

 **Case study on plastic bags**

PART 1

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Case study on plastic bags
Why?

- Unnecessary over-consumption of plastic
- Plastic bags making landscape unsightly
- Plastic bags causing environmental damage
- Plastic bags becoming a health hazard

Plastic bags

- Cause pollution
- Harm health
- Create waste



RIA Case study

The purpose of the session after lunch is to divide you into three groups and set you the task of undertaking a basic regulatory impact assessment.

Do

Each group should appoint a:

- Rapporteur (someone to take notes)
- A facilitator to guide the discussions
- Someone to present the findings to the main session (either the Rapporteur or the facilitator)
- Ask questions one of us will be available.

Don't

- Take too long in starting the discussion
- Worry too much about not having all the data needed (you can make assumptions)
- Take too long to get through the exercise
- Exceed 5 minutes with your summary

Remember

- Good Policy-Making needs to be informed by evidence
- Impact assessment is a way of framing a policy issue by means of:
 - Defining the problem
 - Developing options
 - Working out the costs of the options
 - Making a decision on the options based on a cost benefit analysis or a political decision.

Tasks for Groups

1. What is the objective of this RIA?
2. What is the 'Preferred Option'?
3. What are the estimated main costs of regulation?
4. What are the main benefits of regulation?
5. What stakeholders should be consulted and why?

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Part 2

Solutions ?

Suggested solutions to Over-use
of Plastic Bags and why we put forward this solution over the
others

Solution 1: Take no action

Solution 2: Voluntary reduction in plastic bag
consumption

Solution 3: Set-up a "*Plastic-bag Police Team*" to
take action, or

Solution 4: Impose a levy on plastic bags

Levy on Plastic Bags

- Irish Government introduced levy in March 2002
- Levy at 15 cent per plastic bag
- Pre-levy: 328 bags per person p.a.
- Post-levy: 21 bags per person p.a.
and a decrease of over
95% in plastic bag litter

LEVY

- Made use of existing structures (existing Tax Collection System and Local Government institutions)
- Not an “over-bureaucratic” process
- Public can see evidence of where the levies are being spent
- Good “back-check” system (from Levies collected and Plastic-bag sales)

Use of Levies from Plastic Bag Tax

- The provision of civic recycling facilities
- Operational costs of running civic recycling facilities
- Enforcement of the Waste Management Acts
- North / south waste initiatives such as all-island scheme for the Management of waste fridges and freezers
- Waste awareness campaigns and
- A very successful "Green Schools" initiative