

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

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Reference no: 1160

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

Yes

Notes

Plastic bags shopping bags (including the produce bags e.g. what we put fruits and vegetables in) are not a necessity, they are just convenient in the short term. However, the long term effects of both the production and disposal of plastic bags are negative on the health of animals, humans, the ocean and the planet in general. The issue with compostable plastic is that we yet do not have the composting facilities to properly dispose of these plastics. Even if the commercial composting is made available, these bags still take resources to make and will not have many uses, furthermore it is likely that people will use these bags to line their bins, therefore these bag will find themselves in landfill where they cannot break down aerobically, generating methane and contributing to climate change

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 plastic shopping bags should be banned, regardless of thickness. Allowing the use of thicker plastic bags is counter-productive, as these thicker bags take more oil to make and longer to break down, causing the presence of more plastic in our environment, when the goal is to have less.

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?

Position

No

Notes

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

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

Plastic is choking our planet, if we take action on it now we can benefit. The production and disposal of plastic bags costs both money and the environment. It also acts as a vehicle for further action on plastic such as food packaging

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

Clause

9a. If no, what do you think is missing currently that would need to be available?

Notes

- Used boxes (not new boxes) should be available in shops so that if someone forgets their bag, they can use a box - Boomerang bags are also a good option The place we buy our spices from, offer bulk spices however we end up having to put them in a small plastic bag. While paper bags are likely to substitute these plastic bags a more sustainable option would be to encourage supermarkets and other grocers to have a TAREing system in which customers can weigh containers and then put their goods in (so as to not pay for the weight of the jar). This is important as certain items cannot be put in a paper bag e.g. meat, fish, items in the deli section and if a TAREing system is not available, plastic would continue to be used

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

- A national information campaign and voluntary incentive schemes should both run - Systems should be in place so that individuals can easily repair their bags rather than replace them. - Bags made of natural materials should be encouraged

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

- Mandatory for businesses to record the type and weight of plastic they are using

Clause

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

Notes

This should be a start of something greater. Further action that can be taken includes banning the pre-bagging of fruits and vegetables, a bottle return scheme (so that bottles get reduced, rather than disposed or recycled), incentives for supermarkets to offer loose bulk items and the ban of plastic and polystyrene takeaway containers and cutlery (including straws)