

Minister for Energy and Renewables  
Minister for Parks and Environment

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20 September 2024

Ms Jacquie Petrusma  
Member for Franklin  
Via Clerk of the House of Assembly  
email: [laura.ross@parliament.tas.gov.au](mailto:laura.ross@parliament.tas.gov.au)

Dear Ms Petrusma

I write in response to a question raised in Parliament on behalf of your constituents on 11 September 2024. It is estimated 160 million single-use plastic items are used in Tasmania each year, and these plastics can take hundreds of years to break down. The 2023-24 Tasmanian Statewide Litter Survey found that plastic packaging made up almost half the amount of rubbish counted. We know Tasmanians are passionate about the environment and addressing the impact of problematic single-use plastics is a priority for this Government.

That's why we have released a discussion paper on phasing out problematic single use plastics. Consultation is open for six weeks until 1 October 2024. This is part of our broader strategy to improve waste management and resource recovery in Tasmania – our goal is Tasmania, a place where nothing is wasted. The Tasmanian Government has committed \$1 million over four years to support the phase-out of problematic single use plastics (PSUPs) state-wide. This is the first step in the process which Tasmania committed to – along with all other states and territories – in April 2021.

National Environment Ministers identified eight 'problematic and unnecessary' plastic product types to phase-out nationally by 2025. The commitment constitutes one of the seven core targets set under the National Waste Policy Action Plan established in 2019.

The list includes single-use plastic items identified as problematic and/or unnecessary by design:

- lightweight plastic bags (already banned in Tasmania);
- plastic straws;
- plastic utensils and stirrers;
- plastic bowls and plates;
- expanded polystyrene consumer food containers (e.g. cups and clamshells); and
- microbeads in personal healthcare products, as well as problematic materials which are difficult to recover and/or high polluting when released in the environment:
- plastic products misleadingly termed as 'degradable'; and
- expanded polystyrene (EPS) packaging for consumer goods (loose filled and moulded).

We recognise that aged care, health, charities and correctional facilities rely on the material properties of single-use plastics items to operate services for health, hygiene and safety. The alternative options for replacing single-use plastic utensils and drink containers, or items like straws might not be suitable for those Tasmanians with certain disabilities or medical conditions. The legislation will provide for exemptions for those who still require

access to any restricted items. These will be assessed through consultation and on a case-by-case basis.

New legislation to bring into effect the ban of these products is planned for development in 2025. The experience of other states and territories, and the outputs of the Commonwealth single-use plastic harmonisation working group are being leveraged to ensure that the best-informed approach is implemented in Tasmania.

As we work towards phasing-out these items, we encourage all Tasmanians to help reduce single-use waste now by choosing alternatives such as reusable coffee cups, lunch containers and utensils.

Thank you again for raising this important matter with me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Duigan', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Hon Nick Duigan MLC  
**Minister Parks and Environment**