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NMEC Programme



# EDITORIAL

There is increasing pressure worldwide to ban lightweight plastic bags and many countries have already done so, either as a whole or as individual regions or states.

However, in Huntington Beach (California) the plastic bag ban ordinance was repealed on a Council vote of 6-to-1 when residents saw the move as government overreach.

In the US, the banning and taxing of plastic bags is also seen as a threat to almost 25,000 jobs and has been called a "...misguided [policy] that threaten jobs, economic recovery, and American competitiveness."

Other claims – via the US, which seems to have the most to say about the ban – include: bag taxes hurt struggling families and take money away from working families; bans and taxes on plastic bags hurt America's working class and kill jobs; plastic bag bans and taxes hurt small businesses; and bag taxes hurt struggling families and take money away from working families.

I have friends who have travelled to remote places – including Africa, which has almost lead the charge in banning plastic bags – and been asked by local villagers for plastic bags. One lady showed my friend her tiny hut-cum-house where all her possessions were tidily hung on the wall in plastic bags. She also used them to carry water and milk from her very treasured goat. This lady was far from the coast and it is marine creatures that we associate with the damage caused by plastic bags. But another story much the same in its telling, was set in a village up the mighty Amazon, from which comes 20 percent of the global riverine discharge to the ocean, so is a prime route for discarded bags.

What is the answer? There is an interesting pros and cons argument here - https://journalistsresource. org/studies/environment/pollution-environment/ plastic-bag-bans-grocery-shopping-environment

## JANE WARWICK



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Send your news and photos to Editor@DEMM.co.nz

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EDITOR: Jane Warwick, editor@demm.co.nz ADVERTISING Nicki Nemeth, nicki@demm.co.nz PUBLISHER: Cathy Parker, cathy@adrenalin.co.nz DESIGNER: cherie@adrenalin.co.nz SUBSCRIPTIONS: subs@adrenalin.co.nz PROOFREADING: George Ward ADRENALIN PUBLISHING LTD. 14c Vega Place, Mairangi Bay. P.O. Box 65 092 Mairangi Bay. Auckland, 0754. PHONE: 64-9-478 4771 FACSIMILE: 64-9-478 4779 PRINTING: Image Centre. ISSN 1172-4536 (Print) ISSN 2253-279X (Online) AUDITED CIRCULATION: 12,619



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