

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

Clever Green Ltd

**Reference no:** 1003

**Submitter Type:** Business / Industry

**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**

Yes

**Notes**

I think a government phase out is required to push companies to offer customers better options. To me it is important that bioplastics are included in this as they are not any better than petroleum based plastic at the end of life.

**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**

All single use shopping bags should be phased out as plastic is a cheap material so a thicker plastic bag is still cheaper for companies to use than paper.

**Clause**

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

**Position**

Not sure

**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**

I avoid single use plastics in my personal and work life.

**Clause**

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

**Position**

Yes

**Notes**

A blanket ban is necessary to make the shift away from single use plastics. This bag ban is the opportunity to make a stand and is as much a statement about plastic pollution as it is a solution.

**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**

This would only ever be an arbitrary number. I work for a business that has a large (positive) impact but only employs part time staff.

**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**

Yes

**Notes**

I think that is a reasonable amount of time to give companies the opportunity to look at and budget for alternatives.

**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**

Of course! The environmental gain of banning any single use plastic will be huge in New Zealand! The short term cost of adjusting to this change is negligible and once businesses start budgeting in the costs of alternatives, there will be no significant loss of profits. Once everyone is looking at alternatives, there will potentially be more opportunities for those alternatives to be made in NZ by NZ businesses, which in turn would provide more local jobs and reduce carbon emissions associated with the products.

**Clause**

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

**Position**

Yes

**Notes**

Yes of course they do. Although people complain that paper uses a lot of resources, the end of life is still far better than plastic (especially if it ends up in the environment). There are endless opportunities to purchase or make your own reusable shopping bag, and even community groups that will do it for you from salvaged fabric (Boomerang Bags etc).

**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**

I think the only real solution you can offer people is a shopping bag library at stores, so that there is an option if they don't bring their own, or if they don't want to buy their own.

**Clause**

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

**Notes**

I personally don't use single use plastic shopping bags and avoid other single use items where possible. I think the best way to help people adjust is to provide easy solutions - ie advertise where to buy paper bin liners, offer suggestions on local community groups that provide reusable shopping bags, provide incentives for reusable shopping bag libraries at stores (like Boomerang Bags).

**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**

Well, at this stage it is almost impossible to find reliable statistics on New Zealand's consumption of any single use plastic products. The plastic and waste industries seem to keep it all from the public quite well. I think that data collected by private companies regarding NZ waste should be made public. I think that the technology available to handle large databases should allow a lot more information to be provided regarding plastic consumption.

**Clause**

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

**Notes**

I think it is a great initiative and look forward to seeing it rolled out.