

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

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Reference no: 1174

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 are one of the biggest contributors to waste plastic in the environment. There are many alternatives, such as paper bags, cloth bags, baskets, backpacks - we managed to do our shopping for thousands of years before plastic bags came along!

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 plastic bags AND PACKAGING 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?

Position

No

Notes

Consumers need to be re-educated to bring their own bags. Retailers can have paper or cloth bags available to give or sell to those who don't bring their own bags. There's no reason to have single-use plastic bags.

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

They should not be exempt.

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

Not sure

Notes

What is the purpose of the phase-out period? If it is to "use up" supplies of plastic bags, doesn't this just mean they will get thrown out anyway? Could the un-used plastic bags be more easily recycled if they are not used at all? If the purpose of the phase-out period is to educate consumers, that is already happening. We have a year to do it, that seems enough to me. The sooner we stop the plastic going into the environment, the better for everyone.

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

What is the cost of a ruined environment? Any costs (monetary & non-monetary) of stopping plastic from going into the environment are tiny in comparison with the damage currently being done by single-use plastic.

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

The use of single-use plastic bags has happened in the last 40 years; in my childhood, supermarkets offered brown paper bags to those customers who hadn't brought their own bags or baskets. We had string bags that could easily be carried in a pocket when empty. My mother used a shopping basket. Even today, some supermarkets offer recycled cardboard boxes to customers, as well as a variety of practical reuseable bags. Shopping trolleys are also very practical, especially for elderly people. In fact all of these alternatives are easier to carry than plastic bags, which have handles that break and can't hold very much. There are so many alternatives!

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

education & awareness campaigns via general media; information to school children; education of retailers. I don't know what use a mobile phone app would be. The message is pretty simple - bring your own bag / basket / trolley. Most people understand the problem of plastic in the environment and will be happy to make a small effort for a big environmental win.

Clause

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

Notes

We don't use single-use plastic shopping bags. No help needed!

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

It's pretty easy to find the data, if you want to look for it. I don't think the data needs to be improved, but a few billboards near supermarkets, reminding people of the amount of plastic being tipped into the ocean every minute and the numbers of birds and marine life that are being killed by it, would be a good thing.

Clause

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

Notes

It's great that this is happening, finally! Now let's introduce regulations to reduce excessive plastic packaging & to promote a plastic-free world!