

House of Representatives

Supplementary Order Paper

Tuesday, 23 June 2015

Environmental Reporting Bill

Proposed amendments

Su'a William Sio, in Committee, to move the following amendments:

Clause 7

In *clause 7(2)(b)*, replace “standards.” (page 7, line 5) with “standards; and”, and also insert:

- (c) how the state of New Zealand’s economic and environmental activities impacts on the Pacific region’s climate and ecosystems, and its people.

Clause 10

In *clause 10(2)(b)*, replace “standards.” (page 8, line 19) with “standards; and”, and also insert:

- (c) how the state of New Zealand’s economic and environmental activities impacts on the Pacific region’s climate and ecosystems, and its people.

Explanatory note

This Supplementary Order Paper amends *clauses 7 and 10* of the Environmental Reporting Bill. We live in an interconnected and inter-related world. The actions and activities of New Zealand’s industry and economy not only have an impact on its own internal environmental surroundings, but also have a profound and deep influence on the climate and ecosystem of its neighbours in the Pacific Island region. While the effects of climate change may not be obvious for many in New Zealand, for the people of the Pacific Island countries the threat is very real.

Hon Tessie Eria Lambourne of the Government of Kiribati, an atoll experiencing severe climate change effects, said, “There are still some who believe that climate

change is a distant threat but for us it is a present threat. It's happening now and our people are being affected now.”

The geographic conditions of the Pacific Islands – small, low lying islands – make them highly vulnerable to effects of climate change such as increasing sea level rise and the various impacts it brings. In some countries, tides have already flooded homes and devastated livelihoods, while rising sea levels have contaminated precious fresh water supplies. More risks arise from the region's high exposure to natural hazards. About 41 tropical cyclones occur each year in the region, making it the most damaging peril in terms of economic loss, while earthquakes are close behind. Natural disasters cause the Pacific Island countries to lose 2% of their GDP annually. Eight of these countries are among the top 20 in the world with the highest loss of GDP from natural disasters. Vulnerability is worsened by poor development planning and the countries' limited ability to respond and manage risks. In a World Bank report “Turn Down the Heat” it highlighted the risk that, without global action, the world could potentially be 4°C warmer by the end of the century, which would be devastating in many regions, especially for Pacific Island countries who are on the front line of climate change and natural hazards.

New Zealand can do its part in addressing climate change and its impact on the Pacific by living up to our rhetoric that we have a special relationship with the Pacific, and by leading the way in reporting and measuring how our own economic and environmental activities impact on the climate and ecosystems in the Pacific region and its people. Reporting and measuring our own internal activities and how these may impact on the Pacific region is the first step in doing our part to genuinely and meaningfully work for the sake of our Pacific neighbours and our collective future in this region of ours. This Supplementary Order Paper amends *Part 2* of the Bill to achieve this.