



Ministry for the
Environment
Manatū Mō Te Taiao

Status Report

Minister for the Environment

Minister for Climate Change Issues

Week beginning 8 March 2010



Seen by Hon Dr Nick Smith

Date _____

1. Actions from the meeting of 1 March 2010

1.4 ECan Review – You requested a 90 minute meeting with officials to discuss the draft Cabinet paper. **Completed.**

We will provide all documents/papers received by the previous Minister for the Environment with regards to Environment Canterbury concerns. **In progress.**

Kevin Currie

6. Major Media Items from the past week

6.1 Continued coverage of the ECan Report - There has still been a lot of media surrounding the ECan report this week. An article in The Press (3 March) focuses on the expectation for ECan councillors to submit their views on the organisation's future to the government by noon today. ECan chairman Alex Neill said that he has been advised that a subcommittee of ministers would meet on 3 March to discuss the councillor's response. However, the article also quotes a spokesman for you as having said that the subcommittee was not scheduled to meet on that date. The Marlborough Express (27 February) stated that the Labour party knew about ECan's plight. The article claims that complaints against ECan were taken to the previous government but that former Prime Minister Helen Clark would not act on them in the countdown to the 2008 election. The article also claims that former Environment Minister, Trevor Mallard, had received information on the problems with ECan from a number of Canterbury MPs, Ministry for the Environment officials and some of the region's mayors. He is quoted as saying that "everyone knew there was a problem". The article goes on to say that ECan chairman Alec Neill and deputy chairwoman Jo Kane were angry that the issues were not raised with the council at the time. Kane is quoted as saying that she had no time for "duck-shoving Ministry for the Environment officials". The paper also claims that the reason that ECan had difficulties in carrying out its duties could be partially attributed to the fact that the Ministry for the Environment had not formulated either an NES or an NPS for water.