

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

The Rubbish Whisperer

Reference no: 6143

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

Because all plastic bags whether made from plant material or oil have a detrimental effect on the environment. There aren't adequate composting facilities for 'compostable' bags. Removing all single-use plastics bags is an excellent starting point in NZ reducing it's reliance on single-use products and encourages moves towards a sustainable, reusable, circular economy.

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

Bags less than 70 microns are still used as single-use by most people. Only bags that are obviously reusable should be allowed.

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

NZ should only have reusable bags available.

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

We manufacture reusable produce bags and provide 13 NZ jobs in doing so.

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, the phase out does not have as much weight if some people are exempt. Small retailers will save money by not providing single-use bags and can sell reusable bags and encourage customers to bring their own.

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

Six months is plenty of time.

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

We manufacture reusable produce bags here in NZ employing 13 people, so there are jobs available in an economy focussed on reusable products. Not providing free plastic bags will save retailers money. Reducing landfill and plastic pollution will save money on clean up costs. NZ's image as a clean, green country, which is vital to tourists, will suffer if we continue to live a disposable lifestyle. We love our beaches in NZ and we don't want them polluted with plastic, especially as there is research showing that plastic polluted beaches have a negative effect on mental health.

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, reusable bags are affordable when they are used properly for years. There are reusable bags available for every budget, including bags given away for free by groups such as Boomerang Bags and other sewing groups. Also cardboard boxes can be made freely available at supermarkets for packing groceries, and this will save the retailer money in getting rid of their commercial waste.

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

Also voluntary incentive schemes by retailers. Perhaps some free bags at first then having to pay for more bags? Although not so many free bags everyone ends up with cupboards full of them. Everyone used to use reusable bags and they do so in other countries so I really don't think that it's very hard.

Clause

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

Notes

We already do. It's very easy to keep your reusable bags in the car ready for going shopping.

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

Not focussing on the weight of the number of plastic bags being thrown away. The tonnage of disposed plastic bags is lower than other plastic waste, but that is the point - they are so light they end up escaping from landfill and polluting the marine environment. Keeping the information on how well we've done in the news. People need to know that they are making a difference.