



**Minister for Environment; Disability Services
Deputy Leader of the Legislative Council**

Our Ref: 62-06547

Mr Melvyn Tuckey
Committee Member
Peel Preservation Group Inc.
peelpreservation@westnet.com.au

Dear Mr Tuckey

Thank you for your correspondence, received in this office on 23 February 2018, regarding plastic pollution in the Peel region.

I appreciate the significant contribution made by community groups like the Peel Preservation Group in protecting our nature reserves and wetland areas. The McGowan Labor Government supports efforts to reduce plastic pollution and is taking action to achieve this.

The Government will implement a lightweight single-use plastic bag ban in Western Australia from 1 July 2018. A discussion paper titled *Implementing a lightweight single-use plastic bag ban in Western Australia* was published on the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) website and was open for public comment until 9 March 2018. Further details of the ban will be released following consideration of the public submissions received.

The McGowan Labor Government is also working with other Australian jurisdictions to achieve a voluntary phase out of microbeads. At this time, the voluntary process is on track to phase out microbeads by mid-2018. In 2017 the Meeting of Environment Ministers, which is a conference of Commonwealth, State and Territory Environment Ministers, agreed that if the voluntary approach is not effective, governments will move to implement a ban.

The DWER is currently designing the container deposit scheme, a McGowan Labor Government election commitment. The scheme will help reduce plastic pollution by creating an incentive for the collection and reuse of plastic beverage containers. It is anticipated that the scheme will commence in mid-2019. You can subscribe to receive email alerts regarding the container deposit scheme as new information is published at www.dwer.wa.gov.au/cds.

The Government has no plans to legislate a state-wide ban on balloons or plastic drinking straws. However, I am interested in hearing from all Western Australians regarding their views on this issue. The matter will be considered further if the community indicates broad support for a wider ban on plastics, and the evidence for instigating a ban in Western Australia is compelling.

I have provided your letter to the Department for its consideration of this issue. Please pass along my best wishes to your Committee and volunteers for their efforts in protecting our natural environment.

Thank you for writing to me about this important matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Dawson', with a large, stylized initial 'S'.

Hon Stephen Dawson MLC
MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT

19 MAR 2018