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Appendix A: Questions in writing for Stephen Knight-Lenihan

1. Would you agree that, as outlined in the brief of Katherine Wilson (Wai 3325, #A141), the Government is aware of and accepts the following issues you raise in your evidence:

    a. At [31(a)] of your brief of evidence (Wai 3325, #A61) and [41] of your speaking notes (Wai 3325, #A61(a)), you say Aotearoa New Zealand lacks a clear and coherent framework for adaptation and implementation and that the patchwork of legislative and regulatory powers as well as responsibilities makes local decision-making very difficult. Katherine Wilson at [103] and [109] of her brief of evidence accepts the Climate Change Commission's recommendation that local government (and others) should be clear on their roles and acknowledges that responsibilities and decision-making about adaptation have been fragmented and could pose significant challenges.
        i. Would you agree that your concern is also identified in the Crown's evidence as something which needs to be addressed? Why/why not?

    b. Katherine Wilson's brief from [21] identifies the challenges of adaptation policy. Specifically, at [24] she acknowledges that a decentralised approach is favourable, because "Local government and communities are generally best placed to understand local risks and decide whether and how to protect each of their assets".
        i. Would you agree that this evidence shows that the Crown's general position is supportive of local decision-making in adaptation policy? Why/why not?
        ii. Further, at [25] she notes that a "decentralised approach may be more enabling for Māori to adapt effectively to climate risks". Would you agree that this evidence shows that local decision-making may also prioritise, or take into account, Māori interests? Why/why not?

    c. At [31] of your speaking notes, you say there is a question over how to manage all assets, public or private, in a coordinated way. You say a "fragmented individualised approach" to climate change adaptation will be inefficient, will likely worsen existing socio-economic gaps, and will not provide the central Government input required to address climate change impacts. Katherine Wilson at [102] acknowledges that coordination is currently lacking between and across infrastructure service providers and that better information on risks, and how best to manage them would support better decision making on risk reduction and resilience initiatives.
        i. Would you agree that the issue you raise is also identified in the Crown's evidence? Why/why not?

    d. At [38] of your speaking notes, you say that there is no transparent compensation system that defines financial responsibilities and that instead, individuals and communities are being left with compounding risks of financial wellbeing and stresses. Katherine Wilson at [103] notes the government

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agreed with the Commission's recommendations relating to setting out clear roles, responsibilities and processes for adaptation planning, and clarifying how the costs of climate adaptation will be shared. These changes are considered necessary to enable credible markets, in which local government, households, communities, and others are clear on their roles and have access to information, including price signals, so they can make decisions that account for climate risk.

   i. Would you agree that your concern is also identified in the Crown's evidence? Why/why not?

2. In your evidence (see [30]) and your speaking notes (see [41]) you refer to the Climate Change Commission's 2024 Review of the first National Adaptation Plan (NAP). Are you aware that, as discussed in Katherine Wilson's brief of evidence from [97] that the Government released its response to the Commission's report in January 2025?

   a. Would you agree, as outlined in Katherine Wilson's evidence, at [100]-[103], the government has acknowledged and agreed with a number of the issues raised by the Commission?

   b. Would you agree that, as outlined in Katherine Wilson's brief (in particular from [102]-[114]), the Government is responding to issues identified (including by the Commission) with adaptation/implementation through several programmes of work, including infrastructure resilience and preparedness and the National Adaptation Framework? Why/why not?

3. At [29] of Katherine Wilson's brief she explains that the 'broad range of actions in the NAP, together with the National Adaptation Framework, will be a key tool to deliver on the government's climate strategy". Paragraph [114] of Katherine Wilson's brief outlines the four pillars or workstreams of the National Adaptation Framework, being: principles for investment in risk response/reduction; principles for cost-sharing pre- and post-event; roles and responsibilities; and risk and response information sharing. The Framework as released contains 16 actions under these four pillars.

   a. Are you familiar with the National Adaptation Framework as released in October 2025?

   b. At [31] of your evidence (and [41] of your speaking notes), you outline what you see to be four issues relating to what is lacking or not covered by New Zealand's adaptation response: Aotearoa New Zealand lacks a clear and coherent framework for adaptation planning and implementation; it is unclear to local authorities what they should prioritise in terms of adaptation; there is no national direction on or clear rights and responsibilities for planned retreat; and there is no transparent compensation system that defines financial responsibilities.

      i. Do you think the four pillars of the National Adaptation Framework align with the four key areas you have identified as gaps in New Zealand's adaptation response? Why/why not?

ii. Acknowledging there is more detail to come on how the objectives of the Framework will be achieved, what is your assessment of the 16 actions encompassed by the four pillars in the Framework?

c. At [114.1] in relation to the principles for investment in risk response, Ms Wilson notes that communities and businesses need to know what investment will happen in their areas. This workstream under the Adaptation Framework will support consideration of investments across the full spectrum of risk reduction options (including both government infrastructure investment (and how this is signalled to the public) and local infrastructure investment).
    i. Would you agree that this is one way in which co-ordination and information sharing is being incorporated into the adaptation response? Why/why not?
    ii. Would you agree this could be one way to provide information/guidance on where resources will be invested to maintain particular infrastructure, which may include infrastructure to land with spiritual or cultural values? Why/why not?

d. At [114.2] in relation to principles for cost-sharing pre- and post- event Ms Wilson notes this will set out what the government's approach is to sharing the costs from future natural hazard risk, particularly addressing the uncertainty of what will be available to assist property owners with recovery from an event or take action in an affected area before or after a natural hazard event occurs.
    i. Do you agree this is one way of providing a more transparent system that defines financial responsibilities? Why/why not?

e. At [114.3] in relation to roles and responsibilities, Ms Wilson notes this will look at how the principles under the Framework need to be implemented and decisions made. This includes by identifying and using, and potentially amending, clarifying or strengthening, roles and responsibilities under existing systems/legislation. Key to this is the expectation that local governments will be primary decision-makers for adaptation actions within their jurisdictions, being generally best placed to understand local risks and manage their assets with appropriate support and guidance from local government.
    i. Would you agree this is one way of providing for strategic-long term planning and the aligning of central and local government climate change adaptation? Why/why not?

f. At [105] Ms Wilson explains that an "important component of the Adaptation Framework will be to encourage and incentivise people to reduce climate risk where they can" which will be facilitated by access to information on hazards. At [114.4] Ms Wilson discusses sharing hazard risk and response information so property owners, insurers, financial markets, and councils can make more informed decisions about their appetite for and management of risk.

i. Would you agree this is one way by which natural hazards risks will be incorporated into decision making across various levels? Why/why not?

4. Would you agree that climate change adaptation is a complex and dynamic process? Furthermore:

    a. Would you agree that adaptation involves trade-offs and value judgments, with many choices and competing interests for decision-makers to consider? If not, why not?

    b. Would you agree that it is important for the Government to proceed carefully to get any adaptation response/guidance right? If not, why not?

    c. Would you agree that it is reasonable that an adaptation response which considers these competing interests, responds appropriately to issues raised and which provides cohesive and long-term guidance for adaptation, may take some time to develop? If not, why not?

5. At [35] of your speaking notes, when you say that some Māori communities are not currently well served with utilities such as safe drinking water, sewage or irrigation and that some of these communities may have to make significant climate change adaptation decisions – is that due to the rural and isolated locations of those communities?

    a. If no, what is the reason?

    b. If yes, would you agree that this is a broader rural issue, affecting a range of rural communities?