

For Immediate Release

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Plastic Bag Ban – NSW to fail?

A failure by the NSW government to impose a comprehensive ban on plastic bags, after commendable voluntary action by 3 retailers, will mean tens of millions of bags still being littered in coming years.

“Every turtle, whale and bird that is harmed or killed by this litter will lay at the Berejiklian’s government’s door. Despite the action by Coles, Woolworths and Harris Farm, data shows that at least 10million bags will continue to pollute the state’s environment each year,*” said Jeff Angel, director of the Boomerang Alliance of 47 groups.

“Premier Berejiklian told a meeting of the Tweed Chamber of Commerce on Monday morning that since Coles and Woolworths are responsible for 80% of bags, the government does not need to act.”

‘NSW should avoid being ideological about this essential policy. The facts are – the retailers’ actions are voluntary and not enforceable; key business sectors have called for a level playing field; and the community wants a full ban. The state will be an international embarrassment, if it fails to enact a full ban,” Mr Angel said.

“Environment Ministers meet on 28 July – it’s a simple choice for the 3 states (NSW, WA, Vic) yet to take action – become environmental champions or environmental pariahs.”

“A worldwide experts’ analysis (Marine Policy 65, 2016) found disposable plastic bags are in the top three entanglement and ingestion threats to marine animals. They also add to the microplastic load in the environment, waste resources and block up recycling equipment.”

‘The alternative to lightweight single use plastic bags is to bring your own bag to the shops, an easy and practical solution to reduce plastic pollution.’

*Approx 8 billion bags pa nationally; NSW 32% of the population; 2% littered.