

Your submission to Proposed mandatory phase out of single-use plastic shopping bags

Reference no: 302

Submitter Type: Individual

Clause

1. Do you agree with the proposed mandatory phase out of the sale or distribution of single-use plastic shopping bags in New Zealand, including those made of degradable (eg, oxo-degradable, biodegradable and compostable) plastic? Why / why not?

Position

No

Notes

Plastic shopping bags came into use because they are highly effective, cheap and the alternatives (paper bags, cardboard boxes, cotton or synthetic polymer longer life bags) are not as convenient, healthy or useful for other purposes. My bags are generally used two or more times before safely discarding. You mention 5 trillion bags per year, at 8 billion people then someone is getting at least more than half of my share (1.7 bags per day). Biodegradation of polyethylene polymers has been recognised since the mid-1970s - they do not simply accumulate in the environment. Photodegradation significantly enhances complete biodegradation (ethylene is a common plant hormone - it does not accumulate in the atmosphere).

Clause

2. We have proposed a mandatory phase out of single-use plastic shopping bags. This could include under 50 microns or under 70 microns in thickness. If you agree with a mandatory phase out, which option do you prefer, and why?

Position

Other (please specify)

Notes

No need to phase them out at all.

Clause

3. Are you aware of types of single-use plastic shopping bags that should be exempt from a mandatory phase out?

Position

Yes

Notes

They should all remain available to fulfill the purpose they were designed to do.

Clause

4. Do you currently manufacture, sell, provide or import for sale or personal use these types of single-use plastic shopping bags:

Position

No

Notes

Clause

5. Should smaller retailers be exempted from a mandatory phase out of single-use plastic shopping bags? Why / why not?

Position

No

Notes

Just because the retailers are small, their bags are essentially the same.

Clause

6. If smaller retailers are exempted from a mandatory phase out of single-use plastic shopping bags and they are defined by their number of full-time equivalent employees, what should that number be?

Notes

n/a

Clause

7. The proposed mandatory phase-out period for single-use plastic shopping bags is at least six months from when regulations are Gazetted, subject to consultation. Do you agree with this timing?

Position

No

Notes

This is a silly proposed regulation.

Clause

8. Do you agree that the benefits expected from implementing a mandatory phase out of single-use plastic shopping bags exceed the costs expected from implementing the phase out? Why / why not? Please consider both monetary and non-monetary costs and benefits (those that can be measured by money as well as those that can't).

Position

No

Notes

The bulk of plastics in the oceans are from fishery losses and the plastic film waste to oceans largely arises from faked recycling and disposed of cheaply to oceans, recently reported to be primarily 10 major river systems. The amount of energy inherent in a single bag is minuscule compared to alternatives like paper bags or longer life polymer bags currently on sale. Dirt inside the bags, including microbiological growth on liquids spilled in bags, may easily be transferred to foods. The cost of providing bags at retailers is very small, but managing the supply will be the expense. They will be pleased to be able to blame someone else for having to make this saving and add to the profit line.

Clause

9. Do you think that reasonably practicable alternatives to single-use plastic shopping bags exist in New Zealand? Why / why not?

Position

No

Notes

I grew up with the alternatives. Introduction of supermarket bags was an amazing convenience and quickly became valued for the myriad of other uses.

Clause

10. How can people be encouraged to reuse multiple-use shopping bags enough times to offset the environmental impacts of producing them? (select one or more)

Position

Other (please specify)

Notes

You're welcome to try but not on my tax dollars. The current offerings are unlikely to last anywhere near long enough to offset just the plastic content of existing bags. They need washing. And each time forgotten to be taken is likely to mean a drive home to collect or buy more bags.

Clause

11. What would help you and your family adjust to life without single-use plastic shopping bags?

Notes

Reminding me how we coped before plastic bags became available. What will be more difficult will be to adjust to not having them available for so many other purposes. How come they are called single-use?

Clause

12. How can data on single-use plastic shopping bags and other single-use plastics entering the market and monitoring of reductions be improved?

Notes

I've no idea how you collect it at present. Does it matter?

Clause

13. Please provide any additional comments or suggestions about the proposed mandatory phase out of single-use plastic shopping bags.

Notes

This is a feel good proposal for people who are too ignorant to know it is simply signalling a virtue without any real value. They are welcome to continue signalling, but not at my expense or inconvenience.

You have elected to withhold your personal details from publication.