



Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang Consumers Association of Penang

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Press Release

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CAP and SAM Support the Global Movement to “Break Free from Plastic”

The Consumers’ Association of Penang (CAP) and Sahabat Alam Malaysia (SAM) are part of the newly-launched Break Free from Plastic movement to stem the tide of plastic pollution across the globe.

It is reported that each year, at least 8 million tonnes of plastics leak into the ocean. Estimates suggest that there are over 150 million tonnes of plastic in the ocean today. In a business as usual scenario the ocean is expected to contain one tonne of plastic for every three tonnes of fish by 2025 and by 2050 more plastic than fish by weight.

Despite the danger that plastic pollution poses to public health, marine biodiversity and the environment, governments and industry have so far failed to address the problem. We also need to change consumer’s perception and use of plastics.

Recognising the growing problem of plastic pollution, the #breakfreefromplastic movement’s vision statement says, “We believe in a world where the land, sky, oceans, and water are home to an abundance of life, not an abundance of plastic, and where the air we breathe, the water we drink and the food we eat is free of toxic by-products of plastic pollution. In this world the principles of environmental justice, social justice, public health, and human rights lead government policy, not the demands of elites and corporations.”

Towards a future that is free of plastic pollution, the movement will pursue the following shared principles:

- 1) Our lifestyles and economy fit within the environment limits of the planet.
- 2) Waste is reduced, first and foremost.
- 3) The life cycle of the materials and products we use – from extraction and production, to end use, recycling, composting, and disposal –sustain the health of the people and the planet.
- 4) Strong community action and partnerships among citizens, workers, government, sector experts, and supportive business leaders guide decisions about present and future material design, manufacturing, and waste management.
- 5) Waste pickers and recycling workers are supported to improve the systems they operate in and can co-lead a just transition to a new and safe materials economy.
- 6) Producers take responsibility for the full life cycle costs and impacts of their products and packaging, and are redesigning and innovating better materials and systems.
- 7) Where plastic products and packages are necessary, they are re-used, repaired, or, failing that, recycled; and toxic substances are eliminated from their production.
- 8) No new incinerators are constructed, and renewable energy incentives are eliminated for

plastics and waste burning. This includes gasification, pyrolysis, cement kilns, and other burn “waste-to-energy” facilities.

9) Organic waste returns to the soils and zero waste systems reduce reliance on landfills and incinerators.

10) The systems we build and materials we use slow climate change, rather than accelerate it.

Interested groups and individuals who share the above vision and principles may join the movement by signing up at <http://breakfreefromplastic.org/> .

Our ultimate goal is a future free from plastic pollution.

S.M. MOHAMED IDRIS

President

Consumers Association of Penang