

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

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## Reference no: 877

**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 strongly support the proposed mandatory phase out of the sale and distribution of single-use plastic shopping bags. I see no value, or need to, exclude those which provide a supposed interim solution such as oxo-degradable, biodegradable and compostable bags. Such exclusions would only make the enforcement of a comprehensive ban more difficult.

### 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

I see no reason to exclude bags that are thicker than 50 microns. If the legislation only makes phase out of 50 micron (or thinner) bags compulsory, while exempting 70 micron bags, what is to stop supermarkets simply using 70 micron (or thicker) bags? Any legislation needs to avoid perverse outcomes.

### 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

If anything, customers frequenting smaller retailers should require less use of plastic bags than those frequenting supermarkets because the volumes are much smaller. A backpack or single personal shopping bag should be sufficient when purchasing from smaller 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**

I agree that retailers that provide plastic bags need to be given a sufficiently long period to implement alternative approaches and that customers need to get into the habit of bringing their own bags to shops. Strategies such as during the transition period customers having to specifically request plastic bags will help to habituate customers to bringing their own bags.

**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**

I don't know. It depends on what costs are included in 'costs'. If the full economic and environmental costs of dealing with a plastic waste stream are included in the costs of using plastic bags, then the benefits of implementing the mandatory phase out will almost certainly exceed the costs. At present, however, e.g. supermarkets are not required to cover the full economic and environmental costs of plastic bag use.

**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**

Shoppers bring reusable shopping bags to shops. Germans have been doing this for many years and kiwis are smarter than Germans (:-)) so this really should not be terribly taxing for New Zealanders.

**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**

Strategies such as during the transition period customers having to specifically request plastic bags will help to habituate customers to bringing their own bags.

**Clause**

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

**Notes**

We have already adjusted to life without single-use plastic shopping bags.

**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**

Knowing the current stockpile (in tons) of single use plastic waiting for recycling would be very helpful.