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Legal and Policy Analysis

for the National Strategy Plan/ Roadmap for a Plastic Pollution-Free Mauritius

FINAL REPORT

Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change



IslandPlas



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Executive Summary

This Legal and Policy Framework Review provides an assessment of the country’s existing legislative frameworks governing plastics, situating it within national development priorities, international obligations, and emerging global best practices. It evaluates the effectiveness of current laws and regulations, identifies systemic gaps, and proposes a coherent pathway to strengthen plastic governance through a lifecycle-based and circular economy approach by enacting a Plastic Governance and Control Act.

National Legislative Landscape

At the national level, Mauritius has adopted a multi-layered set of legal instruments addressing plastics at different points of their lifecycle. The Environment Act 2024 serves as the overarching environmental framework, empowering the Minister to enact regulations for the prevention, reduction and control of plastic pollution, while ensuring alignment with international agreements. A key advancement under this Act is the formal introduction of a Plastic Management Committee as the central policy-coordination and advisory body responsible for guiding Mauritius’ national response to plastic pollution.

Complementing this framework, the Waste Management and Resource Recovery Act 2023 establishes the legal foundation for Mauritius’ transition towards a circular economy. It embeds the waste hierarchy, provides for EPR schemes, licensing of recyclers, and data reporting obligations, and creates opportunities for instruments such as deposit-refund mechanisms. However, the Act remains predominantly waste-oriented, focusing on plastics once they become waste rather than regulating plastics throughout their full lifecycle. This limits its effectiveness in preventing plastic pollution at source and underscores the need for plastic-specific legislation.

The Environment (Control of Single Use Plastic Products) Regulations 2020 represent a significant policy intervention aimed at reducing high-leakage, short-lived plastic items. These Regulations prohibit a defined list of non-biodegradable single-use plastic products while allowing alternatives made from “materials other than plastic”, subject to registration, certification and testing. Despite their intent, implementation has been hampered by definitional ambiguities, narrow product

coverage, repeated moratoria, and the absence of clear criteria for biodegradability and compostability. As a result, enforcement challenges persist and the overall environmental impact of substitution materials remains uncertain.

Mauritius' long-standing efforts to regulate plastic bags are reflected in the Environment Protection (Banning of Plastic Bags) Regulations, strengthened through amendments in 2020 and 2025. The 2025 amendments are particularly notable for introducing legal precision by explicitly listing prohibited petroleum-derived polymers and aligning standards for biodegradable and compostable bags with international norms. While these measures close key loopholes and enhance enforceability, plastic bag regulation remains product-specific and disconnected from a broader lifecycle or EPR framework, limiting its contribution to systemic plastic reduction

The Environment Protection (PET Bottle Permit) Regulations 2001 stand as Mauritius' earliest application of producer responsibility, requiring beverage bottlers using PET to obtain permits and report on collection and recycling. Although innovative at the time, the Regulations have become outdated, covering only locally bottled beverages and excluding imported pre-filled PET bottles, other PET containers, and non-PET plastic bottles. The absence of a formalised EPR or deposit-refund scheme results in incomplete oversight and underutilised potential for improving PET recovery and recycling rates

International and Regional Commitments

Mauritius' domestic plastic governance is reinforced by its participation in key international and regional frameworks, including the MARPOL Convention, Basel Convention, Stockholm Convention, Paris Agreement, and the Nairobi Convention. These commitments underscore the country's obligations to prevent marine pollution, control hazardous waste movements, and address climate impacts associated with plastics. As a Small Island Developing State (SIDS), Mauritius has also embedded plastic pollution concerns within its commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) and SDG 14 (Life Below Water). Furthermore, Mauritius has emerged as an active advocate for a Global Plastics Treaty, reinforcing its leadership role in international plastic diplomacy.

Review of existing legislative frameworks

Across all legislative frameworks reviewed, four critical dimensions have been used to determine their effectiveness. The dimensions are: comprehensiveness of coverage, monitoring, evaluation and enforcement, infrastructure and alternatives, and stakeholder engagement.

While Mauritius' laws and regulations demonstrate strong intent and increasing technical sophistication, they remain fragmented, product-specific and uneven in scope. Definitions of plastics, biodegradable materials, recyclability, and problematic plastics are inconsistent or absent, creating regulatory uncertainty and enforcement loopholes. Monitoring and evaluation systems are underdeveloped, with no consolidated national plastic flow inventory, limited plastic-specific performance indicators, and insufficient transparency. Enforcement remains focused on downstream waste handlers rather than upstream producers and importers, weakening accountability across the value chain

Infrastructure gaps further undermine policy effectiveness. The promotion of biodegradable or compostable alternatives has outpaced the development of industrial composting, reuse, refill and advanced recycling infrastructure. Without appropriate facilities, alternative materials risk becoming environmentally equivalent to conventional plastics. Additionally, limited investment in research and development constrains the identification of locally appropriate, socially, economically and environmentally viable alternatives.

Stakeholder engagement remains insufficiently institutionalised. Regular, structured dialogue with producers, retailers, recyclers, municipalities, civil society, informal waste collectors and consumers is lacking. This limits shared ownership of policy objectives, weakens behavioural change, and increases resistance or accidental non-compliance.

Comparative Insights and Best Practices

The comparative analysis of Rwanda, Antigua and Barbuda, Singapore, New Zealand and the European Union highlights valuable lessons for Mauritius. Successful jurisdictions adopt holistic, lifecycle-based regulation, combine bans with economic instruments, embed Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) as a financial lever, and invest heavily in public communication and

stakeholder participation. Phased implementation, adaptive policymaking, and strong data systems emerge as common success factors.

Strategic Direction and Recommendations

Mauritius has reached a transition point in its plastic governance journey. While multiple regulations addressing plastic pollution are already in place, their fragmented, product-specific and reactive nature limits their effectiveness. The Review therefore recommends the enactment of a comprehensive Plastic Governance and Control Act (PGCA), supported by strengthened and harmonised regulations on single-use plastics, plastic carrier bags and Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for packaging.

1. Plastic Governance and Control Act

The Plastic Governance and Control Act (PGCA) is proposed as the central legislative instrument to address plastic pollution in Mauritius in a comprehensive, coherent and forward-looking manner. The Act is designed to overcome the limitations of the current regulatory frameworks by consolidating existing plastic-related regulations and introducing a lifecycle-based approach to plastic management. It is intended to serve as the primary legal vehicle for implementing the National Strategic Plan (NSP) and Roadmap towards a Plastic-Pollution-Free Mauritius.

At its core, the PGCA shifts plastic governance away from a narrow focus on bans and downstream waste management towards prevention, accountability and circularity. The Act regulates plastics across their entire lifecycle—design, production, importation, distribution, consumption, collection, recycling and final disposal. This approach ensures that plastic pollution is addressed at source rather than only once plastic becomes waste.

A key function of the Act is to establish clear and harmonised legal definitions. The PGCA will provide definitions of, *inter alia*, plastic and single-use plastic which must be aligned with international standards and shall be amended as and when the Global Plastic Treaty comes into force. The Act will eliminate regulatory ambiguity, closes enforcement loopholes and ensures consistency across all subsidiary regulations, including those on plastic carry bags, single-use plastic products and packaging.

The Act embeds Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) as a binding legal obligation rather than a voluntary or policy-based instrument. Producers, importers and distributors placing plastic products or packaging on the Mauritian market are required to register, report quantities and material types, and finance the collection, recycling and recovery of plastic waste. Through EPR, the Act shifts financial and operational responsibility from public authorities to market actors, internalising the environmental costs of plastics and creating sustainable funding streams for waste management and recycling infrastructure.

Institutionally, the PGCA provides for the establishment of a Department of Plastic Management, responsible for coordinating and implementing plastic policy nationwide. The Department is structured into specialised divisions covering data and monitoring, research and development, recycling and circular economy, education and behavioural change, and policy, governance and finance. This institutional reform addresses current coordination gaps and ensures that policy development, implementation, monitoring and enforcement are integrated under a single authority.

The Act also strengthens monitoring, reporting and enforcement mechanisms. It mandates the development of a national plastic flow inventory, enabling the tracking of plastic quantities placed on the market, collected, recycled and leaked into the environment. Plastic-specific performance indicators and periodic evaluations are required to assess progress against NSP targets. Enforcement provisions include proportionate and dissuasive penalties, audits of producer compliance under EPR schemes, and digital traceability systems to enhance transparency and accountability.

Finally, the PGCA institutionalises stakeholder engagement as a core governance principle. It provides for structured and continuous engagement with industry, SMEs, recyclers, local authorities, civil society, academia and the informal sector. This participatory approach is essential to ensure social acceptance, economic feasibility and long-term behavioural change.

In summary, the Plastic Governance and Control Act represents a systemic shift in Mauritius' approach to plastic pollution—moving from fragmented, reactive regulation towards an integrated, lifecycle-based and circular plastic governance framework capable of delivering lasting environmental, economic and social benefits

2. Reform of Single-Use Plastic Product Regulations

The Review finds that the Environment (Control of Single Use Plastic Products) Regulations 2020 represent an important initial intervention to curb plastic pollution in Mauritius but are limited by narrow product coverage, definitional ambiguity, and implementation challenges. To achieve meaningful and sustained reductions in single-use plastic consumption, a reform of the SUPP regulatory framework is recommended.

First, the scope of regulation should be expanded beyond the current list of food-service items to include other forms of single-use plastics such as certain types of plastic carry bags. Regulation should be guided by a clear classification of non-essential and problematic plastics, prioritising items with short lifespans, low recyclability, and high littering potential. Additionally, the Review recommends addressing definitional gaps by clearly defining “plastic,” “single-use plastic,” “plastic carry bags” among others. Clear definition will promote efficient monitoring and enforcement

Secondly, the Regulations should be restructured under a phased-out approach, aligned with the National Strategic Plan (NSP). Rather than immediate bans, phase-wise implementation schedules should be adopted, supported by transition periods, market readiness assessments, and stakeholder consultation. This approach would reduce the need for repeated moratoria and improve compliance by industry and retailers.

Thirdly, monitoring, evaluation and enforcement mechanisms should be strengthened. The Review recommends integrating SUPP controls into a national plastic inventory to track quantities placed on the market, reductions achieved, and substitution trends. Clear performance indicators, public reporting, and periodic evaluations should be introduced. In addition to monetary fines, administrative sanctions, such as suspension or revocation of licences for repeat offenders, should be considered to enhance deterrence.

Fourthly, regulatory measures on SUPPs must be supported by appropriate infrastructure and alternatives. The promotion of biodegradable or compostable products should be conditional on the availability of treatment facilities, such as industrial composting. Without such infrastructure,

alternatives risk behaving like conventional plastics at end-of-life. Research and development on sustainable alternatives, reuse systems, and refill models should therefore be prioritised.

Finally, the Review emphasises the need for institutionalised stakeholder engagement. Continuous dialogue with producers, importers, retailers, recyclers, civil society and the informal sector is essential to ensure social acceptance, behavioural change and economic feasibility. Stakeholder platforms under the National Strategic Plan should be used to guide phased implementation and future regulatory adjustments.

The Review recommends repositioning single-use plastic product regulation within a broader Plastic Governance and Control framework, shifting from isolated bans to a coherent, lifecycle-based strategy that prioritises reduction, reuse and circular economy outcomes

3. Strengthening Plastic Carry Bag Regulations

Mauritius' plastic carrier bag regulations are recognised as among the country's most mature plastic control instruments, particularly following the 2025 amendments, which clarify polymer definitions and close key loopholes. However, the Review notes that these regulations remain product-specific and isolated, limiting their contribution to broader plastic reduction goals.

The Review recommends that plastic bag regulations be integrated into the Plastic Governance and Control Act and Single Use Plastic Product Regulations, ensuring consistency with lifecycle and circular economy principles. The polymer list introduced under the 2025 amendments should be made dynamic, allowing periodic review to capture emerging materials.

The Review also highlights the importance of aligning bag regulations with available infrastructure. Without industrial composting or organic waste separation systems, biodegradable or compostable bags risk behaving like conventional plastics in landfills or the marine environment. Regulatory decisions on alternatives should therefore be supported by life-cycle assessments and infrastructure readiness.

Improved data collection on quantities of bags placed on the market, compliance levels and reduction trends is recommended, alongside risk-based inspections and proportionate enforcement that differentiates between large commercial actors and small retailers.

4. Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Packaging

A central recommendation of the Review is the formalisation and operationalisation of Extended Producer Responsibility for plastic packaging. While EPR principles are referenced in existing legislation, they are not yet applied comprehensively or systematically.

The Review recommends that EPR for packaging be embedded as a binding legal obligation under the PGCA, requiring producers, importers and distributors to assume financial and operational responsibility for the post-consumer phase of packaging they place on the market. This includes mandatory registration, reporting of quantities and material types, financing of collection and recycling systems, and compliance with recovery or recycled-content targets.

Priority should be given to high-volume and high-leakage packaging streams, including PET bottles, flexible packaging and multilayer materials. The Review recommends the introduction of deposit-refund schemes (DRS) (upon return of the product, consumers will be refunded the deposit that they initially gave upon purchase and no voucher or goods in lieu of refund) for PET bottles as a key EPR instrument, complemented by targets for recycled content and incentives for reuse and refill systems.

EPR implementation should be phased, transparent and supported by independent audits, digital traceability systems and periodic evaluations (mid-term and final) aligned with NSP milestones. The Review stresses that EPR should shift the financial burden from public authorities to market actors, while creating predictable funding streams for recycling infrastructure and innovation.

Conclusion

Mauritius stands at a pivotal moment in its plastic governance journey. The foundations for a plastic-pollution-free future are firmly in place, supported by strong political will, progressive legislation and international engagement. However, achieving this vision requires a shift from

fragmented, product-specific controls to an integrated, lifecycle-based governance system anchored in data, accountability, infrastructure and inclusive participation. The findings and recommendations of this Review provide a clear roadmap for that transition, ensuring that Mauritius not only meets its national and international commitments, but also emerges as a regional leader in sustainable plastic management

1.INTRODUCTION

Over the past decades, Mauritius has made significant strides in confronting plastic pollution, progressing beyond a linear 'take-make-dispose' model to establish an aspirational vision of a "Plastic-Pollution Free Mauritius". This legal and policy analysis report outlines the comprehensive, multi-tiered legislative foundation that underpins this vision and critically examines the systemic challenges that impede its full realization.

1.1 National Legislations and Regulations

1.1.1 The Environment Act 2024

The Environment Act 2024 represents a significant legislative step in the country's ongoing effort to regulate and ultimately reduce plastic pollution. The Act primarily functions as the overarching framework that empowers the implementation of existing, specific plastic-control regulations, while also broadening the scope for future regulatory action.

The Act provides the legal foundation for the Minister to make regulations necessary for (Section 102):

- The preservation and conservation of the environment against plastic.
- The prevention, reduction, and control of plastic pollution.
- The implementation of obligations under, and giving effect to, international and regional agreements concerning plastic pollution.

The Act also ensures that existing key regulations, such as the *Environment (Banning of Plastic Bags) Regulations 2020* and the *Environment (Control of Single Use Plastic Products) Regulations 2020*, are rigorously implemented.

A key progressive element of the Environment Act 2024 is its alignment with the principles of a circular economy. While the detailed mechanism is often housed in its associated *Waste Management and Resource Recovery Act 2023*, the Environment Act 2024 sets the policy direction. The Environment Act 2024 (Part X) introduces or references the concept of Extended

Producer Responsibility (EPR). This is crucial for improving recycling rates and promoting sustainable product design.

To ensure effective plastic management, the Act institutionalises a Plastic Management Committee (Section 100). This Committee is mandated to:

- Develop and implement policies, strategies, and action plans for plastic management.
- Advise on research and innovation to promote alternatives to plastics and reduce microplastics.
- Coordinate actions to fulfill national and international commitments.

Furthermore, the Act strengthens enforcement measures, granting authorised officers greater powers of entry and investigation to monitor compliance. This enhanced institutional focus and greater legal clarity are designed to overcome previous implementation challenges and reinforce Mauritius' vision of becoming a "plastic pollution free country".

1.1.2 The Waste Management and Resource Recovery Act 2023

The Waste Management and Resource Recovery Act 2023 establishes the legal framework for Mauritius to transition to a circular economy, with clear emphasis on waste reduction, reuse, material recovery, and recycling. It provides legal backing to key instruments such as Extended Producer Responsibility (Section 46), End-of-Waste criteria (Section 15), Segregation at Source (Section 2 and 19) and licensing of recyclers (Section 33). Depending on whether plastic wastes are categorised as solid or hazardous wastes, Part V and Part VII shall be applicable accordingly.

The Act also requires institutions to implement measures for plastic waste minimisation and submit data to ensure national tracking of material flows (Sections 18–20). These provisions form a legal foundation for Mauritius to integrate plastics into its circular economy strategy, supported by future instruments such as deposit-refund schemes and mandatory reporting by producers.

1.1.3 Environment (Control of Single Use Plastic Products) Regulations 2020

To minimise the use of Single Use Plastic products in the country, in 2020 the Environment (Control of Single Use Plastic Products) Regulations came into force. Single use plastic products have been defined by Section 2 as plastic products intended to be used once only before it is thrown away. Plastic products have been categorized as biodegradable and non-biodegradable.

Under Regulation 4, it is prohibited to import (for home consumption), manufacture, possess, sell, supply or use any non-biodegradable SUPs listed in Part I of the Second Schedule, including plastic cutlery, plates, cups, straws (including those sealed within packaging), beverage stirrers, hinged containers, lids, and food receptacles intended for immediate consumption.

Products that are biodegradable (i.e., made from materials other than plastic) may be imported or manufactured only if the importer or manufacturer is registered with the Director of Environment (Section 5) and obtains prior clearance (Section 11). Clearance requires submission of:

- A certificate of conformity stating that the product contains no plastic;
- A sample of the product for testing;
- Supporting documentation specifying the raw materials used.

The Director may order the testing of samples by an approved laboratory to confirm compliance. If tests reveal plastic content, the Director-General of the MRA may seize the products (Section 14).

No product shall be labelled or marketed as biodegradable or compostable unless certified in accordance with standards issued by the Mauritius Standards Bureau and aligned with ISO 17088 or ASTM D6400. Mislabeling shall be treated as deceptive trade practice.

1.1.4 Environment (Banning of Plastic Bags) Regulations

Over the past two decades, Mauritius has sporadically introduced Regulations to address the use of plastic bags in the country.

Beginning in 2004, The Environment Protection (Plastic Carry Bag) Regulations 2004 were Mauritius' first attempt at curbing plastic bag pollution. This legislation did not impose a total ban but rather introduced a regulatory framework to control the use and disposal of plastic carry bags.

The 2004 regulation serves as a historical marker, demonstrating Mauritius' commitment in regulating plastic bags.

In 2015, the Mauritian government introduced the Environment Protection (Banning of Plastic Bags) Regulations in 2015, which were later strengthened by the 2020 amendments. These regulations represent the country's decisive action to achieve a near-total ban on non-biodegradable plastic bags.

The Environment Protection (Banning of Plastic Bags) (Amendment) Regulations 2025 is one of the most recent legislative efforts to refine and strengthen Mauritius' plastic bag ban.

The key focus of the 2025 Amendment Regulations is to provide unambiguous clarity and close legal loopholes, particularly concerning the definition of plastic and its alternatives. The Regulations replace the generic term "petroleum-based materials" with a precise list of 14 polymers derived from petroleum. This specificity is crucial for legal clarity and enforcement. The 14 polymers are listed below:

1. Polyethylene
2. Polypropylene
3. Polybutylene
4. Polystyrene
5. Polybutadiene
6. Acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (ABS)
7. Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET)
8. Polybutylene Terephthalate (PBT)
9. Copolymer styrene/butadiene
10. Copolymer ethylene/propylene
11. Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC)
12. Polymethylmethacrylate (PMMA)

13. Polyamides (Nylon 6/11)
14. Polycarbonates
15. Such other material as the Minister may determine

1.1.5 The Environment Protection (Banning of Plastic Banners) Regulations 2008

In Mauritian folklore, plastic banners were typically displayed during times of elections or any other national event. Since 2008, with a view of reducing plastic pollution in all its forms, the authorities have introduced the Environment Protection (Banning of Plastic Banners) Regulations. The Regulations prohibit the display of any plastic banner. Regulation 4 states that any person who contravenes these regulations shall commit an offence, and shall on conviction, be liable to a fine not exceeding 250,000 rupees and to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years.

1.1.6 Environment Protection (Polyethylene Terephthalate PET Bottle Permit) Regulations 2001

The Environment Protection (Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET) Bottle Permit) Regulations 2001 marked Mauritius' pioneering attempt to manage a specific, highly visible plastic waste stream: post-consumer PET beverage bottles. This regulation is centred on the principle of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR).

The core mechanism under this Regulation is a permit system. No "responsible person" (i.e., local bottling company) could bottle any beverage in a PET bottle without first obtaining a permit from the Ministry of Environment (Section 3). The permit came with a crucial condition: the bottling companies are required to put in place facilities for the maximum collection and recycling or export of post-consumer PET bottles (Section 7). Companies also have a mandatory reporting obligation, submitting annual returns on the quantity of PET bottles produced versus the amount collected, recycled, and exported.

Ultimately, the 2001 regulations established the legal precedent for holding producers accountable for product end-of-life, a principle that continues to be central to Mauritius' broader waste management strategy, especially with the newer Waste Management and Resource Recovery Act 2023 poised to introduce a more comprehensive Deposit Refund Mechanism (DRM).

1.2 International Legal Frameworks

On an international and regional level, Mauritius is actively engaged in several international and regional initiatives to combat plastic pollution. Mauritius is a party to several international conventions on plastic and marine pollution. The actions taken by Mauritius in terms of its treaty obligations are examined below:

1.2.1 International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) Convention 1973

The Convention is the principal global treaty addressing marine pollution from ships, whether arising from routine operations or accidental causes. Its core objective is to minimize the pollution of oceans and seas. The law that Mauritius has enacted to implement and enforce the MARPOL Convention is the Merchant Shipping Act.

1.2.2 Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal (Basel Convention) 1992

The Basel Convention is an international treaty designed to minimize the transboundary movement of hazardous waste. The legislation that Mauritius has enacted which addresses the management and transboundary movement of hazardous waste, in line with its Basel Convention obligations, is The Waste Management and Resource Recovery Act 2023.

1.2.3 Paris Agreement 2015

The Paris Agreement is an international treaty on climate change. The treaty encourages states to take action in order to address the threats linked to climate change. In 2020, Mauritius enacted the Climate Change Act. This legislation sets a legal and institutional framework which addresses climate change issues and ensures compliance with international agreements.

1.2.4 Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants 2001

The Stockholm Convention is a global treaty whose objective is to protect human health and the environment from Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) by requiring member countries to eliminate or restrict their production, use, import, and export. The key piece of national legislation Mauritius enacted following the signing and ratification of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) is the Dangerous Chemicals Control Act 2004.

1.2.5 Nairobi Convention (Regional Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern African Region)

The Nairobi Convention is a regional agreement that fosters cooperation among ten Western Indian Ocean countries to protect, manage, and develop their shared marine and coastal environment. Its primary objective is to address environmental degradation, especially from land-based sources of pollution (like plastic waste) and climate change impacts, ensuring the region's sustainable Blue Economy. Mauritius' significant commitment came when it ratified the key protocols, notably the Protocol for the Protection of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Western Indian Ocean from Land-Based Sources and Activities (LBSA Protocol). Following this, Mauritius has enacted the Environment Act 2024 and the Waste Management Resource Recovery Act 2023 to curb marine pollution, especially from plastic and waste originating on land.

1.2.6 Sustainable Development Goals

Mauritius, as a Small Island Developing State (SIDS), has placed its commitment to the SDGs at the centre of its national strategy. The country prioritizes progress in the different areas covered by the SDGs. Concerning plastic and plastic pollution, the country is dedicated to protecting its marine resources under SDG 14 (Life Below Water) and advancing sustainable consumption patterns under SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production).

In addition to these already undertaken legislative actions, Mauritius is also a strong advocate for the creation of a Global Plastic Treaty. As a member of both the High Ambition Coalition (HAC) and the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), Mauritius maintained a firm stance during the August 2025 Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee negotiations to forge the global plastic treaty.

The Mauritian government has proved its utmost commitment and political will in addressing plastic pollution. Through the enactment of several national legislations, signatory to international conventions and support given to the global initiative of creating Global Plastic Treaty, the Mauritian government is showing its willingness and endeavour to address the concerns and threats that plastic and plastic pollution may pose.

2. LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

Mauritius has adopted a series of legal instruments, namely: the Environment Act 2024, the Waste Management Resource Recovery Act 2023, the Environment Protection (Control of Single Use Plastic Products) Regulations 2020, the Banning of Plastic Bags Regulations (2020 and 2025 Amendments), and the Environment Protection (Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET) Bottle Permit) Regulations 2001 to help the country face the challenges posed by plastic pollution. As Mauritius seeks to transit towards a circular economy, a deeper analysis of these regulations against four key dimensions - Comprehensiveness of Coverage, Monitoring, Evaluation and Enforcement, Infrastructure and Alternatives and Stakeholders' Engagement become critical to gauge their effectiveness in addressing plastic pollution.

1. **Comprehensiveness of Coverage:** This is fundamental because legislation must clearly define the plastic products it seeks to control, differentiate harmful from essential plastics, and set standards for biodegradable and recycled alternatives. Without precise definitions, regulatory fragmentation occurs, creating loopholes, inconsistent enforcement, and policy confusion across industry and society.
2. **Monitoring, Evaluation and Enforcement:** This represents the backbone of regulatory success. Enforcement institutions, penalties, data systems, and compliance audits determine whether legislation actually brings about plastic pollution reduction.
3. **Infrastructure and Alternatives** are equally critical. Bans and restrictions are only effective when supported by adequate recycling facilities, deposit-refund schemes, composting plants, research into sustainable alternatives and market support for reusable and recyclable products. Without infrastructural, research and logistical support “alternatives” may end up compounding the plastic pollution problem and undermine circular economy aspirations.
4. Finally, **Stakeholders' Engagement** determines the social and economic feasibility of policy transition. Engaging producers, importers, retailers, recyclers, informal collectors (waste pickers), NGOs and consumers ensures shared responsibility, behavioural change, and successful market transformation. A participatory governance model is therefore essential for a plastic pollution free Mauritius.

2.1 The Environment Act 2024

The Environment Act 2024 represents a major legislative milestone in Mauritius' environmental governance framework. Although, it consolidates environmental protection, circular economy principles, and institutional coordination under a single legislation, its scope to manage plastic-related issues effectively still requires improvement. A deeper examination through key dimensions — comprehensiveness of coverage, monitoring and enforcement, infrastructure and alternatives, and stakeholder engagement — highlights both the strengths and gaps that must be addressed to achieve a plastic-pollution-free Mauritius.

2.1.1. Comprehensiveness of Coverage

The Environment Act 2024 integrates several strategic elements which support plastic management. For instance, it establishes National Environmental Standards (Part VI), introduces the Circular Economy and Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) framework (Part X), and creates a Plastic Management Committee (Part XI, sections 100–102) responsible for policy direction, innovation, and coordination on plastic issues. These components signify an institutional shift towards lifecycle management of plastics, from production to disposal, and position Mauritius to integrate circular economy principles into national legislation.

However, the Act lacks specificity and enforceable criteria for defining and managing various categories of plastics. To start with, there is no formal mechanism set-up to capture data on plastic flows. The Act does not also provide standards and guidelines for assessing and defining recycled plastics, biodegradable plastics, non-essential and problematic plastics.

To strengthen comprehensiveness, Mauritius should therefore enact a dedicated Plastic Governance and Control Act that will bring together under one legislation not only existing regulations such as the PET Bottle Regulations, Single-Use Plastic Regulations, and Plastic Bag bans, but also forthcoming regulations on an EPR for plastic packaging. The provisions of this new law should where applicable be benchmarked on international regulations/models/treaties/laws, such as the EU Single-Use Plastics Directive (2019/904) and Rwanda's comprehensive plastic ban model.

Furthermore, the new law provides for the creation of a Department of Plastic Management (DPM) which shall be responsible for the implementation of the roadmap. The DPM shall be divided into 6 divisions which are as follows:

- Division 1: Data & Statistics
- Division 2: Research & Development
- Division 3: Recycling & Circular Economy
- Division 4: Education, Awareness & Behavioural Change
- Division 5: Policy Development
- Division 6: Monitoring & Enforcement

2.1.2. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Enforcement

The Act provides a set of enforcement and compliance mechanisms. It empowers authorized officers and the Director under Part XII (sections 103–116) , and confers powers on the Police de l’Environnement (section 14) to provide assistance with regards to enforcement. Fixed penalties can also be issued by authorized officers under Part XVI.

Furthermore, the Act creates the Observatoire de l’Environnement (sections 15–17) to gather environmental data, track indicators, and produce national reports. The Science-to-Policy Platform and National Environmental Laboratory (section 13) reinforce the technical backbone required for evidence-based policymaking.

However, the Act’s enforcement capacity remains under-developed. There is no clear digital traceability mechanism for monitoring plastic flows, nor are penalties explicitly indexed to the economic benefits derived from non-compliance. The deterrent effect of fines and sanctions has not been empirically assessed. Importantly, there is no provision for independent audit of producer performance under EPR obligations, creating a risk of inadequate reporting.

To remedy these gaps, the government should establish a national plastic inventory database, as envisioned in the National Strategic Plan (NSP) Target 1, to document material flows from life cycle of plastic flows. A Plastic Reduction Pledge (Target 5) and EPR enforcement framework

(Target 7) would institutionalise producer responsibility. Mid-term review (2030) and final evaluation (2035) on EPR effectiveness (Target 7 in NSP); recycling rate (Target 10 in NSP), macro, meso and micro plastics indicators (Target 8 in NSP) would enhance the monitoring and evaluation process.

2.1.3. Infrastructure and Alternatives

Part VI of the Act authorises the setting of national standards across various environmental domains, including water, effluent limitations, air, noise, pesticides residues, odours and built-up environment, while Part X empowers policies that promote the circular economy and EPR implementation. The National Environment and Climate Change Fund (Part VIII, sections 88–92) and Environment Protection Fee (Part IX) provide financial mechanisms for project financing, potentially supporting plastic-related initiatives

However, the Act stops short of explicitly mandating deposit-refund schemes (DRS), or specifying investment priorities for recycling and bio-based alternatives. Nor does it institutionalise public procurement preferences for products made from recycled plastics or certified biodegradable materials. The absence of structured incentives weakens the transition from conventional plastics to sustainable alternatives. Moreover, there is no requirement for research and development into new materials or technologies.

A forward-looking approach would involve operationalising Deposit-Refund Schemes for PET bottles, as proposed under Target 7 of the NSP, and establishing washing and refilling infrastructure hubs (Target 9). Government procurement guidelines should be revised to prioritise recycled or reusable materials (Target 9). Additionally, through a proposed Plastic Governance and Control Act, a Department of Plastic Management should be established to oversee data collection, research & development, implementation of recycling and circular economy principles and practices, education and awareness, policy development as well as monitoring and enforcement. Financing could be drawn from the Plastic Transition Fund, as well as, from other national and international donors/agencies/institutions.

2.1.4. Stakeholder Engagement

The Environment Act 2024 demonstrates commendable efforts to formalise multi-actor engagement. It establishes the Plastic Management Committee (sections 100–102), the National Network for Sustainable Development (sections 8–10), and the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA) Committee (section 11), which collectively bring together ministries, agencies, and research institutions for environmental governance

It also guarantees public participation in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) processes, allowing civil society and local communities to comment on major developments.

However, beyond these institutional structures, stakeholder engagement could be improved. There are no regular dialogue mechanisms involving producers, retailers, civil-society organisations, and informal-sector — all of whom play vital roles in the plastic value chain. The absence of community-based and private-sector partnerships has hindered behavioural change towards adoption of sustainable practices for effective plastic management.

Dimension	Strengths	Gaps / Challenges	Recommendations
1. Comprehensiveness of coverage	The Act includes the following key aspects: National Environmental Standards (Part VI), Circular Economy & EPR (Part X), Plastic Management Committee & ministerial regulation-making for plastics (Part XI: sections 100–102).	The Act lacks specificity and enforceable criteria for defining and managing various categories of plastics. To start with, there is no formal mechanism set-up to capture data on plastic flows.	Enact a Plastic Governance and Control Act and alignment with international/regional treaties and conventions.
2. Monitoring, evaluation and enforcement	Enforcement measures (Part XII: sections 103–118); Tribunal & criminal proceedings with penalties and guidelines (Parts XIII & XV); fixed penalties (Part XVI) and compounding of offences (Part XVII). Police de L’Environnement enhances operational reach (section 14). Establishes Observatoire de	Enforcement capacity, testing, and digital traceability are not specified; no evidence whether penalties are explicitly indexed to economic benefit; no evidence on the dissuasiveness of the penalty, no accountability on the plastic value-chain. Product flow registries, and public dashboards are not mandated; audits of producer performance	Creation of inventory database of plastic flows (Target 1 in NSP); Introduction of Plastic Reduction Pledge (Target 5 in NSP); Enforcement of EPR scheme for plastic products (Target 7 in NSP). Mid-term review (2030) and final evaluation (2035) on EPR effectiveness (Target 7 in NSP); recycling rate

	l'Environnement (sections 15–17), and a Science-to-Policy Platform; National Environmental Laboratory (section 13) and compliance monitoring (section 118).	under EPR are not defined in primary law.	(Target 10 in NSP), macro, meso and micro plastics indicators (Target 8 in NSP)
3. Infrastructure & alternatives	Part VI empowers national standards for water, effluent limitations, air, noise, pesticides residues, odours and built-up environment. Part X empowers circular economy/EPR policies; Climate Change Fund (Part VIII sections 88–92) can finance projects; Environment Protection Fee (Part IX) provides a fiscal lever.	No explicit deposit-refund scheme (DRS); no mention of: (i) plastic recycling/bioplastics testing/alternatives; (ii) public procurement for recycled products; lack of research conducted statutory bodies on plastic alternatives	DRS for PET (Target 7 in NSP); Deploy washing and refilling infrastructure in strategic hubs (Target 9 in NSP); review of public procurement policies and guidelines (Target 9 in NSP) Through the Plastic Governance and Control Act, a Department of Plastic Management will be created consisting of 6 Divisions. (Division 2- Research & Development of the NSP) will oversee and secure research on

			<p>plastic recycling/bioplastics testing/alternatives</p>
<p>4. Stakeholders' engagement</p>	<p>Formalises engagement through PMC (section 100-102), National Network for Sustainable Development (section 8-10), MEA Committee, and public participation in EIA and SEA processes.</p>	<p>Other than the PMC, there is no regular engagement with stakeholders.</p>	<p>Mandate stakeholder (for example recyclers, aggregators and other industry players) contact in Plastic Governance Regulations</p> <p>Formalise public-private forums/platforms (Targets 2, 5, 6, 7 in NSP)</p>

2.2 The Waste Management Resource Recovery Act 2023

The Waste Management and Resource Recovery Act 2023 provides an institutional and enforcement foundation for solid and hazardous wastes management in Mauritius. It incorporates circular economy principles (section 14), solid waste management hierarchy, and governs national strategies (section 16), including the setting up of an EPR (Extended Producer Responsibility) mechanism (section 46). However, while it provides a strong regulatory backbone, the Act is not yet optimally equipped to address the complex, multi-layered challenge posed by plastic pollution, one of Mauritius’s most pressing environmental issues. Therefore, the Act must be accompanied by plastic-specific legislation, economic instruments, and a national monitoring framework. A detailed analysis reveals strengths that support plastics governance, yet exposes regulatory gaps that must be addressed if Mauritius is to meet national, regional, and global plastic pollution reduction targets.

2.2.1. Comprehensiveness of Coverage

The WMRR Act establishes a broad, national regulatory framework governing waste management across all sectors (s.1–3) and embeds circular economy principles (s.14) and the waste hierarchy, emphasising prevention, reduction, reuse, recycling, and recovery before disposal. It legally anchors the preparation of a National Solid Waste Management Strategy and Action Plan (NSWMSAP) (s.16), which must integrate waste minimisation, recycling targets, capacity building, and alignment with international conventions. Importantly, the Act also introduces the possibility of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes for specific product categories (s.46), creating the foundation for future plastic-oriented obligations. However, the Act’s coverage is not plastic-specific, and it does not define or categorise plastics—such as PET, HDPE, LDPE, PS, multilayer laminates, or compostables—nor does it identify “problematic” or “avoidable” plastics. This omission makes enforcement and regulation difficult, especially when addressing high-leakage items such as sachets, films, amongst others. The Act also does not address the life cycle of plastics but only lays emphasis when the plastic becomes waste.

2.2.2. Enforcement and Compliance Mechanisms

The WMRR Act provides enforcement measures under Sections 39-44. It grants powers of investigation, search, and seizure (s.35), issuance of enforcement notices (s.39), prohibition notices (s.40), and stop orders for unlicensed operations (s.41). It outlines offences with penalties reaching Rs 200,000 and imprisonment up to 8 years (s.42), and incorporates a schedule of fixed penalties applicable to common violations. Licensing and registration requirements apply to recyclers, waste carriers, and exporters (s.33), ensuring regulatory oversight of downstream waste operators. However, enforcement remains heavily focused on waste handlers, not on producers, importers, or distributors of plastic products—the actors most responsible for placing plastics into circulation. The Act does not require plastic producers to register, report plastic volumes, or comply with take-back obligations. There is no system to penalise offenders for illegal plastic disposal. The absence of real-time tracking or digital traceability of plastic flows makes it difficult to monitor illegal dumping, under-reporting, or fraud.

2.2.3. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

The Act requires institutions and local authorities to submit detailed waste data, inventories, and quarterly reports (s.16, s.17, s.19, s.20, s.26). This provides the foundation for a national waste dataset. Yet, these provisions do not include plastic-specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) such as:

- Percentage of plastic imported, produced and consumed
- percentage of plastic collected
- percentage of plastic recycled
- plastic leakage to rivers, drains, or coastal zones
- microplastic monitoring
- reuse system uptake
- number of NGOs and other organisations involved in plastic collection/recycling

The Act does not mandate a dedicated plastic flow database, nor does it require the measurement of marine plastic leakage, which is critical for island states like Mauritius. The absence of current statistics and public disclosure of data further limits transparency and accountability.

2.2.4. Infrastructure and Alternatives

The Act empowers the Department to license waste facilities, regulate disposal (s.4(e)–(p)), prevent the landfilling of recyclable materials (s.4(p)), and promote infrastructure upgrading for waste management (s.16(4)(p)). These powers are necessary for establishing recycling plants, sorting centres, and controlled disposal systems.

However, the Act does not articulate infrastructure for plastic alternatives or reuse systems. It does not reference:

- washing/refill hubs
- reuse logistics
- composting infrastructure for biodegradable plastics
- industrial-scale sorting plants
- reverse logistics for PET, HDPE, or other plastics

Nor does it establish standards for assessing alternative materials (e.g., compostables), opening the door to the uncontrolled use of bioplastics or alleged “biodegradables” or problematic alternative materials.

2.2.5. Stakeholder Engagement

The WMRR Act requires government collaboration for the development of the national strategy (s.16) and establishes the National Waste Management Coordination Committee (s.9–11). Public consultation is permitted but not mandated (s.21). These mechanisms ensure inter-institutional coordination but remain heavily public-sector oriented. The private sector—manufacturers, importers, distributors, recyclers—along with NGOs, community groups, and academia are not formally embedded in ongoing waste governance processes. There is no requirement for

continuous or structured dialogue, despite plastics being a cross-sectoral issue that demands co-responsibility.

Dimension	Strengths	Gaps / Challenges	Recommendations
<p>1. Comprehensiveness of Coverage</p>	<p>The Act establishes a national regulatory framework for solid & hazardous waste (s.1–3). It embraces circular economy principles (s.14), solid waste hierarchy, and governs national strategies (s.16). It includes EPR (Extended Producer Responsibility) for product categories (s.46).</p>	<p>Act does not explicitly regulate plastics flows or plastic categories (PET, HDPE, multilayer plastics).</p> <p>There is a lack of definitions for problematic plastics, single-use plastics, recyclability criteria, or plastic alternatives.</p> <p>The Act is waste-oriented, not product-oriented, that is, regulations begin after waste is generated, thus limiting preventive and holistic action.</p>	<p>Enact Plastic Governance and Control Act to address the challenges and gaps.</p>

<p>2. Monitoring, Evaluation & Enforcement</p>	<p>Enforcement powers: search & seizure (s.35), enforcement notices (s.39), prohibition notices (s.40), offences with fines up to Rs 200,000 & 8 years' imprisonment (s.42). Licensing and registration of recyclers, waste carriers, exporters (s.33). Fixed penalties listed in Second Schedule.</p>	<p>Enforcement is waste-handler focused, not producer/importer focused. No real-time tracking of plastic flows. No penalties tied to plastic leakage or non-compliance with plastic recovery targets. Licensing focuses on waste operators, not plastic producers.</p>	<p>Introduce plastic traceability systems (inventory database) to capture all plastic flows.</p>
	<p>The Act mandates submission of waste data & inventories (s.16, s.17, s.19, s.20), including quantities generated, collected, and disposed. Local authorities must report quarterly (s.26).</p>	<p>No plastic-specific KPIs (collection %, recycling %, leakage into environment). No national plastic flow database. Act does not consider measurement of marine plastic leakage, microplastics or littering levels.</p>	<p>Development of the Department of Plastic Management (under the Plastic Governance and Control Act) and the creation of Division 1, which will have as one of its mandate the development KPIs for measuring and monitoring plastics flows.</p>

<p>3. Infrastructure & Alternatives</p>	<p>Department empowered to license waste facilities (s.33), regulate disposal (s.4(e)-(p)), prevent landfilling of recyclables (s.4(p)), and develop waste strategies including infrastructure upgrading (s.16(4)(p)). Encourages circularity and promotes resource recovery (s.14).</p>	<p>No standards dedicated to reusable systems or plastic alternatives. Act does not specifically create washing/refill hubs, sorting/recycling centres</p>	<p>Improve collection and logistics infrastructure Create Plastic Transition Fund to finance sorting/recycling facilities, refill/washing hubs Support research on alternatives. Initiate discussion on the inclusion of appropriate tax credits or other rebates to encourage the use and purchase of recycled plastic products and to implement plastic credits</p>
<p>4. Stakeholders' Engagement</p>	<p>Requires collaboration with institutions for developing national waste strategy (s.16). Establishes National Waste Management Coordination Committee (s.9–11) with multi-ministerial representation. Allows for public consultation (s.21).</p>	<p>The Act is biased towards public authorities, and is not mandatory to consult the public and private sector (manufacturers, importers, SMEs, recyclers), NGOs, youth groups, academia. No mechanism for continuous dialogue on plastics.</p>	<p>Under the Plastic Governance and Control Act, there shall be the Plastic Management Committee which has the powers to set up sub-committees refer to sub-committee 3 of the NSP/roadmap)</p>

2.3 The Environment (Control of Single Use Plastic Products) Regulations 2020

The *Control of Single-Use Plastic Products (SUPP) Regulations* represent one of the most significant attempts by Mauritius to control the proliferation of single use plastic product. The Regulations were designed to restrict the manufacture, importation, sale, and distribution of non-biodegradable SUPPs while enabling the introduction of alternatives deemed more sustainable. The implementation of this regulatory framework has faced numerous conceptual, operational, and structural challenges that limit its effectiveness. A critical examination of the Regulations reveals gaps in definitions, monitoring, enforcement, and stakeholder engagement, all of which hinder the country’s ability to achieve meaningful reductions in plastic pollution.

2.3.1. Comprehensiveness of Coverage

The Regulations establish a blanket prohibition on the manufacture, import, sale, supply, possession, or use of a set of non-biodegradable SUPPs listed in the Second Schedule. This represents an important step towards restricting high-volume food-service items—such as cups, plates, cutlery, and straws—that typically have short lifespans and high littering potential. The Regulations further define *biodegradable single-use products* as items manufactured from “any material other than plastic” and included in the First Schedule. This allows for a substitution pathway by identifying alternative materials.

Despite these strengths, the core limitation of the Regulations is their narrow scope. The coverage is limited to a small selection of food-service products and fails to address a broader spectrum of high-impact plastics, including multilayer films, sachets, carrier bags, foils, beverage packaging, and other plastic formats that represent a significant portion of Mauritius’s plastic waste profile. The Regulations lack clear definitions of “plastic,” “single-use,” “biodegradable,” “compostable,” and “material other than plastic.” This definitional ambiguity makes it difficult to determine which products fall within the ambit of the law and complicates enforcement and prosecution.

Another persistent issue is the repeated moratoriums granted since enactment, which illustrate the practical difficulties of immediate implementation. Without a transition period for industry to adjust, the Regulations have become reactive and piecemeal which creates a lack of understanding and results in poor compliance. The requirement in the Third Schedule to list the “raw material

used” is insufficient to determine whether a product is genuinely free of plastic, especially in the absence of standardized testing criteria.

2.3.2. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Enforcement

The Regulations provide a strong penalty system, with fines ranging from Rs 2,000 to Rs 250,000 and imprisonment for repeat offenders. They also establish registration, certification, and clearance procedures for importers and manufacturers, supported by laboratory testing and mechanisms for seizing or destroying non-compliant goods. These measures create a foundational compliance framework designed to deter illegal production or importation.

Notwithstanding the above, enforcement has struggled due to several limitations. There is no clear metric or criteria for laboratory testing, and no guidance on how to determine biodegradability, compostability, or compliance with the “material other than plastic” requirement. Also, a lack of clarity in definitions makes prosecution difficult.

The absence of a tracking system means that government agencies cannot systematically track how much plastic has been removed from circulation or how substitution patterns are evolving. Without monitoring data, the impact of the Regulations remains largely unknown.

Several national strategic tools could be used to strengthen enforcement and evaluation. These include the development of a national inventory of plastic flows (Target 1 of the National Strategic Plan), a Plastic Reduction Pledge (Target 5), and phase-wise reduction schedules for non-essential plastics (Target 2). It also suggests adopting administrative sentences, such as suspending or revoking licences for habitual non-compliers, to enhance deterrence.

2.3.3. Infrastructure and Alternatives

The Regulations encourage the use of biodegradable alternatives, relying on a declaration of non-plastic content and a certificate of conformity from the source country. Products must be tested by the National Environmental Laboratory prior to clearance—an important safeguard to ensure integrity.

However, significant infrastructural gaps exist. Mauritius lacks adequate treatment facilities—such as industrial composting plants—to process biodegradable or compostable materials (including PLA). These materials may ultimately end up in landfills, undermining the environmental rationale behind promoting alternatives.

The proposed Division 2 of the Department of Plastic Management should:

1. Develop clear definitions of plastics, SUPs, biodegradable and compostable plastics.
2. Set scientific criteria for biodegradability, compostability, and acceptable materials.
3. Carry out life-cycle assessments (LCA) of alternative materials, considering environmental, socio-economic, and health impacts.

2.3.4. Stakeholders' Engagement

Stakeholder engagement in the SUPP Regulations has remained limited. While the Regulations involve the Director of Environment, Customs, and the MRA for compliance and registration, stakeholders—especially small retailers, importers, NGOs, and recyclers—expressed concerns about the lack of dialogue and consultation during the drafting and implementation process.

Dimension	Strengths	Gaps / Challenges	Recommendations
<p>1. Comprehensiveness of Coverage</p>	<p>The Regulation establishes a prohibition on the manufacture, import, sale, possession, supply, or use of non-biodegradable single-use plastic products (SUPPs) listed in its Second Schedule.</p> <p>The Regulation also provides a definition of biodegradable single use products as “any product listed in the First Schedule manufactured from any material other than plastic”.</p>	<p>Coverage is limited to certain food-service SUPPs only.</p> <p>No provisions for other high-impact plastics (e.g. sachets, multilayer films, packaging foils).</p> <p>There is a lack of clarity on the meaning of single use.</p> <p>Successive moratoriums that have been given evidencing the practical difficulty in implementing this Regulation. There has been no transition period.</p> <p>Reactive regulations instead of proactive. Piece-meal.</p> <p>There are no clear definitions for plastics, single-use plastics, biodegradable/compostable plastics, non-biodegradable single use plastic products</p>	<p>Extend the scope to include other SUPP categories</p>

		<p>No clear guidance on the definition of ‘...from any material other than plastic’</p> <p>The requirement to mention ‘raw material used’ under the Third Schedule is not sufficient to allow for effective enforceability.</p>	
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<p>2. Monitoring, Evaluation & Enforcement</p>	<p>Prohibitions with fines ranging from Rs 2,000 to Rs 250,000, with possible imprisonment for repeat offenders.</p> <p>It mandates registration, certification, and clearance procedures for importers/manufacturers (Regulations 5–11), laboratory testing (Regulation 13), and seizure or destruction of non-compliant goods (Regulation 14).</p>	<p>The lack of clarity in the definitions makes enforcement and prosecution difficult.</p> <p>Enforcement relies heavily on administrative checks</p> <p>There is no metric or criteria for laboratory testing.</p> <p>No criteria for determining biodegradability of ‘biodegradable/compostable’ plastic products as well as for ‘material other than plastic’.</p> <p>Lacks quantitative performance indicators, public reporting, and transparent compliance dashboards. No regular evaluation of market trends</p>	<p>Creation of inventory database of plastic flows (Target 1 in NSP); Introduction of Plastic Reduction Pledge (Target 5 in NSP); set phase wise reduction of non-essential and problematic Single-Use Plastics (SUP) in line with availability of sustainable alternatives based on technical, financial and social viability (Target 2)</p> <p>As a deterrent measure administrative sanctions for example, suspension/disqualification/revocation of licences may be imposed (at the discretion of the Magistrate)</p>
<p>3. Infrastructure & Alternatives</p>	<p>Encourages the use of biodegradable single-use alternatives (cutlery, plates, cups, etc.) on the</p>	<p>Lack of proper infrastructural facilities to cater for the proper treatment and disposal for the so-called ‘biodegradable/compostable’</p>	<p>Division 2, of the Department of Plastic Management, should be in a position to:</p>

	<p>basis of a declaration that they contain no plastic, which includes a certificate of conformity from source.</p> <p>Requires testing by the National Environmental Laboratory before clearance (Regulation 13).</p>	<p>products, for instance, the introduction of PLA products as an alternative to plastics, finally may find their way in inappropriate disposal sites or at the landfill instead of being properly treated in industrial composting sites.</p> <p>No mention of life cycle assessments (socio-economic and environmental impacts, as well as, impacts on human health) of allowable alternative materials, which could be understood to be ‘any material other than plastic’.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide a clear definition of plastics, single-use plastics, biodegradable/compostable plastics, non-biodegradable single use plastic products following multisectoral dialogue 2. Set criteria for determining biodegradability of ‘biodegradable/compostable’ plastic products as well as for ‘material other than plastic’ 3. Disseminate key findings of life cycle assessments (socio-economic and environmental impacts, as well
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			as, impacts on human health) of allowable alternative materials
4. Stakeholders Engagement	Involves the Director of Environment, Customs, and the Mauritius Revenue Authority for import control and registration oversight.	Stakeholders voiced out lack of dialogue and consultations with regards to the enactment of this regulation. Limited support provided for waste collectors and recyclers, who could play a role in collection and sorting of plastic waste	The NSP provides a platform to engage stakeholders across the 5 subcommittees, which will oversee the 11 targets and 4 CCAs.

2.4 The Environment (Banning of Plastic Bags) Regulations 2020

The Environment Protection (Banning of Plastic Bags) Regulations 2020, together with the 2025 Amendments, constitute one of Mauritius’s main legal frameworks targeting single-use plastics. The Regulations aim to restrict non-biodegradable plastic bags, establish compliance pathways for biodegradable/compostable alternatives, and introduce testing and certification mechanisms. While the legislative package represents progress in addressing plastic pollution, there are still several weaknesses that hinder effective implementation and policy coherence, which are discussed below.

2.4.1. Comprehensiveness of Coverage

The 2020 Regulations define a broad set of terms, including “plastic bag”, “biodegradable plastic bag”, “compostable plastic bag”, “degradable plastic”, and “exempt plastic bag”, grounding technical compliance in established international standards such as ASTM, EN and ISO. The scope is wide enough to capture manufacture, import, sale, supply, use, possession and distribution of plastic bags. The 2025 Amendments further refine the definitions by including a list of 14 prohibited polymers under a new Sixth Schedule.

The Regulations are however product-specific, dealing exclusively with plastic carrier bags while numerous problematic plastic items are governed by separate legislation. This fragmentation makes the plastic governance landscape difficult to navigate, reducing regulatory coherence and enforcement effectiveness. The absence of a life-cycle or circular-economy framework means that the regime largely remains a bans-and-exemptions driven regulation without onboarding upstream circular measures such as refuse, reuse, reduce and recycle (4 R’s) models. Moreover, even with the new Sixth Schedule, emerging polymers—including bio-based plastics, new polymer blends and oxo-degradables—may still escape regulatory control.

2.4.2. Monitoring, Evaluation and Enforcement

The Regulations contain a significant offence structure with escalating penalties, including fines and imprisonment for possession, use, manufacture, import, export or supply of non-compliant

bags. Mandatory registration and certification for exempt, biodegradable and compostable bags provide regulatory control points, and the Amendments strengthen enforcement by clarifying the polymer types considered non-compliant. These are important steps that increase the enforceability of the regime.

However, several challenges remain. Penalties may not sufficiently differentiate between large-scale corporate offenders, small-scale and informal sector sellers, raising equity concerns. Enforcement provisions should also articulate risk-based inspection strategies to mitigate risks related to the potential misuse of eco-labels—such as “biodegradable”, “compostable” or “bio-based”—especially where independent scientific verification is limited.

The Regulations require operators to maintain certificates, batch numbers and conformity documents. The National Environmental Laboratory is empowered to conduct sample testing to verify compliance, especially to determine the presence of petroleum-based plastics.

However, there is no explicit requirement for periodic monitoring by the authority on volumes of bags placed on the market, nor on reduction of plastic bags. There is an absence of an integrated data system linking customs, local authorities and waste operators.

2.4.3. Infrastructure and Alternatives

The Regulations create opportunities for alternatives such as biodegradable and compostable bags by requiring these products to comply with international standards. This theoretically encourages innovation and market transition to circular economy practices.

However, Mauritius does not yet have the infrastructure required for composting or processing biodegradable/compostable plastics. Without industrial composting, anaerobic digestion or separate organic-waste collection, compostable bags may behave similarly to conventional plastics in landfills or marine environments.

2.4.4. Stakeholder Engagement

The Regulations were enacted without a formal multi-stakeholder engagement mechanism. There is no open platform for dialogue with retailers, importers, manufacturers, tourism operators, municipalities, NGOs, or academia. This absence of stakeholder integration has probably exacerbated the lack of understanding of permitted versus prohibited materials coupled with a growing risk of accidental non-compliance. Lack of education and communication also undermines public knowledge, especially when biodegradable or compostable claims cannot easily be verified.

Dimension	Strengths	Gaps/Challenges	Recommendations
1. Comprehensiveness of coverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2020 Regulations focus on banning plastic bags, with detailed definitions of “plastic bag”, “biodegradable plastic bag”, “compostable plastic bag”, “exempt plastic bag” and standards (ASTM, EN, ISO). • Scope covers manufacture, import, sale, supply, use and possession of plastic bags. • Exempt and biodegradable/compostable bags must be registered and certified; detailed schedules provide forms and conditions. 	<p>Plastic-bag regulations are contained in a stand-alone instrument. Given the existence of other regulations relating to single use plastic products it may be difficult to navigate through a set of scattered regulations.</p> <p>The amendments remain product-specific and focused only on plastic bags; other single-use plastic items (SUPs) like cups, straws, cutlery, takeaway containers,</p>	<p>Enact a Plastic Governance and Control Act that will consolidate all plastic regulations.</p> <p>Provide proof of degradation/biodegradation as per AS 5810 and BS EN 17427 for “biodegradable/compostable” bags</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the Sixth Schedule a dynamic list reviewed every 2–

	<p>The 2020 Regulations make it an offence for any person to possess, use, sell, distribute, import, export, manufacture or supply non-biodegradable plastic bags and provides for a list of exempted bags</p> <p>The 2025 Amendment tightens and clarifies material and product definitions: – “Biodegradable plastic bag” and “compostable plastic bag” are now defined by degradation through microorganisms or biological processes.</p> <p>Third Schedule now includes new standards AS 5810 and BS EN 17427</p> <p>“Plastic” now explicitly means any material containing a polymer listed in the new Sixth Schedule (14 polymers listed). –</p> <p>“Plastic bag” is refined to mean a bag that does not meet</p>	<p>sachets, multilayer packaging, fishing gear, etc... are separately considered (Environment (Control of Single Use Plastic Products) 2020)</p> <p>Polymer list in the Sixth Schedule may still miss some emerging or novel polymers (bio-based, blends, oxo-degradables), which could be exploited as loopholes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The law still does not expressly adopt a life-cycle / circular economy approach (design, reduction, reuse, EPR) – it continues to be framed as a bans-and-exemptions regime. 	<p>3 years, allowing the Minister to quickly add new polymers or problematic additives</p>
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	Third Schedule standards, closing the loophole where any polymer bag could be treated as “plastic bag”.		
2. Monitoring, Evaluation & Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear offences and significant penalties for possession, use, manufacture, import, export and supply of non-compliant plastic bags; fines escalate and include imprisonment for repeat offenders. • Mandatory registration and certification for exempt, biodegradable and compostable bags; Director/Director-General can refuse, suspend or cancel registrations and clearances. <p>The 2025 Amendments provide a stronger definitions of plastic and which polymer is deemed non-compliant make enforcement easier through the Third and Sixth Schedules</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Penalties may not distinguish sufficiently between large corporate actors and small informal sellers; risk of perceived unfairness. • Limited specific provisions on inspection strategy, risk-based targeting to prevent illegal trade. • Risk of misuse of labels (e.g. “biodegradable”, “compostable”, “bio-based”) without real conformity; • No explicit requirement for periodic monitoring by the authority on volumes of bags placed on the market, nor on 	<p>Require third-party certification for biodegradable/compostable bags from accredited bodies and an online registry of authorised products.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply risk-based inspections: prioritise high-volume importers, suspect consignments and high-risk entry points; pair with random checks for small traders. • As a deterrent measure administrative sanctions for example, suspension/

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulations require records and documentation (certificates of registration, conformity, batch numbers, quantities, origin, standards complied with). • National Environmental Laboratory empowered to test samples and verify presence of petroleum-based plastics. 	<p>reduction of plastic bags.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absence of an integrated data system linking customs, local authorities and waste operators. 	<p>disqualification/revocation of licences may be imposed (at the discretion of the Magistrate)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce a monitoring producer/importer reporting system.
3. Infrastructure & alternatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulations strongly restrict non-compliant plastic bags, creating regulatory space for alternatives such as reusable, biodegradable and compostable bags. • Standards (ASTM/EN/ISO) referenced for biodegradable/compostable bags ensure at least a formal link to international technical specifications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulations do not address whether Mauritius has adequate infrastructure (industrial composting, anaerobic digestion, separate organic collection) to process compostable/biodegradable bags; if such infrastructure is not available, these bags may behave like conventional plastics in landfills or the marine environment. . 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper definition of plastic

<p>4. Stakeholders’ engagement</p>	<p>No stakeholder engagement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No formal mechanism for ongoing multi-stakeholder dialogue (retailers, tourism sector, municipalities, NGOs, academia, informal collectors) • Consumers receive no direct guarantee that “biodegradable/compostable” claims are meaningful in Mauritian conditions, which may undermine trust and behavioural change, more so if a person is caught with a plastic bag and fined accordingly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish sub-committees bringing together ministries, local authorities, retailers, tourism operators, manufacturers, recyclers, NGOs, academia to guide implementation and future amendments. • Encourage voluntary agreements with supermarkets, hotels and fast-food chains to eliminate remaining single-use bags by adopting reuse models
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2.5 The Environment Protection (Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET) Bottle Permit) Regulations 2001

The *Environment Protection (Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET) Bottle Permit) Regulations 2001* were introduced as one of Mauritius's earliest legal mechanisms to regulate plastic waste generated from beverage packaging. The Regulations established a clear administrative framework for controlling bottling activities using PET, requiring responsible persons to obtain permits and submit annual returns. However, there are still shortcomings which are briefly discussed below:

2.5.1. Comprehensiveness of Coverage

The Regulations define key terms such as “PET bottle”, “permit”, and “responsible person”. A responsible person is understood as the owner or person responsible for managing an enterprise involved in bottling beverages in PET bottles. PET bottling is prohibited without a permit, and the First and Second Schedules outline permit application and renewal procedures.

The scope of application is limited to any responsible person (Regulation 2 defines responsible person as the owner of, or the person responsible for the management or control of, an enterprise involved in the bottling of a beverage in a PET bottle) involved in PET bottling of beverages.

However, the Regulations do not extend to:

- importers of *pre-filled* PET beverage bottles,
- retailers or distributors who place PET bottles into commerce,
- producers of PET bottle components (caps, labels),
- manufacturers or importers of non-beverage PET containers (e.g., oil bottles, detergent bottles, cosmetic bottles),
- producers of other plastic bottles (HDPE, PP, PVC, multilayer containers).

The current system therefore fails to control not only the total “PET bottles placed on the market” but also non PET plastic bottles, leading to incomplete oversight and inaccurate national data.

2.5.2. Enforcement and Compliance Mechanisms

The Regulations establish a structured control system: permits are valid for three years, and revocation is possible when permit conditions are breached, provided that the responsible person is given an opportunity to show cause. These provisions provide a foundation for administrative enforcement.

Nonetheless, given that the law applies only to beverage PET bottlers, enforcement cannot be initiated against importers of pre-filled PET beverage bottles or importers of other PET non-beverage bottles.

This creates a loophole that weakens compliance, reduces traceability, and may even encourage certain operators to circumvent the regulation.

2.5.3. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

Annual returns under the Regulations require information on quantities of PET bottles produced, collected, recycled, and exported (Reg. 7). This enables the Ministry to request additional environmental information, thus potentially generating valuable national PET data.

The gaps identified are:

- The Ministry is not obligated to compile or publish national PET statistics.
- The returns are limited to producers with permits and excludes pre-filled PET bottles
- No inspection framework or market surveillance system.

2.5.4. Infrastructure and Alternatives

Permit holders must declare the collection and recycling systems they have put in place. This requirement implies some level of producer responsibility for PET waste management and encourages voluntary private-sector involvement.

The gaps identified are:

- Regulations do not mandate producers to operate or finance PET collection systems.
- No formalised EPR system for the collection of PET bottles or deposit systems.
- There is no requirement for the PET bottler to offer incentives to collect and refill
- There is no incentive for the PET bottler to use recycled PET (rPET) bottles

2.5.5. Stakeholders' Engagement

The PET Regulations do not include any provision for stakeholder participation. There is no formal structure for regular consultation with:

- recyclers
- civil society
- municipalities
- informal sector collectors
- tourism sector
- consumers.



Dimension	Strengths	Gaps / Challenges	Recommendations
<p>1. Comprehensiveness of Coverage</p>	<p>The Regulations define “PET bottle”, “permit”, and “responsible person” as the owner of, or the person responsible for the management or control of, an enterprise involved in the bottling of a beverage in a PET bottle.</p> <p>PET Bottling is prohibited without a permit (Reg. 3(1)).</p> <p>Permit applications and renewals are provided in the</p>	<p>Coverage applies <i>only</i> to beverage bottlers and excludes: importers of pre-filled PET bottles; retailers; distributors; producers of labels/caps; other PET packaging (oil bottles, detergent bottles, cosmetic bottles).</p> <p>No coverage of non-PET plastic bottles (HDPE, PP, multilayer bottles).</p>	<p>Extent the scope of the Regulations to cover pre-filled imported PET beverage bottles and all PET bottles placed on the Mauritian market</p> <p>To introduce an EPR mechanism on other PET bottles (oil bottles, detergent bottles, cosmetic bottles).</p>

	First & Second Schedules.		
2. Monitoring, Evaluation & Enforcement	<p>Strong control mechanism: permit valid for 3 years (Reg. 4(2)).</p> <p>Revocation allowed upon non-compliance after giving opportunity to show cause (Reg. 6).</p> <p>Annual returns required: quantities of PET produced, collected, recycled, exported (Reg. 7(1)).</p> <p>Department may request additional information (Reg. 7(2)).</p>	<p>No enforcement mechanism can be initiated for importers of pre-filled PET beverage bottles and other PET non-beverage bottles.</p> <p>No inspection framework or market surveillance system.</p> <p>No reporting obligation for the Department to publish national PET statistics.</p>	<p>•As a deterrent measure administrative sanctions for example, suspension/disqualification/revocation of licences may be imposed (at the discretion of the Magistrate)</p>

<p>3. Infrastructure & Alternatives</p>	<p>Permit forms require enterprises to declare collection and recycling systems and measures put in place (First Schedule: items 4–5). This theoretically encourages producer involvement in waste handling.</p>	<p>Regulations do not mandate producers to operate or finance PET collection systems. No formalised EPR system for the collection of PET bottles or deposit systems. There is no requirement for the PET bottler to offer incentives to collect and refill There is no incentive for the PET bottler to use recycled PET (rPET) bottles</p>	<p>Introduce a Deposit-Refund Scheme (DRS) for PET Establish an EPR mechanism for PET bottlers Initiate discussion for the establishment for an appropriate recycled-content for PET bottles Incentivise local rPET industry through VAT exemptions, low-interest loans, and green procurement policies.</p>
<p>4. Stakeholders' Engagement</p>	<p>No stakeholder engagement</p>	<p>Lack of consultation among recyclers, civil society, municipalities, informal sector collectors, tourism sector, or consumers.</p>	<p>Promote consumer awareness campaigns on PET deposit refund scheme Embed PET bottle reduction and recycling education across all levels of primary, secondary, tertiary and vocation education and community programmes.</p>

3. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Alike Mauritius, many countries took the steps to regulate the production, use and disposal of plastic products as well as regulate marine litter. For instance, The Maldives' plastic programme has successfully advanced waste management by enacting a national single-use plastic phase-out plan, banning key plastic items, strengthening recycling and collection systems, and fostering circular economy projects with electric collection vehicles and processing facilities. Barbados' national plastic programme has boosted collection and recycling through comprehensive policies, community engagement, and new initiatives like widespread eco-bins and partnerships with recyclers. These efforts aim to significantly increase plastic waste recovery and support a circular economy, contributing to long-term pollution reduction and sustainable waste management.

In order to support Mauritius in this endeavour, the actions taken by four countries will be examined and best practices highlighted.

The rationale for using these countries as case-studies is based on the following considerations:

- Rwanda: An African state which is considered as a success-story in regulating plastic pollution
- Antigua and Barbuda: Being an island state like Mauritius, the country has taken several national initiatives to reduce the plastic waste
- Singapore: The country is a reference in actions taken to manage marine litter
- New-Zealand: The country has adopted a phased-out approach which can be reviewed according to the context
- The European Union: The EU is considered as a champion in the regulation of plastics

From these case-studies, best practices will be highlighted which can be used by Mauritius to address plastic pollution and marine litter.

3.1 Case Study: Rwanda

Rwanda is considered as an African leader in addressing plastic pollution. Since 2004, the country has been enacting legislation to regulate, manage and deter the use of plastics. For example, in 2008, the government introduced the Law 57/2008 of 10/09/2008 which prohibits the manufacture, importation, use and sale of polyethylene bags in the country. One characteristic of this law was

that it provided for terms of imprisonment of 6 to 12 months for those who contravene the law. This 2008 law was repealed and replaced by Law 17/2019 of 10/08/2019.

This 2019 law bans the manufacture, importation, use and sale of single-use Low Density Polyethylene (LDPE) carry bags and other forms of plastic items. Furthermore, the law reviews the sanctions applicable to those who contravened it, moving from terms of imprisonment to the payment of fines and confiscation of goods.

Over the years, the legislative amendments have had some positive impacts in Rwanda. A decrease in plastic litter has been noticed across Rwanda. In addition to this, the hybrid system of ban and levy on the manufacture and use of plastic bags in the country did not negatively affect industrial growth. The Rwandan government provides support to and encourages businesses which produce alternative products and packaging to plastics.

On a social level, during the monthly ‘Umuganda’ (which is a monthly community clean-up campaign across Rwanda), participants are educated about plastic regulations. Moreover, other social events such as Beat Plastic Pollution walk organised in 2018, media and tourism campaigns and flights announcement help in educating people about the law and reduce the use of plastic products.

In 2024, Rwanda introduced a new environmental levy on imported goods packaged in plastic, applying a 0.2% tax on their customs value. This measure aims to level the playing field between local producers—already subject to plastic regulation—and importers, while discouraging the use of non-recyclable plastics. The levy forms part of a broader national strategy to reduce plastic waste and promote sustainable packaging alternatives.

3.1.1 Key learning

Key learnings for Mauritius based on the Rwandan case study:

- As a deterrent mechanism, increase the fines and confiscate goods for those who contravene the law
- Nationwide educational and awareness campaigns on plastic policies and regulations
- Regular clean-up and sensitisation campaigns
- Include plastic discourse in sectors such as tourism, health, education and labour.

3.2 Case Study: Antigua and Barbuda

Situated in the Caribbean region, Antigua and Barbuda is the first country in the region to have banned single-use plastics. Facing several challenges in terms of waste management and plastic litter, in 2016, the country banned the importation, manufacture and trade of plastic bags.

In order to address the consequences of the ban of plastic bags, the country's government provided training programmes for the manufacture of reusable bags. To promote alternatives to single-use plastic bags, materials such as sugar cane, bamboo, paper or potato starch, which are used to make bags, became tax free.

On an institutional level, consultation and cooperation among institutions such as: Ministries, customs office and the private sector were ongoing. The aim of these consultations were to obtain information on: the right approach to combat plastic pollution, identify challenges and provide for solutions in order to enact the appropriate legislation. In line with that, public officials came forward to the press to explain the importance of the plastic bags ban and shared any progress made in that endeavour.

Antigua and Barbuda adopted a phased-based approach to address plastic pollution in the country and also put much emphasis on communication. All the measures implemented, lead to a decrease of 15% in the amount of plastic disposed of in landfills.

3.2.1 Key Learning

Being an island state like Antigua and Barbuda, Mauritius can adopt the following strategies:

- Make alternative materials tax-free
- Public officials coming forward to explain the importance of reducing plastic use
- Make progress public
- Continuous consultation and communication among stakeholders
- Awareness creation and education

3.3 Case Study: Singapore

The island state of Singapore is one of the most developed and advanced economies in Asia. For the past years, the country has been facing issues related to marine debris, particularly plastic

debris. In 2018, 55% of waste disposed of in Singapore consisted of plastic packaging. Furthermore, the consumption of single-use plastic items such as takeaways, cutlery or plastic bottles has been on the rise. It has been estimated that Singapore uses approximately 1.76 billion tons of plastic items per year.

To address this situation, the country has undertaken the following actions:

- **Sustainable Singapore Blueprint:** In this document, the Government of Singapore wants to make the country a Zero-Waste Nation. An objective of the blueprint is to develop a circular economy where plastic materials will be reused and recycled. This has led to a decrease in the amount of plastic items being disposed of.
- **Resource Sustainability Act 2019:** In 2019, the Singaporean government enacted the Resource Sustainability Act. This law addresses the disposal of electronic waste, food waste and packaging waste. The Act provides for the proper disposal of regulated products and imposes the mandatory reporting of packaging. The mandatory reporting of packaging framework is used to decrease the number of plastic packaging being used and disposed of.
- **Grants:** Various grants are offered to producers, researchers and the relevant stakeholders to reduce plastic pollution and waste management. In addition to this, reverse vending machines are available near supermarkets where individuals can dispose of plastic bottles and cans. This contributes to better managing wastes.

3.3.1 Key Learning

Mauritius has always inspired itself from Singapore for its economic development. In terms of waste management and regulation of plastic wastes, Mauritius can inspire from Singapore and adopt the following measures:

- Educate people about the circular economy concepts and adopt the 3Rs: Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. This means to reduce the consumption of single use products, reuse the product and giving the product a second life by recycling it.
- Provide for recycling facilities of different types of plastic wastes found mainly in: electronic and electrical wastes and food wastes for example

- Accountability: Request governmental as well as non-governmental organisations to categorise, report and publish the amount of waste they generate and how they dispose of such wastes.
- Offer financial incentives to interested parties in developing mechanisms to sustainably dispose of wastes.

3.4 Case study: New-Zealand

In order to reduce plastic wastes, particularly single-use and hard-to-recycle plastic items, in 2022 the government of New-Zealand enacted the Waste Minimisation (Plastic and Related Products) Regulations 2022. The Regulations provide for a list of products containing plastic which it intends to ban the manufacture and sale. These products are:

- plastic drink stirrers that are single use:
- plastic or synthetic cotton buds that are single-use, with some exceptions:
- any product that contains plastic with pro-degradants:
- PVC food trays or containers:
- specified polystyrene packaging for food or drink.

In order to achieve this objective, the authorities of the country adopted a phased out approach. Before the enactment of the Regulations, the government conducted a series of consultations with the relevant stakeholders, which consisted of the general public, affected businesses, environmental and community groups and local government agencies. Approximately 8,000 submissions were received during the consultation period which were supportive of the regulations.

The application of the Regulations in phasing-out single-use and hard to recycle plastic has been done in three phases. Starting October 2022, the first phase banned the following items: Single-use plastic drink stirrers; Single-use plastic cotton buds;Plastics with pro-degradant additives; Certain PVC food trays and containers; Polystyrene takeaway food and beverage packaging; Expanded polystyrene food and beverage packaging. The second phase started in July 2023 and the following items were banned: plastic produce bags; plastic plates, bowls and cutlery; plastic

straws and plastic produce labels. A third phase was meant to be implemented in 2025, however it was halted. The third phase was to ban all other PVC and polystyrene food and beverage packaging. The reason why this third phase has been halted is to allow further consultations between the authorities and stakeholders in finding and developing suitable alternatives to the existing packaging.

3.4.1 Key Learning

Mauritius has some valuable lessons to learn from New-Zealand when implementing its plastic policies and targets:

- Consultation among the governmental authorities, public and private sector stakeholders as well as consultation with the general public is important as it encourages dialogue, identifies areas of concern and develops policies which will be in line with national interest.
- One approach in implementing plastic policies and plastic use reduction targets is to use a phased-out approach. Banning plastic products should not be done using an ‘implementation with immediate effect approach’. A phased-out approach should be prioritised as it gives time to all parties concerned to adapt to the new regulations and come forward with suitable alternatives.
- Implementation of targets should not be rigid and should be conducted through a holistic approach. Just like in New Zealand, the government took the decision to stop the third phase in order to have further consultations. The same approach should be adopted in Mauritius. If there is a need to halt the implementation of a particular target in order to have further consultations in order to find better alternatives, this approach should be adopted.

3.5 The European Union

The European Union has positioned itself as a global leader in combating plastic pollution, moving decisively to transform its plastic economy from a linear "take-make-dispose" model to a circular one. Driven by the ambitious goals of the European Green Deal and the Circular Economy Action Plan, the EU's regulatory framework for plastics is comprehensive, multi-layered, and targets

every stage of the plastic lifecycle, from design and production to consumption and waste management.

The EU's strategy is fundamentally rooted in its Plastics Strategy of 2018, which sets clear objectives: to protect the environment, reduce marine litter, cut greenhouse gas emissions, and decrease reliance on fossil fuels. This strategy is enforced through a series of legislative instruments, primarily the Single-Use Plastics Directive (SUPD) and the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) (which is set to replace the existing Directive).

The Single-Use Plastics Directive (2019) is arguably the most impactful and visible piece of legislation. It specifically targets the ten single-use plastic items most commonly found polluting European beaches. The SUPD implements a range of measures:

- **Market Bans:** It imposes outright bans on certain items for which readily available, non-plastic alternatives exist, such as plastic cutlery, plates, straws (with some medical exceptions), cotton bud sticks, and food/beverage containers made from expanded polystyrene. It also bans all oxo-degradable plastics, which fragment into microplastics.
- **Consumption Reduction:** Member States are required to take measures to achieve a measurable, sustained reduction in the consumption of items like food containers for ready-to-eat food and beverage cups.
- **Design Requirements:** It mandates specific design features, such as requiring beverage bottle caps and lids to be attached to the bottle (tethered caps) by 2024 to ensure they are collected and recycled together.
- **Recycled Content Targets:** The directive sets minimum targets for recycled content in plastic beverage bottles: 25% for PET bottles by 2025 and 30% for all plastic beverage bottles by 2030.
- **Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR):** Producers are made financially responsible for the full cost of waste management, including collection, cleanup, and awareness-raising for a wide range of single-use plastic products, shifting the burden from public authorities to the manufacturers.
- **Separate Collection Targets:** It sets high targets for the separate collection of single-use plastic beverage bottles: 77% by 2025 and 90% by 2029.

Beyond the SUPD, the upcoming Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) signifies a major step toward circularity by enforcing comprehensive rules across all packaging materials, including plastics. This regulation will introduce mandatory re-use targets for specific packaging formats, further harmonize packaging design to ensure recyclability "at scale," and set more demanding recycled content mandates across a broader spectrum of plastic packaging.

Challenges and Systemic Shifts

The EU's regulatory framework represents a systemic market intervention, compelling industry across the entire value chain to innovate and restructure operations. This shift, however, is not without its challenges.

- **Implementation Divergence:** As directives, both the SUPD and the previous Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive required transposition into national law, leading to some variations in implementation and enforcement across Member States, which can complicate compliance for businesses operating across the single market. The move to a Regulation (PPWR) aims to reduce this divergence.
- **Technical Hurdles:** Meeting the high recycled content targets and ensuring packaging is designed for high-quality, closed-loop recycling requires significant investment in new sorting and recycling infrastructure, including chemical recycling technologies, and managing food contact safety issues (governed by Regulation (EU) No 10/2011).
- **Socio-Economic Impact:** The abrupt shift requires businesses, especially Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), to rapidly redesign products, retool supply chains, and absorb new EPR costs, which can be a significant administrative and financial burden. Regulatory delays, such as those recently seen for certain chemical labelling rules, highlight the ongoing tension between ambitious environmental goals and the practical capacity of the industry to adapt.

Ultimately, the EU's plastics regulation is a commitment to a resource-efficient economy, recognizing that the environmental and economic costs of pollution far outweigh the short-term inconvenience of transitioning away from virgin fossil fuel-derived plastics. It sends a clear global signal that a proactive, regulatory approach is necessary to internalize the external costs of plastic waste and drive the market toward sustainable, circular alternatives.

3.5.1 Key Learning

- **Holistic and Lifecycle-Based Regulation:** The EU's success lies in regulating the entire plastic value chain—from upstream design mandates (e.g., tethered caps, recycled content) to downstream waste management obligations (e.g., EPR, collection targets)—rather than focusing solely on end-of-life disposal.
- **Clear Market Signals Drive Innovation:** The combination of outright bans on problematic items and mandatory recycled content targets creates a powerful, predictable demand for recycled plastic materials and forces innovation in product and packaging design, rapidly accelerating the market for sustainable alternatives.
- **Extended Producer Responsibility as a Financial Lever:** Shifting the financial responsibility for clean-up and waste management onto the producers of plastic items through mandatory EPR schemes incentivizes companies to design products that are easier, cheaper, and more effective to collect and recycle, internalizing the environmental cost of their products.

3.6 Comparative Tables

As Mauritius advances its national plastic strategy and seeks to refine its regulatory architecture, it is essential to understand how other jurisdictions legally define plastics, identify problematic or non-essential items, and regulate packaging, single-use products, and durable plastic goods.

The tables presented in this document provide a comparative overview of these developments by summarising international definitions, classification criteria, regulatory mechanisms and policy tools applied to different plastic categories.

3.6.1 Definitions of "Plastic" in International Regulations

The regulatory definition of "plastic" varies significantly across jurisdictions. The European Union (EU) uses a broad, chemical-based definition, whereas countries like Rwanda and Antigua & Barbuda use product-specific definitions aimed at prohibition.

Jurisdiction	Legislative Instrument (Primary Focus)	Definition of Plastic	Key Regulatory Approach
European Union (EU)	Single-Use Plastics Directive (SUPD), REACH Regulation, PPWR	A material consisting of a polymer (as defined in REACH) to which additives or other substances may have been added, and which can function as a main structural component of final products.	Chemical-Based & Broad: Focuses on the polymer structure, encompassing most synthetic and chemically modified natural polymers.
New Zealand (NZ)	Waste Minimisation (Plastic and Related Products) Regulations 2022	"Plastic means any plastic material that is manufactured from any source (including a bio-based source), whether or not it is designed to degrade in a particular way."	Functional & Source-Inclusive: Specifically includes bio-based and degradable materials to prevent loopholes, broadening the scope beyond petroleum origin.

Rwanda	Law N° 17/2019 (Prohibition of Manufacturing, Importation, Use and Sale of Plastic Carry Bags and Single-Use Plastic Items)	Defined in the context of the banned product, e.g., a "plastic carry bag" is a synthetic industrial product with a low density composed of numerous ethane molecules used in packaging or carrying products.	Product-Specific & Punitive: Focuses on the <i>function</i> and <i>material composition</i> of the prohibited items rather than a single scientific definition.
Singapore	Resource Sustainability Act (RSA) 2019, various Regulations	The term is generally used in relation to specific waste streams, e.g., "disposable carrier bags" or "packaging," without a single, overarching, chemical definition in the primary legislation.	Product-Specific & Management-Oriented: Focus is on the end-of-life management of products <i>containing</i> plastic (packaging, e-waste) rather than defining the material itself.
Antigua & Barbuda	External Trade Orders, Litter Control and Prevention Act 2019	Defined by the material of the prohibited items, such as Polyethylene or petroleum-based plastic for shopping bags, and Expanded Polystyrene (Styrofoam) for food containers.	Prohibition-Based: Definition is functional and limited to the specific materials and products targeted by the bans.

3.6.2 Definition of Non-Essential and Problematic Plastics by Jurisdiction

The classification of "non-essential" and "problematic" plastics is based on legislative measures like bans, phase-outs, and restrictions, often targeting items that are easily littered, hard to recycle, or break down into microplastics.

Jurisdiction	Non-Essential and Problematic Plastics (As Defined by Restrictions/Bans)	Regulatory Rationale
European Union (EU)	Outright Banned: Single-use plastic cutlery, plates, straws, stirrers, balloon sticks, cotton bud sticks, and all products made of oxo-degradable plastic. Cups and food/beverage containers made of Expanded Polystyrene (EPS). Restricted: Microplastics (synthetic polymer microparticles) in products like cosmetics, detergents, and infills are being phased out under REACH. PFAS in food-contact packaging.	Focus on reducing marine litter (over 80% is plastic), promoting circularity, and restricting substances that form microplastics.
New Zealand (NZ)	Banned/Phased Out: Degradable plastics (oxo- and photo-degradable). PVC food and beverage packaging, Polystyrene (PS) and Expanded Polystyrene (EPS) food/beverage packaging (phased out by mid-2025). Single-use plastic tableware, produce bags, and stirrers.	Focus on removing hard-to-recycle and contaminating plastics from the waste stream to improve the national recycling system and

		protect the environment (<i>moana</i> and <i>whenua</i>).
Rwanda	Total Ban: Plastic carry bags (polyethylene bags) and all listed single-use plastic items such as straws, bottles, cups, plates, and food containers.	Focus on environmental cleanliness, preventing blockage of drainage systems, and addressing severe environmental and agricultural degradation caused by plastic litter. Total prohibition model.
Singapore	Focus is on Management: Less reliance on broad bans. Specific items targeted include: Disposable carrier bags (addressed via mandatory minimum 5-cent charge). Hazardous chemicals like dechlorane plus and UV-328 used as additives in plastics (regulated under EPMA).	Focus on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and using market mechanisms (charges) to drive behavioural change and reduce the volume of waste sent to its limited landfill space.

Antigua & Barbuda	Total Ban: Plastic shopping bags (polyethylene/petroleum-based). Polystyrene/Styrofoam food service containers (cups, plates, trays, coolers).	Focus on eliminating visible litter and marine pollution to protect the environment and the tourism industry. Utilized tax incentives for alternatives alongside fines for non-compliance.
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3.6.3 Definition and Regulation of Plastic Packaging

The definition and regulatory approach to plastic packaging differ significantly based on each jurisdiction's policy focus—be it circularity, total prohibition, or Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR).

Jurisdiction	Primary Legislative Focus	Definition / Regulatory Scope of Plastic Packaging	Key Regulatory Tool
European Union (EU)	Circular Economy & Resource Management	Definition: Any product made of any material (including plastic) of any nature to be used for the containment, protection, handling, delivery, and presentation of goods, from raw materials to processed goods.	Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR): Mandates specific targets for recyclability at scale, minimum recycled content (e.g., 30% for PET beverage bottles by

			2030), and mandatory reuse/refill schemes.
New Zealand (NZ)	Waste Minimisation & EPR	<p>Definition: Plastic packaging is a declared Priority Product under the Waste Minimisation Act 2008.</p> <p>Focus is on hard-to-recycle types like PVC and Polystyrene food and beverage packaging.</p>	<p>Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR): Requires producers/importers to fund and manage the collection and recycling of plastic packaging waste. Phase-Outs: Bans on specific problematic plastic packaging types (e.g., PVC and Polystyrene food/beverage packaging by mid-2025).</p>

Rwanda	Environmental Protection & Prohibition	Definition: While not explicitly defined by polymer type, plastic packaging is broadly covered under the prohibition of plastic carry bags and single-use plastic items. Its use requires special authorization.	Total Prohibition Model: General ban on the manufacture, use, and sale of non-essential plastic packaging. Environmental Levy: Tax on imported goods packaged in plastic to disincentivize its use.
Singapore	Resource Sustainability & EPR	Definition: Packaging is any material used to contain, protect, or handle a product. Mandatory Packaging Reporting (MPR) is required for large companies based on the weight and type of packaging (including plastic) supplied.	Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR): Beverage Container Return Scheme (starting April 2025) targets plastic beverage bottles with a mandatory refundable deposit. MPR drives companies to reduce plastic packaging volumes.

Antigua & Barbuda	Litter Control & Import Ban	Definition: Focused on packaging made of specific materials, such as Polystyrene/Styrofoam food service containers.	Import Bans: Strict prohibition on the importation and sale of specific plastic packaging formats (e.g., Styrofoam). Exemptions exist for primary plastic packaging necessary for hygiene/food safety (e.g., meat wraps).
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3.6.4 Definition of Single-Use Plastic Products (SUPs) by Jurisdiction

The definition of a Single-Use Plastic Product (SUP) is a cornerstone of modern plastic legislation, though its interpretation and the list of prohibited items vary significantly across countries based on their legislative goals.

Jurisdiction	Legislative Instrument (Primary Focus)	Definition / Description of Single-Use Plastic Product (SUP)	Key Regulatory Mechanism
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<p>European Union (EU)</p>	<p>Single-Use Plastics Directive (SUPD) 2019/904</p>	<p>Products wholly or partly made of plastic that are typically intended to be used just once or for a short period of time before being discarded.</p>	<p>Outright Bans (e.g., straws, cutlery). Consumption Reduction Targets (e.g., cups, food containers). Tethered Caps mandate.</p>
<p>New Zealand (NZ)</p>	<p>Waste Minimisation (Plastic and Related Products) Regulations 2022</p>	<p>Products intended to be used once or for a limited period before disposal, targeting those that are problematic or have readily available alternatives.</p>	<p>Phased Bans on six categories, including single-use tableware and single-use produce bags. Bans often include single-use compostable plastics (PLA) to prevent contamination.</p>
<p>Rwanda</p>	<p>Law N° 17/2019 (Prohibition of Manufacturing, Importation, Use and Sale of Plastic Carry Bags and Single-Use Plastic Items)</p>	<p>A disposable plastic item designed to be used once before it is discarded or recycled.</p>	<p>Total Ban on the manufacture, import, sale, and use of a wide array of SUPs, including plastic bags, straws, and bottles. Known for strict enforcement.</p>

Singapore	Resource Sustainability Act (RSA) 2019	The focus is on the function of the product, such as "disposable carrier bags" or single-use food packaging, which are intended for immediate disposal after use.	Market-Based Instruments: Mandatory minimum 5-cent charge for disposable carrier bags at major supermarkets to curb SUP consumption.
Antigua & Barbuda	External Trade Orders & Prohibition Acts	Items that are short-lived and contribute significantly to litter and marine pollution, such as plastic shopping bags and Styrofoam food containers.	Import Bans: Strict prohibition on the importation and sale of specific, high-litter SUPs like plastic bags and Polystyrene/Styrofoam food service items.

3.6.5 Definition and Regulation of Durable Plastic Products

The definition and regulatory approach for durable plastic products (items designed for long-term use, such as appliances, furniture, or heavy-duty containers) vary significantly. Regulations often address the plastic content in durable goods through laws focusing on circularity, reparability, and end-of-life management (E-waste), rather than imposing bans.

Jurisdiction	Primary Legislative Focus	Definition / Regulatory Scope of Durable Plastic Products	Key Regulatory Tool
European Union (EU)	Circularity & Eco-design	Durable products (those intended for a long service life) are regulated based on their plastic components under the framework designed to make goods more sustainable.	Eco-design for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR): Sets criteria for durability, reusability, and reparability of products, including mandatory requirements for plastic components (e.g., ease of disassembly, recycled content). WEEE Directive: Covers plastic in electrical and electronic equipment.
New Zealand (NZ)	Waste Minimisation & EPR (E-waste)	Durable plastic products are not the focus of the single-use plastic phase-outs. However, plastic components within certain long-life goods are considered Priority Products.	Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR): Mandated for the plastic components in Electrical and Electronic Products (E-waste) and Tyres, requiring producers to fund and manage their take-back and recycling.

Rwanda	Prohibition & Waste Management	Durable plastic products are not the target of the bans, which focus on disposable items. Durable use (e.g., construction materials, water storage) is generally favoured over single-use.	Focus on Recycling: Regulations mandate the collection and segregation of used plastics for recycling into new, likely more durable, products. No specific "Eco-design" rules for durability.
Singapore	Resource Sustainability & EPR (E-waste)	Durable plastic casings and components are captured under the national framework for managing waste streams with high resource value or hazardous content.	Mandatory EPR for E-waste: Producers/importers are legally responsible for the collection and responsible recycling of plastic components in consumer and non-consumer electrical and electronic equipment.
Antigua & Barbuda	Litter Control & Import Bans (Specific SUPs)	Durable plastic products are outside the scope of the current bans, which are limited to short-lived, high-litter items like plastic bags and Styrofoam.	Limited Regulation: Management relies on general waste collection. There are no specific EPR schemes or eco-design requirements for durable plastic products.

5. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The National Strategy Plan (NSP) and the underlying National Source Inventory (NSI) for Plastic Pollution provide a clear diagnostic and strategic direction to make Mauritius a plastic pollution free country. To translate this strategy into measurable environmental outcomes, the existing legislative frameworks concerning plastics require reforms. The fundamental shift demanded by the NSP is from a linear 'take-make-dispose' model to a comprehensive, whole-of-life-cycle approach centred on circular economy principles, Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), and data-driven governance.

Based on the above, the following new legislation and regulations are being recommended:

1. Plastic Governance and Control Act
2. The Plastic Governance and Control (Control of Single Use Plastic Products and Plastic Bag) Regulations
3. The Plastic Governance and Control (Extended Producer Responsibility Plastic Packaging) Regulations
4. The Plastic Governance and Control (PET Bottles) Regulations

It is noteworthy to underline the following *provisos*:

- The creation of Plastic Transition Fund and other funds earmarked for the National Strategy Plan/Roadmap (NSP) and referred to in this report are contingent on policy decision.
- Provision of adequate staffing and resources are subject to the economic situation of the country and highly dependent on financial, other resources available and relevant clearances being obtained from appropriate institutions.
- Fiscal incentives and subsidies will have to be clearly defined and will be subject to policy decision. They also depend on affordability in relation to revenue/growth to be triggered.

Plastic Governance and Control Act

1. Introduction and Purpose of the Plastic Governance and Control Act

The Plastic Governance and Control Act is conceived as the overarching master legislation regulating designated plastics (under the NSP) across their entire life cycle. It replaces the existing fragmented framework, currently dispersed across the Environment Act, and the following Regulations: Environment (Control of Single Use Plastic Products) Regulations 2020, Environment (Banning of Plastic Bags) Regulations and Environment Protection (Polyethylene Terephthalate PET Bottle Permit) Regulations 2001 into one coherent, modern, and enforceable legal instrument. The Act establishes a complete life-cycle approach and provides the legal foundation required to achieve the National Strategy Plan (NSP) targets.

The deliberate choice of the terms “Governance” and “Control” is central to the philosophy and scope of this Act. Unlike terms such as “management”, or “regulation”, governance captures the entire plastic system, spanning environmental, commercial, trade, health, consumer protection, and industrial dimensions. It recognises that plastics cannot be addressed merely as a waste issue; they require full upstream and downstream oversight.

Governance implies responsibility, transparency, accountability, policy coherence, and coordinated institutional action, rather than focusing only on end-of-pipe waste operations. It also reflects modern global trends in materials governance, aligns Mauritius with emerging international norms, including developments under the UN Plastics Treaty, and ensures the Act is future-proof, able to absorb new scientific, economic, and regulatory shifts without requiring structural amendments.

It empowers the State to regulate, restrict and enforce what designated plastic can enter and remain in the Mauritian market and also the authority to phase-out problematic and unnecessary plastic, to licence (eg PRO) and also to take actions against those not complying with the prevailing provisions of the law.

At the heart of the Act is the establishment of a single competent authority, the Department of Plastic Management (DPM), tasked with oversight across the entire value chain. The DPM

consolidates regulatory, enforcement, licensing, and data functions previously scattered across multiple agencies, resolving longstanding institutional fragmentation.

The Act provides for market-entry controls, licensing and registration of producers and importers, inspection powers, issuance of technical and design standards, and coordination with all stakeholders including but not limited to Customs, MRA, Waste Authority, Local Authorities, Ministry of Health, NGOs and private sector operators. By centralising these functions, the Act creates a unified system of accountability and delivers the strong institutional backbone required for effective national plastic governance and control.

Substantively, the Act empowers Mauritius to eliminate problematic plastics and unsustainable packaging by establishing phase-out schedules, and eco-design requirements. It introduces legal authority to regulate all categories of plastics, single-use plastics, packaging, bioplastics, composites, and oxo-degradables, and to control additives, labelling, and recycled content thresholds. It embeds a mandatory, comprehensive Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) mechanism operationalise through producer registration, PRO licensing and compliance reporting. It also creates a legally enforceable National Plastic Inventory, resolving current data gaps and enabling real-time tracking of plastic flows.

Finally, the Act provides the regulatory and enforcement machinery needed for a genuinely transformative system.

It includes strong regulation-making powers to address future developments in plastic management, governance and control. It establishes a robust enforcement framework through compliance orders, prohibition notices, administrative penalties, criminal offences, and the liability of directors and officers. It protects consumers from misleading “eco-friendly” or “biodegradable” claims and harmonises Mauritius’ legal architecture with leading global frameworks such as the EU SUPD and PPWR, Rwanda’s plastics law, New Zealand’s circular reforms, and Singapore’s Resource Sustainability Act. The Plastic Governance and Control Act is therefore not merely an environmental statute, it is a comprehensive national reform instrument designed to reorganise, modernise, and future-proof the entire plastic ecosystem of Mauritius.

More specifically, the Plastic Governance and Control Act aims to:

- **Govern the entire life cycle of plastics** in Mauritius (full-circle governance).
- **Create a Plastic Inventory** to close data gaps.
- **Reduce and eliminate problematic plastics** following the NSP Targets.
- **Guide the transition to sustainable alternatives**, including economic incentives.
- **Establish a single competent authority** (DPM) with full governance powers.
- **Create enforceable standards** for design, plastic content, packaging, and marking.
- **Formalise EPR and producer accountability**
- **Compel transparent reporting and Enable future regulations** via strong regulation-making powers.
- **Ensure harmonisation with global best practices** (e.g. EU SUPD, PPWR, Rwanda, NZ, Singapore, Antigua & Barbuda amongst others).
- **Protect consumers** and ensure truthful environmental claims.

2. The Five Pillars of the Act

The entire legislative structure rests on five core pillars. These pillars ensure coherence, provide policy clarity, and serve as the foundation for all subsequent regulations.

PILLAR 1, GOVERNANCE & INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

(The central nerve system of plastic governance in Mauritius)

1. **Structural Problem: Fragmentation and Systemic Weakness**
Mauritius' current approach to plastic oversight is characterised by institutional fragmentation and an absence of clear, centralised authority. Responsibilities lie scattered across the Ministry of Environment, Waste Management Authority, Local Authorities, Customs, MRA, Ministry of Health and an array of Government Notices issued under different statutes. This dispersed structure has produced operational overlaps, regulatory uncertainty, and gaps that undermine enforcement. In practice, no single institution presently carries end-to-end responsibility for determining which

plastic products enter the country, monitoring their circulation, or ensuring their safe recovery and recycling. This structural fragmentation has led to weak accountability and an enforcement regime that is reactive, inconsistent, and largely ineffective against the scale and complexity of Mauritius' plastic problem.

2. Central Solution: Establishment of the Department of Plastic Management (DPM)
The Plastic Governance and Control Act addresses this systemic failure by creating a single, unified, legally mandated authority, the Department of Plastic Management (DPM). The DPM consolidates functions that were previously dispersed across multiple institutions, becoming the principal body responsible for regulating plastic products across their entire life cycle.

By legislatively empowering a dedicated department, the Act ensures that plastic governance is no longer diluted across competing institutional priorities but is instead managed with clarity of mandate, technical competence, and long-term continuity.

3. Market Entry Control: Regulating the Front Gate

The DPM's mandate begins with full control over market entry, which is the most critical leverage point in plastic governance. The Department may authorise or prohibit plastic products based on their recyclability, hazardous composition, environmental risk, availability of alternatives, and alignment with NSP targets.

This transforms Mauritius from a passive recipient of problematic plastics to a proactive regulator capable of stopping harmful plastics before they enter circulation, thus preventing downstream pollution and reducing waste burdens on municipalities and communities.

4. Licensing, Registration and Stakeholder Oversight

The DPM becomes the national licensing and registration body for all operators engaged in the plastic value chain, producers, importers, converters, recyclers, distributors and packaging suppliers.

This creates the first comprehensive national register of plastic actors, providing complete

upstream and downstream traceability. It enables the Department to enforce standards, set obligations, monitor performance, and ensure that only compliant and authorised operators engage in the plastic market.

5. Enforcement Authority: Strengthened Inspection and Compliance Powers

The Act grants the DPM robust statutory enforcement powers, including the right to enter premises, inspect operations, seize non-compliant products, issue compliance and prohibition notices, and initiate administrative or criminal proceedings.

For the first time, Mauritius will possess a single institution with clear legal authority to enforce plastic regulations across all sectors, from import warehouses to retail shops, thereby filling a gap that has long undermined national enforcement efforts.

6. Data Governance: The National Plastic Inventory and Analytics Function

The DPM is also mandated to operate the legally binding National Plastic Inventory, consolidating data from Customs, MRA, Statistics Mauritius, Local Authorities, EPR systems, and industry reporting.

This integrated data ecosystem resolves chronic national gaps in plastic flow information and creates real-time visibility over imports, consumption, recovery, and recycling. With accurate data, Mauritius can finally plan evidence-based interventions, monitor compliance, and measure progress against NSP targets with precision.

7. Technical Standards and Inter-Agency Coordination

The DPM is empowered to issue national technical standards, covering design-for-recycling rules, marking and labelling requirements, biodegradability and compostability standards, and packaging recyclability guidelines. It also serves as the central coordination body linking Customs, MRA, the Waste Authority, Local Authorities, Ministry of Health and private-sector actors.

This ensures a coherent and harmonised national approach to plastic regulation, replacing ad hoc

coordination with a formal governance mechanism capable of delivering whole-of-government and whole-of-market alignment.

Impact:

Pillar 1 fundamentally restructures the governance landscape by eliminating institutional fragmentation and centralising authority within a single, competent, accountable body. It creates one point of leadership, one system of enforcement, and one coherent framework under which all plastic-related activities are regulated. It is the institutional backbone upon which the remaining pillars, product regulation, EPR, data systems, and enforcement, depend, and is therefore the cornerstone of the Plastic Governance and Control Act.

PILLAR 2, REGULATION OF PLASTIC PRODUCTS & PACKAGING

(Full life-cycle control over market entry, design, labelling, and phase-outs)

1. Purpose and Scope: Establishing a Complete Market Governance System

Pillar 2 constitutes the substantive regulatory engine of the Plastic Governance and Control Act. It provides the Minister and the Department of Plastic Management (DPM) with wide, discretionary, and future-proof powers to regulate all plastic products and packaging placed on the Mauritian market. The intent is to move away from Mauritius' historically reactive approach, where bans were issued piecemeal through isolated Government Notices, toward a structured, science-based, and lifecycle-governed framework. These powers ensure that plastic placed on the Mauritian market is safe, recyclable, reusable, and aligned with NSP targets for reduction and circularity. They also position Mauritius in line with global best practices such as the EU Single-Use Plastics Directive (2019/904) and (2025/40), the proposed EU Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR), Rwanda's plastics reforms, Canada's Single-Use Plastics Prohibition Regulations, and Singapore's Resource Sustainability Act. This establishes a regulatory system capable of preventing environmental harm before it occurs rather than attempting to remedy it after waste has been generated.

2. Classification and Definition: Creating a Legally Coherent Universe of Plastics

The Act empowers the DPM to establish binding classifications of plastic product categories, including: single-use plastic products (SUPs), primary and secondary plastic packaging, microplastics and microbeads, bio-based or partially bio-based plastics, oxo-degradable or oxo-fragmentable plastics, and composite or laminated materials. (Annex 1 provides for a list of definitions currently used in Mauritius, EU Regulations used as a benchmark and proposed definition for upcoming Regulations for Mauritius).

This classification function is crucial because the absence of clear legal definitions has enabled manufacturers and importers to exploit loopholes, rebrand plastics as “eco-friendly”, or claim exemptions based on marginal compositional changes. Under this pillar, classifications become technology-neutral and functional: a product is regulated not based on its marketing label, but based on its actual physical, chemical, and environmental properties. This removes ambiguity, strengthens enforcement, and ensures that regulators can categorise new materials, emerging polymers, or innovative packaging types rapidly without requiring amendments to the primary law.

3. Market Placement Controls: Legal Authority over What May Enter the Market

This pillar provides the Minister and DPM with the authority to determine, through regulations or technical notices, which plastic items may be placed on the Mauritian market and under what conditions. This includes outright prohibitions for materials known to cause environmental harm or that are inconsistent with circularity objectives; restrictions on specific polymers; and limits on formats such as single-use cutlery, plates, straws, sachets, polystyrene foodware, and composite multilayer packaging. The DPM may also establish pre-conditions for market entry including minimum recyclability, conformity to compositional standards (example: limits additive, approved materials, chemical of concerns, etc.), certification requirements, product design suitability for sorting systems, and compliance with chemical safety standards. This system transforms the entry of plastics into Mauritius from a passive activity controlled only by Customs into an active, regulatory gatekeeping function that filters out harmful products before they can generate waste or pollution.

4. Mandatory Phase-Out Schedules: Structured and Predictable Transition Pathways

This pillar enables the Minister and DPM to implement binding phase-out schedules, allowing problematic plastics to be eliminated in an orderly, progressive manner. These schedules may target non-essential SUPs, non-recyclable packaging, multi-layer composite materials, OXO-degradables, single-use sachets, balloon sticks, microbeads, and other formats lacking sustainable waste pathways. Unlike previous abrupt bans, phase-outs will be established based on public consultation, technical feasibility assessments, cost-benefit analysis, and the availability of viable alternatives. Each phase-out may include transitional periods, exemptions for essential uses, and obligations on industry to redesign products within specified timeframes. This approach directly supports NSP Target 2 (phase-out of problematic SUPs) and NSP Target 4 (reduction of plastic packaging consumption by 2035). It also gives clarity and predictability to industry, ensuring that businesses have sufficient lead time to adapt production, sourcing, and packaging strategies.

5. Eco-Design Requirements, Recycled Content and Packaging Standards

Under this pillar, the Act introduces binding eco-design standards to reduce waste at source and make plastic packaging inherently recyclable. These powers allow the DPM to mandate, in a phased-wise manner, minimum levels of recycled content (for example, minimum recycled PET in beverage bottles), prohibit non-recyclable laminates, simplify packaging components through monomaterial requirements, restrict unnecessary colourants or additives that interfere with recycling, and require packaging systems to be compatible with national sorting and processing infrastructure. Standards may also address weight-reduction, reuse requirements, and maximum limits for unnecessary or decorative packaging. These measures shift responsibility upstream to producers and importers, compelling them to redesign products to support circularity. This is a foundational element of modern plastic governance and ensures that the physical characteristics of plastics placed on the market do not undermine downstream recovery systems.

6. Labelling, Traceability and Consumer Information Requirements

This pillar introduces mandatory, standardised labelling requirements for all plastic products and packaging. These include polymer identification codes, recyclability instructions, marking for compostable or biodegradable materials (where verified), and warnings or mandatory information for certain classes of plastics. Labelling ensures traceability throughout the supply chain and

supports waste sorting at municipal and community levels. It also targets misleading environmental claims, prohibiting vague or unverified statements such as “biodegradable”, “eco-friendly”, or “environmentally safe” when these cannot be substantiated by recognised standards. This protects consumers from deception, prevents greenwashing, supports recycling systems, and strengthens enforcement by giving inspectors a clear legal basis to identify non-compliant items.

7. Regulation of Additives, Chemical Composition and Hazardous Components

The Act grants the Minister and the DPM authority to regulate or prohibit additives and chemical substances used in plastic products. This includes OXO-degradable additives, phthalates and plasticisers, heavy-metal colourants, toxic stabilisers, benzene-based or styrene compounds in food-contact materials, and any substance shown to generate microplastic fragmentation. These controls align Mauritius with EU chemical safety regulations, WHO recommendations, and global scientific evidence on risks associated with certain plastic additives. Regulation of chemical composition is critical for preventing contamination of soil, water, food systems, and the broader environment, and is a prerequisite for ensuring that recycled plastics are safe and of high quality.

Pillar 2 creates a holistic, lifecycle-based market governance system capable of controlling what enters Mauritius, how products are designed, how they are labelled, and how they ultimately circulate in the national economy. It ensures that only plastic products that are safe, recyclable or reusable, free from harmful additives, and aligned with national circular economy objectives may be placed on the Mauritian market. This represents a fundamental shift from the current reactive, product-specific ban regime to a modern, comprehensive governance framework capable of addressing current challenges and future innovations with equal rigour.

PILLAR 3 , EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY (EPR)

1. Purpose and Strategic Role of EPR in the Plastic Governance and Control Act
Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) is internationally recognised as the core mechanism for transforming linear plastic economies into circular systems. Under Pillar 3, the Plastic Governance and Control Act introduces a legally binding national EPR framework, ensuring that producers,

importers, distributors, brand owners and quasi-producers assume the physical, financial, and organisational responsibility for the plastics they place on the Mauritian market. This marks a fundamental shift from a government-subsidised, taxpayer-funded waste system to a producer-financed circular model, consistent with NSP Target 7 and aligned with global standards such as the EU Waste Framework Directive, Canada's EPR Regulations, South Africa's EPR Notice (GN 1184), and Chile's REP Law. For the first time, Mauritius will be adopting a systemic, structured, and enforceable model of producer accountability.

2. Mandatory Registration and Traceability Through the National Producer Inventory

A binding EPR system requires complete visibility of all entities placing plastic on the market. The Act therefore mandates compulsory registration of all producers, importers, distributors, brand owners, and quasi-producers within a legally established National Producer Inventory managed by the DPM. Registration triggers legal obligations, creates traceability, and enables regulators to quantify plastic placed on the market with precision. This resolves a major systemic gap: many operators currently function without oversight, data reporting, or financial contribution to waste management. With compulsory registration, every actor is identifiable, accountable, and subject to compliance monitoring.

3. Legally Binding Obligations on Producers: Shifting Responsibility Upstream

Once registered, producers are assigned a suite of legally enforceable obligations designed to internalise the environmental and economic cost of plastic waste. These obligations include: financing the full cost of collection, transport, sorting and treatment of post-consumer plastic waste; achieving progressively increasing recycling and recovery targets; ensuring eco-design of products and packaging; reducing unnecessary or excessive packaging; and submitting annual compliance and performance reports to the DPM. The Act also obliges producers to implement design changes that minimise waste generation, promote reuse, and increase recyclability. These obligations convert producers from passive suppliers into active environmental stewards legally responsible for the lifecycle impacts of their products.

4. Producer Responsibility Organisations (PROs): Institutional Mechanisms for Implementation

The Act provides for the creation, licensing, and oversight of Producer Responsibility

Organisations (PROs), collective entities established by producers to fulfil their obligations under the EPR framework. PROs must adhere to strict accreditation criteria, including financial transparency, governance standards, performance reporting, third-party audits, and mechanisms for stakeholder representation. Through PROs, producers may pool resources to establish nationwide collection schemes, fund recycling infrastructure, implement recovery campaigns, and manage compliance documentation. The regulatory framework prevents conflicts of interest, ensures transparency and accountability, and prohibits opaque or informal recovery systems. This institutional architecture ensures that producer obligations are delivered effectively, equitably, and in line with national circular economy goals.

5. Eco-Modulated EPR Fees: Incentivising Circularity Through Financial Signals

A critical feature of modern EPR systems is eco-modulated fee structures, whereby the financial contribution paid by producers varies according to the environmental performance of their products. Under the Act, fees are scaled based on recyclability, polymer composition, chemical additives, toxicity, presence of recyclate, and reuse potential. Products that are difficult to recycle, contain hazardous additives, or lack viable recovery pathways incur the highest fees. Conversely, producers who adopt eco-design, use recyclable materials, or incorporate recycled content benefit from reduced fees. This financial incentive structure drives market transformation by rewarding sustainable design and penalising harmful or non-circular materials.

6. Take-Back, Deposit and Recovery Schemes for Priority Product Categories

The Act empowers the Minister and DPM to mandate take-back systems, including deposit-return or buy-back schemes for high-volume or high-impact categories such as PET bottles, beverage containers, large rigid plastics, agricultural plastics, and, in the long-term, fishing gear and marine plastics. These schemes establish guaranteed recovery pathways, improve collection rates, reduce litter, and ensure materials re-enter recycling streams. They may be administered by PROs, industry associations, or licensed operators, subject to performance targets, reporting requirements, and financial guarantees. Through take-back schemes, where necessary, Mauritius adopts proven global mechanisms that dramatically increase recovery rates for targeted plastic categories.

7. Integration with the Plastic Transition Fund: Financing the National Circular Economy Shift
All EPR fees, penalties, levies, charges, and contributions collected under Pillar 3 are channelled into the Plastic Transition Fund, a dedicated national fund established under Target 7. This Fund supports recycling infrastructure, innovation in alternative materials, research on plastic substitutes, community recovery programmes, PRO operations, and capacity building for SMEs. By linking EPR directly to the Fund, the Act ensures that the money collected from producers is reinvested in strengthening national circular economy systems and reducing the burden on taxpayers and public budgets.

Pillar 3 fundamentally restructures the economics of plastic waste in Mauritius. It shifts the financial burden from the State and its citizens to the entities responsible for placing plastic on the market. It creates accountability, stimulates eco-design, funds recycling, boosts recovery rates, and ensures that producers internalise the environmental cost of their products. It is a cornerstone of the Plastic Governance and Control Act and an essential precondition for Mauritius' transition to a circular plastic economy.

PILLAR 4 , DATA, REPORTING & NATIONAL PLASTIC INVENTORY

(The intelligence backbone of the entire system)

1. Structural Weakness: The Absence of Reliable National Plastic Data/Inventory
A defining weakness of Mauritius' current plastic management system is the near-complete lack of reliable, harmonised and consistent national data on plastic flows. The country currently does not possess accurate information on the volume and type of plastic imported, the categories of plastic packaging placed on the market, consumption patterns across sectors, the quantities of post-consumer waste generated, the volume of plastics recovered or recycled, or the performance of downstream waste systems. This absence of credible data has historically forced policymakers to operate in a vacuum, resulting in reactive, fragmented and estimation-based decision-making. Enforcement agencies are similarly constrained by the inability to detect discrepancies, track offenders or plan targeted interventions. Pillar 4 directly addresses these systemic data failures by establishing a mandatory, enforceable, digitalised data governance system.

2. **Creation of the National Plastic Inventory: A Legally Binding Centralised Data Platform**
At the core of this pillar is the establishment of the National Plastic Inventory, a digital platform operated by the DPM. This Inventory becomes the legally designated national repository for all information relating to plastics placed on the Mauritian market. Mandatory reporting obligations apply to all producers, importers, retailers, recyclers, converters and Producer Responsibility Organisations (PROs). These entities must provide detailed quantitative and qualitative data on the plastics they introduce, handle, transform, or recover. By capturing the full plastic value chain, the inventory becomes the single definitive database for national plastic flows. This replaces the current patchwork of partially overlapping information held across different agencies, and gives Mauritius, for the first time, an integrated and authoritative data source.

3. Possible extension of HS Codes and Classification Rules: Preventing Misdeclaration and Data Gaps

To ensure accuracy and prevent import misclassification, the Act mandates the possible extension of HS codes for goods packed in plastic packaging/containers across Mauritius Customs and the DPM. This proposed amendment closes a significant loophole in the current system, where misdeclaration or ambiguous coding allows imports to bypass controls, avoid levies or enter the market without visibility.

4. **Mandatory Reporting Requirements: Full Transparency Across the Value Chain**
Under this pillar, businesses are legally required to submit periodic reports on key data metrics, including: volumes of plastic placed on the market; material composition; recycled content shares; post-consumer waste collected, treated or exported; and recycling or recovery rates achieved. Reporting obligations apply not only to producers and importers but also to recyclers, PROs and large-volume retailers participating in take-back schemes. These reporting duties ensure that plastic flow information is complete, traceable and verifiable across all nodes of the value chain. Reports must be submitted in prescribed digital formats, enabling automated analysis, cross-agency validation and rapid detection of anomalies or breaches.

5. Inter-Agency Data Integration: A National “Single Source of Truth”

The Act mandates full interoperability of the National Plastic Inventory with the databases of MRA, Mauritius Customs, Statistics Mauritius, the Waste Management Authority and Local Authorities. This ensures that each plastic-related data point, whether recorded at import, sale, collection or recycling, is consolidated into a single integrated system. Such inter-agency coordination eliminates duplication, prevents inconsistencies, strengthens regulatory oversight and allows for real-time cross-verification. With this architecture, Mauritius moves from an information-poor system to one with a complete, synchronised and reliable view of its national plastic footprint.

6. Annual Plastic Flow Report: Transparency and Evidence-Based Policy

The DPM is required to publish an Annual Plastic Flow Report summarising: national consumption trends; waste generation and recovery rates; sectoral performance; compliance statistics; progress in reducing imports of specific plastic categories; and the evolution of the plastic market. This annual publication strengthens Government transparency, provides industry with reliable benchmarks for planning and redesign, and enables the public to monitor progress under the NSP. It also supports Mauritius’ obligations under international reporting frameworks and positions the country as a regional leader in environmental data governance.

7. Legal Enforcement Mechanisms: Ensuring Completeness, Accuracy and Integrity

To protect data integrity, the Act establishes strict legal penalties for false or misleading reporting, deliberate omission of mandatory data, import misdeclaration, or the submission of falsified labels or documentation. These offences may lead to administrative penalties, suspension of licences, prosecution or seizure of products. Accurate data becomes not only an administrative requirement but a statutory obligation, enforced with clear consequences. This ensures that compliance is taken seriously and that the Inventory reflects the true state of the national plastic economy.

Pillar 4 establishes the intelligence infrastructure on which all other pillars of the Plastic Governance and Control Act rely. Without reliable data, Mauritius cannot enforce bans, implement

EPR, regulate imports, plan recycling infrastructure or measure progress. With this pillar, the country becomes data-rich, enforcement-capable, and policy-responsive, enabling evidence-driven decision-making and providing regulators with unprecedented visibility over plastic flows. It transforms plastic governance from guesswork into a scientifically grounded, accountable and strategically informed system.

PILLAR 5 , ENFORCEMENT, COMPLIANCE & PENALTIES

(Transforming plastic governance from voluntary to enforceable)

1. Purpose: Establishing the Enforcement Backbone of the Act Pillar 5 provides the Plastic Governance and Control Act with its essential enforcement architecture, the mechanisms that ensure compliance is not voluntary, discretionary, or dependent on goodwill. Historically, Mauritius has relied on fragmented enforcement provisions spread across multiple laws, resulting in weak deterrence, inconsistent application, and low compliance rates. This pillar creates a unified, modern, and legally robust enforcement system comparable to advanced jurisdictions such as Singapore, the EU, and New Zealand. It empowers the Department of Plastic Management (DPM) with the tools to enforce obligations across the plastic life cycle and ensures that violations carry real consequences.

2. Broad Inspection and Investigative Powers

The Act grants DPM inspectors wide statutory powers to conduct inspections, investigations, and compliance monitoring across all stages of the plastic value chain. These include the authority to enter premises (factories, warehouses, ports, retail outlets, storage facilities), stop vehicles transporting plastic products, inspect documents and electronic records, take physical samples of products, and test materials for compliance with standards. Inspectors may also seize illegal or non-compliant products pending further investigation. These powers enable real-time detection of violations and prevent harmful plastics from circulating undetected in the market.

3. Compliance Orders and Corrective Directions

The DPM may issue a range of legally enforceable compliance instruments, including improvement notices requiring corrective actions within a specified timeframe; compliance orders

directing operators to cease prohibited activities; market withdrawal or recall orders requiring the removal of non-compliant products from sale; and suspension or revocation of licences or registrations for serious or repeated breaches. These tools allow the regulator to intervene swiftly and proportionately, addressing violations before they escalate into widespread harm. They also incentivise businesses to correct operations promptly to avoid more severe sanctions.

4. Administrative Monetary Penalties: Fast, Efficient Enforcement Mechanisms

To avoid the limitations of court-dependent enforcement systems, the Act empowers the DPM to impose administrative monetary penalties (AMPs) for a wide range of offences, including failure to register, failure to report data, importation of prohibited plastics, selling banned SUP items, mislabelling products, or violating eco-design and recyclability standards. AMPs provide immediate consequences without the need to initiate lengthy judicial proceedings, ensuring rapid enforcement and promoting behavioural change. This system aligns Mauritius with modern administrative enforcement models used in the EU, Canada, and Singapore.

5. Criminal Offences for Serious, Fraudulent, or Wilful Misconduct

In addition to administrative penalties, the Act establishes criminal offences for serious breaches, including fraudulent reporting, falsification of labels or documentation, repeated or intentional violations of market-entry controls, illegal importation of prohibited plastics, sale of counterfeit or falsely labelled products, and obstruction or intimidation of inspectors. These offences may result in substantial fines, imprisonment, or both. By establishing a dual enforcement pathway, administrative for routine breaches, criminal for serious misconduct, the Act ensures proportionality while maintaining strong deterrence.

6. Seizure, Forfeiture and Destruction Powers

To prevent non-compliant plastics from reaching consumers or entering the waste stream, the DPM is empowered to confiscate prohibited plastics, seize consignments at ports and border points, and order the destruction of dangerous, counterfeit, misdeclared, or otherwise illegal products. These powers are crucial for border control and market surveillance, ensuring that harmful plastics do not become embedded in the national economy. They also deter importers from attempting to bypass regulations through misdeclaration or concealment.

7. Personal Liability of Directors, Officers and PRO Executives

To prevent evasion of responsibility through the corporate veil, the Act creates personal liability for directors, senior officers, key decision-makers, and executives of Producer Responsibility Organisations (PROs) in cases of serious breaches. Where offences are committed with the consent, connivance, or neglect of company leadership, those individuals may be personally prosecuted. This ensures that compliance obligations are embedded at the highest levels of corporate governance and prevents companies from treating penalties as mere operational costs. It aligns Mauritius with international best practice, ensuring accountability within corporate structures.

Impact

Pillar 5 establishes a strong, modern, and sophisticated enforcement framework that overturns the long-standing culture of weak compliance in the plastic sector. Together with the inspection powers, administrative penalties, criminal offences, and personal liability mechanisms, it ensures that regulations under the Plastic Governance and Control Act are enforceable, respected, and taken seriously by all actors in the value chain. It gives Mauritius a regulatory architecture comparable to leading global jurisdictions and ensures the Act has the legal strength required to deliver real, measurable outcomes.

3. Structure of the Plastic Governance and Control Act

The Plastic Governance and Control Act is conceived as a modern, comprehensive piece of legislation designed to regulate plastics across their full life cycle. Its structure reflects the logical progression of plastic governance, from definitions and institutions, to control measures, to accountability systems and enforcement. The twelve Parts of the Act together form an integrated framework that is both operationally clear and future-proof, ensuring that Mauritius can continuously refine its plastic governance in response to evolving technologies, market dynamics, and international obligations. Each Part builds on the previous one, creating a seamless legislative ecosystem.

Part I, Preliminary

This Part sets out the foundational provisions of the Act, including the long title, commencement, application, and, most importantly, the definitions. Because modern plastic governance depends heavily on precise terminology, this Part establishes a wide, inclusive and technology-neutral vocabulary covering plastic polymers, plastic products, packaging categories, additives, microplastics, producers, quasi-producers, and other relevant terms. It ensures that the law applies broadly to avoid loopholes and aligns Mauritian definitions with global standards such as the EU SUPD and PPWR.

Part II, Administration & Institutional Framework

Part II creates the institutional backbone of the Act. It establishes the Department of Plastic Management (DPM), defines its functions, powers, internal governance, and reporting obligations. It sets out the appointment and powers of inspectors, the delegation of authority, inter-agency cooperation mechanisms, and oversight by the Minister. This Part resolves the historical fragmentation of institutions by creating a single competent authority responsible for implementing and enforcing the Act.

Part III, Control of Plastic Products

This Part contains the substantive regulatory powers for controlling plastic products and packaging. It empowers the Minister and the DPM to regulate market entry, ban or restrict harmful plastics, impose design and compositional standards, regulate additives, mandate phase-outs, prescribe labelling requirements and ban the dumping and littering of plastics in coastal and marine environments. It allows Mauritius to control which plastics may or may not enter the national market, thereby preventing downstream waste and pollution.

Part IV, Registration of Producers & Importers

Part IV establishes the mandatory registration system for all entities placing plastics on the market. It creates the National Producer Inventory and requires producers, importers, converters, distributors, recyclers and brand owners to register prior to placing any plastic product on the Mauritian market. This Part is essential for transparency, traceability and the enforcement of obligations under the Act.

Part V, Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)

This Part introduces a binding EPR framework, imposing legal obligations on producers to finance and manage the post-consumer impacts of the plastics they introduce. It covers the creation and accreditation of Producer Responsibility Organisations (PROs), fee structures, eco-modulation principles, recycling and recovery targets, take-back systems, reporting duties, and compliance mechanisms. It operationalises NSP Target 7 and embeds the polluter-pays principle into Mauritian law.

Part VI, National Plastic Inventory & Reporting

Part VI establishes the digital National Plastic Inventory and sets out mandatory reporting obligations for producers, importers, PROs, recyclers and retailers. It governs data standards, reporting formats, record keeping, data verification, confidentiality rules, and integration of the Inventory with Customs, MRA, Statistics Mauritius and other agencies. This Part ensures Mauritius has the data it needs to regulate plastics scientifically and effectively.

Part VII, Plastic Transition Fund

This Part establishes a dedicated fund to support the implementation of the Act and to finance the transition toward sustainable alternatives. It sets out the sources of the Fund (EPR fees, penalties, levies, grants, appropriations, and donor financing), the governance structure, permitted uses (recycling infrastructure, innovation grants, community collection systems, research, capacity building), and financial reporting obligations.

Part VIII, Inspections, Monitoring & Compliance

Part VIII describes the powers of inspectors and the enforcement mechanisms available to the DPM. It includes powers of entry, search and seizure, vehicle stoppage, inspection of records, sampling and testing, and issuance of compliance and improvement notices. This Part ensures that the obligations created elsewhere in the Act can be effectively monitored and enforced.

Part IX, Offences & Penalties

This Part sets out criminal and administrative offences, ranging from non-registration and failure to report to illegal importation, fraudulent data submission, and obstruction of inspectors. It includes penalties, fines, imprisonment provisions, administrative monetary penalties, corporate liability, and the personal liability of directors and officers. This Part gives the Act the deterrent strength it needs.

Part X, Appeals

Part X creates an appeal mechanism, allowing aggrieved parties to challenge decisions of the DPM, including licensing refusals, penalties, orders, or registration decisions, before an independent tribunal or designated body. This ensures procedural fairness and maintains checks and balances.

Part XI, Regulation-Making Powers

Because plastic governance is a fast-evolving field, this Part grants the Minister and the DPM wide regulation-making powers to address future developments, including new plastic types, updated international obligations, emerging technologies, or evolving data on environmental impacts. It allows the Act to remain modern without requiring constant amendment of the primary legislation.

Part XII, Transitional & Savings Provisions

Finally, this Part manages the transition from the existing fragmented legal regime to the new comprehensive governance system. It repeals or amends existing regulations, preserves ongoing proceedings, allows for transitional licences and temporary exemptions where necessary, and ensures continuity of enforcement. It provides the legal bridge enabling Mauritius to shift smoothly into a fully integrated plastic governance framework.

Together, these twelve Parts create a complete life-cycle governance framework, from definitions to enforcement, from institutional structures to producer responsibility, from data systems to financial mechanisms. They ensure coherence, modernity and adaptability, positioning the Act as a long-term, future-proof central instrument for plastic regulation in Mauritius.

4. Interpretation Section, Definitions

The Interpretation section of the Plastic Governance and Control Act forms the legal foundation upon which all regulatory powers, prohibitions, obligations and enforcement mechanisms rest. Because plastic governance is a technically complex and constantly evolving field, the definitions adopted must be broad, inclusive, adaptable and prosecution-friendly, while still offering sufficient clarity to industry and regulators. A narrow or overly technical definition would risk creating loopholes that manufacturers, importers or defence counsel could exploit. Conversely, an excessively vague definition could generate legal uncertainty and undermine enforceability. The Act therefore adopts a hybrid definitional approach, combining detailed listings of materials, characteristics and product types with broad, principle-based clauses that capture future innovations and substances of similar nature.

Alongside “plastic”, the Act adopts broad definitions for the major regulated categories, including “single-use plastic product”, “plastic packaging”, “producer”, “quasi-producer”, “importer”, and “recycler”. These definitions are intentionally drafted in wide terms to reflect functional use rather than industry labels. For example, a “single-use plastic product” is defined by its intended or reasonably foreseeable one-time use, not by its nominal design or marketing claim. It is also proposed that term “Producer” should be defined in accordance with the definition provided in other Regulations to ensure a degree of harmonisation.

Crucially, each defined term includes a catch-all clause, phrases such as “including but not limited to”, “of any composition”, “whether or not intended for reuse”, or “or any material of similar nature, function or environmental impact”, ensuring that the definitional scope remains flexible and future-proof. These clauses allow the Act to capture new materials, emerging polymers, innovative packaging formats and future additives without requiring amendments to the primary legislation. This protects the regulatory system from becoming obsolete as industry evolves, while preserving fairness and clarity in enforcement.

By adopting this hybrid listing-plus-principle approach, the Interpretation section safeguards the Act against legal loopholes, strengthens the hand of prosecutors, empowers inspectors to act decisively, and ensures that the law can regulate present and future plastic products with equal effectiveness. It places the burden of compliance firmly on producers and importers, not on regulators chasing technicalities, and ensures that the Act remains adaptable, modern and resilient for decades to come.

5. Alignment with NSP Targets

The Plastic Governance and Control Act is conceived not as an isolated environmental statute but as the principal legal instrument that operationalises Mauritius’ National Strategy Plan (NSP)/Roadmap on plastics. The Act is intentionally drafted to anchor and give enforceable legal effect to the NSP’s key targets, ensuring that national policy commitments translate into concrete, measurable, and binding obligations for all actors in the plastic value chain.

By integrating the NSP within the architecture of the Act, Mauritius embeds long-term strategic coherence between national policy, legislative authority, market regulation, and enforcement capacity.

Central to this alignment is Target 2, which calls for the *phase-wise reduction of problematic single-use plastics*. The Act gives this strategic objective a robust legal foundation by empowering the Minister and the Department of Plastic Management (DPM) to define, prohibit, restrict, and

progressively eliminate categories of non-essential and high-pollution SUP products. Through market-entry controls, phase-out schedules, design standards, and take-back obligations, the Act ensures that Target 2 evolves from policy aspiration to enforceable law.

Similarly, the Act directly implements Target 4, which mandates a *phase-wise reduction of plastic packaging consumption by 2035*. This is operationalised through the Act's provisions on plastic product control, eco-design rules, recycled content requirements, marking and labelling standards, and the authority to regulate multi-layer and non-recyclable packaging formats. By legally enabling the progressive reduction of packaging volumes, complexity, and harmful components, the Act provides the regulatory machinery needed to achieve the long-term consumption reduction required under the NSP.

Target 7, focusing on the *formalisation of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)*, is fully embedded within Part V of the Act. The Act not only provides a legal basis for producer obligations but establishes the institutional mechanisms, registration systems, Producer Responsibility Organisations (PROs), eco-modulated fee structures, take-back schemes, and performance reporting, that make EPR operational, enforceable, and financially sustainable.

The Act also aligns with CCA 3.1, the NSP's commitment to mobilising national and international financing mechanisms to support the transition toward sustainable plastics management. Through Part VII, the Act establishes the Plastic Transition Fund, which consolidates EPR fees, penalties, levies, grants, donor contributions, and international funding streams (GEF, UNEP, EU circularity programmes, MRIC innovation funds, etc.). This ensures that the NSP's financing strategy is built into the legislative framework, enabling long-term funding for collection, recycling infrastructure, innovation, monitoring systems, and transition support for SMEs.

Part I (Preliminary) advances all targets. Part II (Administration & Institutional Framework), Parts III (Control of Plastic Products) and IV (Registration of Producers & Importers) deliver Targets 1, 2 and 4 by acting on upstream plastic flows. Part V (Extended Producer Responsibility) delivers Target 7 through a fully enforceable EPR architecture. Part VI (National Plastic Inventory &

Reporting) advances all targets by establishing the data systems required for national monitoring. Part VII provides for the Plastic Transition Fund. Parts VIII (Inspections, Monitoring & Compliance) and IX (Offences & Penalties) provide the enforcement strength necessary to ensure compliance and Part X provide. Part XI (Regulation-Making Powers) ensures future alignment by granting regulation-making powers that can evolve with the NSP’s future phases.

In this way, the Plastic Governance and Control Act becomes the legislative engine that powers the NSP, transforming policy goals into binding obligations, coherent institutions, market incentives, and enforceable regulatory outcomes. It ensures that Mauritius has the legal, financial, and institutional capacity to meet its national commitments and to lead the region in modern, science-based plastic governance.

NSP ALIGNMENT TABLE — PLASTIC GOVERNANCE AND CONTROL ACT

Part of the Act	NSP Target(s) Supported	How the Act Operationalises the Target
Part I , Preliminary	All Targets (Foundational)	Establishes broad, prosecution-friendly definitions that capture all plastics, coatings, composites and additives, creating the legal foundation for NSP implementation.
Part II , Administration & Institutional Framework	Targets 2, 4, 7, CCA 3.1	Creates the Department of Plastic Management (DPM), centralises authority, mandates inter-agency coordination, and provides long-term institutional

		capacity to deliver NSP actions.
Part III , Control of Plastic Products	Target 2; Target 4	Empowers the Minister/DPM to ban SUPs, ban dumping of plastics in coastal and marine environments, restrict polymers, regulate packaging, impose eco-design rules, and introduce phased targets aligned with NSP Targets 2 and 4.
Part IV , Registration of Producers & Importers	Target 7	Ensures producers and importers are traceable and accountable, enabling enforcement of EPR obligations and data reporting required for Target 7.
Part V , Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)	Target 7	Establishes binding EPR duties (collection, recovery, eco-design, reporting), PRO accreditation, and fee systems that implement NSP Target 7.
Part VI , National Plastic Inventory & Reporting	Targets 1, 2, 4, 7 and 8	Creates national data infrastructure through mandatory reporting, HS code extension, and annual plastic flow statistics,

		enabling evidence-based delivery of NSP targets.
Part VII , Plastic Transition Fund	CCA 3.1; Targets 2, 4, 7	Establishes the Plastic Transition Fund to consolidate EPR fees, levies, penalties, grants and donor contributions, providing long-term financing of NSP actions.
Part VIII , Inspections, Monitoring & Compliance	Targets 2, 4, 7	Provides inspection and monitoring powers ensuring enforcement of bans, restrictions, EPR duties, and reporting obligations required to meet NSP targets.
Part IX , Offences & Penalties	Targets 2, 4, 7	Creates administrative and criminal penalties for SUP violations, misreporting, illegal imports, and non-compliance with EPR, ensuring deterrence and implementation.
Part X , Appeals	Governance integrity across all targets	Guarantees fairness and transparency in decisions taken under the Act, supporting the integrity of NSP-driven governance measures.
Part XI , Regulation-Making Powers	All NSP Targets + Future Phases	Enables updating of bans, packaging rules, recycled

		content quotas, and EPR mechanisms as NSP evolves, ensuring adaptability and future alignment.
Part XII , Transitional & Savings Provisions	All Targets	Ensures a smooth transition from fragmented current rules to the unified Act, preserving continuity and avoiding enforcement gaps as NSP targets are rolled out.

Proposed Plastic Governance and Control (Single Use Plastic Products and Plastic Bags)

Regulations

Mauritius’ efforts to reduce plastic pollution have produced numerous separate legal instruments controlling different categories of plastics. While these regulations have helped reduce certain products from the market, fragmentation has created overlapping obligations, uneven enforcement, and opportunities for loopholes. A single regulation governing both Single-Use Plastic Products (SUPPs) and plastic bags would provide not only a more coherent and efficient framework, improving regulatory clarity, enforcement capacity, infrastructure planning, and stakeholder compliance but more importantly would create a level playing field for all operators.

1. Comprehensiveness of Coverage

It is proposed that the coverage for single use plastic products categories be reviewed to incorporate plastic bags, rather than treating them separately.

This will align with NSP Target 2, which calls for a phase-wise reduction of non-essential and problematic plastics based on economic, technical, and social feasibility. A unified regulation would therefore ensure that bans, restrictions, and alternative requirements apply consistently to all categories of disposable plastics, including plastic bags.

Such consolidation would also allow uniform criteria for biodegradable and compostable products, including mandatory proof of biodegradation in accordance with technical standards AS 5810 and BS EN 17427 standards and those listed under the Third Schedule of the 2020 Regulations. The current Sixth Schedule under the 2025 Amendments (listing prohibited polymers) should be construed as a dynamic list which must be regularly updated to rapidly respond to market innovations and emerging plastic threats.

2. Monitoring, Enforcement & Evaluation

The creation of an inventory database of plastic flows, aligned with Target 1 of the NSP, will bring about traceability of production, imports, distribution, and consumption. Having separate traceability systems for bags and SUPPs results in duplication and data fragmentation. A consolidated regulation could streamline reporting from producers and quasi-producers, importers, distributors and retailers under one legally mandated system.

To enhance and complement enforcement, it is recommended to also introduce, over and above any existing monetary penalties, administrative sanctions such as suspension, disqualification or revocation of licences.

Furthermore, implementing risk-based inspections – for instance, surveilling high-volume importers and “suspect consignments” coupled with random inspections of smaller traders - would increase enforcement efficiency and nurture better utilisation of monitoring and enforcement resources.

Signatories to the voluntary Plastic Reduction Pledge (Target 5), would be required to produce annual reports demonstrating progress made whilst at the same time highlighting any obstacles and challenges towards the implementation of the action plan.

3. Infrastructure & Alternatives

A single overarching regulation would strengthen the link between legislation and scientific evidence.

Division 2 (Research and Development) and Division 5 (Policy Development) under the Department of Plastic Management would be tasked with:

1. Defining plastics, single-use plastics, biodegradable/compostable plastics, non-biodegradable single use plastic products following multisectoral dialogue
2. Setting criteria for determining biodegradability of ‘biodegradable/compostable’ plastic products as well as for ‘material other than plastic’
3. Disseminating key findings of life cycle assessments (socio-economic and environmental impacts, as well as, impacts on human health) of allowable alternative materials

4. Stakeholders’ Engagement

The NSP proposes five subcommittees to oversee 11 targets and four cross-cutting actions, offering a structured governance platform. A unified regulation would enable these committees to work across all plastic categories, fostering multi-sector dialogue as specified in the NSP.

Dimension	Recommendations
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**1.
Comprehensiveness of Coverage**

Enact a Plastic Governance and Control Act that will consolidate all plastic regulations.

Extend the scope to include other Single Use Plastic Products categories

Provide proof of degradation/biodegradation as per AS 5810 and BS EN 17427 for “biodegradable/compostable” bags

- Make the Sixth Schedule a dynamic list reviewed every 2–3 years, allowing the Minister to quickly add new polymers or problematic additives

**2. Monitoring,
Evaluation &
Enforcement**

Creation of inventory database of plastic flows (Target 1 in NSP); Introduction of Plastic Reduction Pledge (Target 5 in NSP); set phase wise reduction of non-essential and problematic Single-Use Plastics (SUP) in line with availability of sustainable alternatives based on technical, financial and social viability (Target 2)

Require third-party certification for biodegradable/compostable bags from accredited bodies and an online registry of authorised products.

Apply risk-based inspections: prioritise high-volume importers, suspect consignments and high-risk entry points; pair with random checks for small traders.

Introduce a monitoring producer/importer reporting system.

As a deterrent measure administrative sanctions for example, suspension/ disqualification/revocation of licences may be imposed (at the discretion of the Magistrate)

<p>3. Infrastructure & Alternatives</p>	<p>Division 2, of the Department of Plastic Management, should be in a position to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide a clear definition of plastics, single-use plastics, biodegradable/compostable plastics, non-biodegradable single use plastic products following multisectoral dialogue 2. Set criteria for determining biodegradability of ‘biodegradable/compostable’ plastic products as well as for ‘material other than plastic’ 3. Disseminate key findings of life cycle assessments (socio-economic and environmental impacts, as well as, impacts on human health) of allowable alternative materials
<p>4. Stakeholders Engagement</p>	<p>The NSP provides a platform to engage stakeholders across the 5 subcommittees, which will oversee the 11 targets and 4 CCAs.</p> <p>Establish sub-committees bringing together ministries, local authorities, retailers, tourism operators, manufacturers, recyclers, NGOs, academia to guide implementation and future amendments.</p> <p>Encourage voluntary agreements with supermarkets, hotels and fast-food chains to eliminate remaining single-use bags by adopting reuse models</p>

Proposed Plastic Governance and Control (Extended Producer Responsibility Plastic Packaging) Regulation

A regulation on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for plastic packaging would mark a major shift in Mauritius' plastic governance landscape. EPR would place legal responsibility on producers (defined as retailers, importers, exporters and quasi-producers) to finance and manage the end-of-life impacts of the plastic packaging they place on the market.

The success of such a regulation depends on meticulous planning, multi-stakeholder engagement and financial and technical assessments. Therefore, enacting EPR regulations for plastic packaging should be a medium to long term process, implemented only after the relevant divisions complete robust baseline studies on plastic flows, recycling capacity, social impacts and available alternatives.

1. Comprehensiveness of Coverage

EPR must regulate the entire lifecycle of plastic packaging: design, production, importation, distribution, consumption and post-consumer management. To ensure completeness, it should look into different packaging types—primary (direct product packaging), secondary (wrapping and sealing), tertiary (shipping packaging) and reusable systems.

Prior to the development of this EPR mechanism, it is essential to:

1. Identify which sectors/producers/quasi-producers which will be in a position financially and technically to embrace and discharge an EPR;
2. Identify the proposed list of products that will be governed by an EPR mechanism.

Target 7 outlines the different activities underlying the formalisation of EPR schemes.

2. Monitoring, Enforcement & Evaluation

Once implemented, the EPR regulation should include:

- A producer registry linked to customs and import declarations.
- Mandatory audits and public reporting.
- Graduated administrative sanctions, including licence suspension or revocation for non-compliance.
- Risk-based inspections

3. Infrastructure and Alternatives

EPR cannot succeed without adequate infrastructure for collection, sorting, recycling, composting and reuse. EPR fees should be used to finance: recycling plants (e.g., r-PET), deposit-return systems, reuse logistics, and compostable treatment infrastructure. Action must follow life-cycle assessments and sector research.

Only after baseline assessments should EPR fees be designed to finance:

- National deposit-return systems for beverages.
- Local r-PET and recycling facilities.
- Reuse logistics (return schemes, refill models, washing systems).
- Infrastructure for compostable materials where scientifically justified.

4. Stakeholders’ Engagement

EPR demands coordinated responsibility among producers, importers, retailers, municipalities, recyclers, NGOs and consumers. The NSP proposes multi-stakeholder subcommittees to oversee plastic targets, providing an ideal platform for long-term EPR policy design. Given the multifaceted considerations of implementing an EPR mechanism, it is important kickstart and plan well before 2035.

Dimension	Recommendations
1.Comprehensiveness of Coverage	<p>Shifts responsibility to producers/importers to finance and manage post-consumer plastic packaging waste. Moves beyond bans to full lifecycle responsibility (design → collection → recycling/reuse).</p> <p>Covers all packaging types: primary (direct), secondary (wrapping), tertiary (shipping) and reusable systems. Must integrate standards for “biodegradable/compostable” packaging.</p> <p>Target 7 outlines the different activities underlying the formalisation of EPR schemes.</p>

	Should not be implemented immediately; requires baseline studies first (plastic flows, recycling capacity, alternatives, social/economic impacts).
2. Monitoring, Enforcement & Evaluation	<p>Must include: producer registry, mandatory audits, public reporting, customs-linked declarations, sanctions (licence suspension/revocation) and risk-based inspections.</p> <p>Enforcement mechanisms must be supported by Target 1 baseline data to determine market size and viability of sanctions and reporting duties.</p>
3. Infrastructure & Alternatives	EPR fees should finance: recycling plants (e.g., r-PET), deposit-return systems, reuse logistics, and compostable treatment infrastructure.
4. Stakeholder Engagement	Requires collaboration between producers, importers, retailers, recyclers, municipalities, NGOs, informal collectors and consumers.

The Environment Protection (Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET) Bottle Permit) Regulations 2001

A new set of PET Regulations are currently under consideration at the level of the State Law Office. The following policy recommendations could be considered for the enactment of new PET Regulations:

- To extend the scope of the Regulations to cover pre-filled imported PET beverage bottles and all PET bottles
- To introduce an EPR mechanism on other PET bottles (e.g. oil bottles, detergent bottles, cosmetic bottles).
- To introduce administrative sanctions for example, suspension/ disqualification/revocation of licences may be imposed (at the discretion of the Magistrate) as deterrent measures
- To operationalise a Deposit-Refund Scheme (DRS) for PET
- To establish an EPR mechanism for PET bottlers
- To initiate discussion for the establishment for an appropriate recycled-content for PET bottles

The table below shows the time frame that can be adopted for the enactment of the Plastic Management Act and its associated regulations.

	Time Frame		
Legislation/Regulations	Short-to-Medium (2026-2028)	Medium-to-Long (2028-2035)	Rationale
Plastic Governance and Control Act			It is recommended that the Act be enacted in the short-to-

			medium term due to its importance in formalising the recommendations of the roadmap and unifying all plastic related regulations
Plastic Governance and Control (Control of Single Use Plastic Products and Plastic Bags) Regulations			The foundation for this new regulation, namely: the Environment (Control of Single Use Plastic Product) Regulations 2020 and the Environment (Banning of Plastic Bags) Regulations 2020, are currently being implemented and enforced. The new regulation combines the above two regulations and its implementation can be done in the short term.
Plastic Governance and Control (Extended Producer			Due to the nature of this regulation, which involves regulating

<p>Responsibility Plastic Packaging) Regulations</p>			<p>certain categories of plastic products and packaging, further consultations with the relevant stakeholders as well as market research have to be done to determine the type of product and packaging that this new EPR regulation will cover. Hence, it is recommended that the enactment and implementation of this regulation be a medium-to-long term process.</p>
<p>Plastic Management (PET Bottles) Regulations</p>			<p>These regulations are currently under preparation and can be applicable in the short term.</p>

ANNEX 1

1. DEFINITION OF “PLASTIC”

Definition under the current 2025 Plastic Bag Regulation & 2020 SUPP Regulations	EU Benchmark Definition	Proposed Mauritius Definition
<p><i>2025 Plastic Bag Regulations: “plastic” means a material containing any polymer listed in the Sixth Schedule (Provides for a list of 14 polymers)</i></p> <p><i>2020 SUPP Regulations: Plastic means a petroleum based material or its derivatives</i></p> <p>—</p>	<p><i>Plastic = “A material consisting of a polymer (as defined in REACH) to which additives or other substances may have been added, and which can function as a main structural component of final products, except unmodified natural polymers.”</i></p>	<p>“Plastic” means any material containing a polymer, whether synthetic or fossil-based examples of which are listed in the Sixth Schedule.</p> <p>Proviso: This definition is subject to change based on the adoption of the Global Plastic Treaty.</p>

2. DEFINITION OF “SINGLE-USE PLASTIC PRODUCT (SUPP) and PLASTIC BAGS”

Definition under the current 2020 SUPP Regulations and 2025 Regulations for Plastic bags	EU Benchmark Definition	Proposed Mauritius Definition

<p>“single use plastic product” means a plastic product intended to be used once only before it is thrown away.</p>	<p>SUP = “<i>Products wholly or partly made of plastic, not conceived or designed to accomplish multiple trips or rotations by being refilled or reused; typically used once or for a short period before disposal.</i>” and elaborated further in CELEX 2019/904 (examples, criteria)</p>	<p>“Single-use plastic product” means any product made wholly or partly from plastic that is designed to be used once or typically for a short period of time before being discarded.</p> <p>For the purposes of this Act, single-use plastic products include, but are not limited to, plastic food containers, detergent containers, shampoo bottles, and other disposable plastic items intended for immediate consumption or to be used for a short period of time.</p> <p>This definition excludes products that are designed for multiple use through refill or reuse, and does not extend to products made predominantly of materials such as glass or metal,</p>
<p>The Environment Protection (Banning of Plastic Bags) (Amendment) Regulations 2025, reviewed and expanded the definition of plastic,</p>	<p>EU Directives 2015/720 provides for the following definitions: 1b. “plastic carrier bags” shall mean carrier bags, with or</p>	<p>“single-use plastic carrier bag” means a plastic carrier bag, with or without handles, having a wall thickness of less than 100</p>

<p>biodegradable plastic bags, and compostable plastic bags by making reference to a list of specific petroleum-derived polymers which are banned and international standards of biodegradability/compostability.</p>	<p>without handle, made of plastic, which are supplied to consumers at the point of sale of goods or products;</p> <p>1c. “lightweight plastic carrier bags” shall mean plastic carrier bags with a wall thickness below 50 microns;</p> <p>1d. “very lightweight plastic carrier bags” shall mean plastic carrier bags with a wall thickness below 15 microns which are required for hygiene purposes or provided as primary packaging for loose food when this helps to prevent food wastage</p>	<p>microns, which is designed to be used once or for a short period of time before disposal, and which is not designed for repeated use over its life span, and includes—</p> <p>(a) lightweight plastic carrier bags, having a wall thickness of less than 50 microns; and</p> <p>(b) other plastic carrier bags, having a wall thickness of 50 microns or more but less than 100 microns, where such bags are not demonstrably reusable (evidenced by appropriate durability, resistance and reusability characteristics)*, but excludes—</p> <p>(i) plastic carrier bags designed, for multiple reuse, supported by appropriate durability, resistance and reusability characteristics;</p> <p>(ii) plastic carrier bags intended for specific hygiene or safety purposes, where their use is necessary to prevent food waste or protect public health, as may be prescribed; and</p>
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