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Sent: Saturday, 24 September 2016 8:31 AM
To: LCLC
Subject: EP amendment - Banning Plastic Bags, Packaging and Microbeads

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When I was born in 1945 plastic was not part of daily life, apart from things like bakelite radio cases. Since then the type and variety of plastic has evolved to invade most aspects of life, from food packaging to plant labels, water pipes and vehicle components. These things you can see, but hidden from view is the recent deception of microbead inclusion in many products, particularly personal care products. The choice of whether to buy or avoid plastics is removed from the consumer.

The microbeads are so tiny that they are not removed in sewage treatment. They find their way into the oceans where the beads are consumed by creatures as tiny as shrimp. As these tiny creatures are at the bottom of the food chain, the microbeads move up the food chain, to be present in the bodies of large sea life. It has been suggested that the microbeads emit chemicals which affect the host, but the major effect is to affect the stomach capacity, leading to malnutrition. People are being encouraged to eat more fish and seafood for health and environmental reasons which has led to overfishing. Microbeads are another factor in the decline of global fish stock, which impacts on the future ability of the world to feed itself.

Microbeads should be banned as soon as possible.

As the type and use of plastics has evolved, the disposal systems have not kept pace. It is almost impossible to buy anything in the supermarket which has not had contact with plastic. It is good that a parliamentary inquiry has been set up to consider banning certain types of plastic, but I feel that the whole supply chain use of plastic needs to be considered. For instance some sweets and biscuits may have triple layers for retail sale, but they are delivered to the supermarket in industrial cling wrap, possibly after shipping from overseas. Building components, newspapers, drinks and medicines can also have similar layers of packaging. All this has a huge environmental footprint, in the context of climate change when production, transport and disposal costs are taken into account.

It is time to look at the whole system to determine where plastics can be restricted. Plastic has been found in all oceans, strangling seabirds and other sea creatures, polluting waterways and littering the land. All councils face disposal problems.

As a society we have the ability to control the production of plastic and develop better ways to collect and handle the waste, preferably by recycling the components to avoid landfill and air contamination from combustion.

I will support whatever restriction can be placed on any category of plastic.

Yours sincerely

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