



Ministry of Environment  
and National Resources

# EFFECTING THE GAZETTE NOTICE ON THE BAN ON PLASTIC CARRIER BAGS



nema  
mazingira yetu | uhai wetu | wajibu wetu

National Environment  
Management Authority

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

### SCOPE OF PLASTIC CARRIER BAGS BANNED IN THE GAZETTE NOTICE



#### Carrier bags

Regardless of their thickness or color used at supermarkets, retail store, shopping mall, grocery stores, daily household and so on



#### Flat bags

Used mainly in groceries and including those used for garbage collection

#### Question 1: Which plastics have been banned?

**Answer:** The ban applies to all plastic carrier bags and flat bags used for commercial and household packaging.

#### Question 2: What is a plastic carrier bag?

**Answer:** This is any plastic bag regardless of its thickness or colour, used at the supermarkets, retail stores, shopping malls and grocery stores as secondary packages.

#### Question 3: What is a flat bag?

**Answer:** A flat bag is a plastic bag constructed without handles and may have a gusset or not.

#### Question 4: What are the major concerns of plastics bags?

**Answer:** Plastic bags are usually manufactured for single use and generally tear or puncture after a first use. They are easily transported by the wind and are some of the most visible components of roadside and shoreline litter. Plastic bags are produced from oil and natural gas, and never fully biodegrade, remaining in the environment as small or even microscopic particles, essentially forever.

#### Question 5: Are plastics used for primary industrial packaging also banned by the Gazette Notice?

**Answer:** No, plastic bags used for industrial packaging are exempted so

long as they are used for industrial primary packaging at the source of the product and are not available on sale at the counter or given freely outside the industrial setting. Furthermore, the bags must be labeled clearly by the industry manufacturing the product.

#### Question 6: When are manufacturers and importers required to stop providing plastic single-use carrier bags to customers?

**Answer:** By August 28th, 2017. Furthermore, all manufacturers and importers shall declare all their remaining stocks by the due date to the National Environment Management Authority for necessary action.

#### Question 7: Will exporters of plastic single-use carrier bags continue to manufacture the bags?

**Answer:** NO. The manufacturing of all plastic carrier bags shall cease by 28th August 2017.

#### Question 8: Will there be a "grace period" for retailers to comply?

**Answer:** The Gazette Notice was published on 28th February 2017, allowing six (6) months grace period for necessary adjustments and compliance.

#### Question 9: Are retailers allowed to use up existing stocks of plastic bags after August 28th, 2017?

**Answer:** No, retailers are required to clear stocks within the grace period. Furthermore, all retailers shall declare all the remaining stocks by the due date to the National Environment Management Authority for necessary action.

#### Question 10: Can retailers provide paper bags as an alternative to plastic carrier bags?

**Answer:** yes

#### Question 11: What are the alternatives to plastic carrier bags?

**Answer:** These include paper bags; clothing bags; canvas bags; sisal bags; papyrus bags and buyers/shoppers own shopping bags.

#### Question 12: Which retailers are affected?

**Answer:** All Retailers

#### Question 13: Are small retail businesses exempt?

**Answer:** No.

#### Question 14: Does the Ban prohibit retailers from selling plastic bags such as garbage bags?

**Answer:** Yes.

#### Question 15: Is there an exemption for clothing stores?

**Answer:** No. Exemptions apply to only industrial packaging as indicated in 5 above.



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