

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

For the week starting 3 September 2018

Environment weekly meeting 12.00pm – 12.30pm, Monday 3 September

Attendees: Hon Eugenie Sage, Associate Minister for the Environment

Vicky Robertson, Chief Executive, Ministry for the Environment

James Walker, Deputy Secretary, Partnerships and Customers

Amanda Moran, Deputy Secretary, Natural and Built System

Shaun Lewis, Director, Investments and Partnerships

Glenn Wigley, Director, Natural and Built Environment

	Agenda Item	Lead	Paper / verbal update	Mins
1.	Discuss Weekly Update	Shaun Lewis	Verbal update	15
2.	Catch up discussion	Vicky Robertson	Verbal update	15

Upcoming meetings

3 Sept	12.00pm – 12.30pm	MfE Officials meeting
3 Sept	12.30 pm – 1.00pm	EPA Officials meeting
3 Sept	2.30 pm – 4.00pm	EPA budget
4 Sept	3.30 pm – 4.00pm	Meeting with Minister Parker
6Sept	10.30am – 11.00am	Quarterly Meeting with Paul Evans and Darren Patterson
6 Sept	11.45am – 12.15pm	MFE officials – product stewardship
10 Sept	12.00pm – 12.30pm	MfE Officials meeting
10 Sept	12.30 pm – 1.00pm	EPA Officials meeting
11 Sept	12.20 – 1.20 pm	Speaking to Wellington High School students RE: climate change and waste for Zero Waste Awareness Week
12 Sept	5.00pm –5.30pm	Meeting with Minister Parker

Upcoming events

20 Sept	3.30pm – 4.30pm	Key note address to RMLA conference
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1. Updates for noting

1.1. s9(2)(f)(iv)

s 9(2)(f)(iv)

Your next meeting on the UDA entity form will be on 13 September with Ministers Twyford, Parker, Mahuta and Jones.

You will also meet with Ministers Twyford, Davis, Parker, Mahuta, and Jones on 5 September to discuss the approach in the UDA legislation to offer back obligations (under the Public Works Act 1981) for Crown land that is former Māori freehold land.

1.2. Update on Litter

This item updates you on the progress of the Litter (Increased Infringement Fee) Amendment Bill and advice relating to concerns raised by Local Government New Zealand.

The Bill, which proposes to increase the maximum infringement fee from \$400 to \$1,000, has progressed through presentation of the Initial Briefing (written by the Ministry) and hearings of evidence. The Ministry is currently finalising a Departmental Report which is due with the Committee on Thursday 6 September. At this stage, based on advice from the Ministry of Justice and the evidence provided by submitters, the Ministry does not consider that an increased infringement fee will act as a greater deterrence for littering on its own. It is also important to note that because enforcing littering penalties is difficult (e.g. the apprehension and provision of evidence of littering), increases to the penalties for committing littering offences are relatively ineffective as a deterrent compared to targeting the cause of littering.

The Ministry is considering the most practical, and effective option, taking into consideration issues with proportionality within the wider infringement system, the certainty or likelihood of an offender being issued an infringement notice, the issues with enforcement, and inflation. The final report by the Committee is due on 2 November.

Reviewing the Litter Act is not currently a priority work programme for the Ministry.

1.3. Launch of the Sustainable Wealth Initiative

This note is further to the briefing provided to you dated 27 August. The Sustainable Wealth Initiative is due to launch on 19 October, and you have been invited to attend. MfE and DOC are two of the government agencies supporting the initiative and are working together on this project.

This partnership is a new and innovative way to try and amplify the work of environmental agencies by bringing together the private sector, alongside the wider set of NRS agencies. NRS agencies are collaborating within their stewardship mandate. Our briefing of 27 August outlined that the initiative will initially collaborate on three work streams: marine, biodiversity and sustainable finance.

The biodiversity work stream is being led by DOC, alongside Sir Rob Fenwick. The workshop on biodiversity will be held on September 6th and will include experts across business, Government and NGOs.

In due course, DOC will contribute to all other environment based work streams including land and soil, marine, climate change, fresh water.

The initiative does not intend to replicate existing work being undertaken by the public or private sector on protecting our natural environment. Instead it will:

- Communicate the importance of our natural capital to a business and government audience.
- Collaborate on shared projects, where there are gaps, to improve environmental outcomes.
- Amplify the work already underway and look for connections.

The following government agencies have contributed \$10,000 toward getting the Initiative to launch in October: DoC, Land Information NZ, Manaaki Whenua, MBIE,

MPI, MoT, NZTE and Te Puni Kokiri. Corporate partners have invested the same, and some further funds and resources in kind. Other agencies such as Stats and Treasury have also been involved in the workshops as part of the identification and development of how the initiative would work together. In order to launch the Initiative, MfE has dedicated 1 FTE from the Office of the Chief Executive to do so. The intent is that from 19 October the Initiative becomes a standalone charitable organisation.

Minister Shaw was part of their most recent meeting in March, and is being approached to co-chair the Sustainable Finance work stream of this initiative. It may be worth speaking to him about his involvement and perspectives.

We will keep you up to date. You may also wish to ask DOC to provide you with a further briefing.

Do you wish to attend the Launch?

YES / NO

1.4. Lithium ion batteries and product stewardship

A Battery Leaders Group with Audi / Drive Electric, BMW, Tesla (stationary battery side), Toyota, Waste Management and Scrap Metal Association of New Zealand and Sims Pacific Metals has been convened by Vector and met recently.

Vector is commissioning research on the current battery state of play in NZ and what any future projections on battery production, import and use could be.

After carrying out further data gathering, research and stakeholder engagement, the Battery Leaders Group will be hosting a New Energy Futures Battery Workshop in November with key players from across the battery value chain. The workshop will be facilitated by Forum for the Future.

The research will help the group form a view about what is the best governance structure and approach to creating a proposal for a product stewardship scheme for industry. The Ministry has been invited to participate in this workshop. At the workshop, the Battery Leaders Group want to invite stakeholders to participate in working groups to co-create a scheme and want to ensure the resulting proposal for an overarching scheme aligns with the various business-level product stewardship schemes under development (e.g. by Waste Management) and business development work by organisations such as Abilities Group and UpCycle.

2. Briefing notes

3 September – 28 September

Title	Lead agency	What this briefing covers	Due to office
HSNO legislative improvements	MfE/EPA	Advice on the range of potential HSNO legislative improvements, including how can the Trusted Regulator concept can be fully implemented in to EPA processes.	5 September
National Security System: Improving the Management of National Security Risks	MfE	Briefing advising on the New Zealand National Risk Report in advance of the Ministerial round table to discuss the draft report on 6 September.	4 September

3. Cabinet material

3 September – 28 September

Paper name	Committee	What this paper covers	Our Suggested timeframes
s 9(2)(f)(iv)			

4. Cabinet material we have been consulted on

Paper name	Agency	Committee	Our advice on the paper
Public release of proposed National Disaster Resilience Strategy	Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet	Cabinet Economic Development Committee	Paper seeks agreement to the release for public consultation of a proposed national civil defence emergency management strategy to be called 'National Disaster Resilience Strategy'. MfE gave feedback on minor changes to report and supports release.
National Security System: Improving the Management of National Security Risks	Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet	Cabinet National Security Committee	Paper seeks Cabinet approval for public release of the New Zealand National Risk Report and an appropriate launch event to be confirmed. MfE gave feedback to improve text outlining the environmental risks in report and how risk coordinating agency's had been selected. MfE supports release of this report.

5. Official Information Act requests

5.1. Ministerial

Request	Correspondent	Reference	At your office	Due to send
Copies of any briefings you received on the percentage of supermarket plastic bags that ended up in our coastal marine environments, and the alternatives for consumers who currently use plastic bags as garbage bags, not bin liners, garbage bags and the cost of those alternatives.	s 9(2)(a)	18-O-01787	3 September	7 September

5.2. Departmental

Request	Correspondent	Reference	Due to send
Information on which New Zealand transfer stations (location and business name included) are currently selling which types of recycled materials (Estimated values of materials per tonne and total amount) to which countries trailing twelve months. The Materials are but not included to: sum of waste, parings and scrap, of plastics; sum of glass, cullet and their waste and scrap of glass, glass in the mass; sum of ferrous waste and scrap, remelting scrap ingots of iron or steel; sum of copper, waste and scrap; sum of lead, waste and scrap; sum of paper, waste and cardboard.	s 9(2)(a) 3DCapital Ltd	18-D-01774	6 September

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

For the week starting 10 September 2018

Environment weekly meeting 12.00pm – 12.30pm, Monday 10 September

Attendees: Hon Eugenie Sage, Associate Minister for the Environment

Vicky Robertson, Chief Executive, Ministry for the Environment

James Walker, Deputy Secretary, Partnerships and Customers

Amanda Moran, Deputy Secretary, Natural and Built System

Shaun Lewis, Director Investments and Partnerships

Glenn Wigley, Director, Natural and Built System

	Agenda Item	Lead	Paper / verbal update	Mins
1.	Discuss Weekly Update	Shaun Lewis	Verbal update	10
2.	National Resource Recovery	Shaun Lewis	Verbal update	10
3.	Circular economy	Shaun Lewis, Awatere Hinemoa	Verbal update	10

Upcoming meetings

10 September	12.00pm – 12.30pm	MfE officials meeting
	12.30pm – 1.00pm	EPA officials meeting
11 September	12.20 – 1.20pm	Speaking to Wellington High School students RE: climate change and waste for Zero Waste Awareness Week
12 September	8:30am – 9:00am	Regular meeting with Deborah Russell re: Environment Select Committee
	5.00pm – 5.30pm	Meeting with Minister Parker
13 September	10:00am – 10:30am	Meeting with Minister Parker and the Fiordland Marine Guardians
17 September	10.00am – 10.30am	MfE officials meeting
	10.30 am – 11.00am	EPA officials meeting
18 September	4:30pm – 5:00pm	Meeting with Minister Parker
	6:00pm – 6:30pm	Meeting with Clayton Mitchell MP and Angie Warren-Clarke MP regarding methyl bromide

Upcoming events

12 September	10:00 – 10:30am	Stuff live Q&A on plastic bags
16 September	10:00am – 3:00pm	Predator Free Waiheke event (<i>DOC event, but includes a meeting with Mayor Phil Goff on waste and recycling</i>)
20 September	3.30pm – 4.30pm	Key note address to RMLA conference

1. Actions and decisions

1.1. World Wildlife Fund - Earth Hour 2019

World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Chief Executive Livia Esterhazy approached us to inform us about their intention to re-establish Earth Hour in New Zealand in 2019. New Zealand is the first (non-Pacific Island) country to switch-off. Earth Hour 2019 will take place at 8.30pm on Saturday 30 March 2019

The theme for 2019 is climate change and sustainable living. This timing will likely be during the parliamentary process for the Zero Carbon Bill.

WWF will be appointing an advertising agency to run a campaign in New Zealand. They are approaching corporate NZ for support, e.g. Sky City has expressed interest.

They are looking for (non-financial) support from us and our Ministers. This could look like: media, social media, 'switching off the lights on the Beehive'. This is an opportunity to have a mainstream environmental conversation with New Zealand.

We are approaching all Environment portfolio Ministers and the Minister for Climate Change James Shaw, given the portfolio relevance.

Would you like us to express interest in the campaign to WWF and work with your office on how you might support the campaign, depending on how it emerges?

Yes/No

2. Updates for noting

2.1. Biodiversity Collaborative Group update

The Biodiversity Collaborative Group (BCG) is funded from the Community Environment Fund (CEF), which falls within your area of responsibility as Associate Minister for the Environment. This item is to provide you with a progress report on the BCG'S work, as it relates to their expenditure and delivery against core project milestones.

The Biodiversity Collaborative Group (the Group) are due to deliver a draft National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity and recommendations for complementary and supporting measures (collectively, the policy package) on 24 September. The Group has up to \$900,000 from the Community Environment Fund (CEF). The Group received quarterly payments from March 2017 to June, upon delivering against agreed milestones. Payments changed to monthly (in arrears) from July until the end of the group's process in October. So far, the Group has received its July payment, met its August milestones and we are processing the August payment.

Following delivery of the Group's policy package on 24 September, we will provide advice to Minister Mahuta on progressing the next stage of this work, which will be a joint work programme between Ministry for the Environment and the Department of Conservation (DOC). We are also arranging for Minister Mahuta to meet with the DOC officials who will be progressing this work.

2.2. MfE Sustainability Strategy

We have developed a strategy outlining how we are taking action to ensure we operate our organisation in a sustainable way; by being a great place to work, leading by example, being a strong voice for the environment and being financially fit so we can achieve our outcomes. We recognise that we are behind a number of corporates in New Zealand, and we need to re-establish ourselves as sustainability leaders in the public service. This is important step forwards for both us and our stakeholders.

This strategy compliments our wider organisational strategy and work programme, building upon what we do ourselves as an organisation. The strategy is accompanied by our Sustainability Commitment and Environmental Commitment that set our vision for how we manage our organisation's sustainability and an action plan to ensure we deliver on our targets by July 2020 (and beyond). One target within the strategy is to measure and report our carbon footprint, ensuring it is externally verified. We have just finalised our emissions inventory and had it externally certified under the Certified Emissions Management and Reduction Scheme through EnviroMark. The Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA) is the only other central Government agency to have this certification. We plan to share our carbon footprint on our website as soon as the certification is finalised in the next few weeks, alongside our strategy.

We have shared our experience and offered help to other agencies who also wish to undertake certification. A notable improvement in our footprint has been our investment in Environment House with a more open layout, more energy efficient lighting, and laptops after the 2016 earthquakes. This has seen our annual energy spend decrease significantly.

We, along with Ministry of Defence, convened an All of Government Sustainability Group that had its inaugural meeting on 15 August with representatives from;

- Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment (MBIE)
- EECA
- Environmental Protection Authority
- Bay of Plenty District Health Board
- Ministry of Transport.

Representatives from Corrections, Housing NZ and Ministry for Primary of Industry were also scheduled to attend. The group discussed what agencies are currently doing (we appear to be leading) and how we can support one another through sharing intel and products. We also discussed sustainable procurement and how we could better support and drive this, which is being led out of MBIE.

Please find attached (appendix 1) our Sustainability Strategy on a page along with our Environmental and Sustainability Commitments. If you would like further information please ask James Walker.

2.3. Tax Working Group Environmental taxes presentation

You, and other Ministers interested in environmental issues, have been invited to a presentation on Monday 10 September by the Tax Working Group (TWG) Secretariat. This presentation will provide a summary of the key draft findings of the TWG on environmental taxes. It provides a new framework for considering proposed environmental taxes, specific taxes to be considered in the short- and medium-term, some areas for longer-term work, tax concessions, and the use of tax revenue. Specific environmental issues that the paper covers include waste, greenhouse gases, congestion, water takes and water pollution. The draft report is scheduled to be discussed at Cabinet on Monday 17 September before being publicly released. The final report is due in February 2019. Ministry officials have been working with the TWG Secretariat and Steering Group, and are happy to meet with you or provide you with further comment on any of the issues raised in the presentation.

3. Briefing notes

10 September – 5 October

Title	Lead agency	What this briefing covers	Due to office
Accreditation of Fonterra and SKYCITY voluntary product stewardship scheme	MFE	Provides you with advice on accreditation of a voluntary product stewardship scheme application from Fonterra and SKYCITY	10 September
Draft annual report 2017/18 for your information	MfE	Draft annual report supplied for your information and any feedback.	16 September

4. Cabinet material

10 September – 5 October

Paper name	Committee	What this paper covers	Our Suggested timeframes
s 9(2)(f)(iv)			

Appendix 1.

Proactively released

Our Sustainability Commitment



Aotearoa – he whenua mana kura mō te tangata

Our goal is that Aotearoa New Zealand is the most liveable place in the world. For this to be realised, and for New Zealand to prosper, our environment must prosper. We need to care for our natural resources and put the environment at the heart of our decision making. A thriving environment underpins our economic prosperity; it contributes to our health and our physical well-being and is central to what it means to be a Kiwi.

Sustainability for us at the Ministry for the Environment means operating within our baseline, minimising our environmental footprint and providing our people what they need to thrive. We connect, engage, influence and mobilise action across New Zealand to care for, manage and invest in our natural resources wisely, so our environment thrives along with our economy and people.

We do this every day by living our Strategy on a Page and:

- Using our diversity as our strength – “He rau mano, he rau kotahi tangata” Embracing our multiple talents;
- Growing our people so they can be effective leaders, challenging and empowering others to improve environmental outcomes;
- Reducing our environmental footprint, leading by example and sharing best practice. We want to be a carbon neutral and zero waste Ministry;
- Advising with impact by providing New Zealanders with the best information at the right time to enable informed and sustainable decisions;
- Connecting others with an interest in better environmental outcomes to find solutions;
- Remaining financially sustainable by operating within our baseline; and
- Managing our funds for greatest environmental benefit and in-line with our outcomes.

We report on our performance and progress to our people and stakeholders on our intranet and in our Annual Report.

Ministry for the Environment Sustainability Strategy

Our purpose: Aotearoa - he whenua mana kura mō te tangata - Aotearoa New Zealand is the most liveable place in the world

Sustainability for us at the Ministry for the Environment means operating within our baseline, minimising our environmental footprint and providing our people what they need to thrive. We connect, engage, influence and mobilise action across New Zealand to care for, manage and invest in our natural resources wisely, so our environment thrives along with our economy and people. This is our plan to July 2020 which compliments our Strategy on a Page.

Our People

Being an awesome place to work



Our Environment

Leading by example



Being a strong voice for the environment



Our Finances & Transparency

Being financially fit so we can achieve our outcomes



Our longer term Goals

- Using our diversity as our strength – “He rau mano, he rau kotahi tangata” Embracing our multiple talents
- Growing our people so they can be effective leaders, challenging and empowering others to improve environmental outcomes

- Reducing our environmental footprint, leading by example and sharing best practice
- We want to be carbon neutral by reducing and then offsetting our emissions and be a zero waste ministry

- Advising with impact by providing New Zealanders with the best information at the right time to enable informed and sustainable decisions
- We lead by connecting others with an interest in better environmental outcomes to find solutions

- Remain financially sustainable by operating within our baseline
- Reporting on our performance and progress to our people and stakeholders on our intranet and in our Annual Report
- Managing our funds for greatest environmental benefit/impact and in-line with our priorities

Our Targets by July 1st 2020

- Develop and launch our Te Ao Māori Strategy
- Achieve Rainbow Tick Certification
- No gender pay gap
- Staff volunteering day available for all staff annually
- Diversity and Inclusion Policy and programme enacted

- Measure and report our carbon footprint and have it externally verified
- Reduce our waste to landfill by 50%
- Sustainability criteria added into the funds we administer
- Reduce our total energy use (kWh) in Environment House by 10% per m²
- Reduce our travel emissions by 20%

- Policy Plus - Sustainability is at the forefront of our minds and is woven into our everyday actions, advice and outcomes
- Building our voice – engagement, reputation and brand measurement scores consistently over 75%
- Use our state of the environment synthesis report EA2019 to lead action on sustainability managing our natural assets

- 100% of OIAs consistently delivered within statutory timeframes
- Measure and Report on our financial as well as non-financial results via our Annual Report and intranet
- Sustainable procurement principles incorporated into all contracts. We help lead this for Government to progress our outcomes

Our Environmental Commitment



Aotearoa – he whenua mana kura mō te tangata

Our goal is that Aotearoa New Zealand is the most liveable place in the world.

To make New Zealand the most liveable place in the world, our environment must prosper. We need to care for and invest in our natural resources, understanding the consequences of our decisions, and make wise choices that will benefit future generations.

We need everyone to play a part. And that starts with us. At MfE we are a team of people passionate about the environment and the role we play. We take action, lead and help others succeed. We connect, engage, influence and mobilise action across New Zealand to care for, manage and invest in our natural resources wisely, so our environment thrives along with our economy and people. We can influence others environmental performance through our policy advice, environmental improvement funding, best practice advice and procurement.

As environmental stewards, we take every opportunity to reduce and minimise our environmental impact in our day to day work. This means that as well as complying with all relevant legislation and standards, we will:

- Continue to provide informed policy advice that leads to sustainable management of our natural assets.
- Monitor our environmental performance, setting and reviewing clear objectives and targets at least annually to ensure we are continually improving.
- Measure our carbon footprint, proactively seeking to reduce it, and reporting publically on our progress.
- Reduce our consumption of non-renewable resources and the waste we generate, thereby preventing any unnecessary pollution.
- Guide our staff to reduce impact of air and land travel.
- Raise our awareness of environmental issues associated with our organisation and monitoring new technologies or practices that may assist us to approve our environmental performance and demonstrate leadership for others.
- Consider the environmental credentials of products and services in our procurement decisions (in accordance with our Procurement Policy).
- Encourage our stakeholders within central government and beyond to minimise their environmental footprint.



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

For the week starting 17 September 2018

Upcoming meetings

18 September	4:30pm – 5:00pm	Meeting with Minister Parker
	6:00pm – 6:30pm	Meeting with Clayton Mitchell MP and Angie Warren-Clarke MP regarding methyl bromide
24 September	12:00pm – 12:30pm	MfE officials meeting
	12:30pm – 1:00pm	EPA officials meeting
25 September	8:30am – 9:00am	Meeting with Ministers Parker, Jones and O'Connor regarding methyl bromide
	3:30pm – 4:00pm	Meeting with Minister Parker
27 September	8:00am – 8:30am	Meeting with Mayor Lester regarding waste

Upcoming events

20 September	3.30pm – 4.30pm	Key note address to RMLA conference
28 September	9:00am – 11:00am	Morning tea with the Formary to launch a textile reuse programme
	12:30pm – 1:30pm	Accompanying EPA on school visit to talk about Safer Homes programme

1. Updates for noting

1.1. Proposed Environment Select Committee briefing on food waste in New Zealand

In mid-August you communicated to the Environment Select Committee (the Committee) that the Ministry for the Environment (the Ministry) was able to provide a departmental adviser to support the work of a lead independent adviser. You suggested the independent adviser would lead on research and written work. Due to limited departmental capacity, you advised the Ministry's adviser would only be available to comment on papers prepared by the Committee, attend hearings, and assist in coordinating input from other government agencies.

The Committee has also requested resourcing assistance from the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI). Similar to the Ministry, MPI has responded by saying that they would provide limited input through their officials taking a supporting role to a lead independent adviser.

There has been no further information received from the Committee since your communication about Ministry resourcing in mid-August.

1.2. Summary of the Cabinet paper *Enhancing the effectiveness of government procurement policy*

You requested a summary of the inclusion of waste in the Cabinet paper *Enhancing the effectiveness of government procurement policy*.

Four priority outcomes have been agreed in principle by Cabinet for agencies to collectively leverage; one of these is to 'support the transition to a zero net emissions economy and design waste out of the system' by supporting innovation to significantly reduce climate and waste impacts from goods, services and capital works.

It is noted that reducing waste supports other environmental goals (e.g. water quality and biodiversity) and increases resource efficiency [point 73 of the Cabinet paper]. The work programme on low carbon/low waste procurement will be focused on a small number of high impact areas. This will include phasing out hydrofluorocarbons, investigating green building ratings across public service office buildings, and increasing uptake of green options in all-of-government contracts for example low waste options in the all-of-government office consumables contract [points 74-78].

We sent comments to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment on the Cabinet paper that included a recommendation to support goods and services that have low waste and low emissions built into their design, manufacture and use.

1.3. Update on Golden Bay Cement's Waste Minimisation Fund project

Northland Regional Council (NRC) has indicated to Golden Bay Cement (GBC) that decisions regarding their resource consent are expected to be finalised by the end of September. GBC are currently finalising costings and the work programme for Phase 2 of the 'Tyre recovery and recycling at Golden Bay Cement' project. Next week, we will visit GBC to discuss the project planning details for Phase 2, and the Ministry's Stage Gate requirements that will need to be achieved prior to commencing Phase 2. Final details for Phase 2 are expected to be discussed in detail by Fletcher Concrete and Infrastructure Limited executives on 15 October. We will provide you with an update on the outcomes of GBC's resource consent in early October once details are received.

1.4. Discussion Paper - updating the Australian National Waste Policy.

The discussion paper *Updating the 2009 National Waste Policy: Less waste more resources* was published this week and is open to comment for four weeks from 5 September to 26 September. The discussion paper has been coordinated by the Australian government, with input from state and territory government officials, the Australian Local Government Association, business and industry associations and non-government organisations. The policy proposes a new approach to waste minimisation based on five circular economy principles reflecting the global shift towards a circular economy, and sets out six new targets for comment. The updated Australian National Waste Policy generally aligns with New Zealand's policy direction and there may be an opportunity to consider alignment of the circular economy principles and targets. We are currently analysing the discussion paper and will provide advice in the next two weeks.

1.5. Update on coastal Occupation Charges

The Ministry and the Department of Conservation (DOC) are progressing a project to consider whether councils can be provided more assistance to establish coastal occupation charging regimes. To date, only Southland District Council has a regime in place and this was established prior to the Resource Management Act (RMA). Marlborough District Council (MDC) is now progressing a regime under its notified Marlborough Environmental Plan.

The Ministry and DOC are to discuss this regime with MDC in the coming weeks. Following this discussion, officials would be in a position to brief you on whether councils need further assistance to establish regimes.

1.6. Sustainable Wealth Initiative – Update on Progress

Key elements for the launch of the Sustainable Wealth Initiative on 19 October are progressing well, including development of a new name, brand, and public communication collateral. Work to establish the Trust and confirm its future funding is underway and on track.

To recall, the initiative's purpose is to bring together key government agencies, in their stewardship capacity, and key private sector corporates to set out a shared aspiration for improving NZ's natural capital. The work programme of the Trust, launched in October, will be around amplifying existing policy and private sector efforts, and working on collaborative projects in areas where there are gaps.

Under the biodiversity work stream, we held a workshop for key participants, which was led by the DOC Director-General, Lou Sanson, and Sir Rob Fenwick. The purpose of the workshop was to understand the work already underway by Government, councils and other players, and identify gaps and opportunities. The ideas generated are now being tested with the intention of identifying two-three actions that will be launched in October. We will share these with you shortly.

A similar workshop for the marine work stream next week, facilitated by Sir Rob Fenwick and Sanford Chief Executive Volker Kuntzsch. The purpose is the same as the biodiversity workshop.

So far Ministers Robertson, Shaw, and Mahuta have agreed to attend the launch. Minister Parker will attend depending on his travel plans.

2. Briefing notes

17 September – 12 October

Title	Lead agency	What this briefing covers	Due to office
National Planning Standards – overview of submissions and upcoming briefings	MfE and DOC	Provides an overview of submissions received on the recent consultation and sets out the series of briefings you will receive over the coming months to prepare for gazettal in April 2019.	27 September

3. Cabinet material

17 September – 12 October

Paper name	Committee	What this paper covers	Our Suggested timeframes
s 9(2)(f)(iv)			

4. Official Information Act requests

4.1. Ministerial

Request	Correspondent	Reference	At your office	Due to send
Under the OIA, please provide all advice you have received relating to the proposed mandatory phase out of single-use plastic shopping bags.	s 9(2)(a) Act Party	18-O-01942	21 September	28 September

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

For the week starting 24 September 2018

Environment weekly meeting 12.00pm – 12.30pm, Monday 24 September

Attendees: Hon Eugenie Sage, Associate Minister for the Environment

Vicky Robertson, Chief Executive, Ministry for the Environment

James Walker, Deputy Secretary, Partnerships and Customers

Glenn Wigley, Acting Deputy Secretary, Natural and Built System

Shaun Lewis, Director Investments and Partnerships

	Agenda Item	Lead	Paper / verbal update	Mins
1.	Discuss Weekly Update	Shaun Lewis	Verbal update	10
2.	Budget	Vicky Robertson	Verbal update	20

Upcoming meetings

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	12:30pm – 1:00pm	EPA officials meeting
25 September	8:30am – 9:00am	Meeting with Ministers Parker, Jones and O'Connor regarding methyl bromide
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27 September	8:00am – 8:30am	Meeting with Mayor Lester regarding waste
4 October	3:30pm – 4:30pm	Meeting with Tyrewise Group

Upcoming events

28 September	9:00am – 11:00am	Morning tea with the Formary to launch a textile reuse programme
	12:30pm – 1:30pm	Accompanying EPA on school visit to talk about Safer Homes programme
4 October	5:30pm – 7:30pm	Panel Forum – Victoria University


1. Updates for noting

1.1. Mackenzie Basin - situation update

Two months ago Simons Pass Station Ltd withdrew its resource consent applications to the Mackenzie District Council (MDC) for the development of dairy sheds, buildings and associated infrastructure on three new farms (Nodes A, B and Maryburn). It has now lodged two new consent applications for irrigation on a fourth dairy farm (Node C) which already has resource consents for a dairy shed and other buildings. The irrigation consents are necessary for the intensification of dairy farming at Node C.

MDC has placed these consent applications on hold while it seeks an Environment Court declaration on whether the activities should be treated as discretionary or controlled (there is ambiguity arising from the timing of other Environment Court decisions and plan changes).

s9(2)(f)(iv)



A briefing on Mackenzie issues and options will be provided to Minister Parker this week, and copied to you.

1.2. SBN's Plastic Packaging System Diagnosis

The Sustainable Business Network (SBN) held a Plastic Packaging System Diagnosis meeting in Auckland on 13 September. It was attended by more than 30 representatives of major companies involved in the New Zealand packaging economy, who heard updates on the work to date and participated in a workshop. The system diagnosis has included desktop research, and 44 interviews.

Most participating companies expressed willingness to take responsibility for their product's whole lifecycle, and asked central government for support in this endeavour. The largest problem was determined to be the lack of available data, and central government was asked to create a more sophisticated data monitoring system. The attendees also argued for the use of more direct regulations on plastic products, ranging from the development of product stewardship schemes to outright bans of non-recyclable materials. This is to help companies to increase their environmental responsibility without losing competitiveness in the process. The final results of the study will be published near the end of October.

1.3. Release of the Interim Report of the Tax Working Group

The Tax Working Group's (the Group) Interim Report was released on 20 September.

The treatment of natural capital is one of two key areas raised in the interim report, alongside the inconsistent taxation of capital income capital. Taxation is identified as a valuable tool – alongside regulation and spending measures – that can be used to influence economic activity and guide a transition to more a sustainable economy.

The Group has developed a framework for deciding when to apply taxes to address environmental externalities and specific opportunities where taxation could play a role. The Group is recommending further work by the Government on the use of tax or other economic instruments in the areas of waste, congestion, greenhouse gasses (through strengthening the Emissions Trading Scheme), water pollution and water abstraction.

This is an interim report only. The Government will not make any decisions until the final report is received in February 2019.

An open letter from the Ministers of Finance and Revenue has been sent to the Group. This includes welcoming the continuing consideration of what role the tax system can play in the delivery of positive environmental and ecological outcomes over the medium and longer term. It also notes that the Government's current environmental work programme provides opportunities to discuss and develop some of the issues raised by the Group in the Interim Report, especially the Waste Work Programme, the Congestion Question project, the Zero Carbon Act and the establishment of the Independent Climate Commission.

We have been involved in the development of the recommendations in the interim report, and will continue to engage with the Group and the secretariat on environmental matters.

1.4. Indicators for Our Air 2018

The list of indicators included in Our Air 2018 were publicly released by the Government Statistician on 18 September. It is standard practice to release the list of indicators about a month before each environmental report. Our Air 2018, published under the Environmental Reporting Act, will be released at 11am on 18 October.

The content of the report is confidential until release. You will be briefed orally on 17 October alongside other relevant Ministers and will be provided with an embargoed copy of the report.

There are two new indicators compared to previous publications: black carbon concentrations, and artificial night sky brightness (which is of particular relevance to Te Ao Māori).

The other indicators (revised, merged, or kept as is compared to previous publications) are: Particulate Matter (PM) 10 concentrations, PM2.5 concentrations, heavy metals, air pollutant emissions, nitrogen dioxide concentrations, natural sources of particulate matter, health effects from exposure to PM10, benzene concentrations, carbon monoxide concentrations, ground level ozone concentrations, sulphur dioxide concentrations, and total suspended particulate matter concentrations in Penrose, Auckland.

The main data gaps identified include issues such as having limited geographic coverage of air pollutant monitoring over time, the need for better data on key sources of air pollutants, limited New Zealand-specific data on the health impacts of exposure to air pollutants, and the lack of data about the impact of air pollutants on natural ecosystems and biodiversity.

1.5. Ombudsman Investigation of Official Information Act Practices

We were one of four agencies chosen by the Ombudsman this year to investigate Official Information Act (OIA) practices. The review has been ongoing since April, and is about to come to a close. The provisional report was positive for us, highlighting the work we have done to improve our OIA practices, as well as taking a lead role in proactive release of official information. There are a number of suggestions in the report, but no formal recommendations. The final report is due to be tabled in Parliament on Thursday 27 September. You will be provided with a copy of the report shortly after.

1.6. s9(2)(f)(iv)



2. Briefing notes

24 September – 19 October

Title	Lead agency	What this briefing covers	Due to office
Intensive land use in the Mackenzie basin: Issues and Options	MfE	Advice on issues relating to land use practice in the Mackenzie Basin including an update on RMA processes	25 September
National Planning Standards – overview of submissions and upcoming briefings	MfE and DOC	Provides an overview of submissions received on the recent consultation and sets out the series of briefings you will receive over the coming months to prepare for gazettal in April 2019.	27 September

3. Cabinet material

24 September – 19 October

Paper name	Committee	What this paper covers	Our Suggested timeframes
s 9(2)(f)(iv)			
Listing Chemicals in the schedules of Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996 and the Imports and Exports Order to comply with international obligations under the Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions	(ENV) Cabinet Environment, Energy and Climate Committee	This paper proposes that New Zealand formally accept the listings by amending legislation and notifying the convention secretariat.	<p>Due to Minister Parker: 27 September</p> <p>Due to lodge: 11 October</p> <p>Due to DEV Committee: 17 October</p> <p>Due to Cabinet 23 October</p>

4. Cabinet material we have been consulted on

Title	Agency	Committee	Our advice on the paper
Future State of Three Waters Regulation and Service Delivery	Department of Internal Affairs	(DEV) Cabinet Economic Development Committee	This paper seeks agreement on the scope and timeframes for decisions on potential changes to regulatory and service delivery arrangements for Three Waters infrastructure. We are working closely with DIA to on the environmental regulation workstream and its alignment with our existing work programmes on Freshwater, urban water and the Resource Management System.

5. Official Information Act requests

5.1. Ministerial

Request	Correspondent	Reference	At your office	Due to send
Under the OIA, please provide all advice you have received relating to the proposed mandatory phase out of single-use plastic shopping bags.	s 9(2)(a) Act Party	18-O-01942	21 September	28 September

5.2. Departmental

Request	Correspondent	Reference	Due to send
All reports, correspondence, emails, texts, briefings and aide memoires you have received or sent, or your staff have received or sent concerning Glyphosate since 1 February 2018 [Your office has received the same request. EPA is preparing the Ministerial response.]	s 9(2)(a) National Party	18-D-01949	10 October

Proactively released