

8 out of 10 of us are concerned about plastic ending up in landfill and polluting the oceans ...

THAT'S WHY 2+ MILLION PEOPLE WORLDWIDE

ARE CHOOSING TO BE PART OF

PLASTIC FREE JULY
FOUNDATION



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Re: Proposed mandatory phase out of single-use plastic shopping bags in NZ

To whom it may concern

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed mandatory phase out of single-use plastic shopping bags in New Zealand. I congratulate the New Zealand government for taking this step to address the growing plastic waste and pollution problem.

In 2018 an estimated 250,000 New Zealander people and over 100 businesses and schools participated in the Plastic Free July challenge and took steps to reduce single-use plastic in their homes, workplaces, schools and communities. This demonstrates not only a growing awareness of the plastic waste issue amongst the community but a willingness to be part of the solution and I believe the plastic bag ban will have strong public support.

I believe there is an opportunity for the New Zealand government to be a world leader by introducing a robust and effective plastic bag ban which avoids a replacement of lightweight bags by thicker plastic bags which still create waste and can end up in the litter stream as seen here in the northern Territory. I urge the government to consider a ban of all plastic bags less than 70 microns and also consider a minimum mandatory fee.

In Australia we are seeing the rise in production and use of a 36-40 micron bag which is designed to be used in jurisdictions where lightweight bags are banned and are being marketed as 'reusable'. The low price of these bags means some retailers are offering for free and a thicker 70 micron bag is not only less likely to end up as litter and more likely to be reused but has a price point which means is unlikely to be given away for free.

The City of San Francisco's checkout bag ordinance is an excellent model to follow as compliant bags have also considered the full life cycle impacts of alternative bags.

I would also support biodegradable, degradable and compostable bags to be included in the ban as these have been shown to not break down in the environment and thus do not address the litter issue.

Thank you for considering my submission.

Yours sincerely

Executive Director, Plastic Free July Foundation

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AUSTRALIA