

The politics of alcohol: What can be learned from tobacco?



Introduction – Nick Wilson, University of Otago

The societal context (from a public health perspective)

- **Powerful industries – often multinational corporations**
- **Weak government controls – insufficient regulation of hazardous products**
- **Political processes – excessive influence by commercial interests - eg, long delays seen in NZ for:**
 - **tobacco control**
 - **removal of leaded petrol**
 - **end to asbestos imports**
 - **greenhouse gas controls**

Wilson N. The Politics of Alcohol: What can be learned from tobacco? Introduction [Oral presentation]. The Politics of Alcohol The Politics of Alcohol: Imagine NZ without Alcohol Damage – Conference. Wellington, Te Papa, 1 June 2011.

Tobacco control vs alcohol control

- 1) Somewhat different goals – “Smokefree NZ” vs minimising harm from alcohol
(but some “elimination” goals possible for alcohol, eg, end to alcohol-related traffic deaths)
- 2) Much joint relevance for: (i) tax/pricing; (ii) marketing controls; (iii) mass media campaigns.
- 3) Limited (but still some) overlap: Smokefree environments & local liquor bans / other local controls.