



30 July 2018

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade – Environment Division

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Submission: plain English statement of New Zealand's Interests in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed "plain English" statement of New Zealand's Interests in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean.

Christchurch is one of only five Antarctic gateways internationally. Christchurch takes seriously its custodial responsibilities as a supporter of New Zealand's national Antarctic priorities; and a host and logistics hub for New Zealand's national Antarctic programme, Antarctica New Zealand; as well as host to the American, Italian and Korean national Antarctic programmes and other programmes which may use Christchurch as their gateway for Antarctic activities. Christchurch also recognises its privileged position as the host of the International Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programs (COMNAP).

The Christchurch Antarctic Office is the city's vehicle to work with international, national and local partners to implement Christchurch's Antarctic Gateway Strategy.

The Christchurch Antarctic Office is making this submission on behalf of the Christchurch City Council and city elected officials, and ChristchurchNZ, the city's economic development and promotion agency.

Christchurch supports the development of a plain English statement of New Zealand's interests in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean.

Christchurch also supports the substantive content, wording and phrasing of the statement.

Christchurch acknowledges the importance, reflected in the statement, of Antarctica and the Southern Ocean in a global context as an exemplar of international peace and co-operation and a scientific world laboratory.

We believe New Zealand's current and historic role in the Antarctic region is disproportionately significant relative to the country's scale and influence in an international context.

As such, we support the Ministry's desire to increase public understanding of the importance of New Zealand's relationship with this unique region through a plain English statement of New Zealand's interests.

Christchurch supports the overarching statement that

“New Zealand is committed to the responsible stewardship of Antarctica and the Southern Ocean for the benefit of present and future generations”

and wishes to draw attention to the strong alignment with Christchurch’s Antarctic Gateway city vision for

*“Christchurch to be an Antarctic city where we celebrate and realise the value of our gateway status **for the benefit of the city and the nation, for current and future generations.**”*

In addition, Christchurch supports the clear statements regarding New Zealand’s Antarctic scientific, conservation and diplomatic priorities. We particularly support priorities to:

Strengthen Christchurch’s position as the international gateway to the Ross Sea region, ensuring we provide high-quality services to and collaboration with other nations.

We believe an effective gateway city is an important asset in support of New Zealand’s objectives.

Our Christchurch Antarctic Gateway Strategy sits squarely within the context of New Zealand’s Antarctic interests and priorities, and emphasises the city’s role in supporting and advancing New Zealand’s interests in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean.

We recognise the importance of working in partnership with our national partners in this endeavour.

Christchurch supports this through two priorities within the Christchurch Antarctic Gateway Strategy:

- *Welcome and Deliver Excellence* – Christchurch will be a welcoming host and excellent provider of logistic and business support to Antarctic programmes and agencies; a valued contributor and asset supporting New Zealand’s interests in the Antarctic region.
- *Advance Knowledge* – Christchurch will support the development of Antarctic knowledge, scientific endeavour and solving Antarctic challenges through technology and innovation.

Tell the story of New Zealand’s connection to Antarctica and the Southern Ocean, through science, environmental protection, conservation, heritage and logistical support.

Christchurch strongly supports celebration and recognition of New Zealand’s special relationship with Antarctica and the Southern Ocean. Not only as a source of national pride regarding our contribution, but also in recognition of both the opportunities this relationship provides for New Zealand and for New Zealanders be it scientific, educational, heritage or conservation, but also the important custodial responsibilities New Zealand holds to care and protect the natural environment and maintain the values embedded within the Antarctic Treaty system.

Christchurch supports this through two priorities within the Christchurch Antarctic Gateway Strategy:

- *Connect and Excite* – Christchurch will celebrate and engage all people in its Antarctic connection in an exciting, informative, interactive and meaningful way.
- *Champion Sustainability* – Christchurch will take a leadership role in sustainable actions for the benefit of the Antarctic region, our city and the world.

Ensure Scott Base is fit for future generations and air and maritime assets are capable of operating in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean.

Christchurch strongly supports continued investment in Scott Base to ensure it is fit for future generations.

We view this objective as essential to realising other environmental, science, diplomatic and heritage objectives by ensuring New Zealand can continue to effectively operate a national programme and support the objectives of programmes from other nations.

The Christchurch Antarctic Gateway Strategy also aligned with this Statement priority and sees a fit-for-purpose Scott Base as essential in supporting the following priorities within the Christchurch Strategy:

- *Welcome and Deliver Excellence* – Christchurch will be a welcoming host and excellent provider of logistic and business support to Antarctic programmes and agencies; a valued contributor and asset supporting New Zealand’s interests in the Antarctic region.
- *Advance Knowledge* – Christchurch will support the development of Antarctic knowledge, scientific endeavour and solving Antarctic challenges through technology and innovation.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed plain English statement and for giving due consideration to this submission.

Yours faithfully



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Christchurch City Council



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ChristchurchNZ