

P-05-803 Our natural world is being poisoned by single use plastics...it's time to introduce a tax!, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 11.01.20

Dear Assembly Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to reply to the Deputy Ministers recent statement. It has been many years since we submitted our petition but during that time we have continued to organise our monthly clean ups of Barry's five beaches and alas during that time the amount of plastics being removed has simply increased! Plastic has revolutionised every aspect of our lives but it has come at a staggering cost...it is the commonest marine pollutant and by 2050 the sea will contain more plastic than fish!

The aim of our petition was to ensure that those who are producing these plastic products are made to pay for the damage damaging our environment and to allow less damaging alternatives to become more cost effective.

We also cannot believe that manufacturers are still allowed to produce products which are either difficult or impossible to recycle. Just when we win the battle to ban plastic straws or plastic ear buds, we allow new unrecyclable products to fill our bins such as plastic foil pet food pouches or crinkly crisp packets.

That said, we welcome the proposed ban on single use polystyrene food/drinks containers. They have polluted our waterways and seas for far too long.

We also urge the Welsh Government to introduce a number of deposit and return streams. We believe Wales should be leading and not following in this field.

The Deputy Minister has not mentioned the threat from the growth of microplastics - microscopic particles to bits the size of grains of sand, originating from our clothing or cleaners, which simply wash down rivers and seas. The creation of microplastics has increased 20 fold in the past 50 years and is expected to double again over the next 20!

Finally, we need to produce less plastic by introducing a tax, reuse what we have, and recycle what's left - rather than using it once and throwing it away!

Many thanks

Rob Curtis
Friends of Barry Beaches