



OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S CHIEF SCIENCE ADVISOR

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Prime Minister's Science Advisor Welcomes Environment Commissioner's Report on Rising Sea Levels

Sir Peter Gluckman, the Prime Minister's Chief Science Advisor, welcomes the report by the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment (PCE) on the expected impact of sea level rise for New Zealand. Entitled *Preparing New Zealand for Rising Seas: Certainty and Uncertainty*, the report "makes the science on sea level rise accessible and highly relevant to New Zealanders", said Sir Peter.

"It also provides accessible understanding of some of the key tools and analytical techniques used by climate scientists to model expected scenarios based on historical and current data" he said. The importance of public and policy-maker understanding of this science cannot be underestimated, according to Sir Peter.

While the report does not attempt to provide numerical estimates for specific locations of potential impact, whether by flooding, erosion or groundwater salination, it nonetheless points the direction for the necessary science and adaptive management that will be required in the coming years. The report emphasizes the importance of local and central government both having clarity about how science should inform policy making in this important area of adaptation.

"The Commissioner is right in distinguishing the urgency of actions aimed at mitigating global greenhouse gas emissions from the longer term horizon that is available to us for adaptive action. However, this should allow for prudent and science-informed planning, not complacency," said Sir Peter.

The PCE's report can be read here: <http://www.pce.parliament.nz/media/1380/preparing-nz-for-rising-seas-web-small.pdf>

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