

HON ROBIN CHAPPLE — PRIVATE MEMBER'S BILL

506. Hon SIMON O'BRIEN to the Minister for Environment:

I refer to the campaign being run by Hon Robin Chapple urging the sending of emails to members of the Legislative Council in support of his private member's bill, the Environmental Protection (Banning Plastic Bags and Other Things) Bill 2017 and the assertion in the email that "Shockingly, if our current rates of plastic production and disposal continue, it is estimated that the volume of plastic in the ocean will outweigh the volume of sea life by 2050."

- (1) What response is the minister providing to emails received?
- (2) Is the minister able to provide the house with any information about the correctness of the assertion mentioned?
- (3) In any case, what is the volume of sea life in the ocean, and if the minister is unable to provide this information, how is it that Hon Robin Chapple seems to know and the Minister for Environment does not?
- (4) What is the government's position on the private member's bill? Full stop!

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

Was that a full stop or was it a question mark?

Hon Simon O'Brien: I think it is a typo but the fourth part asks: what is the government's position on that private member's bill?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I hope I can give the right answer.

Hon Simon O'Brien: I am sure you will.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1) I seek leave to have the response incorporated into *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

The following material was incorporated —

Thank you for your email regarding plastic pollution in Western Australia.

The McGowan Labor Government supports efforts to reduce the use of plastics and is taking actions to achieve this.

The Department of Water and Environment Regulation is currently designing the container deposit scheme, a McGowan Labor Government election commitment and, following consultation with stakeholders and finalisation of the scheme design, will be responsible for its implementation. It is anticipated that the scheme will commence from 1 January 2019. You can subscribe to receive email alerts regarding the container deposit scheme as new information is published at www.der.wa.gov.au/cds.

The Government is concerned about the impacts of waste, including plastic, on the environment, and is investigating ways on how we might implement a State-wide ban of single-use plastic bags.

The Government is also working with other jurisdictions and businesses to achieve a voluntary phase out of microbeads. At this time, the voluntary phase out is well on track to achieve an effective phase out of microbeads by mid-2018. If the voluntary approach does not result in an effective ban, jurisdictions have indicated that they will regulate to give effect to a ban.

The McGowan Labor Government has no plans to legislate a State-wide ban on the release of balloons, however, it supports efforts to raise public awareness of the unintended consequences of releasing balloons during celebrations.

Thanks again for your email.

- (2) I am advised this assertion originated in a report by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation presented to the World Economic Forum in January 2016. The two-page justification for the assertion is published on the Ellen MacArthur Foundation's website, and makes specific reference to peer-reviewed science and reports from international business and environmental organisations that estimate global fish stocks, the movement of plastics into the ocean, and global GDP growth rates. I table the relevant information for the member's information.

[See paper 460.]

- (3) For the purposes of this assertion, global fish stocks were estimated at being between 812 and 899 million tonnes by 2050. This estimate was derived from a peer-reviewed scientific paper published in the *Proceedings of the Royal Society of London* in 2008.
- (4) On 21 June 2017, the member for the Mining and Pastoral Region gave notice of his intention to introduce the Environmental Protection Amendment (Banning Plastic Bags and Other Things) Bill 2017. A second reading of the bill is expected to occur on 7 September 2017. I will present the McGowan Labor government's position on the private member's bill after this time.