

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

**Reference no:** 5881

**Submitter Type:**

**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?

**Notes**

I would like to see the mandatory phase-out include all plastic bags. Whilst thicker bags last longer and are, therefore, likely to be used more times, they too will eventually break. As with the thinner plastic bags, these bags aren't biodegradable, meaning we're still left with the problem of what to do with them. If New Zealand is to commit to this phase-out, which it undoubtedly should, this commitment should be wholehearted. We shouldn't aim simply to emulate the countries who have done this before, but to go one better and become a world-leader when it comes to eliminating plastic waste.

**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?

**Notes**

All plastic should be phased out

**Clause**

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

**Position**

No

**Notes**

**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?

**Notes**

Smaller retailers shouldn't be exempt from the mandatory phase-out. This should be a nationwide commitment to put New Zealand at the forefront of tackling single-use plastic. There is also the question of what defines a smaller retailer. In the consultation document it's suggested that this be determined by the number of employees a business has, but giving any sort of exemption leaves the potential for lines to be blurred.

**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**

Whilst, of course, there is the need for retailers to adjust to this change, I believe six months is longer than necessary. Government statistics suggest that in this time, as a nation we will use a further 375 million single-use plastic bags. We believe the alternative suggestion of two months made in the consultation document is a better, and still achievable, target to aim for.

**Clause**

7a. If no, what do you think would be a more appropriate phase-out period?

**Position**

two months

**Notes**

**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**

Yes

**Notes**

Money is something that can be recovered. The health of the environment is not so easy to get back. The cost of fixing the environment will be more expensive in the long run than the cost of phasing out plastic bags now.

**Clause**

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

**Position**

Not sure

**Notes****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**

voluntary incentive schemes by individual retailers

**Notes****Clause**

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

**Notes**

I am really proud of new Zealand for taking this step.

**You have elected to withhold your personal details from publication.**