

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

**For the week starting 17 December 2018**

### **EPA Environment Weekly Meeting: 4.30 pm-5.00 pm Wednesday, 19 December 2018**

Attendees: Hon Eugenie Sage, Associate Minister for the Environment  
Dr Allan Freeth, Chief Executive, EPA  
Mark Patchett, General Manager, Strategic and Regulatory Services, EPA  
[REDACTED], Manager, Regulation, EPA  
Glenn Wigley, Director, Natural & Built System, MfE

	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Paper/Verbal Update</b>	<b>Mins</b>
1	Discussion of the Weekly Report	Allan Freeth	Verbal	5
2	Discussion – 2019 Focus and Priorities	Allan Freeth	Verbal	20
3	Compliance Activities/Issues	Allan Freeth	Verbal	5
4	Intern's Meeting	Allan Freeth	Verbal	-

## **Update from the EPA**

### **Exirel Insecticide Hearing**

The hearing for the externally generated modified reassessment to allow aerial application of Exirel insecticide, manufactured and imported by FMC New Zealand Ltd, to brassicas was held in Wellington on 12 December. Exirel is currently used to treat cabbage white moth, diamondback moth, soybean looper, European leaf miner, and to suppress grey cabbage aphid. Depending on the hearing proceedings and DMC consideration, a decision may be notified ahead of the statutory shut down period, commencing 20 December 2018.

### **Paraquat Reassessment – Submissions due to open in February 2019**

We have proactively gone out with a heads-up message to industry and interested parties regarding the projected timeframes for the paraquat reassessment. We plan to open the application for submissions in early February through March. We have considered some industry feedback on the overlapping timeframe with the synthetic pyrethroids call for information which closes on 1 March 2019. Advance warning will facilitate submitters planning if they are impacted by both of these activities.

### **Amendment to Regulations Under the Ozone Layer Protection Act**

At the time of writing, it is expected that the Ozone Layer Protection Amendment Regulations 2018 will be gazetted on 12 December 2018. The amendments are to give effect to the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol (to protect the ozone), to phase down 18 hydrofluorocarbons (HFC) with high global warming potential. This is anticipated to avoid up to 0.5°C of warming by 2100.

EPA is responsible for the permitting, reporting, and share responsibility for enforcement with Customs under the Ozone Layer Protection Act.

We will be working with industry and affected stakeholders on the new requirements, and supporting them to participate in this process.

The amendments will come into force on 18 February 2019.

### **Three Written Questions (WQs) Received on 12 December**

Your office has forwarded the following WQs due to your office by 17 December, which we are currently drafting responses for:

- What papers, if any, did the Minister take to Cabinet Committee between 19 November and 30 November inclusive, by title and date?
- What papers, if any, did the Minister take to Cabinet between 19 November and 30 November inclusive, by title and date?
- What reports, briefings, memos or aide memoires, if any, did the Minister receive between 17 November and 30 November inclusive, by title and date?

## Key Issues in the Media

### **Methyl Bromide Inaction Criticised**

According to a report on *Stuff* (10 December) Environment Minister, Hon David Parker, has told the forestry industry that the Government is concerned about lack of progress in finding ways to reduce emissions of the ozone-depleting pesticide methyl bromide. He noted that the deadline to have all such emissions recaptured by October 2020 looks likely to be missed. In a letter to the industry he reportedly said that “It appears that to-date most companies have not been willing to invest sufficiently in effective recapture technology or infrastructure.” He called for meeting of stakeholders early in the new year to discuss solutions. Minister Parker was adamant that “Any operator non-compliant after the deadline will be unable to operate after this date.”

### **Aviation’s Greenhouse Gas Emissions Under Scrutiny**

A group of researchers including economist Paul Callister, environmentalist Deidre Kent, and Professor Robert McLachlan of Massey University’s Institute of Fundamental Sciences, are examining the impact of New Zealand’s aviation emissions, according to a report on *Stuff* (7 December). Their proportion of New Zealand’s total emissions is increasing in absolute terms, as passenger numbers increase and airfreight grows, due partly to growth in online retailing. New Zealand’s international aviation emissions, unregulated by the Paris Agreement, reached 3.4 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent in 2016, up 152 per cent from 1990. The researchers say solutions range from passengers just deciding to fly less; businesses making more use of video and virtual conferencing; and removing incentives such as airports, FlyBuys, and subsidies for regional airlines.

### **Global Greenhouse Gas Emissions Soaring**

The *Manawatu Standard* (7 December) reported that emissions will likely reach a record high, after rising at the fastest rate for seven years, fuelled by increases in the US and China. “The chances of avoiding dangerous climate change are diminishing after a 2.7 per cent projected increase in carbon dioxide emissions to 37.1 billion tonnes, the report said. It quoted Corinne Le Quere, professor of Climate Change at the University of East Anglia, as saying “To limit global warming to the Paris Agreement goal of 1.5C, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions would need to decline by 50 per cent by 2030 and reach zero by about 2050.” She concluded by saying that unless much more is done, “we are on track to see 3C of global warming.”

## EPA Official Information Act Requests

The number of OIAs and Ministerials has continued to increase. We are working on ensuring that as many as possible are finalised before the holiday break.

Request	Correspondent	Due to Send
Copy of The EPA in 5 to 10 Years PowerPoint – Tuesday 28 August (Ref WQ 28200-2018)	██████████ National Party	14 Dec 18
Ecolibrium Biologicals. They are wanting to update three of their pesticide products to a water-dispersible granular form, and their consultant recommended that they track down the original part 5 applications	██████████ Ecolibrium Biologicals	21 Dec 18
Further questions to previous OIA response about Shell PFAS investigation	██████████ Greenpeace NZ	24 Dec 18
All documents received or generated by the EPA concerning gene drives, including but not limited to internal correspondence between staff as well as with the EPA Board and Nga Kaihautu, Te Herenga and Kaupapa Kura Taiao, since February 2018	██████████ Projects Director, Sustainability Council	15 Jan 19
Questions about calculations used to arrive at the decision for glyphosate, hexazinone and MEHR using the FRCAST tool	██████████ Member of public	22 Jan 19
Requesting copy of the Ports of Auckland Limited 2018 marine consent application	██████████ Izard Weston Lawyers	22 Jan 19
Please provide the "Confidential Material" in Appendix U of the 2007 "1080 Review"	██████████ Member of public	22 Jan 19
Copies of info about glyphosate in relation to FRCAST	██████████ Member of public	23 Jan 19
Current state of assessment of glyphosate based herbicides	██████████ Member of public	23 Jan 19
A copy of all correspondence between yourself and your Minister since 26 October 2017	██████████ National Party	23 Jan 19
How many epidemiological studies have been done in relation to drops of 1080 into water catchments and these diseases?	██████████ Member of public	23 Jan 19
Actions taken by WorkSafe that resulted in EPA being satisfied the compliance, enforcement were adequate from 2015 on. Copy of evaluation done by EPA that resulted	██████████ Member of public	5 Feb 19

