



Plastic free Mauritius: Defining the Roadmap

Theme: Plastic bags

Mrs Soodevi Soobron

**Divisional Environment Officer
Ministry of Environment, Solid waste Management and
Climate Change
18-19 October 2021**

Presentation Outline



- **Facts and figures (International)**
- **International Practices**
- **International obligations/
Government policy**
- **Facts and figures (Local Context)**
- **Environment Protection (Banning
of Plastic Bags) Regulations
2015& 2020**
- **Plastic bags allowed**
- **Where we want to go?**
- **How do we get there?**
- **Way forward**

Facts and Figures- International

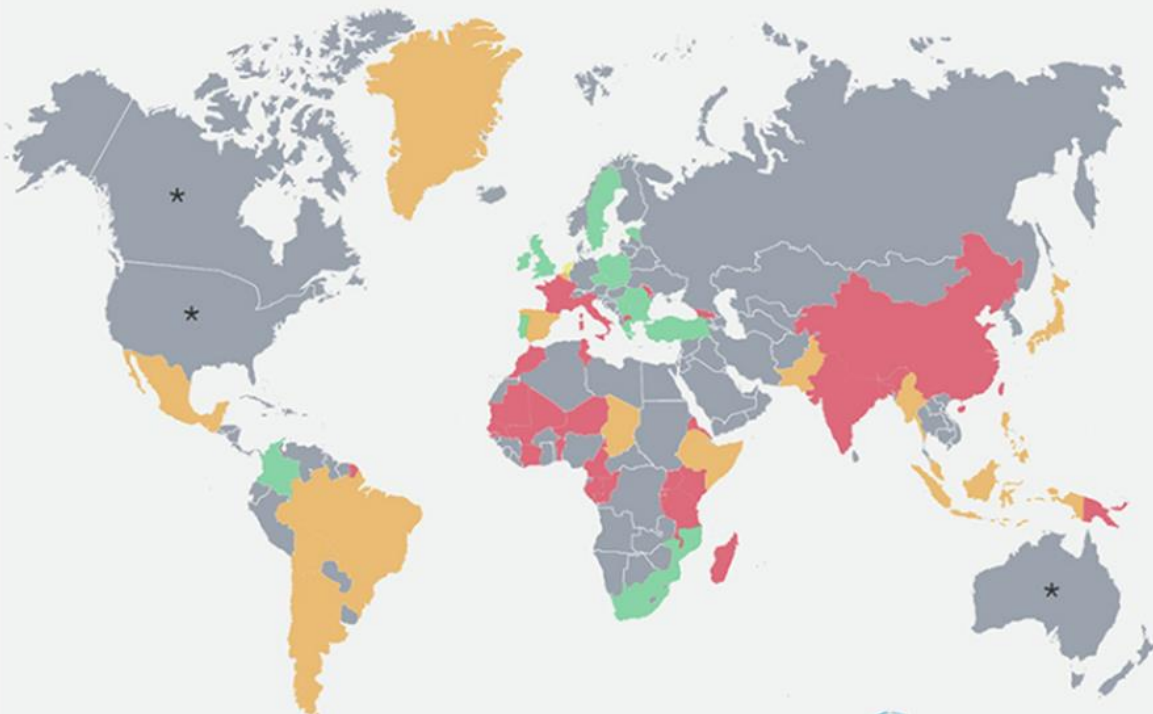
- ❖ 500 billion plastic bags used / year
- ❖ Plastic bags used for 12 minutes, but last > 500 years.
- ❖ Plastic bags, resembling jellyfish, found in sea turtles' stomachs.
- ❖ By 2025, there will be 1 lb of plastic for every 3 lbs of fish in the oceans
- ❖ Every year, plastics add to greenhouse gases (189 new coal plants)



International practices

Where are plastic bags banned or taxed around the world?

■ Plastic bags banned ■ Plastic bags taxed ■ Partial ban or tax



- ❖ At least 32 countries around the world have plastic bag bans in place
- ❖ nearly half are in Africa, where plastic bags frequently clog drains, leading to increased mosquito swarms.

Country	Banning year
Canada	2020
Kenya	2017
Zimbabwe	2017
United Kingdom	2015
European Union	2021
China	2020
India	2022

International obligations/ Government policy on plastic

International Obligations:

- **SDG 14.1:** By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution (from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution),
- Basel Convention - address marine plastic litter and microplastics
- Stockholm convention- microplastics and POPs.



Government Programme 2020 – 2024 - make Mauritius a plastic free country in the nearest possible delay

Facts and Figures : Local context

✓ 537,147 tonnes of solid waste landfilled in 2019

✓ Rs1.5 billion/year spent on waste management, including waste collection, transportation and operation & maintenance of transfer stations/landfill

✓ About 70,000 tons of plastic wastes generated annually (14 % of total wastes)

3000 tons of plastic waste is recycled yearly (<4%)

Environment Protection (Banning of Plastic Bags) Regulations



In 2015 , banning of

- Plastic bags of any size, type, with or without handles or gussets, and
- Non-woven polypropylene bags and were reviewed



Environment Protection (Banning of Plastic Bags) Regulations

In 2020, further banning of:

- ❖ Roll-on plastic bags
- ❖ Pocket type small plastic bags”
- ❖ Plastic bags used in duty free shops,
- ❖ plastic bags manufactured for export



Plastic bags allowed

Exempt plastic bags

- Bin bags (quarantine / clinical waste)
- agriculture
- Medical
- Sampling or analysis
- Packaging
- Security tamper used in airport

Biodegradable/compostable plastic bags



Enforcement Statistics

(Mar – Oct 2021)

Registration certificates issued (Exempt + Biodegradable/ compostable plastic bags)	197
Registration certificates issued for Biodegradable/ compostable plastic bags	18
Clearances for Biodegradable/ compostable plastic bags	5
Biodegradable/ compostable plastic bags manufactured	4,694,174
Biodegradable/ compostable plastic bags imported	1,389,065



Enforcement Statistics (Mar – Oct 2021)

No of Contraventions
established for plastic
bags (on land)

33

Non Woven
Polypropylene Plastic
Bags seized at port

173, 685



Alternatives

- ❖ Cotton (cloth)
- ❖ Jute
- ❖ Pandanus (vacoas)
- ❖ Paper
- ❖ Bamboo fibre (duty free bag)
- ❖ Polylactic Acid (PLA)
- ❖ Long lasting bags



Where we want to go?

- ❖ Other plastics bags to be banned(from the exempt list)- packaging of fruits and vegetables
- ❖ Reduce at source
- ❖ Promote reuse and recycling
- ❖ Promote plastic free villages
- ❖ Financial incentives



How do we get there?

- ❖ **Extended producer responsibility**
- ❖ **Impose levies**
- ❖ **Continued sensitisation**
- ❖ **Strengthen enforcement**
- ❖ **Increase logistic for collection and recycling**
- ❖ **Clean up campaigns**
- ❖ **Further collaboration with top companies to promote/
sponsor eco-friendly /long lasting bags**



Thank you

