



## Office of Hon Jo Goodhew

**MP for Rangitata**

Minister for the Community and Voluntary Sector

Minister for Food Safety

Associate Minister for Primary Industries

Associate Minister for Social  
Development

MinOIA15-005

### OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST

I refer to your official information request of 20 July 2015 relating to correspondence between the Associate Minister for Primary Industries, and her staff, and Mike Sabin regarding swamp kauri since November 2011.

There have been two emails regarding swamp kauri which were forwarded to a private secretary in my office from a staff member in Mike Sabin's office. The same emails were forwarded (at the same time) to a private secretary in the office of the Minister for Primary Industries. These emails are being released to you.

The correspondence released includes a photograph of swamp kauri timber in a shipping container. The photograph is allegedly taken at "Ancientwood Ltd in Wisconsin, USA". I am advised that the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) has not been able to substantiate that the swamp kauri timber shown has actually been exported. There is only one company in New Zealand, which MPI is aware of, that exports to Ancientwood Ltd and that company does not apply sealant to their products (which, to the trained eye, has obviously occurred to the timber in the image). Ancientwood Ltd is also not known to have advertised product for sale of the type shown in the image.

I have withheld some information in these documents pursuant to section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act. The grounds for withholding is the protection of the privacy of individuals who work in the offices of members of parliament and the member of the public who wrote directly to Mike Sabin.

I am satisfied that in the circumstances of this case, the withholding of this information is not outweighed by other considerations which render it desirable in the public interest to make the information available. Their personal details have no bearing on the nature and detail of the correspondence shared.

You may be interested to know MPI has proactively released a large amount of information on swamp kauri on the MPI website here: <http://mpi.govt.nz/exporting/forest-products/wood-and-wood-products/swamp-kauri>. This OIA release, with your contact details redacted, will also be published on the website.

You have the right under section 28(3) of the Official Information Act to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of our decision to withhold information. A request must be made in writing to:

The Ombudsman  
Office of the Ombudsmen  
PO Box 10 152  
WELLINGTON

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jo Goodhew', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Hon Jo Goodhew**  
Associate Minister for Primary Industries



Out of Scope

**From:** § 9(2)(a)  
**Sent:** Thursday, 8 May 2014 7:05 p.m.  
**To:** Sabin TempEA  
**Subject:** RE: Swamp Kauri  
**Attachments:** FW: Swamp Kauri

Hello § 9(2)(a)

On behalf of Hon Jo Goodhew, thank you for your emails (below and attached). As Mr Sabin's enquiry is regarding an operational matter, I am transferring these emails to the Chief Executive of the Ministry for Primary Industries for his consideration and response.

Regards,

§ 9(2)(a) Senior Private Secretary | Office of Hon Jo Goodhew  
| § 9(2)(a)

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**From:** Sabin TempEA  
**Sent:** Thursday, 8 May 2014 1:35 p.m.  
**To:** § 9(2)(a)  
**Subject:** FW: Swamp Kauri

Dear § 9(2)(a)

Mike has asked I forward to email below from § 9(2)(a) to you for assistance in reply for Minister/Associate Minister comment and update.

§ 9(2)(a) had been very critical of government on this issue and Mike has previously provided the MPI guidelines and government policy on this matter – by way of background.

If it is fair to say that many in Northland have a bad taste in their mouth about the fact that operators such as § 9(2)(a) appear to be working around the legislation by simply slicing logs/stumps in raw slabs and exporting them as so called table tops.

Mike would personally be interested to know what engagement MPI have had with § 9(2)(a) and what conclusions they have reached about his operating practice. He would appreciate a briefing on this as he has received a substantial number of concerns raised about his operation.

Kind regards

§ 9(2)(a)  
(a)  
§ 9(2)(a)

Temporary Executive Assistant to Mike Sabin MP | Room G.034 Parliament House | Wellington |  
§ 9(2)(a) | email: [Sabin.TempEA@parliament.govt.nz](mailto:Sabin.TempEA@parliament.govt.nz) | [www.national.org.nz](http://www.national.org.nz)



**Mike Sabin**  
MP FOR NORTHLAND

**National**  
[www.national.org.nz](http://www.national.org.nz)



Parliament Buildings, Wellington 6160  
Tel: 04 817 8384 | Email: [mike.sabin@parliament.govt.nz](mailto:mike.sabin@parliament.govt.nz)  
116A Kerikeri Rd Kerikeri | P.O. Box 298  
Tel: 09 407 7219 | Email: [northlandelectorate@parliament.govt.nz](mailto:northlandelectorate@parliament.govt.nz) | [www.mikesabin.co.nz](http://www.mikesabin.co.nz)

Authorised by Mike Sabin 116A Kerikeri Rd, Kerikeri

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**From:** s 9(2)(a)  
**Sent:** Thursday, 8 May 2014 11:44 a.m.  
**To:** Mike Sabin  
**Cc:** s 9(2)(a)  
**Subject:** Swamp Kauri

Dear Mr Sabin.

I think you have been pulling my wick and you have known for probably much longer than me the extent of illegal kauri extraction in Northland. If after the airing of two recent television programs the Government doesn't put a moratorium on the export of the kauri then the only conclusion that can be drawn is the Government is complicit with this illegal trade as it doesn't want to upset the Chinese. You stopped the legal highs overnight, stop this also.

Yours faithfully

s 9(2)(a)

RELEASED UNDER THE  
OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT



Out of Scope

**From:** § 9(2)(a) @parliament.govt.nz>  
**Sent:** Thursday, 8 May 2014 3:24 p.m.  
**To:** Sabin TempEA; § 9(2)(a)  
**Cc:** § 9(2)(a)  
**Subject:** RE: Swamp Kauri

Thanks § 9(2)(a)  
We'll respond.  
Regards,

§ 9(2)(a) | Senior Private Secretary | Office of Hon Jo Goodhew  
§ 9(2)(a)

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**From:** Sabin TempEA  
**Sent:** Thursday, 8 May 2014 2:16 p.m.  
**To:** § 9(2)(a)  
**Subject:** FW: Swamp Kauri

Dear § 9(2)(a)

Further to my last email on this subject Mike has asked I also forward the further email below from § 9(2)(a)

Regards

§ 9(2)(a)  
Temporary Executive Assistant to Mike Sabin MP | Room G.034 Parliament House | Wellington |  
§ 9(2)(a) | email: [Sabin.TempEA@parliament.govt.nz](mailto:Sabin.TempEA@parliament.govt.nz) | [www.national.org.nz](http://www.national.org.nz)



**Mike Sabin**  
MP FOR NORTHLAND

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116A Kerikeri Rd, Kerikeri | P.O. Box 298  
Tel: 09 407 7219 | Email: [northlandelectorate@parliament.govt.nz](mailto:northlandelectorate@parliament.govt.nz) | [www.mikesabin.co.nz](http://www.mikesabin.co.nz)

Authorised by Mike Sabin 116A Kerikeri Rd, Kerikeri

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**From:** § 9(2)(a)  
**Sent:** Thursday, 8 May 2014 1:40 p.m.  
**To:** Mike Sabin  
**Cc:** § 9(2)(a)  
**Subject:** RE: Swamp Kauri

Mike

Northland is your area. I've been told you were once a Policeman and what is happening is illegal. It's illegally extracted, illegally exported and I doubt very much that the appropriate tax is being paid.

Below is a photograph in a report I was sent by mistake. I sent this report on to John Key's electoral office weeks ago as I have concerns for my own safety having this knowledge. I assume MPI approved this shipment and it



certainly doesn't conform to my understanding of the act. Just go on the net and discover how much raw kauri is being offered for sale in countries all around the world.

After the attack on the Council's Compliance Officer, I doubt if other Officers would put themselves up as targets so I don't think Councils will do much. [http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=1&objectid=11226554](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=11226554) [http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=1&objectid=10864574](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10864574)

Regards

§ 9(2)(a)



Kauri slabs ("table tops") in a container, as received by Ancientwood Ltd in Wisconsin, USA. None is remotely in finished form as required by the Forestry Act for export.

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**From:** Mike Sabin [<mailto:Mike.Sabin@parliament.govt.nz>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, 8 May 2014 12:05 p.m.  
**To:** § 9(2)(a)  
**Cc:** § 9(2)(a)  
**Subject:** RE: Swamp Kauri

§ 9(2)(a)

MPI are the ones who monitor that any exports are complying with current legislation. There is a rigour process in place in this regard. I have certainly pointed out to them and relevant Ministers the potential for those who are inclined to try and work around the legislation. This is being looked at.

Beyond that the Regional Council is the compliance body with regard to the extraction of the logs/stumps and prosecutions occur where individuals breach relevant requirements.

I will forward your correspondence to the Minister and Associate Minister of Primary Industries for comment and an update on this situation.

Thanks for your email.

Kind regards,

Mike Sabin



Authorised by Mike Sabin 116A Kerikeri Rd, Kerikeri

**From:** § 9(2)(a)  
**Sent:** Thursday, 8 May 2014 11:44 a.m.  
**To:** Mike Sabin  
**Cc:** § 9(2)(a)  
**Subject:** Swamp Kauri

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Yours faithfully

§ 9(2)(a)