

## **Parliamentary Visit July 2022**

Below is the transcript (Hansard) of the coverage of CRS in the estimates Debate Environment and Oceans and Fisheries, where Questions were put to Parker from Scott Simpson and Simon Court.

This is a good example of how our combined efforts with other industry bodies, and visit parliament is paying off. The goal is to continue to build on this via, you, our members approaching our own MP's and further parliamentary visits to hit our message home

**Hon SCOTT SIMPSON (National—Coromandel):** *Thank you, Mr Chair. A couple of quick questions. The Minister hinted that or confirmed that there would be no fifty-fifty co-governance arrangements in his new resource management reform package, but that there would be iwi involvement in the planning committee. So I wondered whether he could just expand on the nature of that, please?*

*Second question is what progress has been made to the long promised standardisation of kerbside recycling nationwide, and why is it taking so long?*

*Thirdly, what's happened to his plans to set up a container deposit or return scheme? If he is intending to proceed with that in the 15 months or so that his Government still has in office, is he committed to the 20c per container price setting?*

**Simon Court:** *Mr Chair?*

**CHAIRPERSON (Greg O'Connor):** *I call the Hon David Parker—given there's a large number of questions there—and we'll have time to come back to you.*

**Hon DAVID PARKER (Minister for the Environment):** *I'll try and whip through them reasonably quickly. In respect of funding for the Ministry of Fisheries, there's no change to the funding for core services at the Ministry of Fisheries, including research. There is a significant impost on the fishing industry in the next few years coming from cameras on boats, although there is a taxpayer subsidy for it that is still a additional cost to the industry. So more environmental services, if you like, are being cost recovered from the industry in respect of that, though, I do accept the point made that the number of days that Tangaroa is sent to sea has decreased over the decades. I think some of that is explicable from the fact that at the start they were gathering completely new science. Now they're updating existing datasets, and they probably don't need as much time at sea to do that. There may also be some other technological advances in modelling that enable them to have less time at sea. But nonetheless, I accept that is an issue that we need to keep an eye on.*

*In respect of the make-up of the joint planning committees, I won't go into that in detail but I would refer the member to a speech that I gave to the local government conference where I laid that out.*

*In respect of kerbside recycling, the consultation on the standardisation of kerbside recycling has concluded. I'm not sure of the date off hand, but I can get back to the member informally at the end of this, after I find it out, but it's this year.*

*In respect of container deposits, no final decision has been made as to what the level would be. Although, I would observe that the rate of recovery of recycled containers is substantially lower at a 10c deposit compared with a 20c deposit.*

**SIMON COURT (ACT):** *Just coming back to recycling, Minister, currently glass and aluminium have very high recovery rates. It appears that it's the plastics that have little value and are therefore the problem to solve with recycling. We've heard from packaging industry representatives and brewers that the container deposit scheme could add \$6 to \$8 on to a box of beer—\$6 to \$8 in the middle of a cost of living crisis at 20c a can, \$6 to \$8 to those of us who like a beer. Yet the packaging industry have said they would be prepared to set up their own scheme at no cost to the taxpayer and they believe that they can get recycling rates up to something that the Ministry for the Environment believes that the Government could with its own scheme.*

*So, would the Minister give assurances that any container deposit scheme will, firstly, not impose a cost on business because the scheme as currently devised proposes to locate container deposit banks in supermarket car parks and force supermarkets to accommodate these things—busy supermarket car parks in urban environments, which are already under pressure, already struggling with supply chain issues, health and safety issues in car parks. So would the Minister give an assurance that a container deposit scheme won't add any extra cost on to that box of beer for those of us who like a beer and like to buy it in bulk, it won't add any cost to households, and certainly won't add any administrative costs to taxpayers who, unfortunately, under this Minister's Government appeared to be carrying the can for a whole lot of bad policy—Minister.*

**Hon DAVID PARKER (Minister for the Environment):** *Look, I won't try to compete in the recycling puns. I can absolutely assure the member that his beer's not going to go up by \$6 to \$8 a pack of beer. The Queensland Productivity Commission recently did a report on the container deposit scheme that's been introduced in Queensland. Virtually everywhere in Australia now has one, a lot of countries in Europe have them, and, indeed, New Zealand used to have them for beer and fizzy drinks and we think it would be progress if we went back to that. I would refer the member to that productivity commission study. I won't quote the figure because I think I might get it wrong but the cost per beverage container has turned out to be much lower than was even modelled and certainly was much, much, much lower than the apocryphal stories that were told by critics of the scheme over there before it was introduced.*

*In respect of the supermarket issue, I do find the criticism ironic, really, given that most of the waste streams that we're trying to deal with actually come out of supermarkets in the first place. So I don't have too much of a problem making it convenient for people to return their containers when they're going to the supermarket. When they've got them in their boot they can take them and put them into a reverse vending machine in large supermarkets. It won't happen for every supermarket but we know from overseas experience that the success of these schemes depends in part through the convenience of the return venues that are accessible to people that want to return their containers.*