



Event pack - Transforming Recycling launch of public consultation

Date Submitted:	10 March 2022	Tracking # BRF-1290
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Delete/add Ministers as appropriate	Action sought:
To: Hon David PARKER, Minister for the Environment	Read before consultation launch on Sunday 13 March

Actions for Minister's Office Staff	Note the contents and attachments to this briefing.
Number of appendices and attachments: 3	Appendix 1: Transforming Recycling launch event (details correct as at 10 March) Appendix 2: Copy of Event Invitation Appendix 3: Back-pocket questions and answers

Ministry for the Environment contacts

Position	Name	Cell phone	1st contact
Principal Author	Jojo Woodham		
Responsible Managers	Annabelle Ellis Liz Butcher	022 0097624 022 5173314	✓
Director	Shaun Lewis		

Event pack - Transforming Recycling launch of public consultation

Purpose

1. This briefing pack provides you with launch event details and back-pocket questions and answers to support the launch of public consultation on *Transforming Recycling*.


Background

2. On 13 March, you are launching the public consultation on *Transforming Recycling*, which includes the three related proposals to introduce a beverage container return scheme, improve household kerbside recycling and the separation of business food waste.
3. The consultation launch event is scheduled for 10.30am at the Zero Waste Zone at the Tipping Point, Waitākere Refuse and Recycling Transfer Station, on 13 March 2022.
4. Prior to the launch event you are being interviewed on TVNZ Q+A by Jack Tame, as arranged by your office.
5. The Ministry is working with your office on the media release announcing the public consultation and the speech to support the consultation launch.

Attached information

6. An event schedule with more detail about the launch event and likely attendees is attached at Appendix 1.
7. The suggested launch event timeline is included in the Event Invitation attached at Appendix 2.
8. Back-pocket questions and answers to support the Q+A session and the consultation launch are attached at Appendix 3.

Signature

Shaun Lewis Director – Waste and Resource Efficiency	
Date:	10 March 2022

Appendix 1: Transforming Recycling launch event

Run Sheet

Date	13 March 2022
Time	9am – 11am
Location	<p>Zero Waste Zone, the Tipping Point</p> <p>Address: Gate 5 Waitākere Refuse and Recycling Transfer Station 50 The Concourse, Henderson, Auckland 0610</p> <p>Telephone: 09 836 5048</p> <p>Email: mphsshop@gmail.com</p> <p>Website: https://www.tippingpoint.org.nz/</p>
Expected number of guests	Approximately 20 people (subject to invitees' availability, COVID-19 health status and travel restrictions).
Key attendees	<p>Attendees*:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warren Snow - Entrust Foundation (The Kiwi Bottle Drive) • Nic Quilty - Chief Executive, WasteMINZ • Rachel Barker - Chief Executive, Plastics New Zealand • Hayden Smith - Chief Executive, Sea Cleaners • Camden Howitt - General Manager and Co-founder, Sustainable Coastlines • Dorte Wray - Executive Officer, Zero Waste Network Aotearoa • Rachel Brown - Chief Executive, Sustainable Business Network • Heather Saunderson - Chief Executive, Keep New Zealand Beautiful <p>Auckland Council (hosts)*:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bill Cashmore - Auckland Deputy Mayor • Parul Sood - Auckland Council General Manager Waste Solutions • Richard Hills - Auckland Councillor • Jim Stabback - Auckland Council Chief Executive • Barry Potter - Auckland Council Director Infrastructure and Environmental Services • Michelle Blau – Media, communications and hosting <p>Ministry for the Environment attendees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roderick Boys – Principal Advisor • Jenny Marshall – Senior Policy Analyst <p><i>*Attendance to be confirmed with your office.</i></p>
Contact (MfE)	Roderick Boys - 022 493 0561

Background information and context

9. You are launching the public consultation *Te panoni i te hangarua - Transforming Recycling*. This consultation has three parts, including proposals to introduce a beverage container return scheme (CRS), and improve household kerbside recycling and the separation of business food waste.
10. The launch event will take place at the Zero Waste Zone at the Tipping Point, located at the Waitākere Refuse and Recycling Transfer Station in Auckland.
11. Auckland Council is hosting this event. You will be met by Parul Sood, General Manager Waste Solutions of Auckland Council, you will later meet with Deputy Mayor Bill Cashmore.
12. Auckland Council have previously commissioned work on a CRS and has voiced its support of a CRS for Aotearoa New Zealand. Auckland council support in principle a national set of materials being collected at kerbside but were reluctant to do so voluntarily and wanted to wait for clear central government direction. Auckland Council intends to roll out a food scraps collection s 9(2)(g)(i)
13. Prior to the launch event you are being interviewed on TVNZ Q+A by Jack Tame, as arranged by your office. This interview will take place at 9.15am on site at Waitākere Refuse and Recycling Transfer Station, in a boardroom setting.
14. An outline of timings for the launch event is attached at Appendix 2. Your office will confirm final lists of attendees and the event timings to the Ministry and the venue hosts.
15. Biographical information of key Auckland Council attendees is provided below:



Bill Cashmore
Deputy Mayor of Auckland
Franklin Ward Councillor

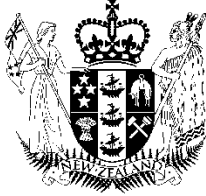


Parul Sood
General Manager Waste Solutions
Auckland Council



Richard Hills
North Shore Councillor
Ngāpuhi
Chair of Environment & Climate Change Committee

Appendix 2: Event Invitation



Office of Hon David Parker

Attorney-General
Minister for the Environment
Associate Minister of Finance

Minister for Oceans and Fisheries
Minister of Revenue

Event Invitation

Some of the information requested below may not apply to your specific event – please indicate this by inserting 'not applicable'.

If any information changes after submitting this form (e.g. adjustments in timing, venue, programme format, speakers, guests attending), please resend this form with an indication of what information has been updated.

Event details	
Description of event and details of host/host organisation	Announcement for media of waste minimisation changes.
Purpose of event (objectives, planned outcomes)	Media coverage
Day, date and timeframe of Minister's attendance <i>Please ensure you indicate the desired <u>full</u> timeframe of Minister's attendance, ie include what time you would like him to arrive and depart, and not just his speaking time</i>	8:50 – 11:00 am Sunday March 13, 2022.
Venue (including complete street address and city/town)	Zero Waste Zone (learning centre) at Waitakere Transfer Station 50 The Concourse, Henderson: https://goo.gl/maps/k71fqMW2FR9E81Wg7
Please provide an outline with timings of the event	Please note, below timings are indicative and subject to change. Minister's Office to confirm with venue host and MFE. 8:45 - 9:15 media interview crew arrive 9:00 – 9:15 Minister arrival, to be met by Parul Sood, General Manager Waste Logistics 9:15 – 9:45 live media interview exclusive

	<p>9:45 – 10:00 arrival of other media and guests, including Deputy Mayor Bill Cashmore</p> <p>10:00 – 10:15 launch announcement and speech</p> <p>10:15 individual media interviews as requested</p> <p>11:00 departure</p>
If the Minister is being asked to make a presentation to someone (eg an award), please provide details of what the presentation is, what the Minister is required to do, who the presentation is to	N/A
Media	
<p>Will invitations be published? If so, please indicate format and timing of publication.</p> <p><i>Any publicity regarding the Minister's attendance must be cleared by the Minister's office. Please ensure the office receives the invitation at least two days before publication for review.</i></p>	N/A
If relevant, please provide social media details regarding the event (eg Facebook, twitter handle and hashtags, etc)	N/A
<p>Is this event open or closed to the media?</p> <p>Will the Minister's attendance be recorded/broadcast in any way? <i>If so, this must be cleared with the Minister's Office in advance</i></p>	Some media in attendance, arranged by Minister's Office. Exclusive live interview session, as organised by Minister's Office.
Speech details	
If the Minister is being asked to speak, please outline the topic, discussion points and length of speech.	Consultation announcement, as arranged by Minister's Office and the Ministry.
Who else has been invited to speak (in particular, are other Ministers or MPs being invited to speak)?	N/A
Attendees	
Please provide a guest/attendance list if possible, or indicate the makeup of the audience	Minister's Office please refer to MfE's event briefing for full list of suggested attendees. Minister's Office to confirm final list of attendees.
Are other Ministers and/or MPs being invited to attend? If so, who?	N/A
Please indicate any other important guests the Minister should be aware of	Auckland Deputy Mayor Bill Cashmore (to be confirmed) Auckland Councillor Richard Hills (to be confirmed)
How many people in total are being invited or are expected to attend?	Approximately 20 people (subject to invitees' availability, COVID-19 health status and travel restrictions). Attendees to be confirmed by the Minister's Office to MfE and host.
Venue	
How will the venue be laid out? Please be as specific as possible (eg lecture style with podium at front / meeting around a table / informal, people standing, with or without podium)	The Minister will do an interview in a private room at the transfer station. He will be escorted to the learning zone where he will stand on the deck and speak to a group of journalists and elected leaders who will be standing physically distanced in a garden.

	Individual interviews can then take place by the composting bins or upcycled materials.
Please advise the dress code for the event	This is an active waste transfer station, so casual clothing and closed toed shoes that can get dirty should be worn. A high vis vest should be available if the Minister does interviews elsewhere on location.
Contact details	
Please RSVP to:	Michelle Blau michelle.blau@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz
For organisational issues around the Minister's attendance (name, telephone number, email address)	Michelle Blau michelle.blau@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz s 9(2)(a)
On the day, at the venue (mobile number, and land-line number if possible)	Michelle Blau michelle.blau@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz s 9(2)(ba)(i), s 6(b)
Do you have any questions you need answered in relation to the Minister's attendance?	N/A
<i>Note to organisations: Photographs taken of the Minister at an event may not be used in any way that could be perceived as an endorsement of the organisation, its products or services.</i>	

Disclaimer:

Please note that information about the Minister's attendance at this event will be released proactively if the event relates to the Minister's portfolio/s (this does not include constituency events). For each event in scope, the summary would list: date, time (start and finish), brief description, location, who the meeting was with, and the portfolio. Information to be released will include the host of the event, and may include the details of other attendees that you provide to us. If the event is hosted by an organisation, the name of the organisation will be released. The names of senior staff members of the organisation in attendance may also be released. The location of the event will be released, unless it is a private residence. The proactive release will be consistent with the provisions in the Official Information Act, including privacy considerations. Under the Privacy Act 1993 individuals have the right to ask for a copy of any personal information we hold about them, and to ask for it to be corrected if they think it is wrong. Any concerns about the release of information relating to this event should be raised with the Minister's office immediately. You can read more about the proactive release policy at <https://www.dia.govt.nz/Proactive-Releases#MS>

Appendix 3: Back-pocket questions and answers

Contents

1. Key statistics
2. Transforming Recycling – Overview of the three proposals
 - a. Part One: Container return scheme
 - b. Part Two: Improving household kerbside recycling
 - c. Part Three: Separation of business food waste

Section One - Key statistics on current state

General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 17 million tonnes of waste go to landfill every year - 1.3 million tonnes of rubbish and recycling are collected annually in kerbside collections but only 440,000 tonnes are recycled
Container Return Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - more than 2.57 billion drinks are sold every year in New Zealand. - less than half of these containers are recycled, meaning that over a billion containers are littered, stockpiled, or sent to landfills every year
Kerbside Recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100,000 tonnes of recyclables are placed in household rubbish bins every year - 16% of materials placed in recycling bins can't be recycled, adding cost to our system and in some cases preventing recyclable materials from being recycled.
Business food waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 300,000 tonnes of food waste goes to landfill every year - 25% is business food waste, c75,000 tonnes

Section Two – Transforming Recycling – Overview of the proposals

Q: What is this consultation about?

Three proposals to transform recycling:

- Part One proposes a drinks container return scheme
- Part Two proposes that we standardize our kerbside recycling systems:
 - to collect a standard set of materials for recycling
 - to enable a food scraps collection for all houses in urban areas
 - to ensure better systems, reporting, and to set targets
- Part Three proposes that we separate out business food waste from general waste.

Q: Why are you proposing these changes

Our current recycling systems are not working. Key issues are:

- Drinks containers are frequently littered and often not recycled
- There is confusion about what can be recycled at kerbside, leading to poor recycling and contamination outcomes
- High volumes of food scraps are going to landfill, generating emissions and climate change

This is resulting in low recycling rates, wasted resources and harm to our environment from litter and greenhouse gas emissions. New Zealanders are very concerned about these issues and so am I. These proposals are designed to address the problems.

Q: What are the proposals intended to achieve?

Container Return Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - increase beverage container recycling rates by over 1 billion containers per year - reduce beverage container litter by 60% - reduce emissions by around 31,000 tonnes of CO2e per year (when the 85% target is reached)
Kerbside recycling and business food waste proposals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - recycling rates will improve - reduced waste to landfill - divert around 50,000 tonnes of food waste per year - reduce methane emissions from waste (by 40,000-60,000 tonnes of CO2e per year by 203)

Q: Why now, when inflation is hitting households and businesses are doing it tough?

Working through these proposals will take time and implementation will be staged, taking into account consultation feedback. Costs to households and business are key considerations that will inform the final policy proposals, but as it stands:

- ratepayers and communities are bearing the costs of litter and poor recycling outcomes
- resources are being wasted because we are paying to send them to landfills, rather than being reused or recycled
- all New Zealanders are bearing the costs of the harm to the environment, including climate change impacts which in part, stem from our wasteful behaviour.

Q: How much will these proposals cost householders?

Container Return Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a net cost of around \$1.50, including GST per week, assuming all costs are passed on to consumers and no reduction in consumption¹ - local government and/or recyclers are expected to benefit by approximately \$50 million per annum (approximately 53 cents per household per week)
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¹ Data from Australia has indicated that the full costs were not passed on for most products and overall, the introduction of a scheme resulted in a one-time 6.5% drop in non-alcoholic drink container sales in the first year, as some consumers reduced consumption.

Kerbside recycling and business food waste proposals	- between 10 cents (for households receiving a high level of service) and \$1.50 per person per week (for households that receive additional services such as a food scraps collections)
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Q: How will we pay for all these proposals?

A: The government has been progressively increasing the waste levy from \$10 per tonne in 2020 to \$60 per tonne in 2024. This funding, half of which goes to councils, will be used to pay for proposals which directly reduce waste from landfill.

For a container return scheme, the proposal provides for a not for profit and self-funding scheme that will shift costs from rate payers and kerbside services onto the producers, retailers and consumers of beverages. Details of financial flows and scheme costs are set out below in the CRS section (Section Two, Part One).

Q: When will the changes happen?

Some changes like standardising materials in kerbside recycling could be in place within the next year or two. Other changes, such as the infrastructure needs for food scraps collections will be phased through to 2030.

A container return scheme requires new legislation, so if we take a scheme forward, it would not commence until 2025.

Final proposals and timeframes will be decided after feedback from consultation is received and clearly, affordability will be a key consideration.

Q: Why are we consulting on these three proposals together?

To have an informed conversation with local government, industry and consumers about how to improve our recycling outcome, they need the full picture - and to understand how these proposals will work together.

For example, if implemented, a container return scheme would reduce the number of drink containers in the kerbside system. It would also see an estimated \$50 million in benefits to Councils and/or recyclers annually.

Food waste collections will incur a cost, but if we implement the changes together, the cost savings from a container return scheme will, along with the increased waste disposal levy, help Councils offset the costs of new and existing food waste collection services.

Q: Is the government doing too much?

Concerns around waste, plastics, recycling and packaging occupy three of the top ten concerns for kiwis alongside other long-standing issues (Kantar 2021)².

Not making these changes would mean that the other changes we are making to our waste systems, through the waste levy changes, the new waste strategy and plastic phase outs would not be as effective. We need to improve the whole system and these proposals are a key part of it.

² <https://www.kantarnewzealand.com/better-futures-reports-2021/>

Section Two, Part One – A Container Return Scheme

Overview

Q: Why do we need a container return scheme?

A scheme would recycle more than 2 billion containers annually, an increase of more than 1 billion containers recycled per year.

Recycling beverage containers reduces emissions and litter and reduces waste of resources.

There are 50 schemes either in place or proposed around the world³. Implementing a scheme will help bring our systems up to global standards.

Q: How will a container return scheme help?

It will incentivise consumers to return their drinks containers for recycling. As some may remember from the past, drinks sold in single-use containers will attract a small deposit (20 cents proposed). This will be refunded when the container is returned for recycling.

We estimate that having a container return scheme in place will increase our recycling rate for beverage containers to 85-90 per cent.

Costs and Impacts

Q: How much will a container return scheme cost to run?

- The scheme is not for profit and self-funding. It will shift costs from rate payers and kerbside services onto the producers, retailers and consumers of beverages.
- A scheme's financial flows include the circular and refundable 20 cent deposit, which would be applied to approximately 2.3 billion eligible containers sold into the New Zealand market annually. Approximately \$460 million of deposit refunds cycling through the system in year 1.
- Total scheme costs including fees add another \$66 million, totalling \$528 million. Because most of the costs are refundable deposits, if consumers recycle their containers, their net costs are likely to be negligible⁴

Q What will this mean for Councils?

Councils will be better off, because the scheme will reduce kerbside litter and landfill costs. They will also benefit from any drinks containers returned through the kerbside system. These savings

³ This includes all six Australian states, Germany, Netherlands, Finland, Norway and Denmark.

⁴ Queensland consumers faced net cost increases of 93 cents per household, per month – albeit, with a 10 cent deposit level.

and benefits are likely to see councils and/or recyclers better off by approximately \$50 million in year 1 of the scheme.

Overall, the proposals will also contribute to a better national culture toward recycling and resource recovery, which will also be positive for Councils who are often fighting an uphill battle when it comes to recycling system performance and education.

Q: *What will this mean for households?*

For those consumers that return their drinks containers for recycling, and assuming producers pass through 100% of the scheme costs (which we think is unlikely) the net scheme cost would be around \$1.50 including GST per week.

However when the price of what is largely sugary drinks and alcohol increases as a result of the scheme, consumers may simply choose to buy less of the product. In Queensland an overall 6.5% drop in non-alcoholic drink container sales was observed in the first year of the scheme.

The proposal is to have an efficient and accessible network of return locations, making it easy for families to return their drinks containers. Positive impacts are better wellbeing as a result of having less litter in the community, and reduced rates.

Q: *Won't this increase the cost of living for struggling families?*

Firstly, if a scheme proceeds, it would likely not be implemented until 2025 as it requires new legislation. In the interim, further consultation on legislative proposals to enable the scheme would provide opportunity to adjust the scheme settings if required.

Secondly, the proposed scope of containers is largely sugary drinks and alcohol. To ensure the scheme does not impact on essential household products, we are proposing to exempt fresh milk from the scheme.

Thirdly, families are able to manage costs by returning their beverage containers for recycling, and/or reducing their consumption of beverages (which on average has seen container sales growing 9% and 7% respectively in the last two years). In practice, fewer containers sold may largely stem from a reduction in sales of large multipacks.

Q: *What about time poor workers that may struggle to return their containers?*

Efficient and convenient drop off points will enable most families to return containers easily, when they do their grocery shopping. Including retail drop off points ensures that drop off locations are accessible (open late and on weekends) as well as convenient.

Q: *What will this mean for drinks producers and retailers?*

Depending on the degree to which producers pass on the scheme fees and the types of product they sell, producers may experience some decrease in container sales in year one of the scheme (refer average of 6.5% in Queensland).

However, because the overall volume of beverage containers sold into the New Zealand market has increased by 9% and 7% respectively over the last two financial years, we expect this drop in sales to be a one-off market adjustment.

There will be some initial set up costs to cover return infrastructure and labelling of containers, but these will be recoverable under the scheme.

Item	Cost
Costs of return infrastructure	Estimated capex of \$26.8 million mainly for retail 'reverse vending machines' (RVMs).
Costs of labelling changes	Estimated one-off cost of \$11.4 million (based on international examples).

Q: *What will this mean for retailers who are required to be a part of the return network?*

We are consulting on the degree to which retailers should be involved in a scheme. Most of the highly successful schemes abroad (that achieve 85% recovery or higher) have regulated take-back requirements for retailers who sell beverages, noting that some also have exemptions which reduces the number of retailers involved. For example, beverage product retailers over a certain floor size only, or a certain type of retailer, such as supermarkets.

Given supermarkets are the main channel for beverage container sales in New Zealand, we consider that they could have some role to pay in taking the containers back for recycling and providing convenient and accessible return points to consumers to recycle and receive their deposit refunds⁵.

All return point operators (whether retail or depot) receive a per container 'handling fee' for every container they take back to help cover the costs of establishing return point infrastructure, typically, this infrastructure involves reverse vending machines.

Q: *What will this mean for charities and NGOs*

For charities and NGO's, there will be a significant opportunity to generate revenue from operating scheme depots, or for those not participating in the network directly, fundraising drives as a part of the "informal network" eg, collection points at schools, sports clubs, etc

Q: *What does this mean for existing voluntary schemes (eg glass)*

The Glass Packaging Forum operates a voluntary scheme via a small industry levy that helps support new glass recycling initiatives, primarily through kerbside, which Councils and rate payers typically fund.

The reality is, the New Zealand glass furnace capacity has not changed and has recycled approximately 120,000T of recycled beverage and non-beverage glass annually for the last three years. With over 253,000T of beverage glass alone last year entering the market, glass is in oversupply to the recycling market.

Given the carbon intensity of glass production, landfilling or using glass beverage containers as roading base is suboptimal. A CRS with an eco-modulation fee can help fix this issue (see below).

⁵ 80% of New Zealanders live within 5 minute drive of a supermarket, 95% live within a 20 minute drive of a major outlet store.

Q. What is an eco-modulation fee?

Eco-modulation is a pricing mechanism within a CRS that can be used to ensure materials are recycled. A fee can be modulated to reflect the costs of recycling a given product, and the fee typically increases when a product is hard to recycle. Equally, products that are easy to recycle have lower scheme fees, encouraging producers to use recyclable materials. The eco-modulation fee incentivises producers to improve the environmental sustainability of their product design.

In the case of the NZ glass oversupply, this could mean that the scheme fees include the costs of recycling the glass, whether that be on-shore, or off-shore. The increased scheme fee (likely only a few cents per container) would send a price signal to the market that reflects the true life cycle costs of glass.

This in turn may see some producers move towards either refillable glass containers or move to different more recyclable packaging types all together. Either way, it reduces the size of the oversupply and ensures that glass is recycled. Eco-modulation fees may also encourage investment in our onshore furnace capacity if onshore production is cheaper than offshore recycling.

Q: Who will manage the scheme?

We are proposing an industry-led scheme to ensure it is run efficiently and effectively. The container return scheme could be led by retailers, beverage producers, recyclers or any such combination of industry representatives.

Scheme governance should be well-balanced among industry members from different sectors, particularly beverage producers and retailers.

An industry-led scheme does not exclude community, NGO nor iwi/Māori representation from scheme governance. Any proposal to become the managing agency would need to be considered and approved by government.

Drinks and materials covered

Q: What kinds of drinks are included in the scheme?

All drinks, including cordials and concentrates. Fresh white milk is excluded. There may be some items (like drinkable yoghurts) which will be difficult to define.

These will be dealt with as we move to regulation and management of a scheme and there will be further consultation as these definitions are developed.

Q: What kinds of drinks containers are included in the scheme?

Sealed single-use containers made of glass, plastic*, liquid-paper board (eg tetrapack) and metal. See the graphic below.

*(HDPE, PET and PP; and recyclable bio-based HDPE and PET)

Q: Why has glass been included in the scheme? Aren't there already schemes in place?

Glass makes up nearly 1 billion beverage container sales in New Zealand annually, of which 92% is alcohol products. It is the most common packaging format type. Given recycling is typically a low margin high volume industry, to leave glass out of the scheme would both, create an uneven playing

field for beverage producers, as well as undermine the cost effectiveness of the scheme. The scheme BCR drops from 1.61 with glass in to 1.1 with glass out.

Q: Why is fresh milk exempt?

It is proposed that fresh milk in all packaging types will be exempt from the scheme. This is consistent with overseas schemes, on the basis that milk is a family staple. In addition, because for the most part, fresh milk is consumed at home, the containers are already dealt with through kerbside recycling. We are proposing to implement a separate scheme for milk containers used in the hospitality sector.

The consultation document has more details about how this is defined and details will be consulted on before coming into effect.

Q: What about soy and other milk alternatives?

The exemption only applies to white dairy milk that requires refrigeration. This definition includes cream but does not include beverages that are shelf-stable (long-life) or partially dairy/milk-based, such as (but not limited to) drinkable fermented dairy drinks like kefir, flavoured milk, smoothies, drinkable yoghurt and plant-based milk alternatives (eg, oat, almond, coconut, soy, etc). These types of beverages have been included in the scheme to ensure that it is as simple as possible.

Q: Why are large containers (over 3 Litres) exempt from the scheme?

Examples from scheme operators in other jurisdictions indicate that the small volume of containers larger than 3L can be challenging to collect through a scheme, particularly where reverse vending machines (RVMs) are the main method for return. Given the small volume of containers of this size on the New Zealand market, it is proposed that to ensure simplicity, they not be included. Volumes can be monitored and the scheme adjusted if this changes.

Q: Why are refillable containers not included in the scheme

Further investigation is required to understand how existing or future infrastructure could support a shift toward reusable/refillable containers, and that is why we have asked some questions in the consultation questionnaire to get people's views. A key element of implementing a NZ CRS would include development of scheme infrastructure (the return network and consolidation facilities). At that time, we could consider how CRS infrastructure could support a future shift to reusable/refillable containers.

Q: What about plant-based or compostable bottles?

These are not included in the proposed scheme at the moment because for the most part, these cannot be recycled, and in fact, cause contamination issues in our waste stream. However, we envisage that the organisation that manages the scheme will be able to develop recommendations about these kinds of beverage containers, if it determines that they are problematic. Detail about this will be developed if we go ahead with a scheme.

Q: What about coffee cups?

Single-use cups and coffee cups are not proposed to be included in the CRS, because they do not meet the proposed definition of a 'beverage container' (ie, they are not sealed in an airtight and watertight state at the point-of-sale). In response to the feedback received through public consultation on proposals to phase out certain plastics, a parallel work programme is underway by the Ministry to coordinate sector experts and inform a plan for single-use cups and coffee cups, including possible options for phasing out these cups by 2025.

How the scheme will work (a consumer perspective)

Q: How much extra will I pay for my drinks?

It will depend on decisions made by the drink producers and retailers. If all of the costs are passed through to consumers, it will be approximately 23 cents (26 cents including GST), but experience from overseas suggests that full pass through of costs varies by product type.

Q: How much money will I get back when I return my empties?

You will receive back 20 cents.

Q: Why a 20-cent deposit?

Analysis from overseas scheme and modelling obtained by the Ministry of the Environment shows that a 20 per cent deposit will produce enough incentive to dramatically increase recycling rates to 85% or more and reducing litter rates for beverage containers by 60%, while also managing household costs.

Q: How will I get my money back? Will it be cash or some other form?

That is one of the things we are consulting on. Overseas schemes have a range of mechanisms for refunding the deposit, including cash, charge card, voucher or a donation to charity. We understand from Australia, that most prefer cash refunds.

Q: Will I have to travel far to return my empties?

Under the proposed scheme, most people will not have to travel far. It is proposed that empties can be returned at supermarkets and other retail stores that they visit already.

Q: Will I still be able to put my empties into my home kerbside bin?

Yes you will, but you will not receive a refund for these containers. The refund will then be able to be claimed by the relevant Council.

Q: What about lids - can I return them too?

Under the proposed scheme lids will be collected, but we are consulting on the details of how this could work

Section Two, Part Two- Improving Household Kerbside Recycling

Q: Why should recycling be standardised?

The different recycling rules across the country lead to confusion about what can be recycled.

Standardised kerbside recycling means there can be national education and messaging about what can and can't be recycled, reducing confusion. Businesses will also have more clarity on what materials can be recycled and can redesign their packaging to make it more recyclable.

Product stewardship for plastics packaging is also being developed. This is where Government works with manufacturers and retailers that use plastic packaging to ensure that this packaging can be correctly disposed of and ideally recycled at end of life. Knowing which packaging is and isn't accepted in kerbside right around the country, makes this process much simpler.

Q: How much will improving kerbside recycling cost households?

Standardised kerbside recycling services and household food scraps collections are likely to cost between 10 cents and \$1.50 per person per week. The lower figure is for households that already receive a high level of service and the higher figure for households that will see the greatest improvement and will receive additional services such as a food scraps collections.

Q: What will happen to materials that are no longer accepted in kerbside recycling?

Just because an item is not accepted for recycling at kerbside (due to its size or other characteristics), does not mean it cannot be recycled. Businesses, councils and community groups increasingly offer recycling drop-off locations for materials which aren't suitable to be recycled at kerbside. For example, soft plastics, some expanded polystyrene, e-waste and small items such as metal and plastic lids.

Q: Isn't this just imposing another burden on local government?

Local government and industry have been working to standardise kerbside recycling for a number of years already and some progress has been made. Many councils have chosen to align with the best practice recommendations, but some have moved further away. The greatest savings and efficiencies can be made where the whole country is aligned, which is why the Local Government Waste Manifesto specifically asked the government to standardise the materials collected at kerbside and set a clear direction of travel.

Q: Why do we need a performance standard for kerbside recycling?

Currently the amount of waste being diverted from landfill through kerbside recycling varies across New Zealand from as low as 16% diversion in some areas to as high as 46% in others. Internationally councils are achieving, on average, 65% diversion. Councils receive money through the waste levy to minimise waste to landfill and providing effective means for households to recycle is a key role for local government. A performance standard for kerbside recycling will help lift the bar and drive change across the country.

Q: why do we need to mandate waste data reporting from the private sector?

Currently councils have a statutory obligation to produce a waste management and minimisation plan every six years. In these plans they report on how much waste is recycled and how much waste is diverted from landfill and then often set themselves goals. Currently most councils have no idea how effective their kerbside collections are as they don't receive any information from private sector kerbside collections. This makes it difficult for councils to plan and prioritise spending. Equally this information will be valuable for the Ministry in evaluating the effectiveness of this program of work.

Q: Is aiming to recycle 50% of our waste achievable?

It is not only achievable, but also necessary to reduce our emissions and impact on our environment. Typically, a third of a household's rubbish is food scraps, while another third is recyclable materials. These proposals simplify our system and ensure that New Zealanders across the country can recycle the same materials including food scraps. Countries overseas such as Wales are achieving on average 65% diversion after focused efforts to standardise and improve kerbside performance.

Q: Why must councils offer a kerbside recycling service?

The data we have to date suggests that councils which rely on the private sector to offer kerbside recycling services have significantly lower diversion rates than where it is a council provided service.

Q: How much of the 13 million tonnes sent to landfill will be recycled if these proposals go ahead?

Around 1.3 million tonnes of rubbish and recycling are collected annually in kerbside collections, 440,000 tonnes in recycling collections. The kerbside proposals are expected to increase the amount being placed in recycling or food scraps collections by 25% to 33% (115,000 to 145,000 tonnes per year).

Section two, Part Three - Household and Business Food Waste

Q: Why should we divert food scraps from landfill?

Food scraps in landfill generate methane, a potent greenhouse gas. Keeping food scraps out of landfill is an easy step we can take to tackle climate change now. Collecting and processing food scraps also lets us close the food loop, returning nutrients to the soil so we can grow more food.

Q: How much will it cost businesses to separate food waste?

The cost to a business for separating out their food waste will depend on the size of the business, how much food waste they generate and whether they rely on commercial collections to recycle their food waste. I expect many smaller or more rural businesses may find a local community solution for their food waste.

At the moment, commercial food scraps collections are usually more expensive than rubbish collections. I expect as collections become commonplace and the waste levy increases that the costs will fall to become more on par with rubbish collections.

Q: How close will these proposals get to the Climate Change Commissions' recommended 40% reduction in emissions from waste?

A complete ban on disposal of food scraps to landfill could achieve **20% to 25%** of the recommended emissions reduction from waste 144 kt CO₂e. These proposals are expected to reduce annual biogenic methane emissions by 42-60 kt CO₂e by 2030, around **30 to 40%** of what would be achieved under a complete ban. As part of the emissions reduction plan development my officials are investigating other measures too such as diverting timber from landfill.

Q: What will happen to the collected food scraps?

Household food scraps will be collected by councils. The main choices for processing these food scraps are composting or anaerobic digestion. Compost is a product that returns nutrients to and improves the structure of the soil. Anaerobic digestion generates energy from the food scraps and also creates a fertiliser to return nutrients to the soil.

Businesses can choose what to do with their food scraps once separated. Some businesses may be able to manage their food scraps on site through on site composting or feeding scraps to animals⁶. Other businesses may use a commercial collection service and send the food scraps to be turned into stock food, compost or digestate.

Q: How are food scraps collected? Won't that be messy and smelly?

Food scraps can be collected cleanly and easily as demonstrated by the food scraps collections that have already been operating in Hamilton and Ohakune and more recently Tauranga. They are also commonplace around the world. Household food scraps are usually collected from kerbside in a 23 litre bin, the size of two large paint pails. This collection bin comes with a secure lid to prevent animals from scavenging. Households often choose to use a small bench top container to collect their daily scraps and then empty this into the outside bin when necessary.

Q: Does this mean I'll get a new bin for food scraps?

Yes, food scraps collections will mean households receive another smaller bin for storing food scraps and placing them out for collection.

Q: I compost at home - why do I need a new food scraps bin?

We commissioned research to understand the extent to which households compost food scraps. Only 55% of households have a compost and of those households many only choose to compost fruit and vegetables scraps. So even households that currently compost will benefit from a food scraps bin that can take cooked food, dairy, bones etc.

Q: I would prefer to see decentralised community solutions for food waste rather than anaerobic digestion plants being set up

The Ministry is technology agnostic. The requirement is for kerbside collection of food scraps to maximise participation and ensure that the elderly, those without transport and other groups can

⁶ MPI provides guidance on what food scraps may be feed to animals and how they should be processed.

easily participate. Once the food scraps are collected councils will have choices as to how the scraps are processed. In some regions community solutions may be set up. For example, both Raglan and Taumaranau have set up small scale composting facilities in their communities.