

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

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## Reference no: 679

**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

I am in favour of a mandatory phase-out of the wanton free distribution of plastic shopping bags. I think a compulsory charge of at least 50c per bag would act as a deterrent.

### 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

Other (please specify)

### Notes

The solution is not to ban thin plastic bags and leave thicker ones in place. This surely is a \*first step\* towards a plastic-free future. I'm guessing that thicker plastic bags require more oil to produce and more time in the landfill to break down - thus being even less environmentally friendly. Don't ban them completely but make them expensive, whilst offering incentives for using compostable brown paper bags.

### Clause

3. Are you aware of types of single-use plastic shopping bags that should be exempt from a mandatory phase out?

### Position

Not sure

### Notes

Dog poo bags? Otherwise what do you propose dog owners should do?

### 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

Not sure

### Notes

Maybe yes, but they must charge for it. No business should be allowed to give them away for free any more.

### 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

Under 5 / local family-owned dairy

### 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 phase-out should come in two stages, at first a mandatory charge for plastic bags, followed by a complete ban 18-24 months later. That gives the general public time to get used to the idea.

**Clause**

7a. If no, what do you think would be a more appropriate phase-out period?

**Position**

Other (please specify)

**Notes**

18-24 months.

**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**

Not sure

**Notes**

The environmental benefits will only kick in proper if all the excess packaging of produce is also being addressed. Customers WILL make environmentally friendly choices if producers/distributors are forced to make plastic choices more expensive. Government can influence this by lowering the taxes on essential foods (such as loose produce) and increasing the taxes on processed or packaged foods.

**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**

Customers are just not yet used to changing their ways. More and more shops are already giving away cotton fabric bags. It's just a matter of customers having a few of them in the boot of their cars.

**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**

If these bags are produced from recycled natural fibres there is no great environmental impact. This submission seems to see a thicker multiple use plastic bag as the only alternative for a thin "single-use" plastic bag (though most people use the "single use" plastic bags more than once). The phase-out needs to include ALL packaging that is made out of fossil fuels and will eventually contribute to the landfill waste.

**Clause**

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

**Notes**

We are already using our own bags, but a simple charge for a plastic shopping bag works wonders.

**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**

Use data of scanned goods at the till. Everything that comes in a plastic packaging should be included, as that is arguably even more "single use" than the plastic shopping bag which is often used a few more times for dog poo removal or as a bin liner.

**Clause**

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

**Notes**

Don't stop there. Make New Zealand plastic-free.