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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**



The Caribbean Environment Programme

STATUS OF STYROFOAM AND PLASTIC BAG BANS IN THE WIDER CARIBBEAN REGION

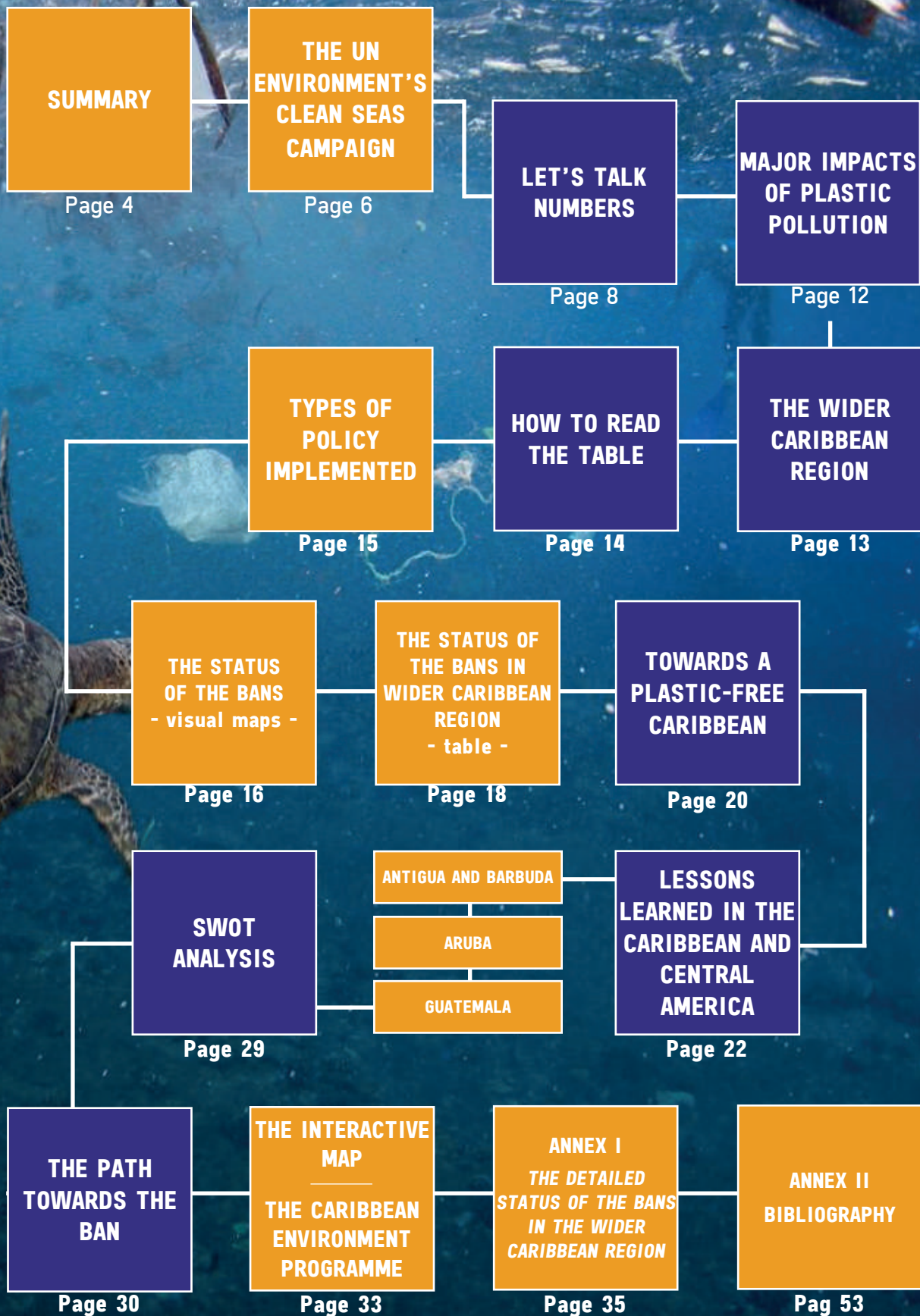


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of Roatán (Honduras), @Carolina Power Photography/ **Page 2 and 3:** A manta ray and a green sea turtle feed in the midst of plastic bags, milk jugs, and other debris floating off one of Oahu's highest-rated beaches. Photograph by John Johnson @ONEBREATHPHOTO.COM

May 2019

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SUMMARY

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 Caribbe-

an 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. On the right: Plastic waste washed up at shore, Turneffe Atoll, Belize (@2er)

**BEAT
PLASTIC
POLLUTION**

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 2018)

THE UN ENVIRONMENT'S CLEAN SEAS CAMPAIGN

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.

**WORLDWIDE, 60 COUNTRIES
HAVE COMMITTED TO THE
CAMPAIGN**

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.

20 COUNTRIES IN LATIN AMERICAN AND THE CARIBBEAN HAVE ALREADY JOINED THE CAMPAIGN!

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.

A Condylactis gigantea in the Fort-Liberté Bay, Haiti. This tropical species of ball anemone is found in shallow reefs and other shallow inshore areas all over the West Indies. (@ Nick Hobgood, Wikipedia)

LET'S TALK NUMBERS

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.

12

100,000

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.

PLASTIC

2

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.

8

500

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.

98

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.



STYROFOAM

5

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.

IN THE CARIBBEAN

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.

40
MILLION PEOPLE

Total municipal solid waste has been estimated to 13.7 million tons per year in the Caribbean countries

13.7

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.

10%

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.

170
MILLION VISITORS

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*.

541,000
TONS/DAY



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 WIDER CARIBBEAN REGION

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:

THE WIDER CARIBBEAN REGION

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

29

Independent Countries in the Wider Caribbean Region

18

Territories under the jurisdiction of France, The Netherlands, UK and USA

44

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

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

North America	Central America	South America	Caribbean
Mexico USA	Belize Costa Rica El Salvador Guatemala Honduras Nicaragua Panama	Colombia Guyana Suriname Venezuela	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.



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.

Policy	Details	Countries	#
BAN	Ban on single-use plastic: plastic bags, Styrofoam, or both. The ban can be national or local.	National Level Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, Barbados, Belize, Colombia, Dominica, France, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Panama, Puerto Rico, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia, Turks and Caicos Islands, US Virgin Islands.	Local Level Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico 18 + 3
BAN ANNOUNCED	Ban announced by Ministries, governments, with official announcements, or in public events. The ban can be official or considered close to be official.	The Bahamas, Costa Rica, and Mexico City.	2
BAN IN DISCUSSION Government Level	Working groups, governmental meetings, national plans and legislation close to being promulgated.	British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Curacao, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Montserrat, Saint Barthélemy, Saint-Martin, Saint Kitts, The Netherlands, USA.	14
BAN IN DISCUSSION Public/NGOs (including Voluntary Ban)	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.	Nicaragua, Sint Maarten, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago.	4
NO BAN	Difficult to find information.	Cuba, Venezuela.	2

National Ban

Local Ban

Ban Announced

Mexico (Queretaro, Tijuana, etc.)
August 1st, 2010

Guatemala (San Pedro)
July 1st, 2016

The Bahamas
by 2020

US Virgin Islands
January 1st, 2017

Honduras (Bay Islands)
2016

Belize
April 22nd, 2019

Antigua and Barbuda
January 1st, 2016

France
July 1st, 2016

Mexico City
by January 2021

Turks and Caicos
January 1st, 2017

Anguilla
March 31st, 2019

Saint Lucia
December 1st, 2018

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
January 31st, 2018

Barbados
April 1st, 2019

Grenada
February 1st, 2019

Dominica
January 1st, 2019

Panama
January 19th, 2018

Jamaica
January 1st, 2019

Colombia
January 1st, 2017

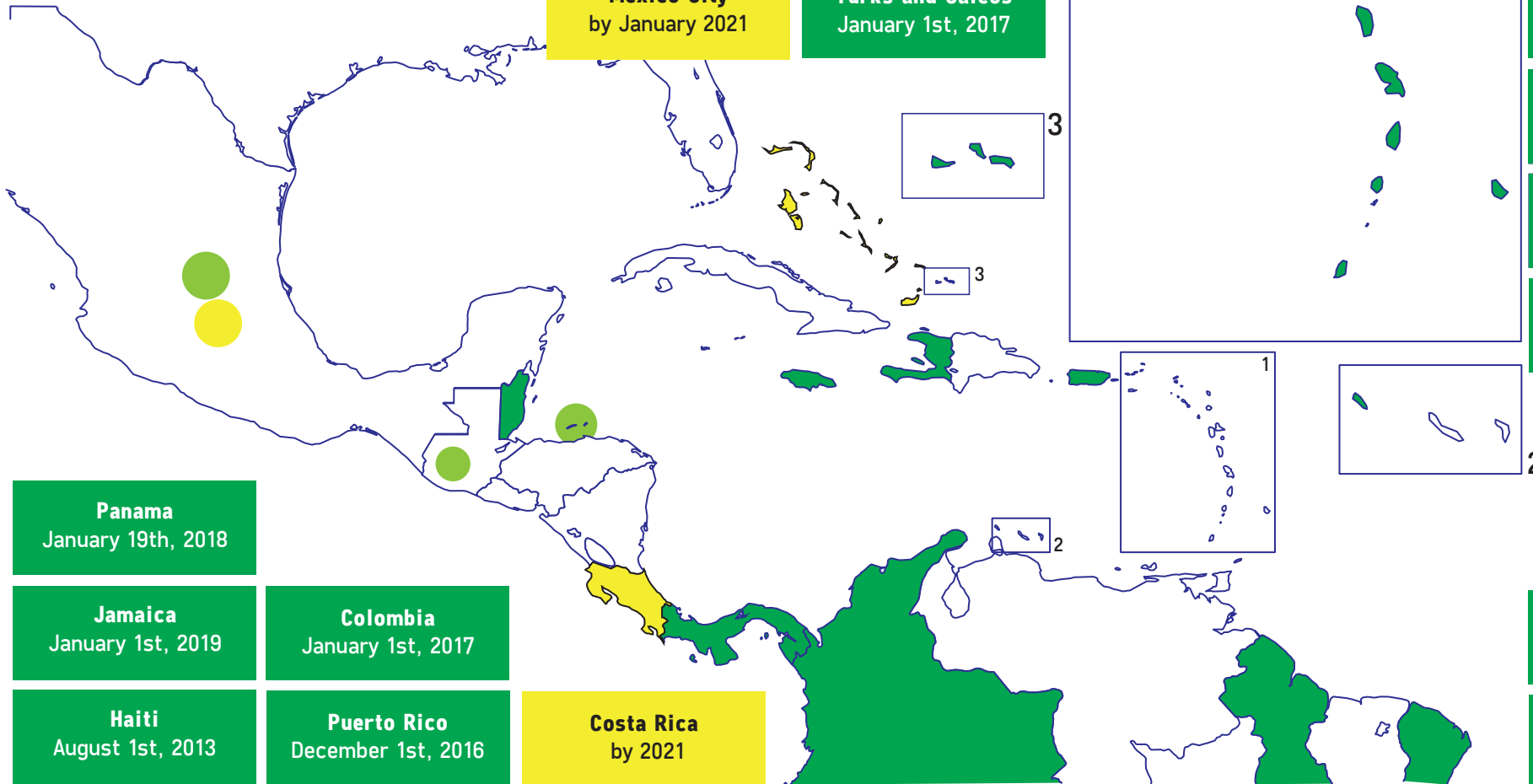
Haiti
August 1st, 2013

Puerto Rico
December 1st, 2016

Costa Rica
by 2021

Aruba
January 1st, 2017

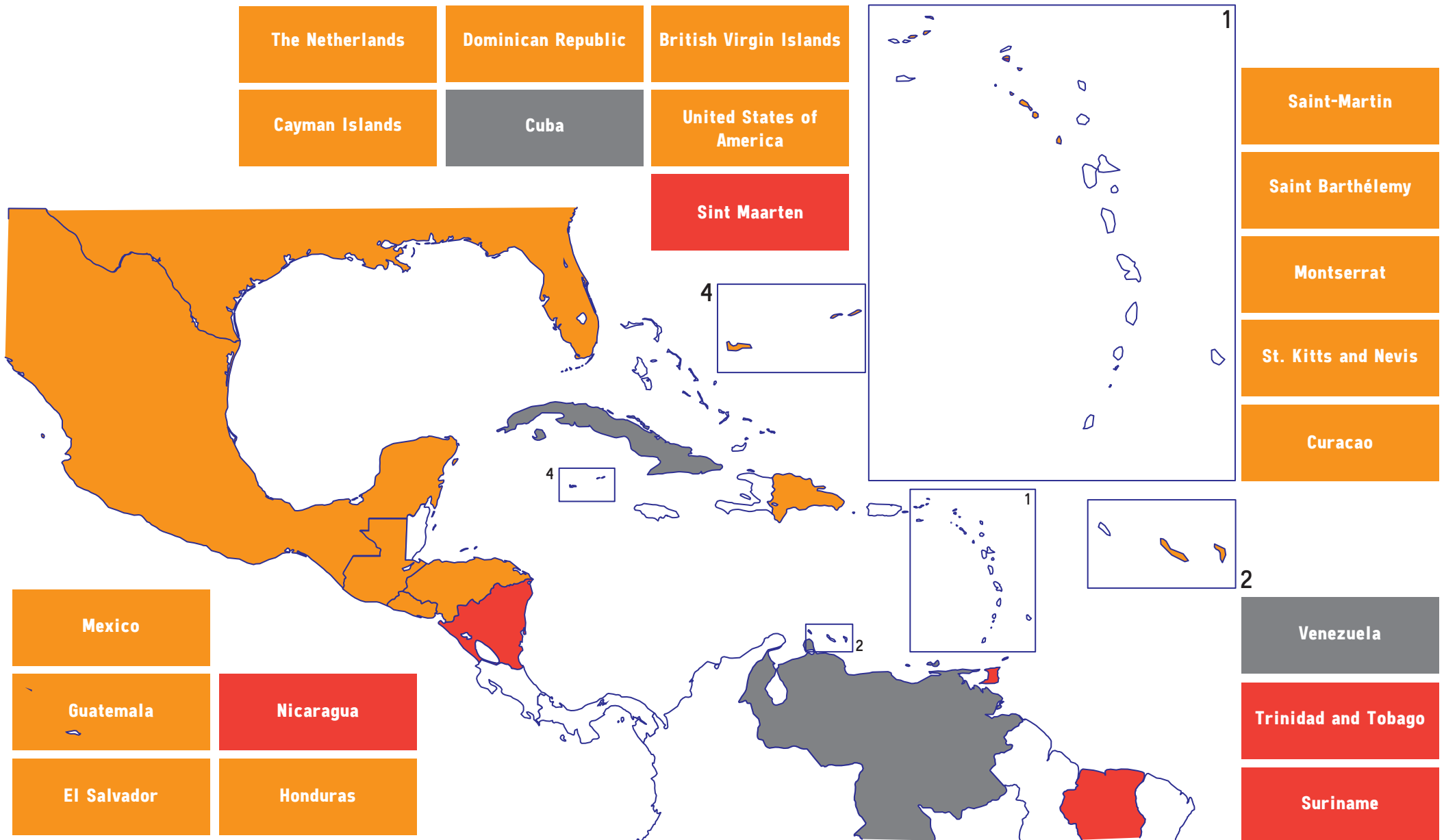
Guyana
January 1st, 2016



Ban in Discussion (Gov't)

Ban in Discussion (Public)

No Data



STATUS OF STYROFOAM AND PLASTIC BAG BANS IN THE WIDER CARIBBEAN REGION

Country	Policy	Date	Details
Anguilla	BAN	Mar 31th, 2019	Several single-use Styrofoam and plastic items
Antigua and Barbuda	BAN	Jan 1st, 2016	Single-use plastic bags and Styrofoam containers
Aruba	BAN	Jan 1st, 2017	Single-use plastic bags
The Bahamas	BAN ANNOUNCED	By 2020	Single-Use Plastics and Styrofoam
Barbados	BAN	Apr 1st, 2019	Plastic and Styrofoam
Belize	BAN	Apr 22nd, 2019	Plastic single-use shopping bags and utensils
British Virgin Islands	BAN IN DISCUSSION - Gov't		Plastic bag
Cayman Islands	BAN IN DISCUSSION - Gov't		Single-use plastic bags and straws
Colombia	BAN	Jan 1st, 2017	Ban on thin plastic bags and levy on thicker ones.
Costa Rica	BAN ANNOUNCED	By 2021	All single-use plastics
Cuba	LACK OF INFORMATION		
Curacao	BAN IN DISCUSSION - Public		Non re-usable plastic bags, plastic cups, etc.
Dominica	BAN	Jan 1st, 2019	Plastic and Styrofoam products
Dominican Republic	BAN IN DISCUSSION - Gov't		Plastic packing material, plastic bags
El Salvador	BAN IN DISCUSSION - Gov't		Single-use plastic
France	BAN	Jul 1st, 2016	Plastic bags smaller than 10L, < 50 microns
Guatemala	Local BAN, DISCUSSION Gov't	Jul 1st, 2016	Plastic bags
Guyana	BAN, BAN ANNOUNCED	Jan 1st, 2016	All Styrofoam products
Grenada	BAN	Feb 1st, 2019 Set 1st, 2018	Plastic Bag Styrofoam items
Haiti	BAN	Aug 1st, 2013	Black plastic bags and foam containers
Honduras	Local BAN, DISCUSS. Public	2016	Plastic Bags
Jamaica	BAN	Jan 1st, 2019	Styrofoam and single-use plastic bags
Mexico	Local BAN, DISCUSS. Public, BAN ANNOUNCED	Aug 1st, 2010 by Jan 2021	Plastic Bags
Montserrat	BAN IN DISCUSSION - Gov't		
Nicaragua	BAN IN DISCUSSION - Public		Plastic bags

STATUS OF STYROFOAM AND PLASTIC BAG BANS IN THE WIDER CARIBBEAN REGION

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

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



Caribbean islands



Local Bans in other countries



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

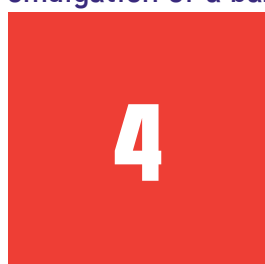
In the last year, 6 new countries have banned styrofoam and/or plastic products and 5 countries have moved the discussion to the Government level through the commitment of NGOs and public or private initiatives.



14 Territories are discussing the ban at a government level.



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



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



Haiti
August 1st, 2013

2014

2015

2016

Antigua and Barbuda
January 1st, 2016

Guyana
January 1st, 2016

France
July 1st, 2016

Guatemala (San Pedro)
July 1st, 2016

Honduras (Bay Islands)
2016

Puerto Rico
December 1st, 2016

2017

Aruba
January 1st, 2017

Colombia
January 1st, 2017

US Virgin Islands
January 1st, 2017

Turks and Caicos
January 1st, 2017

2018

Panama
January 19th, 2018

**St. Vincent and the
Grenadines**
January 31st, 2018

Mexico (Queretaro)
April 2018

St. Lucia
December 1st, 2018

2019

Dominica
January 1st, 2019

Jamaica
January 1st, 2019

Grenada
February 1st, 2019

Anguilla
March 31st, 2019

Barbados
April 1st, 2019

Belize
April 22nd, 2019

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:

Phase I - January 1st, 2016

Ban on the importation of single-use plastic shopping bags

Phase II - July 1st, 2016

Ban on distribution of plastic bags by supermarkets to customers

The success of the first year opened the doors for further phases:

Phase III - July 1st 2017

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.

Phase IV - January 1st 2018

Ban on importation and use of plastic utensils (spoons, forks and knives), straws, fruit trays, meat trays, vegetable trays and egg cartons.

Phase V - July 1st, 2018

Ban on importation and use of “naked” Styrofoam coolers.

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 resolved 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:

The Phased Implementation of the Ban

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

1

The Clarity of the Message

Make it easy for all to understand and enhanced buy-in!

2

Active and Continued dialogue

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

3

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.

4

“

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.

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 Papiamentu.

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

30

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

Million tourists visit the island every year

1.2

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.



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.

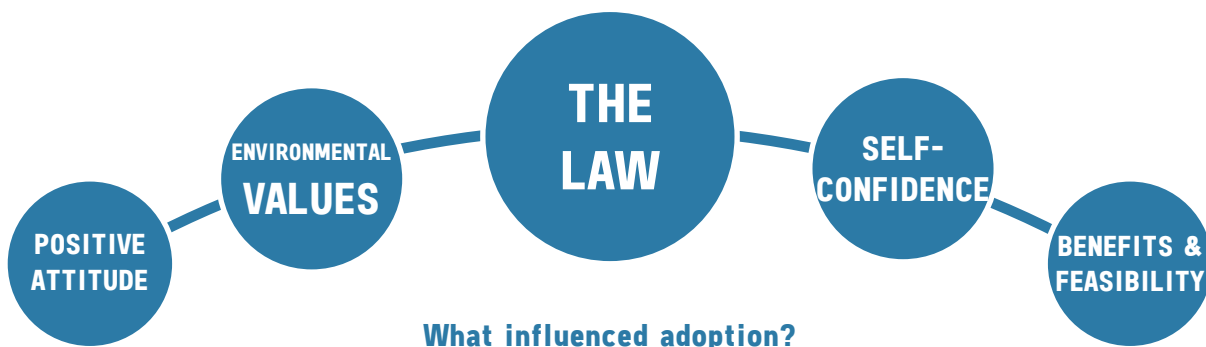
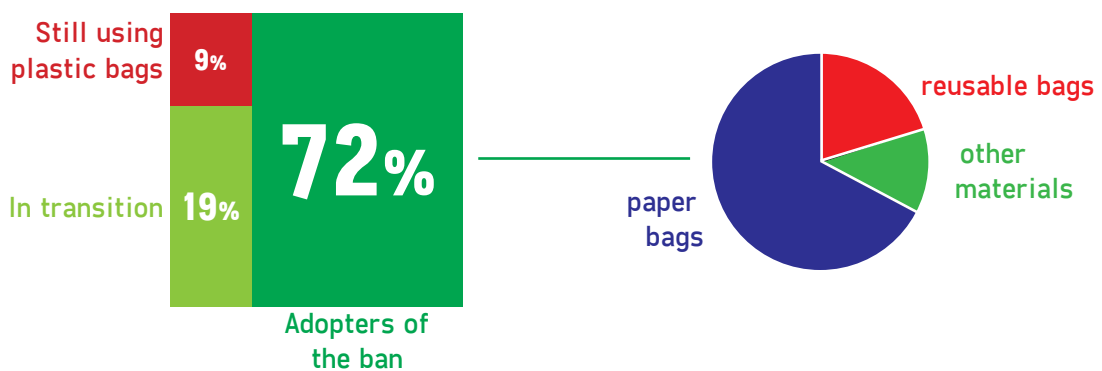
The study did not identify differences between non-adopters and business

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.

Some of the results of the evaluation study conducted in Aruba 2 years after the promulgation of the ban on plastic bags:



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.

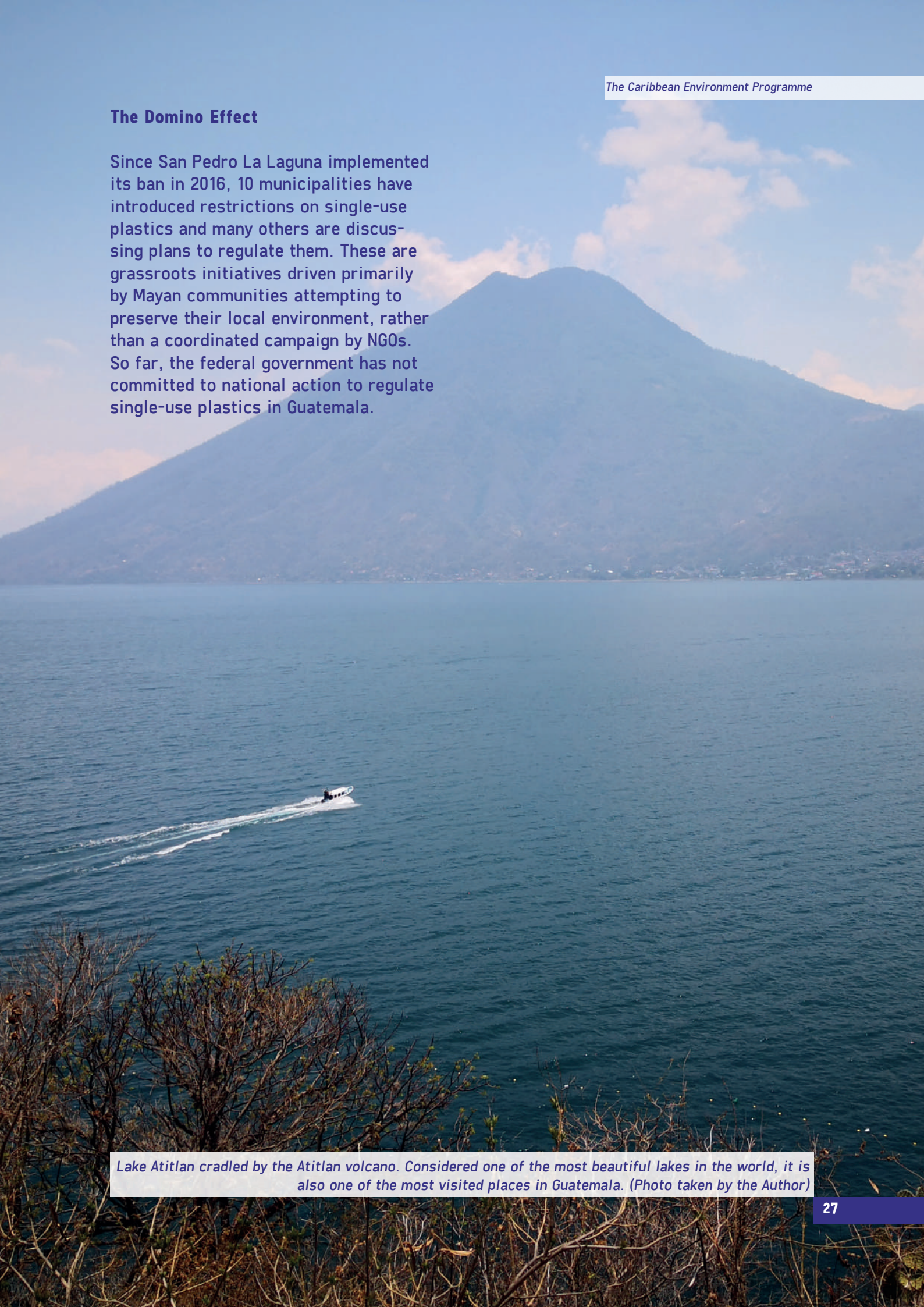
A law born out of a necessity has therefore proved to be a great opportunity for the conservation of the environment and the quality of the lake ecosystem and at the same time the law has an important historical and cultural matrix, bringing back into vogue the use of the famous colorful bags typical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



Lake Atitlan cradled by the Atitlan volcano. Considered one of the most beautiful lakes in the world, it is also one of the most visited places in Guatemala. (Photo taken by the Author)



The market of San Pedro La Laguna is plastic-free since 2016. (Photo taken by the Author)

SWOT ANALYSIS

	The cost of research and development of new or improved biodegradable packaging options
Reduce plastic pollution	Implementation timing and designing of the phases
Increase quality of the environment and of the ecosystems	Comprehensive consultations with all the stakeholders
Increase tourism	Media support



Re-strategize the business	Avoid the increase of illicit imports of plastic bags
As oil prices rise, the need for biodegradable packaging presents more of an opportunity as a solution to the problem	Valid alternatives
Increase the green business	Reduce the market and increase your vulnerability
Development of recycling technologies	Competition from manufacturers who start developing biodegradable packaging

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

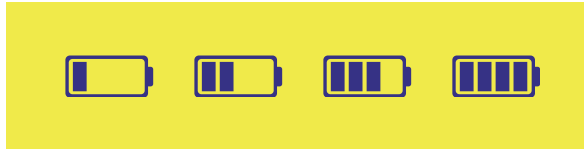
The selection of a significant date (e.g.: World Environment Day, June 5th, or Independence Day of the Country, or a National Holiday) to launch the ban increases the media power of the announcement!



Phase III : THE IMPLEMENTATION



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.

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.

Phase IV : THE EVALUATION

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!

Phase V : THE CORRECTION

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 and 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=1AjPZsUQgmFbYcDNpXI0GMfL6vie-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



Member States & Territories 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





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ANNEX I

STATUS OF STYROFOAM AND PLASTIC BAG BANS IN THE WIDER CARIBBEAN REGION

Country	Policy	Date	Details	Additional Notes	Feedback
Anguilla	BAN	March 31th, 2019	single use plastic shopping bags, single use plastic utensils, and polystyrene foam containers.	After some announcements, on March 31, 2019 the ban became effective throughout the island.	
Antigua and Barbuda	BAN	January 1st, 2016	Single-use plastic bags and Styrofoam containers	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - July 1st to December 31st, 2017 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. - January 1st to June 30th, 2018 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. - July 1st, 2018 to January 1st, 2019 Ban on importation and use of “naked” Styrofoam coolers. Depletion of stock on hand to be followed by monitoring and confiscation. <p>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-</p>	<p>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.</p>

Country	Policy	Date	Details	Additional Notes	Feedback
				batting marine plastic pollution to 60.	
Aruba	BAN	Jan 1st, 2017	Single-use plastic bags	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.	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%.
The Bahamas	BAN ANNOUNCED	By 2020	Plastic bags	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.	
Barbados	BAN	Apr 1st, 2019	Plastic and Styrofoam	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.	
Belize	BAN	Apr 22nd, 2019	Plastic single-use shopping bags and	Belize approved (March, 2018) a proposal to reduce plastic and Styrofoam pollution and will achieve this through the phasing out	

Country	Policy	Date	Details	Additional Notes	Feedback
			food utensils	of single-use shopping bags and food utensils. 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.	
British Virgin Islands	BAN IN DISCUSSION - Government Level		Plastic bag	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.	
Cayman Islands	BAN IN DISCUSSION - Government Level		Single-use plastic bags and straws	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	

Country	Policy	Date	Details	Additional Notes	Feedback
				the Legislative Assembly and debate issues of the country), great emphasis was given to resolutions limiting the use of single-use plastics.	
Colombia	BAN	Jan 1st, 2017	Ban on thin plastic bags and levy on thicker ones.	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).
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.	
Cuba	LACK OF INFORMATION				
Curacao	BAN IN DISCUSSION - Public/NGOs (including Voluntary Ban)		Non re-usable plastic bags, plastic cups, straws, Styrofoam food containers	The Curaçao Clean Up foundation, Sea Turtle Conservation Curaçao and Green Force, with the support of Plastic Free Curaçao, and after a petition, requested the government of Curaçao, specifically the Minister of Health, Environment, and Nature to ban all the following plastic items, from being sold, handled, used and imported: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Non re-usable plastic bags - Plastic cups - Plastic straws 	

Country	Policy	Date	Details	Additional Notes	Feedback
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Styrofoam food containers <p>There is already a voluntary ban on supermarkets and mini markets to not use plastic bags. People should bring their own bags when shopping.</p> <p>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.</p>	
Dominica	BAN	Jan 1st, 2019	Plastic and Styrofoam products	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).	
Dominican Republic	BAN IN DISCUSSION - Government Level		Plastic packing material, plastic bags	<p>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.</p> <p>This Law establishes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. <p>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.</p>	

Country	Policy	Date	Details	Additional Notes	Feedback
El Salvador	BAN IN DISCUSSION - Government Level		Single-use plastic products	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, Damián Alegría, 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.	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.
France	BAN	July 1st, 2016	Plastic bags smaller than 10 liters and with thickness less than 50 microns	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".	
Guatemala	BAN, BAN IN DISCUSSION - Government Level	2016	Plastic bags	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	

Country	Policy	Date	Details	Additional Notes	Feedback
				<p>transition to biodegradable materials.” “... After this period, both producers and distributors who disrespect the rule could be fined and criminally denounced by the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, which would be in charge of the corresponding supervisions.”</p> <p>With this bill, which was submitted to the legislature in November 2017, Guatemala will join the list of countries in the region where similar initiatives have been presented.</p>	
Guyana	BAN, BAN ANNOUNCED	Jan. 1st, 2016	All Styrofoam products	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	
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	Many people in Haiti rely on disposable containers because

Country	Policy	Date	Details	Additional Notes	Feedback
				attempt was largely ignored, and environmental activists fear the government may not be able to enforce it this time either.	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.
Honduras	BAN, BAN IN DISCUSSION - Public/NGOs (including Voluntary Ban)	2016	Plastic Bags	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)	100% elimination in Guanaja, 80% decline on Utila and 50% decline in Roatán (Reference: The Summit Foundation, 2017).
Jamaica	BAN	Jan. 1st, 2019	Styrofoam and single-use plastic bags	Starting January 1, 2019, the Jamaica Government banned the importation, manufacture, distribution and use of specific ca-	

Country	Policy	Date	Details	Additional Notes	Feedback
				<p>categories of plastic packaging materials. These include single-use plastic carrier/shopping bags; expanded polystyrene foam, commonly referred to as Styrofoam; and plastic drinking straws. Update: Almost three months after the Government implemented the ban on specific categories of single-use plastic bags, some people are still using the outlawed items, but the National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA) is warning that the time for allowances has expired.</p> <p>Read more: http://www.caribbean360.com/news/jamaica-govt-banning-single-use-plastic-bags-plastic-straws-and-styrofoam#ixzz5SLiGcPCA</p> <p>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).</p>	
Mexico	BAN, BAN IN DISCUSSION - Public/NGOs (including Voluntary Ban), BAN ANNOUNCED	Aug 1st, 2010 by Jan 2019	Plastic Bags Disposable Plastic items	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.	
Montserrat	BAN IN DISCUSSION - Government Level		Single-Use Plastics	Single-Use Plastics in Government Ministries and Departments has been banned in October 2018. The Government is now expected to investigate and identify local and other suppliers of biodegradable products to ensure compliance with the Cabinet directive. A full ban was expected to be implemented by December 31, 2018, but there are no news on the official media of the Island.	

Country	Policy	Date	Details	Additional Notes	Feedback
Nicaragua	BAN IN DISCUSSION - Public/NGOs (including Voluntary Ban)			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.	
Panama	BAN	Jan. 19th, 2018	Plastic bags	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>According to article 2 of the Law, the replacement of plastic bags with reusable bags will be progressive within the following periods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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." <p>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."</p>	
Puerto Rico	BAN	Dec 1st, 2016	Plastic bags	Act 247-2015 was signed into law Dec. 24, 2015, three months	

Country	Policy	Date	Details	Additional Notes	Feedback
				<p>after Governor Alejandro Garcia Padilla issued an executive order that would ban businesses from dispensing plastic bags to customers starting in July, defying legislators who had rejected a similar bill. The new law, authored by Popular Democratic Party Reps. Manuel Natal and José Báez, gave businesses a year before the ban on plastic bags goes into effect to allow for an educational campaign on the issue.</p> <p>Commercial establishments can provide paper bags and recover their costs from customers, at their discretion. The Act also requires reusable bags sold to customers to meet the following requirements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Must be made of material or fabric that does not damage the environment 2. Must be able to be machine washed, or made of a material that can be washed and disinfected 3. Must have a capacity to carry at least 22 pounds for a distance of 75 feet for at least 125 times 4. If made of plastic, must be made out of polypropylene or polyethylene (non-woven) or any other synthetic fiber that is totally recyclable 5. If it is a reusable fabric, it must have a minimum weight of 80 grams per square meter (gsm). 	
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.	

Country	Policy	Date	Details	Additional Notes	Feedback
Saint Lucia	BAN	Dec 1st, 2018	Importation of Styro-foam	<p>The Government of Saint Lucia (GOSL), in February 2017 made commitments under the #CleanSeas Campaign to eliminate marine litter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -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 	

Country	Policy	Date	Details	Additional Notes	Feedback
				<p>(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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	
Saint-Martin	BAN IN DISCUSSION - Public/ NGOs (including Voluntary Ban)			<p>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-Marten 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.</p>	
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	BAN	Jan. 31st, 2018	Styrofoam products	<p>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.</p>	
Sint Maarten	BAN IN DISCUSSION - Public/ NGOs (including Voluntary Ban)			<p>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</p>	

Country	Policy	Date	Details	Additional Notes	Feedback
				single-use plastic. The foundation is also lobbying for a ban on single-use plastic on the entire island, because such a ban will significantly reduce the widespread use of plastic products.	
Suriname	BAN IN DISCUSSION - Public/NGOs (including Voluntary Ban)		Plastic bags	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.	
The Netherlands	BAN IN DISCUSSION - Government Level		Single-use plastic items	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.	
Trinidad and Tobago	BAN IN DISCUSSION - Public/NGOs (including		Plastic bags	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	

Country	Policy	Date	Details	Additional Notes	Feedback
	Voluntary Ban)			<p>bags. The company is encouraging customers to bring their reusable shopping bags instead.</p> <p>There is also a petition that is seeking to ban single plastic use has just over 15,000 signatures (15,195 as 25/05/2018) the goal is to reach 25,000 signatures!</p> <p>Find here the petition: https://www.change.org/p/government-of-trinidad-and-tobago-ban-plastic-bags-in-trinidad-and-tobago</p> <p>During the last UN Environment Assembly (UNEA), on March 15th, 2019, Trinidad and Tobago joined UN Environment's Clean Seas campaign, bringing the number of countries now involved in the world's largest alliance for combatting marine plastic pollution to 60.</p>	
Turks and Caicos Islands	BAN	Jan. 1st, 2017	Plastic Bags	<p>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 an alternative and government is considering a reduction in customs duties for these alternative carrier bags.</p>	
United States of America	BAN IN DISCUSSION - Government Level			<p>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</p>	

Country	Policy	Date	Details	Additional Notes	Feedback
				<p>approach to bag reduction such as Washington, D.C. and adjacent Montgomery County, Maryland. Some US states, such as Florida and Arizona, have passed laws prohibiting bans on plastic bags statewide in order to prevent local municipalities from passing their own bans.</p>	
US Virgin Islands	BAN	Jan. 1st, 2017	Plastic bags and non-recyclable paper bags	<p>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:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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. <p>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.</p> <p>Beginning April 1, 2017 Any business violating any provision or any regulation adopted by law will be subject to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -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. <p>Exemptions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -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; 	

Country	Policy	Date	Details	Additional Notes	Feedback
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -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 d 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. <p>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).</p>	
Venezuela	BAN, LACK OF INFORMATION	2012	Plastic Bag	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	

ANNEX II

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