

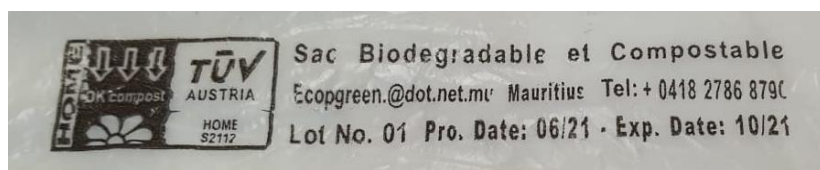
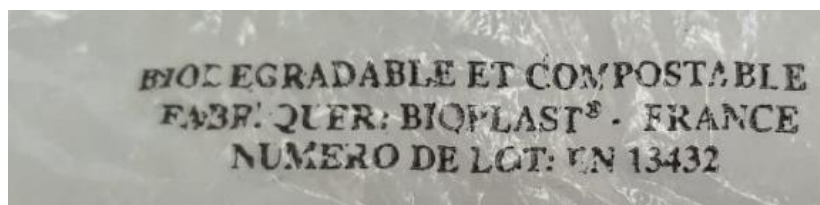
COMMUNIQUÉ

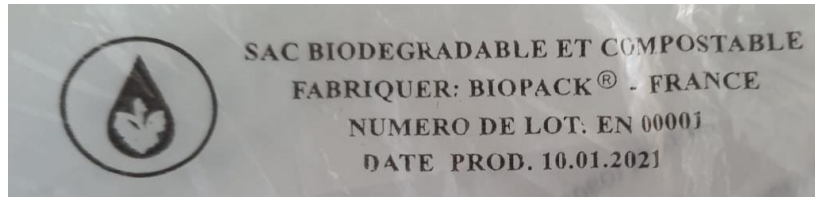
Fake biodegradable/ compostable plastic bags

Pursuant to the coming into operation of the Environment Protection (Banning of Plastic Bags) Regulations 2020 as from **01 March 2021**, the Ministry of the Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change (Environment and Climate Change Division) wishes to remind the public of the following: -

- (i) no person shall import or manufacture a biodegradable or compostable plastic bag **unless he is registered** with the Director of Environment;
- (ii) importers and manufacturers of biodegradable or compostable plastic bags, **exceeding 50 cm²**, are required to ensure that the following information is conspicuously displayed on these bags: -
 - a) the name and contact address of the importer or manufacturer;
 - b) the country of origin;
 - c) the batch number and production date;
 - d) the standards complied with and the materials used; and
 - e) the expiry date of the bag.

Fake biodegradable and compostable plastic bags, bearing fictitious name of manufacturers, as well as fictitious phone numbers and contact details, are being manufactured and sold on the local market. **Fictitious** labels identified include the following:





Retailers and the public in general, are, therefore, advised to: -

- (i) verify **particulars of the labelling** when purchasing biodegradable and/or compostable plastic bags intended to be resold, distributed, supplied or used in their trade and/or business;
- (ii) request the seller or distributor of biodegradable/ compostable plastic bags, or their agent, to produce a copy of their Registration Certificate at the time of purchase. The Registration Certificate may be cross-verified against the list of registered manufacturers and importers of biodegradable/ compostable bags, along with their contact details, available on the Ministry's website;
- (iii) request a receipt from the seller or distributor, or their agent, upon any purchase of biodegradable and/or compostable plastic bags. The receipt should be produced on demand during enforcement activities carried out by enforcing agencies;
- (iv) report any suspected case of illegal activity under these Regulations to this Ministry on telephone number (230) 203-6200 or via WhatsApp number (230) 5250-5151. *Complaints may be made anonymously*; and
- (v) in case of doubt, consult this Ministry for any assistance prior to purchasing and/ or using biodegradable/ compostable bags.

The attention of the public is being also drawn to the fact 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 plastic bags - fine not exceeding Rs2,000;
- (ii) sale or distribution of plastic bags - fine not exceeding Rs20,000;
- (iii) manufacture, importation or exportation of 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 regulation 6 - fine not exceeding Rs100,000.

Any person who otherwise contravenes the Environment Protection (Banning of Plastic Bags) Regulations 2020, shall commit an offence and shall, on conviction, be liable to a fine not exceeding Rs25,000.

More 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 the Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change
(Environment and Climate Change Division)**

30 December 2021