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CALL FOR NATIONAL ROLLOUT OF SOUTH AUSTRALIAN PLASTIC BAG BAN

PLASTIC BAG BAN IN FORCE FROM TODAY IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

400 million less plastic bags ever year. That's how many plastic bags will **not** end up in landfill or the environment as a result of today's South Australian plastic bag ban.

As South Australians show how easy it is to ban plastic checkout bags, leading plastic bag activist Jon Dee has launched banthebag.com.au. It's a web site and campaign that's calling on Environment Ministers to make the SA ban a national one.

"This reduction of 400 million plastic bags is a great result, but it amounts to **only 10%** of the **4 billion plastic bags** that Australians are using at the checkout every year," says Dee, the Founder and Chairman of action group **Do Something**. "For the sake of the marine life who mistake plastic bags for food, we must act decisively and nationally on this issue."

South Australia is the first state to enact the promised phase out of plastic bags. Unfortunately, other Governments are lagging behind on this issue.

"Peter Garrett and Rudd Labor gave Australia a promise that they would phase out plastic checkout bags by the end of last year, but they have failed to deliver on that promise," says Dee. "State Environment Ministers have also bottled out on delivering their plastic bag phase outs."

"State and Federal Governments need to implement the South Australian ban in every retail outlet around Australia," says Dee. "If they can't solve something as simple as plastic checkout bags, then how are they going to deal with something more difficult like climate change?"

The SA ban has also shown national retailers that it's possible to go plastic bag free at the checkout. "Target's SA customers were so supportive that the retailer is rolling out a national ban on June 1," says Dee. "We need other retailers around Australia to follow their lead."

The South Australian Ban in Brief

Every retailer in South Australia is affected by the change. Supermarket and non-supermarket retailers, markets, take-away food and specialty shops must all comply with the ban. From today, every retail outlet in SA is prohibited from selling or giving away polyethylene plastic checkout bags that are less than 35 microns thick. Any retailer in SA who supplies banned plastic shopping bags to a customer will incur an on the spot fine of \$315 or a maximum penalty of \$5,000. Acceptable bags include reusable bags, paper bags and single use biodegradable bags that meet Australian standard AS47-36.

[Jon Dee is available for interview in Adelaide from 5am on 02 9519 8766](#)

Do Something! is a not-for-profit advocacy group that seeks to create positive social and environmental change. For more information, visit www.banthebag.com.au