Resolution No. 49-BOD-01, CD1

"Requesting the governments of the member states and territories of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures to support the efforts to decrease the consumption and impact—both economic and environmental—associated with non-compostable plastic checkout bags."

WHEREAS, discarded non-compostable plastic bags pollute the environment and pose a significant threat to animals; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the harm that these plastic bags present, the manufacturing of these bags requires the needless consumption of the earth’s ever-depleting non-renewable resources; and

WHEREAS, while the economic and social costs associated with plastic bags are high, attempts to mitigate the harms through recycling have proven ineffectual because the present price of recycling is prohibitively higher; and

WHEREAS, we have a duty to preserve our resources, and to act as guardians for mother earth for the benefit of our children and their children; and

WHEREAS, issues relating to consumption and the impact, both economic and environmental, associated with plastic bags must no longer be ignored; and

WHEREAS, in terms of global consumption, each year an estimated 500 billion to one trillion plastic bags are consumed worldwide amounting to over one million bags per minute and billions of these bags end up each year as litter; and

WHEREAS, relative to environmental impact, the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures also finds that hundreds of thousands of sea turtles, whales, and other marine mammals die every year from eating discarded plastic bags mistaken for food; and
WHEREAS, plastic bags are also harmful because rather than biodegrade, they photo
degrade — that is, they break down into smaller and smaller toxic bits, which eventually
contaminate the soil and waterways, and enter the food chain when animals accidentally ingest
them; and

WHEREAS, this Resolution manifests but one avenue for an APIL region-wide effort to
assist our global neighbors in the reversal of global warming and greenhouse effects that threaten
to harm our environment and the welfare of all the earth’s present and future inhabitants; and

WHEREAS, while recognizing that the changes mandated herein may be considered
inconvenient and expensive, APIL finds that the alternative of doing nothing and standing idly
by, is unacceptable; and

WHEREAS, the measures taken today are not unprecedented and have been successful
in other parts of the world, wherein, Ireland consumed 1.2 billion plastic bags, or 316 per person
in 2001 and reduced this consumption by 90% by introducing a plastic bag consumption tax in
2002, resulting in saving approximately 18,000,000 liters of oil; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Directors of the Association of Pacific Island
Legislatures, 49th Meeting, December 4-5, 2008, Majuro, Republic of the Marshall Islands, that
member jurisdictions of APIL are encouraged to promote and support efforts to decrease the
consumption and impact—both economic and environmental—associated with the use of non-
compostable plastic checkout bags by discouraging the use of non-compostable plastic bags by
imposing a fee on the importation and use of the common checkout plastic bag and to encourage
the use of reusable bags, whenever practical, by providing economic incentives to grocery stores
that provide a viable reusable alternative; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the President of the Association of Pacific Island
Legislatures certifies, and the Secretary of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures attests to
the adoption hereof and that copies of the same shall be thereafter transmitted to the Presiding
Legislative Officers and Chief Executives of each of the APIL member jurisdictions.

DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED ON THE 5TH DAY OF DECEMBER, 2008.

J. KALANI ENGLISH  JOUITH T. WON PAT, Ed. D.
PRESIDENT  SECRETARY