOT GOVERNMENT POLICY**

Initiative	Lead agency other agencies	Initiative Description	4yrs \$m	Benefit-cost ratio where available	Existing Commitment (See box below for explanation; graph on next page)	Package reflecting the previous page
Deleted - not covered by your request						
TB Management	MPI	Increase farm productivity and maintain food quality reputation by eradicating bovine TB from cattle and deer by 2026 and from wildlife by 2055.	69.8	12:1	Agreed Initiative and consulted with industry	Building Natural Resources priorities: Pests (Land Productivity)
Deleted - not covered by your request						
Battle for Our Birds 2016	DOC	Control anticipated outbreak of rats, mice and stoats from forecast beech mast event in order to protect threatened and endangered flora and fauna.	19.8	n/a	Discretionary	Building Natural Resources priorities: Pests (Land Productivity)
Accelerating Predator Free New Zealand	DOC MPI	Accelerate the control of predators in New Zealand and ultimately eliminate them.	38	3.4-15.3:1	Discretionary	Building Natural Resources priorities: Pests (Land Productivity)

Deleted - not covered by your request

**BUDGET SENSITIVE**  
**DRAFT – NOT GOVERNMENT POLICY**

Page 3 out of scope of request

**Treasury Budget Guidance explanation of 'existing commitment' classifications:** 1. Pre-commitment: Funding is pre-committed by Cabinet; 2. Non-discretionary: Expenditure is entirely unavoidable (eg service failure will result or legislative change requires it); 3. Agreed initiative: Concrete commitment by Cabinet to progress initiative, but funding yet to be agreed; 4. Agreed policy direction: Intention to progress policy signalled by Cabinet, but flexibility regarding timing, scale or specific initiative design; 5. Discretionary: Discretionary expenditure with no prior commitment.

**BUDGET-SENSITIVE**



**THE TREASURY**  
Kaitohutohu Kaupapa Rawa

Reference: T2016/73

BM-2-4-2016-10

Date: 4 February 2016

To: Minister of Finance  
(Hon Bill English)

Associate Minister of Finance  
(Hon Steven Joyce)

BGA Natural Resources Ministers

CC: Associate Minister of Finance  
(Hon Paula Bennett)

Deadline: Ministers Meeting on 9 February at 5pm

**Aide Memoire: Aide Memoire: Budget 2016 Initiatives in the BGA  
Natural Resources workstream**

**Purpose**

1. The purpose of this note is to support a discussion amongst Natural Resources Ministers on the relative priority of Budget initiatives in the Natural Resources Sector (NRS).

Deleted - not covered by your request

**BUDGET-SENSITIVE**

Deleted - not covered by your request

RELEASED UNDER THE  
OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT

10. Investing in initiatives to eradicate pests (both mammals and wilding conifers) would avoid much larger longer-term costs and support both agricultural productivity and biodiversity aims. On mammals, a core of the eradication effort is well understood and proven but the more discretionary Predator Free New Zealand initiative relies on significantly scaling up the efforts of volunteers and partners, and on continuing to deliver the same ratios of co-funding once Government funding is doubled or tripled. The Department of Conservation believes that capacity exists for this. On conifers, methodologies are well understood and successes have been achieved when funding is sustained. Both Predator Free New Zealand and wilding conifers could be deferred, with costs increasing only a relatively small amount if addressed next year. However, action has been deferred on these issues in previous years and long-term costs are

**BUDGET-SENSITIVE**

rising. Ministers may wish to ask agencies for scaled options which control the growth of long term costs, without pushing for full eradication of these pests.

Deleted - not covered by your request

RELEASED UNDER THE  
OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT



**BUDGET-SENSITIVE**

Deleted - not covered by your request

Sam King, Senior Analyst, Economic Performance & Strategy, 917 6175  
Matthew Gilbert, Team Leader, Economic Performance & Strategy, 917 6048  
Ben Parker, Senior Analyst, Natural Resources, 917 6017  
Simon McLoughlin, Team Leader, Fiscal and State Sector Management, 917 6011

RELEASED UNDER THE  
OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT