

COMMUNIQUÉ

Environment Protection (Banning of Plastic Bags) Regulations 2020

Pursuant to the resolution adopted by Member States at the Fifth United Nations Environment Assembly in March 2022 to adopt a legally binding instrument by 2024 to end plastic pollution, the Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change (Environment and Climate Change Division) wishes to inform the public that the moratorium for compliance with regulation 2 of the Environment Protection (Banning of Plastic Bags) Regulations 2020, by virtue of which a biodegradable or compostable plastic bag should not contain petroleum-based materials or their derivatives, is being extended up to **31 August 2023**.

Accordingly, as from **1st September 2023**, importers and manufacturers of plastic bags shall ensure that:

- a. biodegradable and compostable plastic bags do not contain non-biodegradable petroleum-based materials or their derivatives;
- b. biodegradable and compostable plastic bags shall be home compostable, except for non-woven Polylactic Acid (PLA) bags; and
- c. biodegradable and compostable plastic bags shall comply with the following standards:

i. Standards of Biodegradable and Compostable Plastic Bags:

1. AS 5810
2. BS EN 17427
3. NF T 51-800

ii. Standards of Biodegradable and Compostable Non-woven Polylactic Acid (PLA) bags

1. ASTM D 6400

Importers and manufacturers are also informed that consultations are underway to define the acceptable threshold of bio-based contents in biodegradable and compostable plastic bags and that same would be communicated in due course

The public is hereby reminded that any person who contravenes the Environment Protection (Banning of Plastic Bags) Regulations 2020 shall commit an offence and shall be liable to the payment of fines as follows:

- (i) possession or use of banned plastic bags- fine not exceeding Rs2,000;
- (ii) sale or distribution of banned plastic bags - fine not exceeding Rs20,000;
- (iii) manufacture, importation or exportation of banned plastic bags - fine not exceeding Rs100,000; and
- (iv) importation or manufacture of biodegradable or compostable plastic bags not compliant with the authorisation conferred by this Ministry under Part 6 of the Environment Protection (Banning of Plastic Bags) Regulations- fine not exceeding Rs100,000.

Further details on the Environment Protection (Banning of Plastic Bags) Regulations 2020 can be accessed from the website of the Ministry at <https://environment.govmu.org>.

**Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change
(Environment and Climate Change Division)
19 August 2022**