

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

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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

Yes, a mandatory ban on the sale and distribution of all single use plastic bags, including degradable plastic, is an essential first step towards reducing plastic waste and protecting the marine environment in particular

### 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

All types of plastic bags, including bags of 70 microns, threaten the life of marine organisms. 'Boutique' bags are not needed - they are cosmetic throw away items - and there are alternatives.

### 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

Exemptions should not be allowed, because there are many alternatives to single use shopping bags. Exemptions could make enforcement more difficult

### 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

No, smaller retailers must not be exempted. The ban should apply whatever the size or type of retail outlet. Small outlets can start selling multi-use bags, if they wish, and it can be a new sources of income for them (an economic benefit).

### 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

The ban must apply to all small retailers, however few employees they have. There is no valid reason for exempting small retailers. And they can actually gain some income by selling reusable shopping bags

### 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

No

**Notes**

The mandatory ban should come into effect as soon as possible. 6 months is too long, an unnecessary delay. Many supermarkets already offer reusable shopping bags, and more consumers are already using them. Its feasible to implement the ban quickly.

**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**

The benefits greatly outweigh the costs. I have used the same reusable durable bags for years - durable bags are very cost effective. We have only one planet, which is beyond any monetary value, yet we are rapidly filling it with waste. Plastic waste poses a daily threat to many marine species, and that is a huge cost in non-monetary terms

**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**

Yes, definitely. I have reusable durable shopping bags which I have used regularly for about 10 years. Durable bags are very cost-effective. Robust shopping boxes (rectangular boxes with handles) are very useful for supermarket shopping. They fit inside, or across the top of, a shopping trolley. When I lived in Belgium for a few years, the local supermarket (Delhaize, equivalent to New World) offered shopping boxes with handles to customers at a small price. We bought 3 boxes, which we have used for at least 10 years for weekly supermarket shopping. They are extremely durable and practical.

**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**

voluntary incentive schemes by individual retailers

**Notes**

We need incentive schemes by retailers, as well as targeted PRACTICAL guidance for consumers, such as a checklist or short questionnaire (with pictures) to help consumers learn what type of reusable bag they need for different situations. More thought needs to be put into the precise type of reusable bag needed for different situations. For example, people who go to buy a sandwich or fast food for a work lunch break may not wish to carry around a bulky reusable bag (eg. hessian or flax bag) - but may be persuaded to carry a very lightweight reusable bag that folds up into a small space in a pocket or handbag. On the other hand, consumers who go to a supermarket by car are able to carry bulkier bags or boxes because there is normally sufficient space for those in a car. Robust reusable boxes (like the ones provided by Delhaize supermarket in Belgium) are very practical and useful for large weekly supermarket shopping, and can be reused for many years.

**Clause**

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

**Notes**

See notes above

**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**

To make the ban easier to enforce, the manufacture and imports of single use shopping bags should also be banned.

**Clause**

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

**Notes**

A mandatory ban on all single use shopping bags is an essential, useful first step towards reducing plastic waste. But its also necessary to implement many other measures to reduce/eliminate other types of plastic waste, urgently