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ACT becomes a leading jurisdiction to ban single use plastics

The Boomerang Alliance of 53 national, state and local NGOs has welcomed the passage of the ACT Plastics Reduction Bill 2020 that bans certain single-use plastics from use in the ACT. It makes the Territory one of the leading jurisdictions in Australia, the Alliance said.

'The ban will mean that plastic cutlery, stirrers and polystyrene food and beverage containers cannot be used after 1 July 2021,' said Jeff Angel, Director of the Alliance.

'Plastic fruit and vegetable produce bags, oxo-degradable products and plastic straws will be banned in 2022; and the ACT will be the first Government to declare that public events must be plastic free.'

'Banning these products is a good first step, although we urge coffee cups and lids, other takeaway plastics, cotton bud sticks and heavyweight plastics bags should be included asap, rather than waiting until 2023.'

'The passing of these laws means that the ACT is amongst the leading jurisdictions in Australia tackling unnecessary and problematic single use plastics.'

South Australia and Queensland have already passed laws to ban certain takeaway plastics. Western Australia and Victoria have announced plans to follow suit. New South Wales, Tasmania and the NT have made no announcement or commitments.

'Unlike all other jurisdictions, NSW has still to ban lightweight plastic bags.'

'To meet agreed National Waste targets and address plastic waste and pollution, we need all Australia jurisdictions to take effective action on problematic and unnecessary plastics. We urge every jurisdiction to act by the end of this year with legislation banning takeaway plastics, items that can be avoided or replaced with reusable, non-plastic or certified compostable alternatives,' Mr Angel concluded.