

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

Nona Morris, **Nona Morris**

Reference no: 344

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

1. New Zealand needs to be a leader in sustainable practices and it is time New Zealand caught up with European countries that have already phased out single-use plastic bags. 2. If we don't do this immediately and start working to remove plastic from our ocean systems, three things will happen: our marine ecosystems will be irreversibly damaged, New Zealand's fishing industry will likewise be irreversibly damaged, and three, we are putting our human population at risk as they increasingly ingest plastic fragments that have entered the food chain.

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

In the consumer sector there should be a complete ban on plastic bags, and plastic packaging, especially for fruit, vegetables, eggs, and meats

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

There should be no types of single-use plastic shopping bags that are exempt.

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

We have already determined that single-use plastic bags are detrimental to our environment, our fishing industry, and our health. There are already plenty of adequate alternatives, so no one should be exempt from the ban.

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

Yes

Notes

Yes, that is plenty of time for businesses to create 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

Yes, the long term benefits of the phase-out will exceed the inconvenience and cost. We will be safeguarding our oceans, marine-based industries, and the health of our citizens for future generations to come. These are long term benefit that clearly outweigh any inconvenience caused.

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

At this point, we are making a good start with offering reusable bags for sale, however, many of these reusable bags are made out synthetic materials which defeat the purpose of the ban.

Clause

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

Notes

We need to look to the solutions in other countries for shopping bags and plastic packaging made of: plant fibers, algae, lichen, recycled paper, and other plant-based derivatives.

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

School based education programmes, national campaigns, and free natural-fiber bags given away at certain times of the year with purchases of family necessities such as school uniforms, school stationary and supplies, prescription pharmaceuticals, etc.

Clause

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

Notes

Subsidizing the cost of reusable mesh fruit and vegetable bags (which cost too much at grocery stores right now), and forcing retailers to use compostable bags instead of plastic.

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

Create monitoring stations in major grocery stores - offer shoppers the opportunity to have all the plastic packaging removed from their groceries in return for compostable or reusable packaging. The plastic packaging can then be tabulated to track long term use of single-use plastics in the market.

Clause

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

Notes

1. Tariffs on importers who bring in certain percentages of single-use plastic packaging. 2. Set up research investigate sustainable packaging practices around the globe. 3. Bring this problem middle schoolers and high schoolers - there are many creative solutions from young minds. Feel free to contact me. As an educator in multiple fields of study I am interested in this issue, and willing to work on a task force to determine best solutions.