

15th April 2019

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE GOVERNMENT OF MALAWI ON THE THIN PLASTICS BAN

Planet Earth is in the grip of a global crisis. Across the world, plastic waste is spoiling oceans, destroying landscapes, killing animals and putting human lives at risk.

Malawi is no exception. Estimates suggest that a staggering 75,000 tonnes of plastic is produced in Malawi each year, of which 80% is single-use plastic that cannot be recycled.¹ The social, environmental and economic costs of plastic pollution are vast, resulting in damage to soil, water and food production, increased risk of floods, costs to human health and losses in tourism revenue.²

But - right now - there is a chance to make a real difference. On 16 April the Supreme Court will decide whether to implement a national ban on the production and use of thin plastics - a ban that was first introduced by the Government in 2015 before being successfully challenged by the plastic industry. We, the undersigned, congratulate the Government for showing resolve in passing the ban and look forward to the outcome of the hearing.

We believe a ban would be a critical first step in the fight against plastic pollution and a chance to show that Malawi is serious about protecting its people and environment. Public opinion is behind us, with results from a recent survey showing that 95% of people believe that plastic pollution is a serious issue in Malawi and 94% of people support a ban.³

Signed by:



Hon. Alex Major
Co-chair
MPCC



Adam Davies
Malawi Country Director
United Purpose



William Chadza
Executive Director
CEPA



Jonny Vaughan
CEO
Lilongwe Wildlife Trust



Victoria Ifould
Acting Director
ICCM



Yousaf Jomezai
Malawi Country Director
Concern Worldwide



Chifundo Dalireni
Deputy Branch Manager
WESM Lilongwe



Kobie Brand
Regional Director
ICLEI Africa



Max-Howard Mgala
Executive Director
CYDO



Helen Todd
Executive Director
Art Glo



Malawi Management Team
Mission Rabies



Mathews Malata Jr.
AEJ in Malawi
President



Yolanda Ng'oma
Country Coordinator
LOS Malawi Arts Festival



Samantha Ludick
Proprietor
Cool Runnings



Ivan Dos Santos
Manager
Safari Beach Lodge

1. *Addressing Plastic Pollution in Malawi: Review and Recommendations*, April 2019. Commissioned by UNDP, undertaken by Anchor Environmental with technical support from Lilongwe Wildlife Trust. Available upon request.

2. *Single-Use Plastics: A Roadmap for Sustainability*, June 2018, UNEP; *Plastic & Health: The Hidden Costs of a Plastic Planet*, February 2019, Center for International Environmental Law, Earthworks, Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives, Healthy Babies Bright Futures (HBBF), IPEN, Texas Environmental Justice Advocacy Services (t.e.j.a.s.), University of Exeter, and UPSTREAM.

3. Survey conducted by Lilongwe Wildlife Trust, April 2019 (1,554 respondents).