Joint Statement on the European Parliament’s draft report on plastic carrier bags

March 10th, 2014

The above organisations issue this joint statement to alert Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) of the Environment Committee on specific issues they have identified with the Draft ENVI Report and ongoing negotiations within the ENVI committee.

The above organisations insist on the importance of waste prevention to reduce marine litter in line with the Rio+20 §163 declaration, the Waste Hierarchy as outlined in the Waste Framework Directive and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) objectives. An ambitious 80% reduction target to be achieved at least within two years after the entry into force of the Directive leading to an eventual ban by 2020 at least, applicable to all single-use carrier bags with no exemptions is essential to ensure an effective reduction in the use of single use carrier bags.

We call on MEPs of the ENVI committee to rise to the challenge of reducing the consumption of single use plastics, with a ban on single-use carrier bags as an important starting point. As an interim measure, a binding reduction target must be introduced in the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive to ensure that the instruments are in place to greatly reduce their consumption.

We believe that the interim measure of 80% reduction can be achieved by a fixed charge, before the total phase out of all single-use carrier bags in Europe. Lightweight bags under 10 microns, biobased, biodegradable or compostable polymers and paper bags must all be subject to charges and the reduction target. All of these single use bags cause environmental damage and do not represent a viable option for moving towards a resource efficient economy.

We call on MEPs of the ENVI committee not to grant exemptions for any single use carrier bag, regardless of the material used. Only reusable carrier bags should be encouraged to ensure an end to plastic bag littering and to ensure resource efficiency.

Contacts
Antidia Citores, Surfrider Foundation Europe, acitores@surfrider.eu, tel: +33 (0)6 32 68 9036
Emma Priestland, Seas at Risk, epriestland@seas-at-risk.org, tel: +32 (0)2 893 0967