

Micro-Plastic and Micro-bead Pollution Prevention Bill 2016.

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BE IT ENACTED BY THE OIREACHTAS AS FOLLOWS:

Definitions

1.—In this Act—

“Plastic” means a synthetic material made by linking monomers through a chemical reaction to create an organic polymer chain that can be molded or extruded at high heat into various solid form that retain their defined shapes during the life cycle and after disposal.

“Micro-beads” means non-biodegradable solid plastic particles measuring less than five millimeters in diameter that are used in cosmetics, soaps or similar products as cleansing or exfoliating agents.

“Micro-Plastics” mean non-biodegradable, solid plastic particles measuring five millimeters or less in diameter that are present in the environment whether manufactured or created by mechanical weathering or degradation from larger plastics.

“Person” means any natural or legal person.

“the EPA” means the Environmental Protection Agency.

“the Minister” means the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government or any Minister for the time being responsible for the EPA.

Prohibition on the sale, manufacture of products containing micro-beads

2. (1) No person shall sell or manufacture products containing micro-beads or add micro-beads to cosmetics, soaps or similar products.

(2) A person who contravenes subsection (1) is guilty of an offence and is liable, on conviction, to a fine of not more than €10,000 for each item for sale, sold, or manufactured.

(3) Notwithstanding subsection (2) it shall not be an offence to sell or manufacture products containing micro-beads provided that the purchaser of any such product is not based in the State and that any products purchased are for use outside the state.

(4) The provisions of subsection (3) shall cease to have effect on the expiration of twelve months from the passage of this Act.

(5) An offence under subsection (2) may be prosecuted summarily or on indictment.

Water Analysis

3. (1) Every year, the EPA shall ensure that water samples from Irish Coastal Waters, Irish River Systems, and Marine Life are monitored and/or analysed, in accordance with the regulations, for the presence of micro-beads and micro-plastics and its effects.

(2) The EPA shall then present a report to the Minister for the Environment on the levels of Micro-plastic and Micro-bead pollution in Irish Wasters.

(3) The report referred to in subsection (2) must made detailed recommendations to the minister on measures to remediate micro-plastic and micro-bead pollution of Irish Waters.

(4) The Minister shall present the findings of the report to the relevant Oireachtas Committee with responsibility for Environmental matters within one month of receiving it from the EPA and shall present recommendations to the committee to achieve further reduction in micro-plastic and micro-bead pollution.

(5) On the same day the Minister presents his report in accordance with subsection (4) the main findings of the EPA's report shall be published in at least two national newspapers, and in at least one major internet only Irish News Website.

Environmental Analysis

4. (1) Every year, the EPA shall ensure that the environment, flora and fauna, and all Natura 2000 sites are monitored/analysed, in accordance with the regulations, for the presence of micro-beads and micro-plastic pollution and its effect on the environment, flora and fauna and Natura 2000 sites.

(2) The EPA shall then present a report to the Minister for the Environment on the levels of Micro-plastic and Micro-bead pollution in the Environment and all Habitats designated as Natura 2000 sites under the Habitats Directive.

(3) The report referred to in subsection (2) must made detailed recommendations to the minister on measures to remediate micro-plastic and micro-bead pollution of the Environment.

(4) The Minister shall present the findings of the report to the relevant Oireachtas Committee with responsibility for Environmental matters within one month of receiving it from the EPA and shall present his recommendations to the committee to achieve further reduction in micro-plastic and micro-bead pollution with his report.

(5) On the same day the Minister presents his report in accordance with subsection (4) the main findings of the EPA's report shall be published in at least two national newspapers, and in at least one major internet only Irish News Website.

Regulations

5. (1)The Minister may make regulations,

- (a) governing the water sampling and analysis required by subsection 3 (1);
- (b) governing the environmental sampling and analysis for micro-plastics required by subsection 4(1)
- (b) governing any other matter necessary or advisable to carry out the purposes of this Act.

(2) The Minister must provide for the use of the "Best Available Technology" or BAT in the making of regulations governing water and environmental analysis as required

by subsections 3(1) and 4(1) of this Act.

Short title

6. The short title of this Act is the *Micro-Plastic and Micro-bead Pollution Prevention Act 2016*.