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MEDIA RELEASE

TITLE: Assembly papers and proceedings and a bit about the Environment...

So what happens to papers presented in the Assembly? Do they continue to be secret or confidential?

The answer is *No*.

They become available to members of the public to read and see what the discussions/debate are all about.

This enables the public to decide for themselves.

There is also frustration about what the government is doing with various projects. Or in fact this government ever thinks outside the box.

Environment

There is sometimes great deal made about waste and the philosophy this government takes. It is important that the government has a clear direction and pathway for the environment. We have already indicated a need to measure our environment capacity. We don't want to follow other countries who have far exceeded nature's capacity.

So there is a plan and funding for some initiatives have.

There are those who have pet issues which in the context and analysis would be adding to the problems and not solving them.

We cannot help that but will determine priorities on analysed and statistical information available as well as look at the practical issues involved. This includes funding.

So picking up rusted cars etc. is just shifting the problem. A bailer is on order and when it arrives we'll then start picking the old rust buckets.

We will also be using a drone to identify where these are in the bush.

This has been planned for some time but funds from Australia was received just a few weeks ago

We see the pollution of our water and reefs from septic and biological waste as a top priority. It will cost approx. \$5m to install these septic in every occupied house hold on the island. It is important we do this to every household to ensure consistency, and the proper septic are used. This applies to hotels as well and other major accommodation developments.

The biological waste plant may be cheaper but will help process our biological waste.

Some time ago we were in discussion with a company in New Zealand who had processed all plastics into small pellets and used for roading with bitumen. Since then another company has used it for cement. So we're trying to get the machine that processes all plastics into pellets and use them in cement to cement roads hills parking etc.

It's probably fair to say that the coordination of environment initiatives is continuing. One other aspect we are looking at is to ask visitors to pay their share. So new taxes are being evaluated and based on the ongoing costs of waste management.

Some of it is already included in the departure tax. But that is not enough.

We are evaluating the best way to raise the revenue to pay for these ongoing costs of operations.

You get a few questions asked in the house which may be distracting but will not change government policy on this.

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