

The NZ Government plans to ban a bunch of plastic products...

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... and have released a consultation doc with TWO proposals for you to have your say on. Submissions close on **4 December 2020**. Here's a summary of the proposals:

1

WHY?

- X Not recyclable in NZ
- X Contaminate otherwise recyclable materials
- X If they leak into environment they harm wildlife & break down into microplastics.
- X Contain toxic/chemical additives with potential health impacts
- X Many countries have banned these items already.

Ban Some Hard-to-Recycle Plastics

(PVC = Polyvinyl Chloride; PS=Polystyrene; EPS=Expanded Polystyrene)

- All oxo-degradable plastic products by Jan 2023
- All PVC food & beverage packaging by Jan 2023
 - e.g. meat trays, biscuit trays, soft packaging, wraps, sleeves & other rigid containers or trays
- Some PS food & beverage packaging by Jan 2023 & the rest by Jan 2025
 - e.g. cups, meat trays, sushi packaging, other takeaway containers, protective casing for confectionary, EPS cups & containers, packs for yoghurt & other chilled goods & EPS bins
- All other EPS packaging by Jan 2025
 - including packaging for homeware, electronics & other consumer goods



Biggest winner = the environment. But also local govt & the wider resource recovery sector, incl. recyclers, processors & waste operators, as recycling systems will be less complicated & recycling streams less contaminated.

2

WHY?

- X Not recyclable
- X Many countries have banned some of these already
- X Resource intensive to produce & consume
- X High risk of becoming litter, harming wildlife & breaking down into microplastics

Ban some single-use plastic items by 2025 at the latest

- Straws, cotton buds and drink stirrers
- Tableware (i.e. plates, trays, bowls & cutlery)
- Produce bags under 70 microns without handles
- Cups & lids (NOT including disposable coffee cups) made from plastic types 3, 4, 6 & 7, including paper cups with plastic/wax linings
- Non-compostable produce stickers

(including those made of degradable, biodegradable or compostable plastics)



Biggest winner = the environment, due to less litter & more reusables. Other beneficiaries are local govt who'll have less waste & litter to manage & businesses who make alternative products. Businesses who have already moved will also benefit from a level playing field.

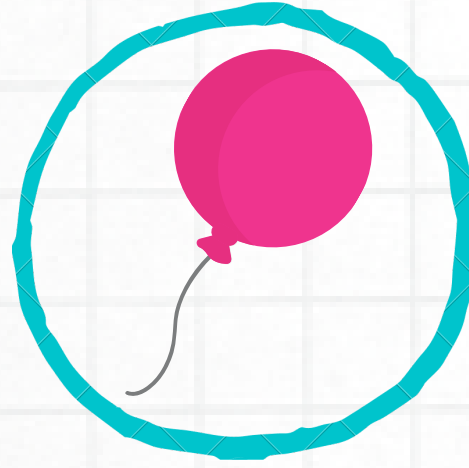
Some items are not proposed for a ban because of a lack of available alternatives:



Coffee Cups



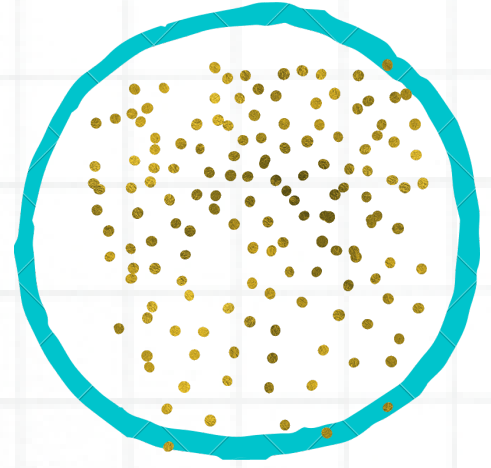
Wet Wipes



Balloons



Cigarette butts



Glitter



The Govt would like to ban these in the future & wants your ideas on how their usage could be minimised in the meantime.



The consultation doc says that getting rid of these problematic items would require significant shifts in behaviour. The Govt wants to know if you think they've chosen the right items for a ban.

EXEMPTIONS! The Govt also wants your views on potential exemptions for some of the bans. For example, provisions to ensure plastic straws are still available for those who need them to drink, or permitting polybins & non-compostable fruit stickers for export products.

The Consultation doc considered other policy options to limit the use of the target plastics:

1. voluntary agreements with industry
2. reduction targets
3. labelling requirements
4. levies or taxes
5. product stewardship
6. mandatory recycled content
7. maintaining the status quo.



... but decided that bans are the most effective, achievable option for moving NZ towards a circular economy & the top layers of the waste hierarchy, while imposing the lowest costs. The Govt wants to know if you agree with this assessment or not.

THE BIGGER PICTURE:

Designing for recyclability & creating a culture of reuse

The Govt believes that banning hard-to-recycle & single-use plastic products will encourage uptake of more reusable alternatives & greater use of recyclable materials with a high recycled content. To support these shifts, the Govt intends to accompany the proposed bans with best practice guidance for sustainable packaging & public education & awareness campaigns.

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