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Dr Jacqui Dewar,
Committee Secretary,
Health and Environment Committee,
Parliament House,
George Street,
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Email: hec@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Dr Dewar

Comments on the Waste Reduction and Recycling (Plastic Items) Amendment Bill 2020

I have been directed by the State Council of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland (Wildlife Queensland) to provide comment for consideration on the Waste Reduction and Recycling (Plastic Items) Amendment Bill.

Wildlife Queensland is one of the longest established and most respected wildlife-focused conservation groups in Queensland. With over 6500 supporters Wildlife Queensland is a strong voice for our wildlife and its habitat. Wildlife Queensland is apolitical. Our aims reflect a strong interest in conserving our biodiversity, our natural landscapes and seascapes and protection of our environment. Wildlife Queensland is not opposed to ecological sustainable development but there needs to be a balance among the needs of the environment, sustainable development and use and society's needs.

Wildlife Queensland supports the introduction of this legislation and has taken this opportunity to provide additional comment. Wildlife Queensland urges enabling legislation to initially ban the supply of specific plastics products, starting with plastic straws, stirrers, plates/bowls and cutlery and subject to further analysis regulations will follow to ban plastic coffee cups, other plastics cups and heavyweight plastic shopping bags. The inclusion of expanded polystyrene cups and containers should occur in the first tranche with exemptions only for products that meet the Australian Compost Standards (AS 5810/AS 4736).

The start date for the first ban of products was scheduled for July 2021. Wildlife Queensland appreciates that consideration may be given to deferring that date due to Covid-19 implications however that should not occur as relevant sectors have been aware of

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government intentions to remove these products for a long time and some business have already changed operations.

It appears the other significant issue of concern, the exemption for plastic items contained in packaged products such as fruit juice has not been addressed. There are alternatives available and as there is at least almost 6 months assuming the legislation is enacted before it becomes law that should give manufacturers adequate time to adjust to the new requirements. Provision could be made so that product produced prior to the enactment of the legislation may be sold without penalty.

Naturally Wildlife Queensland strongly supports the exemption provisions for those with a disability to access plastic items required and the Government is to be commended on addressing this issue.

Ass enabling legislation the bill will enable other items to be included in the future. We ask the Committee to make recommendations that other problematic items be included in a ban:

- condiment sachets and plastic wrapping
- helium balloon releases of any number

The Palaszczuk Government must be commended for their effort to date on the war against waste. More has yet to be achieved with plastics but that should not prevent focussing on other waste challenges – cigarette butts. Granted this is a massive and challenging task but creative solutions must be found.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.



Des Boyland, Policies and Campaigns Manager

12th January 2021.