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Tuesday 19 May

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EVENTS DIARY

MEP enters oxo-biodegradable plastic debate

Tony Corbin May 19, 2015 No Comments » Print

Conservative MEP David Campbell Bannerman has spoken out against those attacking oxo-biodegradable plastic.



The European Parliament recently legislated to reduce the number of bags in circulation, but the potential of oxo-biodegradable plastics has been an important side issue.

Campbell Bannerman spoke about the British technology stating that the debate so far had been characterised by an unjust and misinformed attack on oxo-biodegradable plastic technology, which he added "has a considerable contribution to make in the battle against plastic bag littering."

He said: "Whilst this technology has vast potential, the Rapporteur (Margrete Auken) had given in to rival Italian vested interests resting on hydro-biodegradable technology which has simply sought to eliminate a competitor from the market. We should proceed on the basis of independently produced, solid, scientific evidence, not misinformed smears".

He was pleased that the Commission will be conducting a serious scientific study.

The Oxo-Biodegradable Plastics Association (OPA) said it welcomes the opportunity to prove to the Commission that oxo-biodegradable plastic does work as claimed. It said in a statement: "A plastic bag made with oxo-biodegradable technology can be programmed to have a shelf life, usually 6-18 months, after which the plastic will degrade in the presence of oxygen and then biodegrade, in much the same way as nature's wastes, leaving nothing behind.

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"If collected it can be re-cycled with old-fashioned plastic into similar products but if it escapes collection and ends up in the open environment, it will not lie or float around for decades, it will degrade and biodegrade in the same way as a leaf, only quicker.

"Ten countries around the world have already embraced this technology, rather than banning plastic bags which has consequences for the economy and public health. They have legislated to make oxo-biodegradable plastic mandatory, which makes a lot more sense than banning the bags in the first place."

The news follows the OPA and UK company Symphony Environmental responding to plastic bag bans, which both deemed to be unnecessary, being recently rejected in New York and Huntington Beach, California.



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