

# Plastic bag ban a public health risk

By Jeremy Beck

From 1 July 2018 lightweight plastic bags will be banned in Queensland and Western Australia, and the Victorian Government has announced its intention to introduce such a ban. Big supermarket chains are cheering on the bans boasting their “green” credentials. Coles and Woolworths even plan to cease using these bags in NSW where no such ban is legislated. While the vast majority of Australians quite rightly want to reduce pollution and see less litter, the bag ban actually has little to do with helping the environment. It’s part of a coordinated global campaign, and population control is the actual intention.

The experience overseas shows that the bag bans will put Australians’ lives at risk. Food contamination resulting from the growth of bacteria in reusable bags is a real risk and food poisoning is known to be deadly in severe cases. The thicker plastic reusable bags also provide a non-porous surface whereby viruses may be carried and transmitted; documented cases exist and some viruses such as norovirus and astroviruses can survive for days or weeks on such surfaces. In 2012 in the US state of Oregon, public health officials confirmed that six members of a girls’ soccer team had contracted gastroenteritis from a reusable shopping bag that had been contaminated with norovirus. The 8 September 2017 *San Diego Reader* reported evidence that a hepatitis A outbreak infecting hundreds and killing 15 people, resulted from the plastic bag ban.

Dr Richard Summerbell is a professor at the Dalla Lana School of Public Health at the University of Toronto, Canada. His 21 April 2009 paper, “A Microbiological Study of Reusable Bags and ‘First or single-use’ Plastic Bags” concluded that “test findings clearly support concerns that reusable grocery bags can become an active microbial habitat and a breeding ground for bacteria, yeast, mould, and coliforms.” The study showed that brand new bags showed no evidence of bacteria, mould, yeast, or total coliform, but reusable bags may pose “a significant risk to the safety of the food supply”. Additionally, in future cases of food poisoning, doctors and health officials “should add the reusable grocery bag to the list of possible sources of contamination”. It is noteworthy that the Canadian Department of Health validated the concerns of the Summerbell study.

A 2 November 2012 research paper, “Grocery Bag Bans and Foodborne Illness” by Professors of Law Jonathan Klick of the University of Pennsylvania and Joshua D. Wright of George Mason University, concludes bag bans in the United States are already having an alarming health consequence: “We examine deaths and emergency room admissions related to ... [harmful bacteria such as *E. coli*] in the wake of the San Francisco ban. We find that both deaths and ER visits spiked as soon as the ban went into effect.” Australian officials can’t plead ignorance to the Klick-Wright study. *The Canberra Times* reported it on 8 February 2013 following the ACT’s bag ban. The article noted “most shoppers [in Arizona and California] did not use separate bags for meat and vegetables, did not wash reusable

grocery bags, and often stored them in car boots, resulting in the growth of bacteria”.

## Saving the environment?

Apparently plastic bags are providing a significant threat to marine life and birds. We’re shown pictures of such animals choking on plastic bags. In reality, such occurrences are extraordinarily rare. According to the Ocean Conservancy “Trash Travels” 2010 Report, half-a-million volunteers in 108 countries and locations around the world picked up rubbish from the world’s waterways. They only found 336 wildlife animals entangled in marine debris worldwide of which just 49 were entangled by plastic bags, including 6 amphibians, 19 birds, 11 fish, 6 invertebrates, 6 mammals, and 1 reptile. The Ocean Conservancy’s 2015 Report found 582 animals entangled, but didn’t specify the source of entanglement, which from other reports occurs mostly from lost or abandoned fishing line and nets. The 49 entanglements with plastic bags out of 336 should be kept in perspective with millions of birds, including protected species, which have been killed by “green energy” wind turbines.

Deakin University’s Dr Trevor Thornton, an expert in hazardous materials management, points out that plastic bags comprise just one per cent of Australia’s total litter problem. Australia’s 2016-17 National Litter Index report shows that cigarette butts and packaging amounts to 41 per cent of Australia’s litter, while takeaway food and beverage packages make up 17 per cent. Dr Thornton said “Most shopping bags are used more than once as a bin liner, for dog droppings or other purposes. I think we’ve got to understand why we are actually banning them and make sure it’s in good science,” he told SBS News. “Most people take their shopping bags home and worse-case scenario they put it straight into the bin. It’s the plastic takeaway containers that end up in the litter stream.”

## Population control

The world’s two most prominent environmentalist organisations, the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and Greenpeace, have driven the global campaign to ban plastic bags. Both espouse a Malthusian population



“Green energy” wind turbines kill orders of magnitude more wildlife than plastic bags do. Photo: AFP/Emmanuel Dunand

control agenda. Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, founded the WWF with former Nazi SS officer Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands and British Eugenics Society President Sir Julian Huxley. Prince Philip has infamously said: "In the event that I am reincarnated, I would like to return as a deadly virus, in order to contribute something to solve overpopulation." Several leaders of the environmentalist movement have expressed similar anti-human views. Jacques Cousteau, co-recipient in 1977 (with Sir Peter Scott) of the International Environmental Prize awarded by the United Nations, said: "It's terrible to have to say this. World population must be stabilised and to do that we must eliminate 350,000 people per day. This is so horrible to contemplate that we shouldn't even say it." (Reported in the November 1991 edition of the *UNESCO Courier*.) But Cousteau did say it, exposing the actual thinking and intention of the entire establishment-directed environmentalist movement. And although this ruling oligarchy has not succeeded in their depopulation agenda to the extent that they would desire, they certainly have inflicted much damage in their attempts.

The WWF's elite "philanthropist" 1001 Club, made up of 1,001 individuals hand-picked by Prince Philip, includes a list of the world's wealthiest powerbrokers. One of the initial 1001 Club members, Canadian oil and mineral businessman Maurice Strong, exposed the oligarchy's depopulation agenda in a 1992 interview with an alarming question: "Isn't the only hope for the planet that the industrialised civilisations collapse? Isn't it our responsibility to bring that about?" Strong was Secretary General of

the 1992 Rio Earth Summit and the first Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Greenpeace is likewise top-down controlled by the British financial oligarchy. Lord Peter Melchett, heir to the Imperial Chemical Industries fortune, was Greenpeace's longest serving executive director. Melchett was also a Trustee of WWF and an advisor to Friends of the Earth. Greenpeace is funded by the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, a legacy of one of the world's biggest oil cartels.

Governments in Australia are dutifully following the population control agenda. Queensland retailers found to be supplying the banned bags after 1 July 2018 may be fined up to \$6,300 per offence. According to the Queensland Government you should dob in offenders: "Community members and retailers are encouraged to contact the National Retail Association's Retail Hotline ... to report retailers who they believe are not complying with the ban."

As with many "environmentalist" policies, the poor are hit hardest. Soaring bin-liner sales following bag bans is evidence that such a policy is a kick in the guts to the poor who reuse plastic bags in any way possible to save money.

The AAS previously exposed the fraud of plastic bag bans, along with other frauds in the name of environmentalism (AAS, 23 Aug. 2017, "Fusion torch beats rubbish/recycling deception"). This article offered a 21st-century solution to rubbish processing, based upon fusion technology. A fusion torch would superheat rubbish to a plasma state so constituent elements can be separated for reuse. We should strive to make such technology a reality and defeat the sinister agenda of the bag banners.