

# Eco-groups urge e-commerce sites to reduce plastic use, packaging waste

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MANILA, Philippines — Public interest groups have urged top e-commerce sites such as Shopee and Lazada to reduce their plastic use and packaging waste as they mount their respective 11.11 one-day super online sale.

Through an open letter on Wednesday, 150 diverse groups advocating for a zero waste and toxics-free society have urged online shopping sites to take steps to cut their packaging footprint as the country grapples with increasing plastic waste and pollution crisis.

“We make this appeal to all online shopping platforms to heed our plea for sustainable e-commerce that will not cause further harm to our ailing environment and climate, and endanger the health of humans and other living organisms,” EcoWaste Coalition Policy Advocacy Officer Patricia Nicdao said.

“With the surge in e-shopping, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, we cannot help but be concerned about the huge amounts of plastic packaging produced, consumed and disposed of by the multi-billion peso online retail industry,” the groups wrote.

The groups lamented that much of these packaging wastes are going straight to garbage bins, buried in landfills, incinerated in cement kilns, clogged in drainage canals and river systems, or dumped into the world’s oceans harming marine life.

“As two of the top e-commerce sites in the country, we appeal to Lazada and Shopee to set a good example in preventing and reducing the generation of packaging waste, particularly by diminishing plastic use, from online retail transactions,” the groups said.

They presented recommendations to the online shopping sites and others to cut down on their plastic use and packaging waste:

1. Make public their plastic footprint (i.e., types and quantities of plastic packaging materials used annually);
2. Adopt a plastic packaging waste prevention and reduction policy, including plastic-free packaging choice at checkout, returning used packages with reverse logistics and other schemes, and incentives for reduced packaging;
3. Transition to ecological and safe options for delivering goods, including appropriate product packaging, to reduce disposable and unnecessary plastic and packaging waste;
4. Implement time-targeted and measurable phase-out plans for plastic packaging materials;
5. Communicate such phase-out plans to manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers and consumers; and to
6. Create a merchants’ section for those who sustainably package their products.

The groups also called on e-commerce sites to offer, partner with, and provide incentives to developers, makers, distributors, dealers and customers of alternatives to single-use plastic bags, sachets, cups, cutlery, beverage and water bottles, straws and even diapers, panty liners and sanitary pads.

Aside from providing customers with a plastic-free shopping experience, the groups further urged online shopping platforms to purge their sites of products that pose health and safety risks

This includes non-compliant toys and childcare articles, contraband cosmetics containing lead, mercury and other contaminants, banned mercury-containing medical devices, proscribed or recalled products, etc.

Read more: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1359221/eco-groups-urge-e-commerce-sites-to-reduce-plastic-use-packaging-waste#ixzz6eDcfR9b3>

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