



Ministry for the  
**Environment**  
*Manatū Mō Te Taiao*



*Making Aotearoa New Zealand  
the most liveable place in the world*  
*Aotearoa – he whenua mana kura mō te tangata*

## **Weekly Update – Hon Eugenie Sage, Associate Minister for the Environment**

**For the week starting 28 January 2019**

Proactively released

## 1. Actions and decisions

### 1.1. Ellen MacArthur Foundation Pacific Summit 2019, Ōhanga Āmiomio

The summit is now ten weeks away. The Ellen MacArthur Foundation (EMF) has asked for an indication as to whether the Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern is interested in opening the summit given the international audience.

Please consider (with a view to confirming) attendance by ministerial colleagues, noting that we are unable to guarantee an opportunity for them to speak at the summit.

We expect the EMF will ask you to speak on a panel regarding the Government's role in supporting the circular economy. This will be confirmed, along with the rest of the agenda, by 11 February.

The summit working group will meet in Rotorua (Thursday 24 January) to finalise the agenda and logistics.

*Would you like to invite Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern to open the summit?*

Yes/No

*Would you like to invite relevant ministerial colleagues, noting our inability to guarantee speaking opportunities?*

Yes/No

## 2. Updates for noting

### 2.1. Litter (Increased Infringement Fee) Amendment Bill update

This item updates you on the progress of the Litter (Increased Infringement Fee) Amendment Bill.

The second reading is likely to be on Wednesday 13 February. If the Bill is not debated on 13 February the next date for the second reading is Wednesday 6 March.

You requested advice on fly tipping in relation to this Bill. We will provide this by Friday 8 February as requested.

### 2.2. Minister Mahuta to speak at Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) staff meeting

Minister Mahuta has been invited to speak at the EPA staff meeting on 12 February. She will be talking about Maori participation in decision making, the Maturanga Māori approach to environmental issues, Three Waters, and engagement with local government.

### 2.3. Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) Board appointments – job advertisement now live and next steps

The public job advertisement for the two upcoming vacancies on the EPA Board is now live on jobs.govt.nz. Ministry officials have shared the advertisement link with their professional networks, the EPA, nominating agencies (eg, Treasury, and the Ministry for Women), and on the Ministry's LinkedIn account and Twitter. The deadline for receiving applications is 25 February. We will then proceed to shortlist candidates. We expect to brief you on this in March.

## 2.4. Update on meetings with industry partners and opportunities

This item updates you on five key industry partnerships:

### *Sustainable Coastlines (Camden Howitt)*

The Sustainable Coastlines beach litter project, funded through the Waste Minimisation Fund, will develop an online national litter database via a web-based application (app). The platform will engage citizen scientists, alongside NIWA (freshwater data) and Tidy Kiwi (terrestrial data), to create a full picture of the litter issue. The project so far indicates that the percentage of plastic bags found on beaches has decreased over the past year.

In addition, there is an opportunity for us, Sustainable Coastlines, and Microsoft to enter into a partnership. The objective would be to expand use of the app globally, ensuring development and ongoing funding for the project after the Waste Minimisation Fund deed ends in two years' time. Camden Howitt is consulting with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) about this.

### *3R and Packaging Forum (Adele Rose)*

The Packaging Forum and the Packaging Council of New Zealand will work collaboratively to harness circular economy opportunities. They are also looking at a co-regulatory approach, to become more like the Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation (APCO) or UK-based Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP).

The soft plastics recycling scheme is optimistic about relaunching; the Forum indicates new onshore solutions are emerging. s9(2)(g)(i)

Industry has a significant opportunity to lead in this area. Future thinking may be in manufacturing fewer types of plastics while ensuring the provision of adequate onshore solutions.

### *Waste Industry Forum (Michael Barnett and Tony Garnier)*

The Waste Industry Forum is a new industry group based in Auckland. They represent major players in the commercial waste and recycling industry and provide us with a key opportunity to engage constructively with the commercial sector. Members of the Forum are Green Gorilla, EnviroNZ, Waste Management, JJ Richards, Northland Waste, OJ Fibre Solutions, Visy and Employers and Manufacturers Associations. s9(2)(g)(i)

### *Innocent Packaging (Fraser Hanson)*

Innocent Packaging is a Sustainable Business Network (SBN) and award winning compostable packaging company. s9(2)(g)(i)

Innocent Packaging considers that if there is no demand then solutions will not follow (in regards to infrastructure), and that plant-based packaging causes less environmental damage during manufacture than fossil fuel based plastics. The Prime Minister's Chief Science Advisor has been introduced to the company to continue the conversation on alternatives to plastics.

### *Oxford Institute of Sustainable Development and Scion*

We have worked with the Oxford Institute of Sustainable Development to broker a consultancy project for Scion. This will involve a jurisdictional analysis of other regional circular economy hubs which may be used to inform Scion's development of the Rotorua hub and Provincial Growth Fund applications.

There is no cost for this twelve-week project and the findings will be shared with us to help inform our circular economy road map.

## 2.5. Update on Waste Free Summer digital campaign

Late last year, we advised you that we would run a digital campaign over summer to engage people on the issue of reducing waste. This campaign launched on 16 December 2018 and will run through to 24 February.

As part of the campaign we are releasing a series of light-hearted videos on social media featuring Kiwi kids, who are keen to ensure their friends and families are preventing waste, choosing to reuse, and recycling right. The videos lead people to click through to a 'Waste Free Summer' hub on our website, featuring articles with tips and information on how to reduce waste.

### *How the campaign is tracking*

Our goal is to reach one million New Zealanders with information that will help them take effective action, and so far it's tracking well. Here are some highlights (as at Wednesday 23 January):

- Reach so far from all social media posts is more than 1,005,000. This is the number of times our posts have appeared in people's news feeds and is a good indication of the exposure the campaign has received.
- One video alone "You've got lips" was shared over 280 times, including by several councils and other key stakeholders.
- Of those who have been reached through paid promotion, 42 per cent have engaged with the content in some way – for example leaving a comment, sharing, liking, clicking a link (very strong result).
- The Waste Free Summer webpages have been viewed 18,000 times which is a link click rate of 1.8 per cent (significantly higher than average).

### *Themes from comments*

The strongest theme from the large number of comments received has been calling on the Government to address the problem of plastic packaging at the source – particularly to regulate manufacturers/retailers or introduce a tax.

Other themes include:

- Comments about the soft plastic recycling scheme shutting down recently
- Calling on the Government to invest more in innovative ways of using recycled plastics
- Calling on us to develop standards/better labelling for biodegradable plastics
- Questions and comments on the perceived 'stockpiles' of recyclables (we have responded to these comments to correct the record)
- Government needs to improve/invest in more onshore recycling and composting infrastructure.

We will provide a final summary of results and themes once the campaign finishes in February.

### 3. Briefing notes

28 January – 22 February

Issue or event	Lead agency	Further information	Date due to your office
Productivity Commission's Final Report on Low-Emissions Economy - Waste chapter recommendations	MfE	This briefing summarises the recommendations of chapter 15 (Waste) of the Productivity Commission's Low-Emissions Economy final report. The briefing proposes government responses to each recommendation, and seeks your feedback on each proposed response.	8 February

### 4. Cabinet material

28 January – 22 February

Paper name	Committee	What this paper covers	Our Suggested timeframes
Update on work programme - Supporting New Zealand's Transition to a Circular Economy	DEV	Talking points for oral item, a report back requested by DEV on the wider work programme to improve waste management systems in NZ. [CAB-18-MIN-0577].	For DEV meeting on 6 March
Implementation plan for the Waste Minimisation (Plastic Shopping Bags) Regulations 2018	ENV	Talking points for oral item outlining the implementation plan for the Waste Minimisation (Plastic Shopping Bags) Regulations 2018 [CAB-18-MIN-0635.01].	For ENV meeting on 22 February

### 5. Cabinet material we have been consulted on

Paper name	Agency	Committee	Our advice on the paper
Building system legislative reform programme: Release of discussion paper	MBIE	DEV	<p>The paper seeks agreement to undertake public consultation on proposed changes to the building regulatory system. MfE comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supported a proposed cap on the liability of building consent authorities, and requirement for improved building product information and certification. These proposals may assist councils to support the innovation needed in the building sector to build at pace and scale, and limit risk averse behaviour.</li> <li>Suggested that building product information requirements should also include information on the environmental impacts of the products.</li> </ul> <p>More broadly we commented on future opportunities to improve the Building Act, including for example, the need to address building performance and ensure the Act takes the impact of climate change into account,</p>

			and the need to consider any gaps between RMA and Building Act regulation.
--	--	--	--

## 6. Official Information Act requests

### 6.1. Ministerial

Request	Correspondent	Reference	At your office	Due to send
Criteria used for unsuccessful funding application	s9(2)(a)	18-O-02800	24 January	31 January

Proactively released