

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

**Reference no:** 554

**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**

They are unnecessary and NZ should be taking the lead in moving away from fossil fuels. Convenience for some should not outweigh the right to a clean, green environment for the majority who support this ban. This is the minimum first step toward a greener NZ and will help protect our country's brand - something that has plummeted under National.

**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**

I support a ban of ALL single use plastic shopping bags, despite the thickness. We must move to paper or fabric reusable bags. If the government allows thicker plastic bags, these will be treated in the same way as thinner plastic bags and harm the environment more, as has been seen with Coles in Australia. We need to take the lead toward changing attitudes and behaviours, and the only way to do that is to ban them outright. Nobody needs plastic and we should be leading the move away from non-renewable fossil fuels - it takes hundreds of years for plastic to break down, all for one small moment of convenience.

**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**

None should be exempt unless they are biodegradable and can be composted at home (e.g. paper bags).

**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 don't need them. Smaller retailers might complain that it increases their costs, but this is just a cop out. All retailers should present a united front to promote behavioural change of consumers.

**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**

1 FTE.

**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**

Plenty of time for the govt to educate people about the changes and for consumers and retailers to get used to it.

**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**

By far. This is a long-term gain for the country, financial and non-financial. The environment will be protected, less money and time spent on waste recovery of plastic bags means more time and money to spend on bigger problems, cleaning up NZ will lead to saving our clean green NZ brand, which will otherwise suffer and possibly cause us to lose tourist revenue, taking the lead will position NZ as a first-mover to a greener future and is one small step to the transition away from fossil fuels, it will save us money and time in conservation, particularly in marine life. There are too many reasons to include here - just ask your Analysts and look to international examples.

**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**

Recycled/repurposed reusable bags. Boomerang bags is a great example where convenience is not forfeited. The cost is minimal - maybe \$2-\$3 but the bag lasts you for years. I have one I bought in Lombok, Indonesia that folds up into my handbag - I take it everywhere and it cost me \$2. Still looks brand new after more than a year of daily use.

**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**

national information campaign and mobile phone app for shoppers

**Notes**

Both of the above are good options. Boomerang bags is a good alternative too - get communities together to make them from fabric that would otherwise go to landfill (e.g. discards from op shops). They can then be deposited in bulk at retail stores, borrowed and returned the next time the person goes to the shop. It would be easy for people to just return them to the next shop they go to, a great free alternative for people who can't afford reusables. Education is necessary - about why the plastic bag ban is important, why you should reuse your reusables and how many times you should reuse them. There is a huge move towards this already, most people who keep using plastic bags simply a) don't know the harms or b) find it too convenient to stop. Remove the convenience and you will change people's behaviours. I think there is also a group of people who appreciate the communal benefits but do not see any benefit to them - for these people you should target information campaigns to illustrate how the ban directly impacts them in a positive way (no more pollution in their rivers, for their pets etc). Lots of people use plastic bags as bin liners or for other purposes - you need to show them free alternatives. For example, using newspaper as a bin liner. There is lots of information about this online.

**Clause**

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

**Notes**

Boomerang bags would be a great way to help people adjust. As above, tips focusing on alternatives to all uses for plastic bags would help a lot of people. My family would be persuaded if you could make it more personalised - they understand the environmental impacts, but that seems too disconnected from them. Do consultation with people in communities (who won't be replying to these submissions) to find out why they don't want to get rid of plastic bags - then find ways to convince them it is a good idea and that there are ways around all the problems they might see (e.g. newspaper as an alternative bin liner). You might also need to think about what people will do about dog poop - maybe paper bags or pooper scoopers in parks?

**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**

Import data. Ban it on our customs sheets like overseas fish, meat etc. The internet is a gold mine of data and information. You could monitor reductions by measuring the proportion of plastic bags that are cleaned up - e.g. in beach cleans. Somewhere in Australia recently put nets over their water pipes, which collect all the trash that goes down them - I think that's a great idea too. Ask hikers, have mobile apps etc. People are on their phones all the time and I'm sure environmentalists who are already picking up plastic bags all around the country would be more than happy to report how many they are picking up per day, whether this has reduced

**Clause**

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

**Notes**

Be bold! NZ should be a first-mover. If we do a half-fassed job it will just cost us more in the long run, its important we get it right the first time round. Next stop - fast fashion!

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