

Victoria's Toxic Plastic Tide: government should act

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Victoria needs to acknowledge it has a plastic litter problem and get on with solving it, the Boomerang Alliance of 45 national and state groups will tell a parliamentary inquiry on Thursday, 1 December.

"We will present data showing that since 2007 when the Victorian government agreed to ban plastic bags, some 250 million have been littered and potentially polluted the marine environment. In addition billions of microbeads from cosmetics and cleaners have gone directly into the ocean. Yet during this time, successive governments have denied the state has a problem and relied on weak voluntary policies," said Jeff Angel, Director of the Alliance.

"The challenge for the Andrews government is to be the first Victorian government to fix the problem."

"There is extensive CSIRO evidence that plastic bags while not a large portion of plastic litter are high on the danger list for marine life causing entanglement and being ingested and likely death of thousands of marine creatures. They can also break up into micro plastic which enters the food chain and can end up on our dinner plates."

"Our analysis of the National Litter Index shows that contrary to repeated government claims about Victoria being a leader on litter action, the state has well above national average litter volume on beaches and parks; and more than South Australia which has a container deposit scheme."

"Our position on bags and microbeads is part of our recently released [Marine Plastic Pollution Threat Abatement Plan](#) which calls for a 70% cut in plastic pollution by 2020. Our call on the government is also supported by the 2016 bipartisan Senate report into plastic pollution," Mr Angel said.

The Upper House Inquiry is into the Greens Environment Protection Amendment (Banning Plastic Bags, Packaging and Microbeads) Bill. The hearing will be held at 2.15pm, 1 December at Parliament House.