

Subject: Submission to the consultation on banning the sale and manufacture of plastic microbeads in personal care products in New Zealand

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I strongly support the proposal for a legislative ban on microbeads in New Zealand, and urge the Government to introduce the ban as quickly as possible. I am aware that bans in other countries have fallen foul of loopholes or relied on ineffective, voluntary self-regulation. This is unacceptable to the community. For this reason, I'm making a number of recommendations below that will help the New Zealand Government to avoid making these same mistakes. Breadth of products covered by the legislation I strongly agree with the intention to "define the scope of products as broadly as possible" and advocate for a comprehensive ban on personal care products containing microbeads. Specifically, I ask the Ministry to follow the below guidelines developed by Fauna & Flora International:

- Any definition of 'microbeads' must include all solid plastic ingredients smaller than 5mm used for any purpose (not just for exfoliation). There should be no lower size limit included in the definition;
- The legislation should cover all products that are washed down the drain. This includes a wide range of cosmetic and personal care products as well as cleaning products, make-up, and other product categories;
- Legislation should not allow so-called 'biodegradable' plastics to be used as alternatives, as these materials do not degrade in the marine environment and therefore are not a solution to the problem; ...also smaller and smaller pieces of plastic in the ocean means that we have a bigger and bigger problem. Biodegradable does NOT mean materials will become less harmful - only able to be eaten by smaller and smaller animals which means they will become even more widespread in the food chain. Do you want to eat chemicals and carcinogens with your next meal of seafood? I don't! - There should be a clear and prompt timeline for phasing out these ingredients, and a date after which products containing microplastics must not be sold. This should be within two years of the ban, and preferably within 2 months or immediate if you can do it!

Lead with a legislative ban and avoid voluntary self-regulation I strongly support the consultation document's recommendation to introduce a legislative ban under the Waste Minimisation Act. Voluntary self-regulation by industry has proven ineffective in New Zealand to date. The organisation Plastic Diet exposed just a few months ago how companies who claimed to have largely phased out microbeads - such as Foodstuffs and Progressive - still had numerous microbead products for sale. For this reason, it is essential that the New Zealand Government introduce an outright legislative ban from 2018 at the latest. Products entering New Zealand via Australia I am concerned that the Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Act means that microbead products could still enter New Zealand via Australia, despite the ban. Given that nearly a quarter of our cosmetic products enter New Zealand via Australia, I would strongly encourage the Government to explore all options (i.e. exemptions allowed for health, safety and environmental reasons) to ensure that products containing microbeads do not enter New Zealand shops via Australia, until such a time that Australia introduce a comprehensive legislative ban. I would recommend that all manufacturers, importers, distributors, and retailers who stock, move, or distribute products containing microbeads should be held jointly and individually legally responsible for their clean up and safe recycling. I would recommend the Waste Levy is raised to \$1000 a tonne incrementally over the next 12 months to help pay for the clean up of waste products by non-profits, community groups, and social enterprise and also to help pay for the legal action to hold polluters liable and accountable. Funds returned from this legal action should be returned to the people involved in cleaning up our beautiful country and her waterways. I strongly support the proposal for a legislative ban on microbeads in all their forms in New Zealand. Yours sincerely,

Kyle Parker