



Peel Preservation Group Inc.

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PPG is a non-profit organisation devoted to the conservation of the natural environment in the Peel Region of Western Australia

Hon. Stephen Dawson MLC
Minister for the Environment
2 Havelock Street
West Perth WA 6005

24 July 2017

Dear Minister

RE: PLASTIC BAG BAN

Peel Preservation Group strongly supports the total banning of single-use plastic bags, and urges the State government to bring in legislation to effect this ban.

Statistics supplied by Greenpeace inform us that plastic pollution is killing our marine life. For example, 30% of the world's sea turtles and 90% of seabird species have ingested plastic debris in recent times, with plastic bags being one of the main culprits. It is also estimated that Australians use 4 billion plastic bags every year.

It is very clear that many single-use plastic bags don't directly find a pathway to landfill. Several correspondents to our local Mandurah media have consistently complained about the ugly eye-sore of plastic waste drifting around a vacant lot directly opposite Mandurah's largest shopping centre. It is too easy to throw away plastic bags, which are not biodegradable, and it is too easy for these bags to find their way into our waterways.

It is heartening to hear recently that the two supermarket mega-chains of Coles and Woolworths have declared that they will phase out single-use plastic bags over the next 12 months. Similarly, it is also pleasing to hear that the WA Local Government Association backs a state-wide ban on plastic bags.

There is a mood in contemporary society at the moment that it is time to act on plastic waste, and the State Government needs to respond to this current momentum.

Peel Preservation Group has been very proactive in raising awareness about the negative consequences of single-use plastic bags and the over-use of plastic packaging in general. Over two days in early July our group set up a stall in the recently extended Halls Head shopping centre, to encourage shoppers to sign a pledge to reduce reliance on plastic bags, as well as giving out free reusable calico bags. We were delighted with the number of shoppers who were keen to move away from plastic bags and had already begun the process of bringing along their own reusable bags from home.

As part of our ongoing focus and commitment to environmental education, our group is also providing two free screenings of the very informative documentary entitled "A Plastic Ocean" on 28th July, which has been widely advertised in the local community.

Again, the current impetus, the community interest, and the serious concerns raised by environmental scientists are now crying out for a strong decision from our State Government. It's time. Let's ban the bag.

Yours sincerely
Melvyn J. Tuckey
Committee Member
Peel Preservation Group (Inc)

cc. Hon. Mark McGowan, Premier of Western Australia
David Templeman MLA, Member for Mandurah
Zak Kirkup MLA, Member for Dawesville
Robyn Clarke MLA, Member for Murray/ Wellington