



**environment, forestry  
& fisheries**

Department:  
Environment, Forestry and Fisheries  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**Ref: O2/1/5/2**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**(For written reply)**

**QUESTION NO. 2141 {NW2704E}**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 35 of 2020**

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**Ms H S Winkler (DA) to ask the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment:**

- (1) With reference to the *Government Gazette No. 43601*, what is the rationale behind the phased-out approach to banning (a) single-use plastic carriers and (b) plastic flat bags as opposed to a stricter timeframe for an outright ban; and
- (2) whether her Department has any plans to ban single-use plastics such as (a) straws, (b) cutlery and (c) microbeads; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, why were the items not included in the plan alongside the phasing-out of single-use plastics bags and carriers, considering their equally devastating impact on the environment?

**2141. THE MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT REPLIES:**

- (1) (a) and (b)

The rationale behind the phasing out (or banning) of plastic carrier bags and plastic flat bags that are not manufactured from recycle is to promote resource efficiency (that is, the use of recycle as opposed to virgin material); improve waste management and create a demand for waste materials; increase circularity, recycling and recovery and to improve the design of environmentally sound bags and mitigate the economic impact of an outright ban of plastic carrier and flat bags.

This rationale is the result of extensive research and consultation with relevant stakeholders as well as consideration of international research and best practise.

- (2) The Department has to consider the implications of any proposed policy interventions and the costs attached thereto as well as transitional measures. One of the critical stages of the Socio-Economic Impact Assessment System procedure is the identification of options, alternatives, the implications (social and other) and the costs thereof. A policy recommendation needs to be guided by inter alia, evidence, to avoid unintended consequences. The Department is therefore currently pursuing a study on single-use plastic products that would inform the policy direction. However, in the interim, the Extended Producer Responsibility is being put in place to manage items such as straws and cutlery. In this regard, the Department has been engaging industry and continues to do so. In addition:
- (a) the Department has included straws as part of products to be controlled under Extended Producer Responsibility.
  - (b) the Department has included plastic cutlery as part of products to be controlled under the Extended Producer Responsibility.
  - (c) The Department has also engaged the Department of Health to amend the Cosmetics Regulations to ban the use of plastic microbeads in cosmetics.

Regards,



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MS BD CREECY, MP

MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

DATE: 23/09/2020