



BAN THE BAG

Addressed to:

Honourable Minister of Conservation & Associate Minister for the Environment, Eugenie Sage

Honourable Minister for the Environment, David Parker

Honourable Minister for Fisheries, Stuart Nash

Honourable Minister of Health, Dr David Clark

Honourable Minister for Climate Change, James Shaw



27 February 2018

Dear Ms Sage, Mr Parker, Mr Nash, Dr Clark and Mr Shaw,

Single-use plastics have a devastating impact globally on animals, people and the environment.

New Zealanders use around 1.6 billion single-use plastic bags every year. They are made from non-renewable resources and make their way into the environment. There they pose significant harm to marine life, contributing to an estimated 100,000 marine mammal deaths per year. They are also disposed of via burning, thus contributing again to climate change, or they may sit in landfills where it can take up to 1000 years to degrade. In the marine environment the bags degrade into micro-plastic which attracts persistent organic pollutants, and, once consumed by fish, enters the food-chain.

Governments all over the world are taking action to ban the sale of lightweight single-use plastic bags. Bans have been applied in countries such as Rwanda, Senegal, Kenya, Bangladesh, China, Myanmar, countries in Western Europe and North America, as well as recently many states in Australia.

New Zealand is now well behind the rest of the world in the move to get rid of single-use plastic bags. This lack of regulatory intervention has meant an increase in bag use over the last decade.

We are certainly heartened by the government's recent commitment to reduce the waste we are generating in this country significantly. New Zealand's current position as the 10th worst nation for creating urban waste is indeed shameful but we are encouraged and as a group collectively supportive of initiatives to reduce waste production.

As a vital step towards minimising and eliminating plastic waste and its impact on our environment and its inhabitants, we are calling on you and your Government to institute a regulatory ban on the current primary form of single-use plastic bags. This is supported by industry and community, non-governmental organisations and environmental scientists.

There is a high-level of public support for a ban on plastic bags. A number of large retailers have shown leadership on this issue, with Bunnings completely removing plastic bags from their stores in 2008, and Countdown and New World committing to do the same in 2018.

To extend the opportunity presented by this commitment, and to ensure the challenge of changing public behaviour is carried fairly by everyone in the retail sector, it is vital that the Government step in and regulate.

A levy on bags is not a satisfactory solution to the issue of single-use plastic bags as it has not been shown to eliminate bag use. A regulatory ban is the fairest and most effective way to ensure that single-use plastic bags, in their current form, no longer draw from non-renewable resources and are removed from the waste stream.

We urge you to act immediately for the sake of the local and global environments and their inhabitants and institute a regulatory ban on single-use plastic bags.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Melanie Vivian
Chief Executive Officer & Co-Founder
the Jane Goodall Institute New Zealand



the Jane Goodall Institute New Zealand



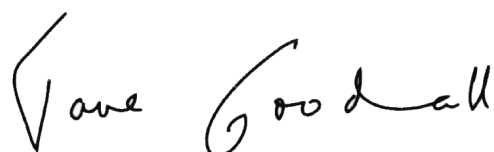
Dr Russel Norman
Executive Director
Greenpeace Aotearoa New Zealand

GREENPEACE

Co-Supporters:



Right Honourable Helen Clark
Former Prime Minister of New Zealand and Former UNDP Administrator



Dr. Jane Goodall. DBE
Founder - the Jane Goodall Institute & UN Messenger of Peace



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Wellington City Council

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Mayor Dalziel
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Dunedin City Council



Mayor Guppy
Upper Hutt City Council



Mayor Wallace
Hutt City Council



Mayor Boulton
Queenstown Lake
District Council



Mayor Smith
Palmerston North City Council



Mayor Reese
Nelson City Council



Toby Lawrance
General Manager NZ



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Willow Van As
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Lisa McLaren



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- Christchurch City Council Mayor Dalziel
- Dunedin City Council Mayor Cull
- Upper Hutt City Council Mayor Guppy
- Hutt City Council Mayor Wallace
- Queenstown City Council Mayor Boulton
- Palmerston North City Council Mayor Smith
- Nelson City Council Mayor Reese
- Bunnings
- Countdown
- Mitre 10
- Iwi Collective Partnership
- WWF NZ
- Forest & Bird
- SPCA
- Wellington Zoo
- Orana Wildlife Park
- Auckland Zoo
- Auckland Zoological Society
- Project Jonah
- Our Seas Our Future
- Commonsense
- Sustainability Trust
- Boomerang Bags
- Plastic Free Raglan
- Plastic Diet
- The Kiwi Bottle Drive
- Dan Godoy, Marine Biologist
- Ana Markic, Marine Scientist
- WasteMINZ Behaviour Change Sector Group
- Algalita Marine Research and Education
- PURE Tour - Plastics Use Resistance Education
- 5 Gyres
- Te Karu o Te Ika Voyaging Trust
- Environmental Defence Society
- Whale and Dolphin Conservation
- Generation Zero