



**THE HON JOSH FRYDENBERG MP**  
Minister for the Environment and Energy

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Assistant Minister for the Environment

## **JOINT MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **MICROBEADS SUCCESSFULLY PHASING OUT IN COSMETICS AND PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS**

Industry has successfully risen to the challenge issued by Australia's environment ministers to voluntarily phase out the use of microbeads in cosmetic and personal care products, with 94 per cent of these products now microbead-free.

An independent assessment, commissioned by the Coalition Government, found that of approximately 4400 relevant supermarket and pharmacy products inspected, only six per cent were found to contain microbeads.

"While our original target was 90 per cent, we will continue the good work done to date until 100 per cent of cosmetics and personal care products are microbead-free," Minister Frydenberg said.

Microbeads are plastic particles of around one millimetre in diameter and have been widely used as an ingredient in cosmetic and personal care products, especially exfoliants.

They can have a damaging effect on marine life and marine environments because of their composition, ability to attract toxins and ability to transfer up the marine food chain.

They can also pollute our waterways, meaning the removal of products containing microbeads from our supermarket and pharmacy shelves will not only benefit the environment, but also human health.

"The best solution is to prevent them from entering marine environments in first place – and governments have been working with industry to do just this since the Meeting of Environment Ministers in 2016," Minister Frydenberg said.

The independent assessment found no shampoos, conditioners, body washes or hand cleaners contained microbeads, indicating that the phase out in these products may be complete.

The remaining six per cent are predominantly not 'rinse-off' products and therefore pose a much smaller risk of entering marine environments.

"I thank industry for their cooperation and look forward to continuing to work with them until we reach 100 per cent," Minister Frydenberg said.

Assistant Minister for the Environment Melissa Price said she was pleased with how well the phase out had gone, considering it was an optional phase out of products by the industry.

"I am really pleased to see such a strong industry response, given the damage that microbeads can do to our marine ecosystems," Assistant Minister Price said.

"This is further proof that industry is capable of making the right choices when it comes to environmental protection."

The Coalition Government will commission a further assessment in late 2018 to provide an additional level of assurance of the success of the phase out.

**Ends**

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