Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

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[redacted]

Our ref: RFI 6020
Date: 15 January 2014

Dear [redacted]

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION RELATING TO INVOLVEMENT OF DEFRA IN THE G8'S NEW ALLIANCE FOR FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

Thank you for your request for information relating to involvement of Defra in the G8's New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition, which we received on 18 November 2013. As you know, we have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The deadline for our response was extended to 16 January 2014 as explained in our letter to you of 16 December.

Following careful consideration, we have decided not to disclose some of this information.

I enclose a copy of the information which can be disclosed:

- Copies of documents related to Defra involvement in the G8's New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition.

I confirm that no Defra funding has been allocated to this matter.

The remainder of the information requested is being withheld as it falls under the exemptions in section 40(2) of the FOIA, which relate(s) to personal information, section 27(2), which relates to international relations, and section 35(1)(a), which relates to the formulation of government policy.

We have decided that some of the information should be withheld under section 40(2) (third party personal data) of the FOIA, as the information constitutes personal data relating to third parties. Section 40(2) of the FOIA provides that personal data relating to third parties is exempt information if disclosure would breach the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA).

We consider that disclosure of this information is likely to breach the first data protection principle in Schedule 1 to the DPA, which relates to the fair and lawful processing of personal data, in two ways. First, disclosure would not constitute 'fair' processing of the personal data, and second, disclosure would not satisfy any of the conditions for data processing set out in Schedule 2 to the DPA. Therefore, we have concluded that this information is exempt from disclosure under section 40(2) of the FOIA.

The exemption in section 27(2) applies to some of the information, which was received from other governments. We recognise that there is a public interest in disclosure of information concerning the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition and that greater transparency makes government more accountable to the electorate and increases trust.

On the other hand, there is a strong public interest in withholding the information because it was provided as part of an open and candid discussion between governments and disclosing it could have a detrimental effect on our future working relationship. On balance we have concluded that the public interest in this case falls in favour of not disclosing the information.

The exemption in section 35(1)(a) applies to some of the information. There is a strong public interest in withholding the information because the collective responsibility of the government should not undermined by disclosure of interdepartmental consideration. On balance we have concluded that the public interest in this case falls in favour of not disclosing the information.

Therefore, we have concluded that, in all the circumstances of the case, the information should be withheld.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the FOIA, and in keeping with the government's Transparency Agenda, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless exempt. Therefore, the information released to you will now be published on www.gov.uk together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context. Please note that this will not include your personal data.

I attach Annex A, which explains the copyright that applies to the information being released to you.

I also attach Annex B giving contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received.

Yours faithfully

International Team

Annex A

Copyright

The information supplied to you continues to be protected by copyright. You are free to use it for your own purposes, including for private study and non-commercial research, and for any other purpose authorised by an exception in current copyright law. Documents (except photographs) can be also used in the UK without requiring permission for the purposes of news reporting. Any other re-use, for example commercial publication, would require the permission of the copyright holder.

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Copyright in other documents may rest with a third party. For information about obtaining permission from a third party see the Intellectual Property Office's website.

Annex B

Complaints

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request you may make a complaint or appeal against our decision under section 17(7) of the FOIA or under regulation 18 of the EIRs, as applicable, within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please write to Mike Kaye, Head of Information Standards, Area 4D, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London; SW1P 3JR (email: requestforinfo@defra.gsi.gov.uk) and he will arrange for an internal review of your case. Details of Defra's complaints procedure are on our website.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, section 50 of the FOIA and regulation 18 of the EIRs gives you the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Please note that generally the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted Defra's own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF