

Have Your Say DPIE - Plastics - Short Survey

Thank you for your submission of the form Plastics - Short Survey through Have Your Say DPIE

1. The NSW Government is considering whether to phase out several plastics. Do you support the phase out of the following plastics?

Lightweight plastic bags - Yes - Near term

Heavier/boutique plastic bags - Yes - Near term

Plastic straws - Yes - Near term

Disposable plastic plates and bowls - Yes - Near term

Disposable plastic cutlery - Yes - Near term

Disposable plastic stirrers - Yes - Near term

Disposable plastic cups - Yes - Near term

Expanded polystyrene food and beverage containers - Yes - Near term

Oxo-degradable plastics (a type of plastics that can break up into microplastics faster and may cause environmental harm) - Yes - Near term

2. Are there other plastics the NSW Government should phase out?

Any plastic that is multilayered should be phased out as soon as possible. This type of material is not currently and will always be difficult to recycle therefore effectively eliminating the circular economy.

3. If the NSW Government were to phase out these types of plastic, what issues will we need to address when we begin to implement and enforce the phase outs?

You will need to ensure that it is done across the board without exceptions and loop holes that will be exploited.

4. Do you support the target to triple the proportion of plastic recycled in NSW by 2030?

Yes

If you want to, please tell us why

We need to establish a market for recycled material. By increasing the amount of material available it will give the consumers of recycled material more confidence to invest in design and equipment to use recycled content in their products. All recycled material however must have set standards which producers must adhere to.

Otherwise it becomes an unsaleable/unusable material which will just add extra cost to the process.

5. Do you support the target to reduce plastic litter items by 25% by 2025?

Yes

If you want to, please tell us why

However reducing litter should not be seen in anyway as improvements in recycling.

Litter reduction is important but is a function of a healthy society not an efficient recycling/waste disposal system.

6. Do you support a requirement for all new plastic packaging to contain at least 30% recycled plastic by 2025?

Yes

If you want to, please tell us why

To realize a circular economy there must be a market for the recovered material. Without reuse back in manufacturing of useful products you are left with down cycling which is not the best use or net highest use value of the material but a feel good disposal plan. 30% recycled content is a weak, feel good target and should be higher (50-60% at least). Processes and equipment is already in place to achieve these rates of recycled content in most cases. The higher the target the faster NSW will transition to a true circular economy and reduce its reliance on export of waste to other states and countries, not to mention the additional employment it could generate.

7. Do you support making producers of plastic items more responsible for collecting and recycling in NSW?

Yes

If you want to, please tell us why

All producers have a responsibility for their products at end of life. This needs to apply to manufactures and importers equally and should be enforced harshly.

8. Which of these issues associated with plastic are you most concerned about?

Environmental impacts of plastic pollution and leakage; Limited reuse and recycling options for plastic

9. What is the most important action the NSW Government could take to minimise the impact of plastic and why do you think this?

The NSW Government would do well to acknowledge and support the leading innovations in plastics recycling that are occurring within its borders. Government support for world class patented technologies has been essentially absent except where that innovation has been instated through the tertiary sector or through other established research institutions. NSW has been the incubator for many fine

technological innovations. However, there are a number of technologies (with origins in the private sector) in the area of waste plastics reprocessing that will likely disappear off-shore unless NSW Government and Corporations show interest and lend support.

10. What other actions could the NSW Government take to protect our environment and human health from plastic?

A total ban on plastic in landfill and strict restrictions on the import of plastic products would also accelerate the uptake of recycled material in manufacturing, therefore generating additional income, increasing employment, attracting manufacturing into the state and assisting with a reduction of plastic in the natural environment.

11. How would you like to receive information about what the NSW Government is doing to reduce plastic?

Email (e-newsletter)

About you

Email

info@aien.com.au

Are you making this submission as an individual or an organisation?

Organisation

For individuals

Do you live in NSW?

Postcode

Age

For organisations

Organisation name

Australian Industrial Ecology Network

Organisation type

Waste and Recycling industry body.

Our commitment to privacy

Tick the box if you would you like your feedback to be withheld from publication