

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

Annelise Craddock

Reference no: 786

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

We need to change the mindset of people from "Single-use". Use it once and then throw it away is just a very poor societal trait where our convenience is put above more important concerns

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

Making a bag thicker may last a few more trips to the shops, but thickness doesn't stop the "single-use" mentality. There is minimal value placed on the bag and they will still be readily discarded into the environment.

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

No, even compostable bags have issues because they cannot be mixed with other soft plastics that our food is often wrapped in. Unless you are very careful and informed about this issue, then we risk contaminating a lot of Soft plastic recycling. Secondly, Compostable needs to have a "standard" and commercial composting is not always 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

Clause

5. Should smaller retailers be exempted from a mandatory phase out of single-use plastic shopping bags? Why / why not?

Position

No

Notes

I recently went to a cafe close to a beach in Hawaii that has been trading for 50 years and embraced the ban on plastic bags. Was anyone worried about not having a plastic bag not to take their food to the beach? of course not. A paperbag was available at a small cost for those that were unprepared.

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

There are no options on this question. There shouldn't be any exclusion. Every business has the responsibility not to provide products that cause pollution, Plastics are just that when they are found in our environment.

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?

Notes

6 months should be adequate time for public and companies to get used to the idea and change habits. this should be well publicised. Perhaps large supermarkets could use a small % of their huge profits to gift strong, re-useable bags around the time of the switch over to avoid the customer tantrums as seen in Australia?

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).

Notes

The fact that there are now numerous charities and small organisations involved with the clean up and maintenance of our beaches and coastlines suggests that Plastic pollution is big issue in NZ. Wouldn't it be great to use that time and energy in something more beneficial to NZ than tidying up Pollution? Banning the plastic bag is about changing the mindset of "Single-use". If it wasn't for the 1,000s of volunteer hours, donations and grants then what would happen to NZ's Clean and Green reputation? As Tourism is a huge industry to NZ, then having visitors put off with plastic pollution in our beaches and waterways would potentially be a major GDP issue. Why are these volunteers/charities having to do this, because it is legal to manufacture and sell products that once discarded pollute the environment.

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

Re-useable bags which are made from natural fibres, are readily available. These are ignored by the "Single-use" user who prioritise their personal convenience.

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)

Notes

removing any form of plastic bags would force people to change their habits, then it becomes the new normal. A "bag for life" would certainly offset the environmental damage caused by plastic bags in our marine ecosystems. Videos and pictures in stores of animals dead with stomachs full of plastic or entangled should make people think about whether they REALLY need that plastic.

Clause

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

Notes

Removing single use plastic bags from vegetable counters and every product in a supermarket wrapped in plastic?

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

I would expect that the majority of plastic bag consumption comes from Large supermarkets and retail stores and other single use items from large fast food chains. It should be very easy for them to determine bag/item use prior to the ban and then consequential savings after the ban.

Clause

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

Notes

other single use plastic wrap, "bags" such as vegetable bags, umbrella bags should be next.