

Vote on introduction of ban on microbeads to take place

The proposed ban will apply to the supply and manufacture of 'rinse-off' personal care products which contain plastic microbeads.

Plastic microbeads are a common ingredient in many hand cleansers, face scrubs, toothpastes, shower gels, cosmetics and other personal care products. When washed down the drain, they are too small to be filtered out in sewage treatment systems, so a proportion enter the marine environment, causing harm to marine life.

Last month, the Welsh Government tabled the Environmental Protection (Microbeads) (Wales) Regulations 2018. If voted through the Senedd today, the ban will make it an offence to manufacture any rinse-off personal care products which contain plastic microbeads. It will also be an offence to supply rinse-off personal care products which contain microbeads.

If agreed following today's vote, the ban will come into force on 30 June.

The Minister for Environment, Hannah Blythyn, said:

"Microbeads in rinse-off products are unnecessary and harmful to sea life. A ban will reduce pollutants from entering our seas and is an important step to safeguarding our marine environment.

"This ban is part of a range of measures here in Wales to reduce waste, tackle plastic pollution and increase recycling. For example, our local authority targets for household recycling mean we recycle 75% of plastic bottles collected from households, compared with 57% across the whole of the UK.

"2018 is Wales' Year Of The Sea and we're taking action to tackle plastic pollution, including signing up to the UN Clean Seas pledge earlier this month. We're also developing water refill points at key communities along our Wales Coast Path, helping reduce further the amount of plastic entering our seas."