Fourth Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP)
To the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities (LBS) in the Wider Caribbean Region

Roatan, Honduras, 4 June 2019

REPORT ON THE STATUS OF STYROFOAM AND PLASTIC BAG BANS IN THE WIDER CARIBBEAN REGION
STATUS OF STYROFOAM AND PLASTIC BAG BANS IN THE WIDER CARIBBEAN REGION
Author, Design and Layout: Marco Ferrario, Independent Consultant for the United Nations Environment Programme - Caribbean Environment Programme/ Supervision and coordination: Caribbean Environment Programme Office in Kingston, Jamaica: Mr. Christopher Corbin, Ms. Sanchez Foreman, Mr. Sean Chedda, Ms. Georgina Janelle Singh/ Cover Image: A sea of plastic floating near the Caribbean island of Roatán (Honduras), @Carolina Power Photography/ Page 2 and 3: A manta ray and a green sea turtle feed in the midst of plastic bags, milk jugs, and other debris floating off one of Oahu’s highest-rated beaches. Photograph by John Johnson @ONEBREATHPHOTO.COM

May 2019
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Plastic pollution is one of the most relevant and important issues of our time. Plastic has gradually become a part of our everyday life, but this is no longer tenable. The traditional linear production, use and disposal model for conventional plastics is ecologically unsustainable and has caused adverse and unacceptable environmental harm. There is increasing consensus among the public and private sectors, environmental NGOs, and civil society that current production and consumption patterns of single-use plastics have severe economic, social and environmental consequences. A growing number of governments are committing to reduce and prevent plastic pollution of the environment. Policies are being introduced to regulate the production, import, and use of plastic bags and Styrofoam products. This report presents the key aspects of these policies and regulatory instruments that have been implemented in the Wider Caribbean Region. It provides lessons for policy makers who seek to regulate the use and production of disposable plastics. The report also includes an analysis of the main impacts of pollution from Styrofoam and disposable plastics, as well as, an evaluation of the effects of ongoing regulatory measures and those planned for implementation in the Wider Caribbean Region. The conclusion of this report features an interactive map on the status of bans that can be updated periodically. Through this interactive tool, Contracting Parties to the Cartagena Convention will be able to monitor their efforts to comply with the Protocol on Land-Based Sources of Pollution. The map will also allow countries to provide updates on national policies and regulatory measures and evaluate their effectiveness to address the importation, use and disposal of plastics and Styrofoam products.

"Beat Plastic Pollution" is one of the most important Slogan of the United Nations; it was launched for the World Environment Day on June 5th, 2018.
Our world is swamped by harmful plastic waste.

Microplastics in the seas now outnumber stars in our galaxy. From remote islands to the Arctic, nowhere is untouched. If present trends continue, by 2050, our oceans will have more plastic than fish.

The message is simple: reject single use plastic.

Refuse what you can’t reuse. Together, we can chart a path to a cleaner, greener world.

António Guterres
United Nations Secretary General
(World Environment Day 2019)
UN Environment launched the #CleanSeas Campaign in February 2017, with the aim of engaging governments, the public, civil society, and the private sector in the fight against marine plastic litter. The goal of the campaign is to address, within the next five years, the root-cause of marine litter by targeting the production and consumption of non-recoverable and single-use plastic. To do this effectively, citizens need to be aware, engaged, and active in the way they confront the problem in their own lives. Furthermore, UN Environment is offering a platform to hundreds of local organizations who are already doing important work on marine litter, in the hope that this will highlight their efforts. By connecting individuals, civil society groups, industry, and governments, UN Environment aims to transform habits, practices, standards, and policies around the globe to dramatically reduce marine litter and the harm it causes.

The campaign contributes to the goals of the Global Partnership on Marine Litter, a voluntary open-ended partnership for international agencies, governments, businesses, academia, local authorities and non-governmental organizations hosted by UN Environment.

Sixty governments - accounting for more than 60% of the world’s coastline - have signed up to the #CleanSeas Campaign after a couple of years since the launch (updated: April 2019). Several of them have already started making specific commitments to protecting oceans, encouraging recycling and cutting back on single-use plastics.

Individuals from across the world who have been inspired by #CleanSeas and have re-evaluated their use of plastic, and are now actively engaging with the government and the private sector in order to establish bold pollution-beating policies. More than 100,000 people have taken the #CleanSeas pledge to eradicate single-use plastics and microbeads from their lives. From Bali to Panama, people are cleaning beaches, cataloguing what they find, and changing their own behavior in small, but meaningful ways, such as using cloth bags and carrying steel cups or cutlery with them, refusing plastic straws at bars and demanding the removal of plastic cups or single-use bottles from their offices.

The number one priority of #CleanSeas is to highlight the scale of the problem, and for people to acknowledge it; it would appear that the message has
been heard loud and clear. Several of the 60 countries that had signed up to the #CleanSeas Campaign have made firm commitments on issues ranging from the creation of marine reserves to the adoption of national plans on recycling and waste management.

In the Wider Caribbean Region, nine countries have signed up to the campaign: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Colombia, Costa Rica, Grenada, Panama, Dominican Republic, Saint Lucia, and Trinidad and Tobago.
Plastic bags come from the same source as all plastic: crude oil. Similar to all other products manufactured from this non-renewable resource, plastic bags have two major drawbacks: manufacturing it emits considerable amounts of pollution, and the product is not biodegradable.

60 to 100 million barrels of oil are required to manufacture a year’s worth of plastic bags worldwide, and it takes approximately 400 years, at minimum, for just one bag to biodegrade. Plastic bags are also difficult to produce, and nearly impossible to get rid of once produced.

Our plastic dependent culture produces plastic waste that ultimately ends up in the ocean. 5.25 trillion pieces of plastic weighing 268,940 tons, and counting, pollute the world’s oceans today.

A person uses a plastic bag to carry things on average for only 12 minutes.

The number of marine animals that die every year because they either mistake the bags for food or get strangled by them.

In April 2018, a sperm whale was found dead on the southern coast of Spain and an autopsy revealed that it was killed by the 29 kilos of plastic found in its stomach. This, unfortunately, is not a unique case.

The millions of plastic bags that are used each minute worldwide. Only 5 percent of them are ever recycled.

Every year, approximately 8 million tons of plastic end up in our oceans.
The number of years that Styrofoam takes to break down under optimal conditions.

Styrofoam is made up of 98% air; when left in our environment, it fills up with rainwater creating mosquito breeding grounds.

Styrofoam contains benzene and styrene. These chemicals are two known carcinogens that can leach into food or drinks.

As Styrofoam breaks down into smaller pieces, it becomes more and more difficult to clean up.

When Styrofoam enters our streams, rivers and oceans, and is eaten by marine organisms, they fall victim to complications from choking, starvation and a buildup of toxic chemicals in their tissues. In addition to killing turtles, fish and seabirds, the buildup of these toxic chemicals ultimately end up in our food supply over time.

In the Wider Caribbean Region, Styrofoam - which is primarily used in the food services industry - makes up about 5% of solid waste.

With the stress of climate change and pollution, our oceans and coastlines cannot afford the extra stress that comes from Styrofoam without compromising the ecosystem services that our bodies of water provide for us daily.
Yet, 40 million people lack access to waste collection and 145,000 tons/day of waste are still disposed in open dumpsites, including 17,000 tons/day of plastic waste.

Total municipal solid waste has been estimated to 13.7 million tons per year in the Caribbean countries. It represents 1.3 Kg/per cap/day (also influenced by non-resident population).

The Caribbean is the second most plastic-contaminated sea in the world after the Mediterranean Sea. Estimations of the volume of plastic waste in this area range from 600 to 1,414 plastic items per square kilometer in different locations.

70% - 85% of Marine Litter in the Caribbean Sea is from land-based sources of solid waste.

Only 10% of the sewage generated by the 170 million annual visitors to the Caribbean and the area’s 100 million inhabitants is treated before being dumped into the sea.

In 2014, 541,000 tons/day of municipal waste were generated in Latin America and the Caribbean, a figure that will increase at least 25% by the year 2050 according to the latest Waste Management Outlook for Latin America and the Caribbean.
Not far from the coast of Honduras, a huge "Plastic Island" has recently been discovered by the Photographer Caroline Power. ©Carolina Power Photography
## MAJOR IMPACTS OF PLASTIC POLLUTION

### Environmental Impacts
- Plastic bags in the environment pose significant hazards to wildlife both on land and in the ocean.
- Plastic bags can choke waterways and exacerbate natural disasters.
- Plastic bags and Styrofoam containers take hundreds of years to decompose, contaminating soil and water.

### Economic Impacts
- Stranded single-use plastic creates visual pollution, impacting tourism and recreational activities.
- The minimization of single-use plastic pollution is increasingly becoming a high priority particularly in those countries that rely heavily on tourism as a major source of GDP such as Small Island Development States.
- The future costs of removing all disposable plastics from the environment, may be higher than the costs to prevent littering today.

### Social Impacts
- Plastic waste and microplastic waste ingested by fish can enter the food chain, ultimately impacting human health.
- By blocking sewage systems and providing breeding grounds for mosquitoes, plastic bags can raise the risk of transmitting waterborne diseases like malaria.
- Illegal disposal of plastic often takes the form of open burning, generating toxic gas such as furan and dioxin.
The report focuses on the so-called Wider Caribbean Region which includes all the Caribbean islands, all the countries bordering the Caribbean Sea and also El Salvador, which is geographically included in the area although the country does not directly border the Caribbean Sea. The political division of the Caribbean Islands can be a bit complex, therefore it is initially presented in this section:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>North America</th>
<th>Central America</th>
<th>South America</th>
<th>Caribbean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>Belize</td>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>Independent Countries:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>Guyana</td>
<td>Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>Suriname</td>
<td>Barbados, Cuba, Dominica,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>Dominican Republic, Grenada, Haiti,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint</td>
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<td>Nicaragua</td>
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<td>Lucia, St. Vincent and the</td>
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<td>Panama</td>
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<td>Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>France:</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Overseas Region</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Guadeloupe, Martinique</td>
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<td>- <strong>Overseas Collectivities</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Saint Barthélemy</td>
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<td>Saint-Martin</td>
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<td><strong>The Netherlands:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Overseas Netherlands</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Bonaire, Saba, Sint Eustatius</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Kingdom of the Netherlands</strong></td>
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<td>Aruba, Curacao, Sint Maarten</td>
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<td><strong>United Kingdom:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>British Overseas Territories</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Anguilla</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>British Virgin Islands (BVI)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Cayman Islands</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Montserrat</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Turks and Caicos Islands</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>United States of America:</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Unincorporated territories</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>United States Virgin Islands</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Puerto Rico</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Independent Countries in the Wider Caribbean Region**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Territories under the jurisdiction of France, The Netherlands, UK and USA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total number of territories (Independent Countries + overseas territories, collectivities, and regions)**

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**HOW TO READ THE TABLES**

In the entire Report (maps and tables) an attempt to give the status of the implementation of plastic and Styrofoam bans in the Region as detailed as possible was made.

Of the 44 territories contemplated in this report, only 6 of them have been incorporated into the two countries that constitute sovereignty from a political point of view. These are the overseas territories of France and the Netherlands, specifically:

**France:** French Guiana, Guadeloupe, Martinique.

**The Netherlands:** Bonaire, Saba, Sint Eustatius.

Therefore, when “France” and “The Netherlands” are mentioned in the Report, reference will be made to the legislation in the respective three overseas territories. In the case of all other territories, the name of the island or territory will be reported. Thanks to this reclassification for the purpose of the report, the total number of territories analysed is 40:

**THE WIDER CARIBBEAN REGION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>North America</th>
<th>Central America</th>
<th>South America</th>
<th>Caribbean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama</td>
<td>Colombia, Guyana, Suriname, Venezuela</td>
<td>Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, Bahamas, Barbados, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Cuba, Curacao, Dominica, Dominican Republic, France, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, Puerto Rico, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Barthélemy, Saint-Martin, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sint Maarten, The Netherlands, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands, US Virgin Islands.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TYPES OF POLICY IMPLEMENTED

Six different implementation stages of the ban have been identified. The ban can be in place (nationally or locally), it may have been announced, it may be under discussion at government level or still be in the hands of NGOs; finally, for some countries it was difficult to find enough information. In this way, all 40 territories analyzed fit into one of the six categories. During the report, the same division and colors will be used to identify the implementation status of a ban. After two visual maps, a detailed table with more information about the implementation of the bans for each country is presented.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>#</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BAN</strong></td>
<td>Ban on single-use plastic: plastic bags, Styrofoam, or both. The ban can be national or local.</td>
<td><strong>National Level</strong>&lt;br&gt;Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, Guatemala, Barbados, Belize, Colombia, Dominica, Honduras, France, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Puerto Rico, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia, Turks and Caicos Islands, US Virgin Islands.</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BAN ANNOUNCED</strong></td>
<td>Ban announced by Ministries, governments, with official announcements, or in public events. The ban can be official or considered close to be official.</td>
<td><strong>Local Level</strong>&lt;br&gt;The Bahamas, Costa Rica, and Mexico City.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BAN IN DISCUSSION</strong></td>
<td>Working groups, governmental meetings, national plans and legislation close to being promulgated.</td>
<td><strong>Government Level</strong>&lt;br&gt;British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Curacao, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Montserrat, Saint Barthélemy, Saint-Martin, Saint Kitts, The Netherlands, USA.</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BAN IN DISCUSSION</strong></td>
<td>Petitions, drafting of proposals, work of NGOs or other local entities. Voluntary Ban (public-private agreement, private sector initiative). Also, Governments to apply levy on certain products.</td>
<td><strong>Public/NGOs (including Voluntary Ban)</strong>&lt;br&gt;Nicaragua, Sint Maarten, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NO BAN</strong></td>
<td>Difficult to find information.</td>
<td><strong>Countries</strong>&lt;br&gt;Cuba, Venezuela.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Policy</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Details</td>
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<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anguilla</td>
<td>BAN</td>
<td>Mar 31th, 2019</td>
<td>Several single-use Styrofoam and plastic items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antigua and Barbuda</td>
<td>BAN</td>
<td>Jan 1st, 2016</td>
<td>Single-use plastic bags and Styrofoam containers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aruba</td>
<td>BAN</td>
<td>Jan 1st, 2017</td>
<td>Single-use plastic bags</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Bahamas</td>
<td>BAN ANNOUNCED</td>
<td>By 2020</td>
<td>Single-Use Plastics and Styrofoam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbados</td>
<td>BAN</td>
<td>Apr 1st, 2019</td>
<td>Plastic and Styrofoam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belize</td>
<td>BAN</td>
<td>Apr 22nd, 2019</td>
<td>Plastic single-use shopping bags and utensils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Virgin Islands</td>
<td>BAN IN DISCUSSION – Gov’t</td>
<td></td>
<td>Plastic bag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cayman Islands</td>
<td>BAN IN DISCUSSION – Gov’t</td>
<td></td>
<td>Single-use plastic bags and straws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>BAN</td>
<td>Jan 1st, 2017</td>
<td>Ban on thin plastic bags and levy on thicker ones.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>BAN ANNOUNCED</td>
<td>By 2021</td>
<td>All single-use plastics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuba</td>
<td>LACK OF INFORMATION</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curacao</td>
<td>BAN IN DISCUSSION – Public</td>
<td></td>
<td>Non re-usable plastic bags, plastic cups, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominica</td>
<td>BAN</td>
<td>Jan 1st, 2019</td>
<td>Plastic and Styrofoam products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican Republic</td>
<td>BAN IN DISCUSSION – Gov’t</td>
<td></td>
<td>Plastic packing material, plastic bags</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>BAN IN DISCUSSION – Gov’t</td>
<td></td>
<td>Single-use plastic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>BAN</td>
<td>Jul 1st, 2016</td>
<td>Plastic bags smaller than 10L, &lt; 50 microns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>Local BAN, DISCUSSION Gov’</td>
<td>Jul 1st, 2016</td>
<td>Plastic bags</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guyana</td>
<td>BAN, BAN ANNOUNCED</td>
<td>Jan 1st, 2016</td>
<td>All Styrofoam products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grenada</td>
<td>BAN</td>
<td>Feb 1st, 2019</td>
<td>Plastic Bag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haiti</td>
<td>BAN</td>
<td>Aug 1st, 2013</td>
<td>Black plastic bags and foam containers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>Local BAN, DISCUSS. Public</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Plastic Bags</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>BAN</td>
<td>Jan 1st, 2019</td>
<td>Styrofoam and single-use plastic bags</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>Local BAN, DISCUSS. Public, BAN</td>
<td>Aug 1st, 2010, by Jan</td>
<td>Plastic Bags</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montserrat</td>
<td>BAN IN DISCUSSION – Gov’t</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>BAN IN DISCUSSION – Public</td>
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<td>Plastic bags</td>
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</table>
### Status of Styrofoam and Plastic Bag Bans in the Wider Caribbean Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Details</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Panama</td>
<td>BAN</td>
<td>Jan 19th, 2018</td>
<td>Plastic bags</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puerto Rico</td>
<td>BAN</td>
<td>Dec 1st, 2016</td>
<td>Plastic bags</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saint Barthélemy</td>
<td>BAN IN DISCUSSION – Gov’t</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Kitts and Nevis</td>
<td>BAN IN DISCUSSION – Gov’t</td>
<td></td>
<td>Plastic bags</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saint Lucia</td>
<td>BAN</td>
<td>Dec 1st, 2018</td>
<td>Importation of Styrofoam</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saint-Martin</td>
<td>BAN IN DISCUSSION – Gov’t</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Vincent and the Grenadines</td>
<td>BAN</td>
<td>Jan 31st, 2018</td>
<td>Styrofoam products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sint Maarten</td>
<td>BAN IN DISCUSSION – Public</td>
<td></td>
<td>Plastic bags</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suriname</td>
<td>BAN IN DISCUSSION – Public</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td>BAN IN DISCUSSION – Gov’t</td>
<td></td>
<td>Plastic bags</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trinidad and Tobago</td>
<td>BAN IN DISCUSSION – Public</td>
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<td>Plastic Bags</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turks and Caicos Islands</td>
<td>BAN</td>
<td>Jan 1st, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>United States of America</td>
<td>BAN IN DISCUSSION – Gov’t</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Virgin Islands</td>
<td>BAN</td>
<td>Jan 1st, 2017</td>
<td>Plastic bags and non-recyclable paper bags</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>LACK OF INFORMATION</td>
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</table>

Find more information about the ban implementation status, the banned items, and the community feedback in Annex I (Page 35).
TOWARDS A PLASTIC-FREE CARIBBEAN

18 Territories in the Wider Caribbean Region have already definitively banned single-use plastic and/or Styrofoam products in the first 5 months of 2019

6 Caribbean islands

15 Local Bans in other countries

In the last year, 6 new countries have banned styrofoam and/or plastic products and 5 countries have moved the discussion to the Government level through the commitment of NGOs and public or private initiatives.

The Bahamas and Costa Rica have announced bans in 2020 and 2021

In 4 Countries petitions, voluntary bans, private initiatives, NGOs, and other stakeholders are working towards the promulgation of a ban.

14 Territories are discussing the ban at a government level.

Cuba and Venezuela have started to move, but social and economic issues are slowing down the process.

2
LESSONS LEARNED IN THE CARIBBEAN ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

The initiative launched to eradicate the use of plastic bags in Antigua and Barbuda differs from all the others in the level of detail of the planning of the different phases. The ban in fact did not take place in a single phase, but through a planned strategy with a total duration of more than 3 years:

Also, highly consultative eight-step implementation process was followed, and this largely accounted for the success of the ban.

The steps were as follows:

I. Announcement of the Ban: Phase I and Phase II;

II. Consultation with External and Internal Stakeholders, including major supermarkets, customs, Ministry of Trade, the National Solid Waste Management Authority, and the Department of Environment;

III. Further consultations with Supermarkets helped to resolve challenges identified;

IV. Cabinet approval;

V. Drafting of Regulations: ban lined to existing legislation (Import Act, 1958. After approval by the Cabinet, it was decided that the ban would be incorporated in the existing legislation, as this was more expedient than instituting a new law;

VI. Gazetting of Regulations;

VII. Notification to all stakeholders: that the regulation had been gazetted;

VIII. Final Consultations: with external agencies and further awareness raising.

The tag line used for the awareness campaign was "Make a difference one bag at a time" and was conveniently launched on World Environment Day (June 5, 2016).
Even though plastic bags have not been totally eradicated from supermarkets, the ban has helped to significantly eliminate the plastics from the coasts and from the islands overall. The success of the ban is shown by waste characterization results: the composition of plastic at landfills declined from 19.5% in 2006 to 4.4% in 2017. Efforts are now being made to phase out the use of Styrofoam.

Nevertheless, the government has drafted a list of approved alternative products and has subsequently organized workshops and events to engage the population to embrace the ban and also to explain how to deal with it without discomfort.

List of Government approved alternatives includes:
- Bagasse (sugarcane)
- PLA Cornstarch (NON-GMO)
- Bamboo
- Wheat Straw
- Cardboard/Paper
- Areca Palm
- Potato Starch.

Four lessons were learnt from this success story:

Our business alone was responsible for generating about 11 million plastic bags a year, much of which ended up in our one overburdened landfill and littering our island. The bags were costing us around US$165,000 a year.

We still can’t quite believe how enthusiastically people responded to the ban! It took less than one month to eliminate the bags completely and without a murmur of complaint – or even enforcement.

We all immediately saw the value of ridding our island of the scourge of plastic bags.

Andrea Jacobs, Attorney for the Department of Environment in Antigua.

The Phased Implementation of the Ban
Two phases first restricting importation, then issuance of bags, was key to preparing all for the eventual eradication.

The Clarity of the Message
Make it easy for all to understand and enhanced buy-in!

Active and Continued dialogue
Maintained with all stakeholders, including policy makers, users, and suppliers to enhance their participation and compliance.

The Support of Government
The provision of alternative bags for shopping enhanced participation of the community. The Minister of Health also championed the initiative and elevated the profile and coverage of the campaign.
LESSONS LEARNED IN THE CARIBBEAN

ARUBA

In a public meeting held on June 28, 2016, Aruba’s Members of Parliament unanimously voted in favor of the proposal to ban single-use plastic bags. The law took effect as of January 1, 2017. Retailers and vendors were no longer able to distribute nor sell carry-out plastic bags intended for single-use at the point-of-sale.

MI TAS TA REUSABLE was the motto of the huge communication campaign; it means “my bag is reusable” in Aruba’s local language Papiamento.

Retailers were initially reluctant as switching to alternatives meant higher costs for their businesses. Meetings were held to overcome the resistance: the local Associations and Authority took part in several meetings in order to overcome their resistance. Furthermore, workshops were organized at local schools on the importance of protecting Aruba’s environment, as the island economy depends primarily on tourism.

After some initial difficulties, the ban took off and reached the whole island, in all sectors. Help has also arrived from the citizens who started to report grocery stores that might be providing the outlawed plastic bags by posting pictures on social media. Currently, many Caribbean islands are looking at Aruba’s approach to initiate their own plastic bag bans.

Among the various protagonists of the success of the ban, it is necessary to mention Ms. Juliet Carvalhal. She started in fact the initiative ‘Plastic Bag Ban Aruba – Mi Tas ta Reusable’ back in 2013 and if the law came into effect in January 2017 is mainly thanks to the efforts of her team. Now, together with numerous private sector partners, Ms. Carvalhal has established the Impact Blue foundation to promote corporate social responsibility and responsible consumerism for Aruba and Dutch Kingdom.

30
Million single-use plastic carry-out bags per year was the size of the problem in Aruba

1.2
Million tourists visit the island every year
After over 2 years from the implementation of the ban, Juliet worked on an evaluation of the effectiveness of the ban. The study evaluated the law on the retail sector at the end of 2018 and sought to respond to the following questions on the promulgation of the ban. What is the current adoption rate? Was the design of the law adequate? Why did adoption happen? Was business performance impacted?

Through surveys involving over 300 people in retail stores across the island, the results showed that: 72% of the respondents adopted the ban, 19% were in transition, while the 9% were still using plastic bags. Of the total number of respondents, 67% said they switched to paper bags, 20% to reusable bags, while the rest began using other materials.

The study did not identify differences between non-adopters and business performance. Actually, 89% of the respondents were enthusiasts and they felt the law was good for Aruba; those who thought the ban was either neutral or positive for their business accounted for 62%

Underlining its role as the Caribbean’s leading environmentally-aware nation, Aruba subsequently announced a total ban on all single-use plastic from 2020. The island’s Ministry of Environment has announced that sunscreens containing oxybenzone will also be prohibited in Aruba. Oxybenzone provides UV coverage, but it is a danger to corals and marine life. Recent studies confirmed that these chemicals can bleach corals which prevent them from reproducing and surviving.

The transition phases of the new bans will start during 2019, with a full ban in place by 2020.
LESSONS LEARNED IN CENTRAL AMERICA

GUATEMALA

San Pedro La Laguna is a town in the highlands of southwestern Guatemala. The city is located on the shores of Lake Atitlán, known as one of the most beautiful lakes in the world. In 2016 the town’s solid waste disposal plant was deteriorating. The spectrum of huge costs to replace it, and fears that debris would end up polluting the Lake Atitlán, led community leaders to pass a stringent anti-plastic bag law. The law prohibits plastic bags and straws, Styrofoam containers and all packaging materials made of polystyrene.

The 13,000 villagers initially resisted, as they had become accustomed to using materials that were now outlawed. To get rid of the single-use plastics already in circulation, leaders of the town went from house to house to talk with villagers about waste management. Residents were wary because they couldn’t afford to purchase biodegradable replacements. The government relieved the community members’ financial burden by collecting all plastic and styrofoam items and trading them for reusable or biodegradable alternatives, completely free of charge.

The municipality therefore purchased 2,000 handmade rubber basket bags from artisans in Totonicapán to distribute among families. The switch to reusable items, including the bags, cost the municipality 90,000 GTQ ($11,632).

The community has returned using hoja del maxán (large leaves) to package meat from the butcher and cloth napkins to carry tortillas. Vendors wrap items in paper as if plastic had never tormented the town. Once the reusable rubber bags have been filled to the brim, ladies stash dry goods in their aprons. One of the most interesting aspects of the entire story is precisely this return to ancestral materials. The law was in fact well-received by San Pedro’s older citizens. Using banana leaves and cloth bags in shops takes them back to days before plastic bags were prevalent.

A law born out of a necessity has therefore proved to be a great opportunity for the conservation of the environment and the quality of the lake ecosystem and at the same time the law has an important historical and cultural matrix, bringing back into vogue the use of the famous colorful bags typical of Guatemala.

By restoring and preserving the natural beauty of the lake, San Pedro La Laguna has attracted more tourists. Tourism is the largest economy in San Pedro La Laguna—visits to the town increased by 40 percent in 2018. Travelers are also prohibited from using plastic bags, straws, and styrofoam containers in the town.

Currently the municipality is working on other measures in the direction of the exit from all single use plastic products and San Pedro la Laguna is proving to be an important example for the other lake locations.
The Domino Effect

Since San Pedro La Laguna implemented its ban in 2016, 10 municipalities have introduced restrictions on single-use plastics and many others are discussing plans to regulate them. These are grassroots initiatives driven primarily by Mayan communities attempting to preserve their local environment, rather than a coordinated campaign by NGOs. So far, the federal government has not committed to national action to regulate single-use plastics in Guatemala.
The market of San Pedro La Laguna is plastic-free since 2016. (Photo taken by the Author)
SWOT ANALYSIS

**Strengths**
- Avoid the increase of illicit imports of plastic bags
- Valid alternatives
- Reduce the market and increase your vulnerability
- Competition from manufacturers who start developing biodegradable packaging

**Weaknesses**
- Re-strategize the business
- As oil prices rise, the need for biodegradable packaging presents more of an opportunity as a solution to the problem
- Increase the green business
- Development of recycling technologies

**Opportunities**
- The cost of research and development of new or improved biodegradable packaging options
- Implementation timing and designing of the phases
- Comprehensive consultations with all the stakeholders
- Media support

**Threats**
- Increase quality of the environment and of the ecosystems
- Reduce plastic pollution
- Increase tourism
- Avoid the increase of illicit imports of plastic bags

The Caribbean Environment Programme
STATUS OF STYROFOAM AND PLASTIC BAG BANS IN THE WIDER CARIBBEAN REGION

THE PATH TOWARDS THE BAN

Be informed about data and numbers of the plastic problem on a global and local scale!

- Start the dialogue with all stakeholders, especially providers, retail companies, major supermarkets, and customs
- Identify valid substitutes for Styrofoam containers and single-use plastic items
- Identify incentives to industries to produce alternatives to Styrofoam and plastic items
- Involve the NGOs that are already working on this theme! They might have ongoing Projects in your country!

Phase I : THE DIALOGUE

- If not clear, conduct questionnaires, interviews, data analysis, workshops, case studies, etc. how deep your country is ready to receive a ban and on which items
- Never stop the dialogue with all stakeholders, and once defined the dimension of the ban in a technical way, move the discussion to policy makers to find the political dimension of the ban

Fight in your Parliament for the promulgation of the Ban

- Sometimes the Ban can be aligned to existing legislation (by adding a paragraph to older National Promulgations)

Announce the Ban!

Phase II : THE ANNOUNCEMENT

- The selection of a significant date (e.g.: World Environment Day, June 5th, or Independence Day of the Country, or a National Holiday) to launch the ban increases the media power of the announcement!
The Ban is an integrated and detailed strategy, composed of a timeline (time and types of items that will be banned). It’s not a separate and unique announcement.

The first ban is usually implemented on the importation, then it moves to the distribution by retailers to customers. The Ban usually moves months after months to more and more detailed items (eg. clamshell and hinge containers, hot dog containers, bowls, plates, and hot and cold beverage cups, plastic utensils like spoons, forks and knives, straws, fruit trays, meat trays, vegetable trays and egg cartons, naked Styrofoam coolers, etc.).

Allow 6 months to pass between the announcement and the effective implementation and at least another 6 months for any more set of plastic items you have planned to ban.

Phase III : THE IMPLEMENTATION

Phase IV : THE EVALUATION

Phase V : THE CORRECTION

Never stop the dialogue with all stakeholders, and be sure that your coordinated awareness and information campaigns are encouraging and involving people to move to recycling bags. Use a powerful “Tag line” and monitor the effectiveness of campaigns to reach as many persons as possible in the country.

Pilot or demonstration activities in selected areas help to reach the complete effectiveness of the ban.

Start to evaluate how well sectors interested in the Ban are responding and the corresponding rate of adoption of the ban!

The perfect Ban doesn’t exist! The evaluation will tell you where to work and which sectors are facing issues. Improve your ban and tell the world your story!
THE INTERACTIVE MAP

The information contained in the table “STATUS OF STYROFOAM AND PLASTIC BAG BANS IN THE WIDER CARIBBEAN REGION” has been inserted into an online interactive map.

The same structure (colors and levels) has been maintained, giving consistency and allowing everybody to understand the map. This will help countries of the region to monitor their efforts to comply with the Land-Based Pollution Protocol and to update and evaluate the effectiveness of policy and regulatory measures being put in place to address the importation, use and disposal of plastics and Styrofoam products.

The Land-Based Pollution Protocol is one of the three Protocols under the Cartagena Convention, the only legally binding regional agreement for the protection and development of the marine environment of the Wider Caribbean Region. The Convention, whose the Caribbean Environment Programme is the Secretariat, has been ratified by 25 United Nations Member States since 1986. The other two Protocols which support the Convention concern Cooperation an Development in Combating Oil Spills and Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW).

This is the link of the interactive map:

https://drive.google.com/open?id=1AjpZsUQgmFbYcDNpX10Gmfl6vie-h_Ni&usp=sharing

The Map is made with Google My Maps and includes a section with all the NGOs and the CBOs that are working for a Plastic-Free Caribbean
THE CARIBBEAN ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

Promoting regional cooperation for the protection and sustainable development of the marine environment within the Wider Caribbean Region

CARTAGENA CONVENTION

- Adopted in 1983
- Entered into force in 1986
- 26 Contracting Parties over 35 years

Only regionally binding treaty for managing the use of coastal & marine resources of the Caribbean Sea

3 Protocols

- Pollution from Oil Spills
  - Adopted in 1983
  - Entered into force in 1986
  - 25 Parties over 35 years

- Specially Protected Areas & Wildlife (SPAW)
  - Adopted in 1990
  - Entered into force in 2000
  - 16 Parties over 28 years

- Land Based Sources & Activities of Marine Pollution (LBS)
  - Adopted in 1999
  - Entered into force in 2010
  - 13 Parties over 19 years
ANNEX I
# Status of Styrofoam and Plastic Bag Bans in the Wider Caribbean Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<th>Additional Notes</th>
<th>Feedback</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anguilla</td>
<td>BAN</td>
<td>March 31th, 2019</td>
<td>single use plastic shopping bags, single use plastic utensils, and polystyrene foam containers.</td>
<td>After some announcements, on March 31, 2019 the ban became effective throughout the island.</td>
<td>In the first year, the ban contributed to a 15.1% decrease in the amount of plastic discarded in landfills in Antigua and Barbuda. The ban on the commercial use of plastic bags has seen major businesses conforming, but compliance among smaller operators remains problematic. To improve this situation, reusable plastic bags were distributed for free in all the smaller businesses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antigua and Barbuda</td>
<td>BAN</td>
<td>January 1st, 2016</td>
<td>Single-use plastic bags and Styrofoam containers</td>
<td>In January 2016, Antigua and Barbuda prohibited the importation, manufacturing and trading of plastic shopping bags. In July of the same year, the distribution of such bags at points of sale was banned. The success of the first year opened the doors for further phases:</td>
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<td>- July 1st to December 31st, 2017                                                                阐述 Ban on importation and use of food service containers to include clamshell and hinge containers, hot dog containers, bowls, plates, and hot and cold beverage cups. Depletion of stock on hand to be followed by monitoring and confiscation.</td>
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<td>- January 1st to June 30th, 2018                                                                阐述 Ban on importation and use of plastic utensils (spoons, forks and knives), straws, fruit trays, meat trays, vegetable trays and egg cartons. Depletion of stock on hand to be followed by monitoring and confiscation.</td>
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<td>- July 1st, 2018 to January 1st, 2019                                                                阐述 Ban on importation and use of “naked” Styrofoam coolers. Depletion of stock on hand to be followed by monitoring and confiscation.</td>
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<td>The ban will extend to all businesses within the food service industry to include large and small supermarkets, grocery stores and the catering sector in Antigua and Barbuda. Airline Carriers, Private Charters and large Cruise Liners will be exempted from the ban until further notice. During the last UN Environment Assembly (UNEA), on March 15th, 2019, Antigua and Barbuda joined UN Environment’s Clean Seas campaign, bringing the number of countries now involved in the world’s largest alliance for com-</td>
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</table>
Coordinated with a huge communication campaign, the ban was observed easily by business on the island, while it was more difficult for tourism-related activities. Adoption rate is currently estimated at approximately 80%-90%.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aruba</td>
<td>BAN</td>
<td>Jan 1st, 2017</td>
<td>Single-use plastic bags</td>
<td>The ban took effect as of January 1, 2017 where all retailers and vendors will no longer be able to distribute nor sell carry-out plastic bags intended for single-use at the point-of-sale. Aruba has also recently announced a more ambitious and comprehensive ban on all disposable plastic and Styrofoam items for January 1, 2020.</td>
<td>Coordinated with a huge communication campaign, the ban was observed easily by business on the island, while it was more difficult for tourism-related activities. Adoption rate is currently estimated at approximately 80%-90%.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Bahamas</td>
<td>BAN ANNOUNCED</td>
<td>By 2020</td>
<td>Plastic bags</td>
<td>The Ministry of Environment and Housing officially announced its initiative to advance an inclusive national campaign to phase out single-use plastics such as plastic shopping bags (point-of-sale), straws, food utensils and Styrofoam food containers by 2020. There have been a series of stakeholder meetings and a committee established with public and private sector participants to move forward with this initiative.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barbados</td>
<td>BAN</td>
<td>Apr 1st, 2019</td>
<td>Plastic and Styrofoam</td>
<td>From April 1, 2019 the importation, retail, sale and use of petro-based single-use plastic (plastic made from petroleum) will no longer be allowed in Barbados. Also, beginning May 1st 2017, a Bd$ 0.15 (USD 0.1) charge per bag has been introduced as part of a private sector initiative, led by BICO Limited.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belize</td>
<td>BAN</td>
<td>Apr 22nd, 2019</td>
<td>Plastic single-use shopping bags and Styrofoam pollution and will achieve this through the phasing out</td>
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A collaborative taskforce working on the proposal said that cleaning up plastic and Styrofoam trash places a large financial burden, and there are already biodegradable cups, plates and bags available in Belize as an alternative. This move has been welcomed by residents, because Belizean shores are at risk from the enormous floating island of plastic in the Caribbean Sea, plus discarded plastic harms marine life and cleaning it up causes a burden. Beginning Apr 22nd, 2019, the ban is effective.

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<tr>
<td>British Virgin Islands</td>
<td>BAN IN DISCUSSION - Government Level</td>
<td>Plastic bag</td>
<td>WorldHouse Caribbean and Green VI have partnered with the major grocery stores in the British Virgin Islands to be the first Overseas Territory to voluntarily ban the plastic bag. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed with the agreement that on the 11th March 2013 a charge of 15 cents per plastic bag would be charged at the till if customers do not bring their own bags. Participating supermarkets include Road Town Wholesale Trading Ltd, OneMart, A Value, Qwomar Trading Ltd, Supa Value, Bobby’s, Buck’s and Rosy’s. The Virgin Islands is looking to stanch the flow of single-use plastics into the territory. Cabinet is currently considering a proposal to ban or restrict the use of certain types of products like plastic straws and Styrofoam, officials have said in recent days, though they have not provided specifics.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cayman Islands</td>
<td>BAN IN DISCUSSION - Government Level</td>
<td>Single-use plastic bags and straws</td>
<td>In March 2018 the Government of Cayman Islands had a meeting to discuss plastic pollution and banning single use plastics, in particular bags and straws. The government officials have suggested the recently set up No-Profit organization “Plastic-Free Cayman” can provide them with a proposal for banning single use plastic. Nevertheless, a petition is seeking to ban single plastic use has just over 4,000 signatures (4370 as 24/05/2018) the goal is to reach 5,000 signatures! Cayman’s shoppers use some 12 million plastic bags annually. Also, in March 2019, during the 12th Session of the Youth Parliament of the Cayman Islands (an event which invites high school and college students to mirror</td>
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the Legislative Assembly and debate issues of the country), great emphasis was given to resolutions limiting the use of single-use plastics.

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<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>BAN</td>
<td>Jan 1st, 2017</td>
<td>Ban on thin plastic bags and levy on thicker ones.</td>
<td>As of 1 January 2017, the government of Colombia banned single-use plastic bags smaller than 30x30 cm (12x12 inches) and introduced alternatives with a higher load-carrying capacity. The decision was approved on April 28th, 2016 through the 0668 resolution which “rules the rational use of plastic bags and adopts other resolutions”. In July 2017, the government went one step further and introduced a tax on single-use plastic bags. As of 1 July 2017, Colombians are paying in fact 1 US cent (20 Colombian pesos) to purchase single-use plastic bags. As a deterrent to use this type of plastic, the government will annually be increasing the tax by 50 per cent. The measure has helped reduce plastic bag consumption by 35 per cent and raise a total of 10,460 million Colombian pesos (about $3.6 million).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>BAN ANNOUNCED</td>
<td>By 2021</td>
<td>All single-use plastics</td>
<td>Costa Rica is taking dramatic action against plastic waste with plan to ban all single-use plastics by 2021. This includes straws, bottles, cutlery, cups and bags. The province of Guanacaste is trying to ban straws and plastic bags before 2021 with local initiatives driven by the Deputy of the Christian Social Unity Party (PUSC) Rodolfo Peña.</td>
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<td>Cuba</td>
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| Curacao  | BAN IN DISCUSSION - Public/NGOs (including Voluntary Ban) |          | Non re-usable plastic bags, plastic cups, straws, Styrofoam food containers | The Curacao Clean Up foundation, Sea Turtle Conservation Curacao and Green Force, with the support of Plastic Free Curacao, and after a petition, requested the government of Curacao, specifically the Minister of Health, Environment, and Nature to ban all the following plastic items, from being sold, handled, used and imported:
- Non re-usable plastic bags
- Plastic cups
- Plastic straws                                                                                                                                 |

**Country Policy Date Details Additional Notes Feedback** | **Costa Rica** BAN ANNOUNCED By 2021 All single-use plastics Costa Rica is taking dramatic action against plastic waste with plan to ban all single-use plastics by 2021. This includes straws, bottles, cutlery, cups and bags. The province of Guanacaste is trying to ban straws and plastic bags before 2021 with local initiatives driven by the Deputy of the Christian Social Unity Party (PUSC) Rodolfo Peña. | Costa Rica is taking dramatic action against plastic waste with plan to ban all single-use plastics by 2021. This includes straws, bottles, cutlery, cups and bags. The province of Guanacaste is trying to ban straws and plastic bags before 2021 with local initiatives driven by the Deputy of the Christian Social Unity Party (PUSC) Rodolfo Peña. |
There is already a voluntary ban on supermarkets and mini markets to not use plastic bags. People should bring their own bags when shopping.

After on neighboring island Aruba passed the Plastic Ban Law in January 2019, the discussion is now increasingly alive and is shifting to the government level.

An announcement by government that it will move to ban the import and use of Styrofoam products has been welcomed by the President of the Layou Enhancement Committee, Lazare Charles (December 2015).

The Dominican Republic is developing and adopting in its legislation specific measures to combat marine debris generated by plastic waste. The Law on Solid Waste Management is currently in the approval phase of the National Congress.

This Law establishes:

- Free delivery of all types of plastic cover is prohibited, as of twelve months after the enactment of the Law. If approved, it is suggested to locate the transitory provisions.
- The use and delivery of non-biodegradable plastic bags in any commercial establishment is prohibited. Only degradable or biodegradable containers that are compatible with the minimization of environmental impact may be used to transport goods or products.
- It is forbidden to use any type of expanded polyethylene container, known as FOAM, for packaging destined for the conservation and sale of food and beverages after the twenty-four (24) months of the Law.
- It is prohibited to serve food in disposable plastic containers for use in the same dispensing center.

These would be ones of the main measures that we Dominican Republic will develop in the upcoming years (from the enactment of the Law) to reduce the use of plastic in the country.

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<td>Dominica</td>
<td>BAN</td>
<td>Jan 1st, 2019</td>
<td>Plastic and Styrofoam products</td>
<td>An announcement by government that it will move to ban the import and use of Styrofoam products has been welcomed by the President of the Layou Enhancement Committee, Lazare Charles (December 2015).</td>
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| Dominican Republic | BAN IN DISCUSSION - Government Level | Plastic packing material, plastic bags | The Dominican Republic is developing and adopting in its legislation specific measures to combat marine debris generated by plastic waste. The Law on Solid Waste Management is currently in the approval phase of the National Congress.
This Law establishes:
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<td></td>
<td>Single-use plastic products</td>
<td>The Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MARN) is working on a bill to ban single-use plastic, such as straws and supermarket bags, to reduce plastic pollution. “We are seeing that we must reduce the amount of plastic used, particularly for a single use: plastic bags, straws, plastic food wrappers that are used and thrown away,” said Deputy Minister of the Environment Angel Ibarra (June 2018). The deputy of the GANA party and member of the environmental committee of the Legislative Assembly, Adelmo Rivas, urged the MARN to present the proposal to discuss it. Also, the FMLN deputy, Damión Alegria, said that the proposal must be approved. For his part, ARENA deputy, Mauricio Vargas, said that all parties should be heard and adopt a strict measure of recycling.</td>
<td>For the TOTO company, plastic is not the problem, but the education of people, because they are the ones who make bad use of it. “It’s very easy to blame the plastic bag. The weapon does not kill, the user kills. Prohibit plastic bags is not the solution, the solution lies in education,” says the TOTO executive director, Luis Tona.</td>
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<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>BAN</td>
<td>July 1st, 2016</td>
<td>Plastic bags smaller than 10 liters and with thickness less than 50 microns</td>
<td>Plastic bags are banned in France as of July 1st, 2017. The ones that are subject to the ban are the single use, fairly flimsy, often see-through plastic bags, that some supermarkets and grocery stores hand out at the check-out. These include even the bio-degradable ones and the plastic bags with handles. To be more specific the law says that the ban covers bags with a capacity “smaller than 10 litres and with thickness less than 50 microns” – otherwise known as the “common plastic bag”.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>BAN, BAN IN DISCUSSION – Government Level</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Plastic bags</td>
<td>A few municipalities in Guatemala have banned plastic bags, including San Pedro La Laguna. A comprehensive bill that has already received endorsement from a legislative commission in Congress proposes to ban the use of plastic bags in the country. Dca.gob.gt reports that “...If the project is approved, a period of five years would be granted, so that companies dedicated to manufacturing this product would have enough time to make the</td>
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</table>
Guyana  | BAN, BAN ANNOUNCED  | Jan. 1st, 2016  | All Styrofoam products  | The Styrofoam ban has put an end to the use, manufacture, importation and distribution of all Styrofoam products, inclusive of cups, plates, egg cartons, meat and vegetable trays, hot and cold beverage cups. As far as the legislation governing the ban is concerned, a Guyanese or a Guyanese entity found to be in contravention (use importation or manufacturing) could face fines of no less than $50,000. Guilty food establishments found possessing and selling food in the Styrofoam containers will be served warnings, and could face fines from a summary conviction upwards of $100,000.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) of Guyana will be partnering with supermarkets in Georgetown to minimize the use of plastic bags, as part of Earth Day 2018. The Government of Guyana is to consider a proposal that could lead to a ban on the use of plastic items (April 2018). After one year, the Minister of State, Joseph Harmon, said that the work has already begun on sensitizing the population to the fact that 2021 is the date we have identified for a ban on single-use plastic.

Grenada  | BAN  | Feb 1st, 2019, Sep 1st, 2018  | Plastic Bag, Styrofoam items  | Grenada’s ban on the importation of single use plastic bags came into effect on February 1, 2019 and importers have 10 months to sell all the plastic bags that are currently in stock.

Haiti  | BAN  | Aug 1st, 2013  | Black plastic bags and foam containers  | The Haitian government has banned black plastic bags and foam containers. The ban, which came into force on 1 August 2013, is not the first ban of Michel Martelly’s government; a previous ban in 2010 was lifted due to complaints from the public. Many people in Haiti rely on disposable containers because...
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<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>BAN, BAN IN DISCUSSION - Public/ NGOs (including Voluntary Ban)</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Plastic Bags</td>
<td>Bans on plastic bags instituted at the municipal level in the Bay Islands. The ban was accompanied by a door-to-door awareness raising campaign, providing each household with two reusable bags. (The Summit Foundation, 2017)</td>
<td>they cannot afford reusable ones. Protests initially broke out when the ban was put in place because many citizens thought the government was outlawing the plastic bags they use to transport drinking water. For now, those plastic bags are exempt, or not subject to the ban. Recent reports show that many citizens have not followed the ban just yet. Leaders and environmentalists believe it will take some time before it is widely obeyed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>BAN</td>
<td>Jan. 1st, 2019</td>
<td>Styrofoam and single-use plastic bags</td>
<td>Starting January 1, 2019, the Jamaica Government banned the importation, manufacture, distribution and use of specific ca-</td>
<td>100% elimination in Guanaja, 80% decline on Utila and 50% decline in Roatán (Reference: The Summit Foundation, 2017).</td>
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Mexico city approved legislation to ban plastic bags in August 2010. However, the legislation is not observed. The city of Querétaro also banned plastic bags in 2017; overall there are more than 15 regions and cities that have locally banned plastic items. Also, Mexico City’s legislature recently voted to ban businesses from buying, selling or giving their customers disposable plastics. The ban will come into force by January 2021.

Mexico
- BAN, BAN IN DISCUSSION - Public/NGOs
  - BAN ANNOUNCED by Jan 2019
  - Plastic Bags
  - Disposable Plastic items

Montserrat
- BAN IN DISCUSSION - Government Level
  - Single-Use Plastics


In Jamaica, as at 2015, each person has been using almost 500 ‘scandal’ bags annually, an estimated 75 per cent increase from 2011, while more developed countries, like those in the European Union, average 200 bags per person annually (170 bags in Australia).
Lucy Valenti, president of the National Chamber of Tourism of Nicaragua (Canatur) recently (February 2018) revealed that they intend to promote an initiative to prohibit plastic bags and promote the recycling of other plastic products. “We are exploring the possibility of promoting an initiative to prohibit plastic bags and promote the recycling of other plastic products,” Valenti said. He added that at this moment the creation of the law is an idea. They are currently studying the laws that exist in other countries of the region on the use of plastic bags. They also analyze what products in the country are potential to make biodegradable bags. In 2005, the National Policy on Solid Waste Integral Management was created, which mentions the promotion of non-generation of solid waste and, similarly, the replacement of plastic bags should be sought.

As of January 19, supermarkets, pharmacies and retailers will have 18 months to stop using plastic bags, and warehouses and wholesalers will have a period of 24 months. The sanction of Law 1 of January 19, 2018, was published in the Official Gazette, a law which prohibits the use of polyethylene bags in supermarkets, self-service shops, warehouses or shops in general to transport products or merchandise.

According to article 2 of the Law, the replacement of plastic bags with reusable bags will be progressive within the following periods:
- Eighteen months, counted from the enactment of this Law, for supermarkets, pharmacies and retailers.
- Twenty-four months, counted from the enactment of the Law, for warehouses and wholesalers.

The Law states that “the Consumer Protection and Defense of Competition Authority will be responsible for the application of the Law and for inspection of the replacement referred to in Article 2.”

Act 247-2015 was signed into law Dec. 24, 2015, three months
Saint Barthélemy

BAN IN DISCUSSION – Government Level

Plastic and styrofoam

In December 2018, the first “Assises de l’Environnement et de l’Energie” was held in Saint-Barthélemy. The objective of this meeting was to co-build with the population, the environmental organizations and the Government a new energy and environmental strategy. Great emphasis has been given in the discussion about the ban on plastic and polystyrene items and a comprehensive legislation is planned for 2019.

St. Kitts and Nevis

BAN IN DISCUSSION – Government Level

Plastic bags

With the Federation joining the rest of the world in recognition of April 22 as Earth Day, the topic of placing a ban on the importation and use of plastic bags in the Federation has once again surfaced.
The Government of Saint Lucia (GOSL), in February 2017 made commitments under the #CleanSeas Campaign to eliminate marine litter.

- In March 2018, the GOSL will express further commitment to joining the Clean Seas Campaign, geared towards partnering with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to take action to protect the oceans and their resources.

- In March 2018, the Cabinet of Ministers will be requested to consider and endorse the following recommendations:
  - A phase-out of Polystyrene (Styrofoam) food service containers.
  - An imposition of a 0% Import Duty on all biodegradable and compostable food service containers.
  - A total ban on plastic shopping bags, in order to encourage the use of reusable shopping bags, along with total ban on single use plastics and personal care products containing microplastics thereby reducing the impact of plastics on the environment, both marine and terrestrial.
  - Ensuring that the Saint Lucia Solid Waste Management Authority, in collaboration with relevant agencies, implement waste diversion and minimization strategies that encourage recycling, reuse, composting, etc. in order to increase the life of the landfills, provide employment/economic opportunities and provide environmental stewardship.
  - Increase public sensitization on the use of environmentally friendly products such as biodegradable products and the economic/environmental impacts they pose, in contrast to their alternatives.
  - Increase public awareness and education, with a view to making the public more aware of the negative impacts of plastics and to encourage positive behaviours such as community recycling and composting.
  - Indicating to the Council of Trade and Economic Development

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<tr>
<td>Saint Lucia</td>
<td>BAN</td>
<td>Dec 1st, 2018</td>
<td>Importation of Styrofoam</td>
<td>The Government of Saint Lucia (GOSL), in February 2017 made commitments under the #CleanSeas Campaign to eliminate marine litter.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Saint-Martin

BAN IN DISCUSSION – Public/NGOs (including Voluntary Ban)

Jan. 31st, 2018

Styrofoam products

(COTED), as the Member State with responsibility for sustainable development within the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the need to consider further breaking down the classification of plastics so as to allow a proper disaggregation of the various types of plastics.

- St Lucia is set to ban Styrofoam, phasing out the usage of the environmentally detrimental products totally by November 30, 2019 with a ban on importation beginning December 1, 2018.

The Minister of Environment, Energy and the Sea decided to ban all the plastic bags and single-use plastic items on July 1, 2016. Despite this indulgence, most of the merchants of St Martin still distribute plastic bags for single use to customers. The Sint-Maarten Nature Foundation ensures that single-use plastic bags, straws, cups, cutlery, and other polystyrene food containers are some of the most environmentally damaging products on the island and is working to raise awareness among the population and ensure that the promulgated ban becomes effective.

Following up on the ban on the importation and use of Styrofoam products, the government will, this year (2018), implement many policies aimed at further protecting the environment. Minister of Finance Camillo Gonsalves said this government intends to deepen its commitment to environmental stewardship through four additional measures. The government plans to curtail severely the free availability of single-use plastic bags in supermarkets and other retail centres, while promoting the use of reusable or recyclable bags.

Nature Foundation Sint Maarten actively promotes the use of reusable and biodegradable products in the community, through social media, newspaper articles, flyers, company visits, workshops and school presentations. A number of bars and restaurants on the island have embraced this much-needed change and are now plastic-free, or are taking measures to reduce the use of...
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<tr>
<td>Suriname</td>
<td>BAN IN DISCUSSION - Public/NGOs (including Voluntary Ban)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Plastic bags</td>
<td>The Foundation Support Recycling Suriname (SuResur) is working to go for a ban in 2019. SuReSur would like to play a pioneering role in making the Surinamese population aware of the recycling process. The organization has started an online survey and asks respondents what they think about banning plastic bags. The Green Heritage Fund Suriname (GHFS) is also working towards the promulgation of a ban. They recently stated that 2018 has been a very productive year, filled with a lot of awareness sessions, beach-clean ups, media coverage, etc. It appears that more and more organizations are engaged in the prevention of plastic pollution. GHFS is frequently mentioned in conversations about the prevention of plastic pollution and is also regularly invited to activities related to this issue. GHFS were also asked to be part of a brainstorm group of the private sector and NGOs that wants to work towards a ban on single use plastic bags.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td>BAN IN DISCUSSION - Government Level</td>
<td></td>
<td>Single-use plastic</td>
<td>With effect from 1 January 2016, free plastic bags are prohibited in the Netherlands. This measure is intended to combat litter on the streets and in the sea, and prevent wastage of resources. Customers will no longer receive a free plastic bag in the shops, unless their purchase falls within the exceptions. If you would still like a plastic bag, you will have to pay a small amount. Shopkeepers are free to fix the price they charge. The recommended price for a plastic bag is EUR 0.25. The European Union recently (December 2018) expressed the intends to ban plastic disposable products in the next couple of years. The aim is to ban plastic straws, cutlery, plates and stirrers in 2021.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trinidad and Tobago</td>
<td>BAN IN DISCUSSION - Public/NGOs (including Voluntary Ban)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Plastic bags</td>
<td>From July 4, 2018, Massy Stores Trinidad announced that customers will be charged 50 cents for each shopping bag they use. The measure was brought about to cut down on the use of plastic</td>
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Turks and Caicos Islands

Voluntary Ban)

Government Ministers and the new Governor, HE John Freeman approved a ban on the importation of plastic bags into Turks and Caicos and that ban begins on January 1, 2017. Store owners, from the decision taken at Cabinet will have three months to get rid of the plastic bags they do have because after April 1, 2017 there will also be a ban on the distribution of plastic bags. The policy will mean stores which package goods and more in plastics will have to find and alternative and government is considering a reduction in customs duties for these alternative carrier bags.

There is no national plastic bag fee or ban currently in effect in the United States. However, the state of California, and the territories of American Samoa and Puerto Rico have banned disposable bags. Over 200 counties and municipalities have enacted ordinances either imposing a fee on plastic bags or banning them outright, including all counties in Hawaii. Other attempts at banning plastic shopping bags statewide (for example in Massachusetts) have not succeeded mainly due to plastic industry lobbying. A few jurisdictions have chosen to implement a fee-only
US Virgin Islands

**BAN** Jan. 1st, 2017

Plastic bags and non-recyclable paper bags

All businesses are prohibited from providing plastic checkout bags and non-recyclable paper bags to their customers at the point of sale for transporting groceries or other merchandise. Nothing in this section precludes a business from making available to customers, with or without charge, at the point of sale:

1) Reusable bags, compostable plastic bags, or recyclable paper bags for the purpose of transporting groceries or other merchandise; or
2) Non-recyclable paper bags to protect or transport prepared foods, beverages, or bakery goods.

Beginning January 1, 2017

All businesses in the Virgin Islands are prohibited from providing plastic checkout bags and non-recyclable paper bags for groceries or other merchandise.

Beginning April 1, 2017

Any business violating any provision or any regulation adopted by law will be subject to:

- An order to discontinue distribution of prohibited bags, and
- A civil fine of not less than $500 or more than $1,000 for each day of violation.

Exemptions include:

- Bags used inside a business to package loose items such as fruits, vegetables, nuts, ground coffee, grains, candies and or small hardware items;
- Bags used to contain or wrap frozen foods, meat, or fish, flowers or potted plants or other items to contain dampness;
- Bags used to protect or transport prepared foods, beverages, or bakery goods;
- Bags for prescription medication, newspaper home delivery bags, door-hanger bags, laundry, dry cleaning, or garment bags including bags to provide to hotel guest to contain wet or dirty clothing;
- Bags sold in packages containing multiple bags intended for use as garbage, pet waste, or yard waste bags;
- Bags used to contain live animals, such as fish or insects sold in pet stores; or
- Bags used to transport chemical pesticides, drain-cleaning chemicals, or other caustic chemicals sold at the retail level; provided that this exemption is limited to one bag per customer.

As a petroleum byproduct, plastic is the 2nd most valued commodity in the waste stream and makes up 14% of the US Virgin Islands MSW (2010).

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<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>BAN, LACK OF INFORMATION</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Plastic Bag</td>
<td>In the Venezuelan Caribbean, in the peninsula of Paraguaná, the city of Punto Fijo, a town of 270,000 inhabitants is in the process of becoming a free plastic area. The city has had a turn towards sustainability because it is very aware of the environment, since there is the second largest refining complex in the world, with the capacity to distill 940,000 barrels of oil per day. A municipal ordinance, that took effect at the beginning of 2012, banned the commercialization and use of plastic bags with a capacity of less than 30 kilos. In Venezuela, contamination by plastic bags is a serious problem, research has shown that 500,000 tons of plastic are consumed per year, of which only 20% is recycled.</td>
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