



Committee Secretary
Health and Environment Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

13 January 2021

Email: hec@parliament.qld.gov.au

**RE: SUBMISSION WASTE REDUCTION & RECYCLING (PLASTIC ITEMS)
AMENDMENT BILL 2020**

Dear Secretary,

Plastic Bag Free Livingstone now Plastic Free Living supports the introduction of this legislation and urges its implementation as soon as practical.

We support:

Enabling legislation to ban the supply of specific plastics products, starting with

1. Plastic straws (considering the disability needs of people), stirrers, plates/bowls and cutlery and
2. Regulation to include coffee cups, other plastics cups and heavyweight plastic shopping bags.
 - The inclusion of expanded polystyrene cups and containers (e.g., clam shells).
 - Exemptions only for products that meet the Australian Compost Standards (AS 5810/AS 4736).
 - The banning of all oxo-degradable products, with no exemptions.
 - The start date for the first products to be banned being July 2021, with no additional transition period. The retail, food services and hospitality sectors have been aware of government intentions to remove these products for some years and many have already changed their procurement practices and use alternative options. Most of these businesses support this legislation and its purpose to avoid further waste and litter as soon as possible
 - The introduction of the second should be within 12 months of the enabling legislation being passed.



In addition:

- We question the exemption for plastic straws, stirrers or cutlery in shelf-ready products (e.g., a straw with a mixed drink or fork with a pre-packaged salad). This is inconsistent with the legislation and will add to public confusion. Under this exemption, these plastic items will still end up as waste or litter. There are viable non-plastic alternatives available that should and could be used now.
- We also recommend that a specific list of products be identified by the Government for this second phase-out which includes coffee cups AND lids, other single-use plastic cups AND other problematic packaging used in takeaway or away from home (e.g., plastic wrappers, sushi packaging) and heavyweight plastic shopping bags (up to 70 microns thickness).

As enabling legislation, the bill can include other items in the future. We ask that the Committee make recommendations that the following problematic items also be included in a ban:

- Bait bags
- Little fish bottles (condiment sachets and plastic wrapping)
- plastic balloon sticks
- plastic barrier bags
- cotton buds with plastic sticks
- paper wipes (these also contain plastic materials)

We would like to see alternatives to plastic fishing line be sourced and promoted. Sealife at all levels are affected by discarded fishing line which causes injury and even death to many marine animals. Additionally, if small enough it can be mistaken for food which works its way into the food chain.

Thank you for coming to Yeppoon and listening to our concerns. Our Community has been a driver of these changes and this group has never had funding or paid positions, so what has been achieved since 2015 is amazing and it shows that change can occur from a grass roots level and it can be positive within the Community. With education, sharing of knowledge and working together; Government working with Community, change can be implemented.

Jo Stoyel
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(Plastic Bag Free Livingstone)