



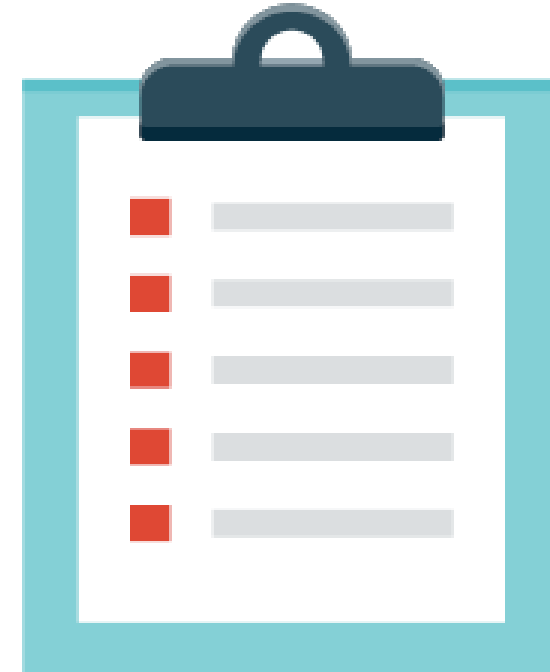
Ban on Plastics in Jamaica

A PRIVATE SECTOR PERSPECTIVE

DATE: APRIL 29, 2021

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Overview

- u Small Island Developing States (SIDS) such as Jamaica are vulnerable to global environmental challenges, including climate change and marine litter.
- u Additionally, improperly disposed plastics end up in our drains, gullies and waterways especially after heavy rainfall, which contribute to severe flooding and ultimately cause tremendous damage to life and property.
- u Plastic pollution is one of the biggest threats to the fragile ecosystems of island states.
- u Sea mammals such as whales and turtles as well as sea birds and other sea life - ingest plastics leading to fatalities.
- u Microplastics - discovered in fishes which is in turn is consumed by people.



Background

- u In Jamaica, the problem of the improper management of plastic wastes has been recognized for some time.
- u On October 7, 2016, the Senate approved a private member's motion proposing a ban on the use of Styrofoam containers and plastic bags locally.
- u The motion, which was mooted by Government Senator, Matthew Samuda, was unanimously supported following an extensive debate during the Senate sitting in Parliament.
- u In opening the debate, Mr. Samuda noted that Styrofoam and plastics take an inordinately long period of time to biodegrade.



Background (Cont'd)

- u He said this and the fact that both materials comprise approximately 50 % of the non-biodegradable waste generated locally, posed grave environmental and health concerns for Jamaica.
- u In light of this, Mr. Samuda contended that it would be far less costly to ban them rather than persist with their usage.
- u There was the subsequent establishment by the Cabinet of a Multi-sectoral Working Group, falling under the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation's environment portfolio headed by the then Minister, Hon. Daryl Vaz.
- u Industry players were also a part of this Working Group.



Press Conference - Ban on Plastics



- u On September 17, 2018, the then Minister of Economic Growth and Job Creation, Minister Daryl Vaz convened a press conference to announce the impending plastic ban measures that would take effect on January 1, 2019.
- u There were several consultations held with private sector prior to finalizing the measures and timelines to be announced.

Ministerial Orders

u On December 24, 2018, the following Ministerial Orders were promulgated:

u The Natural Resources Conservation Authority (NRCA) Act

u The Natural Resources Conservation (Plastic Packaging Materials Prohibition) Order 2018.

u The Trade Act

u The Trade (Plastic Packaging Materials Prohibition) Order 2018.

u Anyone who committed an offence in contravention of the Orders was liable on summary conviction before a Judge of a Parish Court to a fine not exceeding fifty thousand dollars (JA\$50,000) under the NRCA Act and two million dollars (JA\$2,000,000) under the Trade Act or imprisonment for a term not exceeding two (2) years.



Measures Implemented

Ban on Single Use Plastic Carrier/Shopping Bags



Phase 1

As of January 1, 2019, the Government imposed a ban on the import, manufacture, distribution and use of all single use plastic carrier bags with dimensions at and below 24 inches by 24 inches (24"x24"), which included those bags commonly referred to locally as 'scandal bags' and 'T-shirt bags', used primarily in the retail and wholesale sectors.

In some instances, the use of plastic bags was allowed. However, manufacturers had to apply to the National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA) for exemptions.



Measures Implemented

Ban on Styrofoam



PHASE 1

On January 1, 2019, the Government instituted a ban on the importation of expanded polystyrene foam, commonly referred to as 'Styrofoam™', for use as finished goods in the food and beverage industry, that is, food and beverage containers.

PHASE 2

In addition, the local manufacture and distribution of polystyrene foam for use as finished goods in the food and beverage industry was banned as at January 1, 2020.

Measures Implemented

Ban on Plastic Straws



PHASE 1

On January 1, 2019, the Government instituted a ban on the import and manufacture of plastic drinking straws.

PHASE 3

On January 1, 2021, the importation of straws attached to lunch juice boxes and drink pouches was banned however an extension has been granted for six (6) months before enforcement will take place.



Exemptions

For Plastic Bags and Straws

Plastic Bags

This ban will not apply to single use plastic bags utilized to maintain public health or food safety standards, such as those used to package:

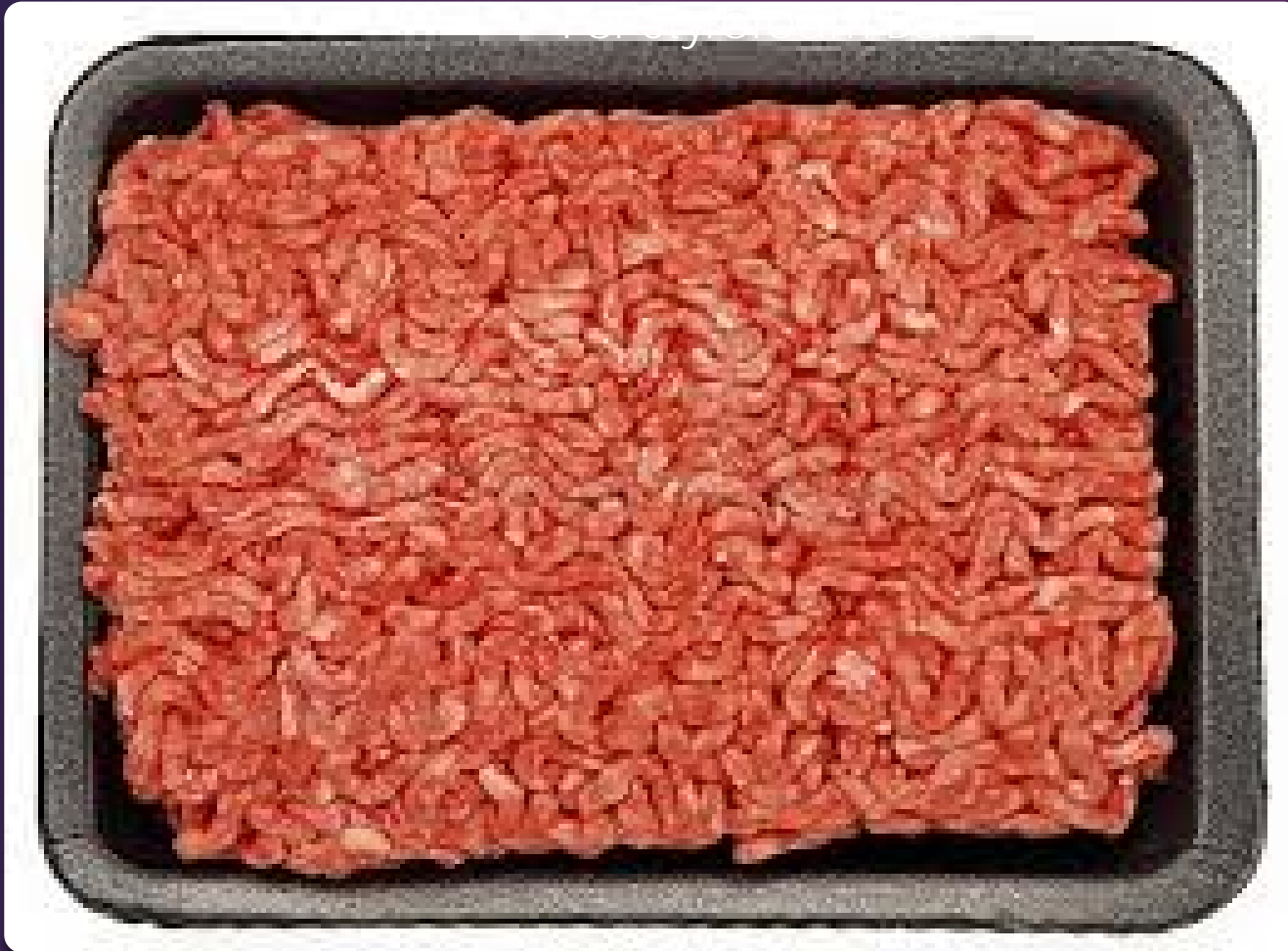
- q Raw meats
- q Flour
- q Sugar
- q Rice and
- q Baked goods such as bread.



Straws

- q This was not applicable to wax-lined paper straws or other non-plastic straws.
- q Drinking straws manufactured for use by or used by persons with disabilities.





The use of polystyrene for the packaging of food items such as raw meats will be exempt.

Exemptions

Results of the Ban on Plastic Bags



Plastic Bags

- u Companies were given an additional month before full enforcement of the ban on plastic bags.
- u From the onset of the ban the GoJ indicated that they would consider the compensation to the private sector. The total value of plastic bags, straws and Styrofoam in inventory of 17 impacted stakeholders was JA\$53,188,138.93.
- u Advertising on the ban in traditional as well as social media.
- u General acceptance and alternative paper bags and shopping bags are utilized by the formal trade, major shopping supermarkets and retail outlets.
- u There, however, still exists retail and wholesale outlets (uptown and downtown) as well as restaurants that two (2) years later still have plastic bags in storage and will distribute it with the purchase of goods.
- u The issue is enforcement.

Results of the Ban on Plastic Straws

Plastic Straws – Phase 1

- Alternative paper straws and metal straws were sourced.
- Issues existed with the alternative paper straws namely:
 - Quality – Once left in beverages (i.e. liquids) or refrigerated for a few minutes, the paper straws got soggy.
 - Cost – Paper based, and metal straws were more expensive than plastic straws.
 - Lab Testing – Results obtained from Bureau of Standards were not definitive.



Plastic Straws Affixed to Box Juices and Drink Pouches – Phase 3

- Manufacturers requested a three (3) year extension to transition to alternative straws affixed to juice boxes and drink pouches.
- Same issues occurred as with regular straws.
- Additionally, enforcement at the Ports as the straws were affixed to packages and did not have a specific HS Code.
- The Government only granted a six (6) month extension until June 30, 2021.



Results of the Ban on Styrofoam

Styrofoam

- u Wisynco, the only manufacturer of Styrofoam products was significantly impacted with the ban.
- u Although the ban on importation of materials caused dislocation and capital loss to this company, when Phase 2 was implemented, it resulted in the ultimate closure of the Styrofoam plant and redundancies in over 100 persons.
- u Issues existed with the alternative paper products namely:
 - u Quality – Leakage of containers as Jamaican foods comprised of stews and gravies.
 - u Cost – Paper based products were three (3) to eight (8) times the cost of Styrofoam.
 - u Heat Transfer – There complaints about the transfer of heat in the paper-based lunch containers

Jamaica's Wisynco cuts 100 jobs ahead of Styrofoam ban



William Marfoot

Results of the Ban on Styrofoam (Cont'd)

- u This resulted in the importation of all types of alternative plastic containers.
- u We have replaced one problem with another.
- u Jamaica has a disposal problem.
- u The issue is enforcement.



Overall Impact

There were very small investments in facilities to make alternative bags, boxes and straws (bamboo) these were micro and small businesses, for example, Bio-Made Repository and Bambusa Bamboo.

Some plastic bag manufacturers switched to making paper bags or products that are outside of the banned criteria. Some textile companies started the manufacture of reusable bags, for example, Crimson Dawn Manufacturing.

A number of local manufacturing facilities were displaced by the ban and import numbers increased for food containers and reusable bags.

The formal trade has completely switched from the use of Styrofoam boxes and straws.

PERSONALIZE YOUR BAMBUSA BAMBOO STRAWS

PRICE



Deposit Refund Scheme (DRS)



Polyethylene terephthalate or PET bottles comprise fifteen per cent (15%) all plastic waste generated in Jamaica.

These bottles are used for packaging for juices, water and other beverages sold on the Jamaican market.

While there are several recycling initiatives presently operating within the country, the recovery of PET bottles from the Jamaican environment has been very low.

It is well recognized that a Deposit Refund Scheme (DRS) supported by legislation, can significantly increase the recovery rate of waste products, such as PET bottles.

Recycling Partners of Jamaica (RPJ)

Recycling Partners of Jamaica (RPJ) is a charitable organization borne out of private public partnership between certain bottlers, beverage owners and bottle manufacturers in Jamaica.

RPJ's primary objective is to eliminate plastic waste from the Jamaican environment by engendering consistent and wholesale stakeholder participation and national and public awareness.

In 2018, the private sector proposed that instead of placing a tax on sodas and plastic bottles that the private sector implement the DRS through the RPJ resourcing the DRS through a self-imposed cess.

The intention is to achieve 33% recovery rate in 2021 increasing to 65% recovery rate by 2023 for PET and High-Density Polyethylene (HDPE) Bottles.



Recycling Partners of Jamaica (Cont'd)

- q RPJ opened its new headquarters in June 2020.
- q The company continues to procure the needed equipment (Balers, Pallet Jacks, Forklifts) to ensure that present and proposed depots are appropriately outfitted.
- q Effective May 1, 2021, the Deposit Refund amount will be increased to JA\$25/lb or JA\$50/Kg. This represents a substantive increase from J\$8-10/lb that was previously paid, and the impact and effectiveness of this increase will be mapped through the recovery percentages.

Recycling Partners of Jamaica

The current cess of JA\$1/ bottle that is currently in place from February 2019 will remain in effect.

The label revision has been completed and the trademark process is currently underway.

RPJ continues to implement its build out plan, including establishment of administration offices, depots, collection points and transportation networks.

RPJ has commenced marketing and public education process to change behaviours and increase collection rates.

Month (2020/2021)	PET Bottles (Unit Sales)
April	49,614,748
May	51,319,781
June	63,963,339
July	72,688,124
August	62,554,636
September	62,145,889
October	53,483,006
November	48,651,225
December	61,152,416
January	53,229,749
February	49,236,615
March	61,156,814
TOTAL	689,196,342



Lessons Learned

- u There are global trends shaping industry and the private sector needs to be abreast of these developments.
- u Public-private partnerships can be explored as solutions to our collective problems.
- u Connect all the dots and identify all the possible loopholes. Be clear on the alternative packaging that you will allow.
- u Ensure that resources (capital and human) are available to enforce new policies.
- u Identify possible low-cost funding or grants that can assist firms to transition or pivot into a new business or assist displaced workers
- u Listening and taking the advice of Stakeholders and "persons on the ground" when implementing policies.
- u Ascertain the root cause of the problem. Jamaica not only has a plastics problem but most importantly it has a disposal problem.

