



3rd October 2017

**Statement from the Environmental Investigation Agency, Fauna & Flora International, Greenpeace UK, and the Marine Conservation Society (the microbeads coalition)**

Cosmetics industry representatives have [submitted a statement](#) to the European Commission regarding the UK Government's plan to introduce a legislative ban on plastic microbeads.

Among other comments, they have objected to the scope of the proposed legislation, which is currently set to ban all solid microplastic ingredients found in rinse-off cosmetic products, arguing that only solid plastic particles used for cleansing or exfoliating should be banned.

**Responding to this statement, the microbeads coalition said:**

*"Our seas have become a dumping ground for plastic waste including microplastics, which are just as harmful to marine wildlife and ecosystems as larger plastic items, even if they are less visible.*

*"Solid microplastic ingredients should never be used in products that are directly washed down the drain into our waterways. These ingredients include not only exfoliating microbeads, which have been well publicised, but also a range of other microplastic ingredients used for a variety of purposes that pose just as much of a threat to the marine environment.*

*"The ban announced by the UK government is world-leading in its ambition to successfully put a stop to this source of marine pollution and avoid the loopholes identified in other legislation around the world as well as in voluntary measures taken by UK companies to date. A weakening of the ban, as proposed by this industry statement, would prevent effective, robust legislation and would allow damaging microplastics to continue flowing into our seas.*

*"Pollution is pollution, regardless of the role a microplastic ingredient plays within a product. We therefore object to the idea of limiting the microbeads ban to include only exfoliating ingredients, and urge the government to continue to show leadership on this issue."*