

**Submission
No 36**

**INQUIRY INTO WASTE AVOIDANCE AND RESOURCE
RECOVERY AMENDMENT (PLASTICS REDUCTION)
BILL 2021**

Name: Mrs Cynthia Harris

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I wish to make a submission supporting the phasing out of single use plastics, which I consider to be some of the most lethal items commonly seen, in terms of the dangers they pose for many forms of life. Apart from the risk of their ending up in rivers, creeks or the oceans, where they can kill such marine animals as turtles, the smaller single use items are very dangerous to small birds who may be attracted by a sweet odour, and find themselves trapped. Anything that is circular (like dome-shaped plastic lids), anything that cannot be broken (like ring seals), anything that blows into the ocean and looks like a jellyfish: these are a disaster waiting to happen.

Single use plastics also break up into micro-particles that are already polluting our own food and water, not to mention harming other life forms as well. The greenhouse gases emitted during manufacture of these (originally oil- or gas-based) materials are also costing us the earth! The sheer volume of single use plastics discarded in the environment is a cause for great anxiety and clearly can not be sustained indefinitely. What better time to stop production than now?.

When I was younger none of these single use plastics existed, and we managed perfectly well with cardboard, which is at least bio-degradable and flexible, thus minimizing the risk of harm; with shopping bags made of string or fabric; and with take-away food wrapped in paper. Today we can add different but still sustainable materials to this list, such as drinking straws made of bamboo.

Yes, I do understand that businesses make an income out of supplying these plastic items, but just as we no longer have bus conductors, telegram deliverers or slave traders, humans must adapt and find new ways to generate an income. Yes, I also recognize that a few plastic items are best for the job at hand. Ultimately, there won't be a viable economy for anyone to make a living unless we clean up our environment and keep it habitable.

I urge you to phase out ALL forms of single use plastics within a specified and very short period of time, such as over the next two years. We don't have a chance of survival without urgent action, and neither does our home planet.

Thanking you for your attention,

Yours sincerely,

Cynthia Harris