

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

**Reference no:** 6323

**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**

Plastic, and particularly single-use plastic is doing a huge amount of harm to our environment. We urgently need to make a change, and this is a great start.

**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**

Encouraging people to move to thicker plastic bags won't solve the problem.

**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**

A blanket ban is clearer and easier to enforce. It also ensures a level playing field for all retailers.

**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**

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**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**

Education and enabling activities will be required, but we need to move on this ASAP. Six months seems reasonable.

**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**

Although there will be cost associated with this change, there will also be opportunities for new businesses to take advantage of the opportunities created. Currently we don't account for the cost to the environment, and if we were to take that into account there would no doubt be net benefit. If managed correctly and communities are empowered to drive and take advantage of this change there will be huge benefit.

**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**

I am part of the group Plastic Bag Free Tairāwhiti, which has been working for over two years to raise awareness and encourage our community to move away from single-use plastic bags. Once people get in the habit of taking reusable bags with them to the shops this is a very easy change to make. We need to support lower-income groups to ensure that they can make this change, but that should be manageable.

**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**

I think that once people understand the equation they will make sure that they reuse the bags often enough. I think that thick plastic bags are less likely to be reused enough times to justify their creation and disposal. When people invest in a reusable bag that is functional and attractive they tend to reuse it many times.

**Clause**

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

**Notes**

We made the adjustment over two years ago. For us the key was to have several reusable bags so that there is always one or two in the car. Our community group has established sewing bees which create reusable bags, which are given away in our community. I think reaching into homes that can't afford fancy reusable bags is important. I think too that educating our tamariki is a great way to reach into families.

**Clause**

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

**Notes**

I think that this move is to be applauded, and that the Government should seek to utilize the Waste Minimisation Act to its full effect, including implementing product stewardship. In order for consumers to truly understand the real cost of products, we need to start to see what these are, including the environmental cost.

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