

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

Go Well Consulting Ltd

Reference no: 556

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 agree with the phase-out approach. I think this should be matched with a nationwide campaign to engage, educate, inspire and help Kiwis through these changing times, and to create a much bigger impact on plastic pollution. I agree with the ban on "oxo-degradable" "degradable" and "biodegradable" plastics, but I believe certified compostable packaging is a huge part of New Zealand's future, especially for takeaway food packaging. I believe every town and city in New Zealand should have an urban network of commercial composting sites that will process these compostable materials. I believe there is a place for certified compostable plastic bags, but that they should include a levy or cost that covers the externalities of processing them and restricts any excessive use. I also believe NZ needs a really clear and enforced regulation around the terminology regarding compostable plastics.

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

less than 70 microns in thickness

Notes

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

This would create confusion amongst the public and leave the door open for arguments that "plastic bags aren't that bad". For this to really work, and for New Zealanders to solve plastic pollution, we need all plastic bags gone, and we need everyone on board.

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 pollution is arguably the biggest issue of our time and the costs to our environment, health, and economy aren't truly known, now or in the future. But, if nothing is done (and done quickly) the incremental impacts on our soil health, fishing industry, tourism industry, native wildlife, and human health will be devastating. In comparison, the relatively small amount of financial cost involved in phasing out plastic bags is a fantastic investment.

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

Absolutely!

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

As stated above. A nationwide campaign to help Kiwis remember to take a bag shopping, and tips and tricks on how to live without plastic bags.

Clause

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

Notes

A nationwide behavioural change campaign that shares tips and tricks on how to remember to take my bags shopping, how to live without plastic bags, explain to me what the difference is between all the degradables, biodegradables and so on, and that helps normalise a life without single-use plastics.

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

More accurate measures of how many are being used and how many are being collected.

Clause

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

Notes

Well done!