

# Comparing Characteristics of National Bans on Microbeads

Data compiled from 2018 UNEP Report - Legal Limits of Single Use Plastics and Microplastics - A Review of National Laws and Regulations

Country	Microbead Definition	Type of prohibitions limiting microbeads	Type of products covered limiting the USE and SALE of microbeads	Type of Exemption of Microbead containing product	Phase in Dates
<a href="#">Canada</a>	microbeads are defined in item 133 of the List of Toxic Substances in Schedule 1 to the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999 as plastic microbeads that are ≤ 5 mm in size	<b>Cannot manufacture, import, or sell</b>  A person must not manufacture or import any toiletries that contain microbeads. A person must not sell any toiletries that contain microbeads	<b>Toiletries</b>  Toiletries means any personal hair, skin, teeth or mouth care products for cleansing or hygiene, including exfoliants and any of those products that is also a natural health product as defined in the Natural Health Products Regulations or a non-prescription drug.	<b>Transit of goods</b> - toiletries in transit through Canada, from a place outside Canada to another place outside Canada. Transit of goods	Entered into Force January 1, 2018 Prohibition to manufacture, sell, or import applies on or after July 1, 2018. Toiletries that are also natural health products or non-prescription drug prohibition applies on or after July 1, 2019
<a href="#">France</a>	any solid particle including microbeads smaller than 5 millimeters made of plastic in whole or in part, obtained by a hot-shaping process	<b>Cannot sell</b>  The introduction on the market of exfoliating and cleaning rinse-off cosmetics. Defines "introduction on the market" as "making available for the first time the supply of a product intended to be distributed, consumed or used on the national territory."	<b>Cosmetic and rinse-off cosmetic</b>  A cosmetic product shall mean any substance or preparation intended to be in contact with external parts of the human body (epidermis, hair system, nails, lips and external genital organs) or with teeth and oral mucosa with a view exclusively or mainly to cleaning them, perfuming them, changing their appearance, protecting them, keeping them in good condition or correcting body odours; a rinse-off cosmetic is defined as a "product which is intended to be removed by a water rinse immediately after use"	<b>Biodegradable Alternatives</b> - natural origin particles that are not likely to remain in the environment, to spread chemical or biological active ingredients as "solid natural origin particles for which the time and degradation conditions are defined by an order from the Minister for the Environment". It also defines the term "natural origin particles that are not likely to impact animal food chains" as "solid natural origin particles not containing or not releasing during their degradation in sea water classified substances, either because of a danger for the environment, either due to a danger for human health, by an order from the Minister for the Environment"	Entered into Force January 1, 2018
<a href="#">Italy</a>	Microbeads ("microplastiche") are defined as solid plastic parcels of 5 or less millimetres	<b>Cannot sell</b>  forbidden to sell cosmetic rinse products with an exfoliating or detergent action containing microplastics.	<b>Rinse-off cosmetics</b>  Products [that are] rinsing cosmetics with exfoliating or detergent containing microplastics.	<b>No Exemption</b>	Entered into force January 1, 2018, Prohibition to sell begins January 1, 2020
<a href="#">Republic of Korea</a>	Microplastic are defined as solid plastic under 5 mm, contained in rinse-off, scrub, and other products	<b>Cannot sell or manufacture</b>  use of raw materials cannot be used in cosmetics and restrictions on the use of cosmetics should be specified	<b>Cosmetics and sanitary aids</b>  product types such as cosmetics (for rinse-off, scrub, etc) and sanitary aids (gargle, toothpaste, and teeth whitening)	<b>No Exemption</b>	Entered into force July 1, 2017 for cosmetics, May 19, 2017 for sanitary aids
<a href="#">New Zealand</a>	Microbead means a water-insoluble plastic particle that is less than 5 mm at its widest point.	<b>Cannot sell or manufacture</b>  A person must not sell a prohibited wash-off product in New Zealand. A person must not manufacture a prohibited wash-off product in New Zealand.	<b>Wash-off products including heavy-duty hand cleansers, abrasive cleaning products and car or industrial cleaning products</b>  wash-off product for 1 or more of the following purposes: (i) exfoliation of all or part of a person's body; (ii) cleaning of all or part of a person's body; (iii) abrasive cleaning of any area, surface, or thing; (iv) visual appearance of the product;	<b>Medical</b> - Medical device is any device, instrument, apparatus, appliance, or other article is intended to be used in, on, or for human beings for a therapeutic purpose. Medicine is defined as any substance or article that is manufactured, imported, sold, or supplied wholly or principally for administering to 1 or more human beings for a therapeutic purpose	Entered into force June 7, 2018
<a href="#">Sweden</a>	plastic particles that are smaller than 5 mm in any dimension,	<b>Cannot sell</b>  It is prohibited to provide a cosmetic product on the market	<b>rinse-off cosmetic</b>  A cleansing, exfoliating or polishing effect in rinse-off cosmetic products. The prohibition covers cosmetic products intended to be rinsed of or spat out after use on skin, hair, mucous membrane or teeth.	<b>Biodegradable Alternatives</b> - The ban does not cover cosmetic products containing microbeads consisting solely of natural occurring polymers. The Chemicals Agency may issue regulations on exceptions or in individual cases grant exemption from the ban.	Entered into force on 1 July 2018. Cosmetic products released on the market before July 1, 2018 must be phased out by the end of December 2018.
<a href="#">UK</a>	"microbead" means any water-insoluble solid plastic particle of less than or equal to 5mm in any dimension;	<b>Cannot sell or manufacture</b>  A person who, in the manufacture of any rinse-off personal care product, uses microbeads as an ingredient of that product is guilty of an offence. A person who supplies, or offers to supply, any rinse-off personal care product containing microbeads is guilty of an offence.	<b>rinse-off personal care product</b>  "rinse-off personal care product" means any substance, or mixture of substances, manufactured for the purpose of being applied to any relevant human body part in the course of any personal care treatment, by an application which entails at its completion the prompt and specific removal of the product (or any residue of the product) by washing or rinsing with water, rather than leaving it to wear off or wash off, or be absorbed or shed, in the course of time; and for this purpose— (a) a "personal care treatment" means any process of cleaning, protecting or perfuming a relevant human body part, maintaining or restoring its condition or changing its appearance; and (b) a "relevant human body part" is— (i) any external part of the human body (including any part of the epidermis, hair system, nails or lips); (ii) the teeth; or (iii) mucous membranes of the oral cavity;	<b>No Exemption</b>	N. Ireland - The prohibition on the manufacture and sale will come into force in September 2018.  England - The prohibition on the manufacture came into force on January 9, 2018 for manufacture, June 19, 2018 for sale  Scotland - The prohibition on the manufacture and sale came into force on July 9, 2018.  Wales - The prohibition on the manufacture and sale came into force on 30 June 2018.
<a href="#">US</a>	"plastic microbead" is defined as any solid plastic particle that is — 5 millimeters or less in size and intended to be used to exfoliate or cleanse the body or any part of the body.	<b>Cannot manufacture, import, package, or sell</b>  The manufacture or the introduction or delivery for introduction into interstate commerce of a rinse-off cosmetic that contains intentionally-added plastic microbeads	<b>cosmetics and non-prescription (also called "over-the-counter" or "OTC") drugs, such as toothpastes</b>  Rinse off cosmetic intended to be used to exfoliate or cleanse the human body or any part thereof; the term 'rinse-off cosmetic' includes toothpaste	<b>Medical</b> - drugs that are not also cosmetics	For rinse-off cosmetics: Prohibition to stop the manufacturing of the products was July 1, 2017. Prohibition to stop the introduction or delivery for introduction of these products into interstate commerce was July 1, 2018. For rinse-off cosmetics that are also non-prescription drugs: The deadline was July 1, 2018 to stop manufacturing the products described in the law. The deadline to stop the introduction or delivery for introduction of these products into interstate commerce is July 1, 2019.