



**GREEN SANGHA**

**Green Sangha**

P.O. Box 20261  
Oakland, CA 94620  
510-532-6574

[www.GreenSangha.org](http://www.GreenSangha.org)

**Founder**

Jonathan Gustin, MFT

**Executive Committee**

Linda Currie

Trathen Heckman  
*Executive Director*

Elizabeth Little

Stuart Moody, MA

Beth Terry

**Advisory Council**

Jack Kornfield  
*Spirit Rock Meditation Center*

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*Buddhist Teacher and Activist*

Carol Misseldine  
*Sustainability Coordinator  
City of Mill Valley*

Mark Squire  
*Natural Foods Grocer*

Diana Winston  
*Mindful Awareness  
Research Center, UCLA*

**Healing our communities  
and restoring the earth  
through mindful practice  
and awakened action**

March 25, 2009

Sam Schuchat, Secretary  
Ocean Protection Council  
1330 Broadway, Suite 1300  
Oakland, CA 94612

**Re: Master Environmental Assessment (MEA) on single-use  
and reusable bags – SUPPORT**

Dear Secretary Schuchat and Members of the California Ocean  
Protection Council:

Green Sangha commends the California Ocean Protection Council  
for its leadership in addressing critical issues facing California's  
marine environment, including the daunting problem of marine  
debris. We strongly support the proposed Master Environmental  
Assessment (MEA) on single-use bags (both plastic and paper) and  
reusable bags. This MEA will help California municipalities quickly  
complete Environmental Impact Reports (EIR's) as they consider  
bans of plastic bags.

As you know, the Ocean Protection Council has determined that  
single-use plastic bags significantly contribute to the serious litter  
and marine debris problem facing the state. For that reason, OPC's  
Ocean Litter Implementation Strategy includes as Priority Action #2  
a call for a prohibition on single-use products such as plastic bags.

Many California cities have heeded this call for action and are  
developing ordinances intended to minimize or eliminate single-use  
bags through the adoption of bans on plastic bags and, in some  
cases, fees on paper bags. However, a ruling issued February 20,  
2009, in Los Angeles County on a challenge under CEQA to a  
municipal plastic bag ban now requires that municipality to  
complete an EIR before it can implement its ban.

Completion of an MEA on single-use bags will greatly simplify the  
EIR process for cities such as Los Angeles, allowing them to  
incorporate the MEA into their individual EIRs. This will save  
valuable time and money, thus facilitating the implementation of  
single-use bag regulations throughout the state.

Thank you for considering our input.

Sincerely,

Stuart Moody  
Rethinking Plastics campaign director  
Green Sangha  
[www.greensangha.org](http://www.greensangha.org)