

COMMUNIQUÉ

Environment Protection Regulations 2020

Pursuant to the promulgation of the Environment Protection (Control of Single Use Plastic Products) Regulations 2020 and the Environment Protection (Banning of Plastic Bags) Regulations 2020 in July and September 2020 respectively, the Ministry of the Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change (Environment and Climate Change Division) wishes to remind members of the public of the effective dates of the coming into operation of the Regulations as follows:

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

As from 15 January 2021

No individual is authorised to possess, use, sell, distribute, import or manufacture the following non-biodegradable single use plastic products (including polystyrene): -

- (i) plastic cutlery (forks, knives, spoons, chopsticks);
- (ii) plastic plate;
- (iii) plastic cup;
- (iv) plastic bowl;
- (v) plastic tray;
- (vi) plastic beverage stirrer;
- (vii) plastic hinged container;
- (viii) plastic lid for single use plastic products; and
- (ix) receptacles of any shape, with or without lid, used to contain food which is intended for immediate consumption, either on the spot or take away and supplied by a food service business.

As from 15 April 2021

The following non-biodegradable single-use plastic products shall be banned:

- (i) plastic straw, including sealed plastic straw forming an integral part of the packaging of another product; and
- (ii) plastic trays and plastic hinged containers used for the packaging of fresh, frozen, pre-cooked or cooked products such as fruits, vegetables, “*faratas*”, pastries and sandwich.

As from 15 January 2022

The following non-biodegradable single-use plastic products used by local food industries will be banned:

- (i) plastic cups and plastic bowls used solely for the packaging of food products such as dairy products, yogurt, ice cream and desserts; and
- (ii) plastic trays used solely for the “Modified Atmosphere Packaging (MAP)” of fresh, cooked or pre-cooked food products such as meat, burgers, seafood and cheese.

In this respect, relevant local food companies are required to register themselves with the Ministry. Application forms can be collected at the Registration Desk of the Ministry, Ground Floor, Ken Lee Tower, Cnr Barracks and St Georges Streets, Port Louis or downloaded from the Ministry’s website at the following address <https://environment.govmu.org>.

The public is also notified that the Consumer Protection (Control of Imports) Regulations 2017 will be amended to ban the importation of food products that are packaged in non-biodegradable single use plastic containers.

Any person who contravenes the Environment Protection (Control of Single Use Plastic Products) Regulations 2020 shall commit an offence and shall be liable to the payment of fines as follows:

- (i) possession or use - fine not exceeding Rs2,000;
- (ii) sale or distribution - fine not exceeding Rs20,000;
- (iii) importation - fine not exceeding Rs50,000; and
- (iv) manufacture - fine not exceeding Rs100,000.

Environment Protection (Banning of Plastic Bags) Regulations 2020

Further to the banning of non-biodegradable plastic bags (vest-type) since 01 January 2016 by virtue of the Environment Protection (Banning of Plastic Bags) Regulations 2015, the following non-biodegradable plastic bags will also be banned under the Environment Protection (Banning of Plastic Bags) Regulations 2020 as from **01 March 2021**: -

- (i) roll-on plastic bags;
- (ii) pocket type small plastic bags commonly used for “*dholl-puris*” and “*fruits confits*” among others;
- (iii) bags containing items purchased in duty free shops, carried by passengers disembarking from an aircraft or a ship; and
- (iv) all such types of non-biodegradable plastic bags manufactured for the purpose of exportation.

As from this date, no individual shall possess, use, sell, distribute, import, export or manufacture the plastic bags mentioned above.

Types of plastic bags exempted from the application of these Regulations:

The following types of plastic bags shall be exempted: -

- (i) those designed to be used for the disposal of waste, including quarantine and clinical waste;
- (ii) those designed to be used for the purpose of agriculture;
- (iii) those designed to be used for medical purposes;
- (iv) those designed to be used for the purpose of sampling or analysis;
- (v) those constituting or forming an integral part of the packaging in which goods, materials or products are sealed prior to sale on the local market or for export; and
- (vi) transparent re-sealable bags with security tamper used by a passenger or carried by a passenger on transfer to carry liquids, aerosols or gels at an airport or on board of an aircraft.

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 - fine not exceeding Rs2,000;
- (ii) sale or distribution - fine not exceeding Rs20,000;
- (iii) manufacture, importation or exportation - 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.

Temporary facilities have been put in place by local authorities for the collection of all banned non-biodegradable single use plastic products and plastic bags.

The public is being also advised that the Ministry is working on an additional list of non-biodegradable single use plastic products which shall be banned as from January 2022 as well as on new regulations for Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET) bottles and other containers for water, soft drinks, juice and other food products such as dairy products, sauce, ketchup and vinegar.

More details on the Environment Protection (Control of Single Use Plastic Products) Regulations 2020 and the Environment Protection (Banning of Plastic Bags) Regulations 2020 can be accessed on the website of the Ministry at <https://environment.govmu.org>.

**Ministry of the Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change
(Environment and Climate Change Division)
08 February 2021**