



**REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**  
**MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTRY AND TOURISM**

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT BY**  
**HONOURABLE POHAMBA SHIFETA, MP**  
**MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTRY, AND TOURISM**  
**TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**  
**ON SINGLE-USE PLASTIC BAN IN THE COUNTRY.**

**WINDHOEK**  
**JUNE 202**

**Hon. Speaker,**  
**Hon. Members,**

I rise today to make a Ministerial Statement regarding the Ministry of Environment, Forestry & Tourism's (MEFT) plans to ban the usage of some single-use plastics in Namibia.

Single- Use plastics are not worth destroying our Earth. Smarter choices need to be made when it comes to buying and selling single-use plastic products. The plastic waste stays on this planet for much longer than any of us may think. Even when we recycle, plastic waste remains on Earth.

On the 05<sup>th</sup> June 2023, the world commemorated the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of World Environment Day, with official celebrations held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. The World Environment Day was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1972 with the objective of encouraging awareness and promotion of actions for the protection of the environment. For this year's celebrations, individuals, communities, civil society, businesses, and governments around the world marked World Environment Day with a focus on solutions to plastics pollution. The focus on solutions to plastic pollution on this World Environment Day was particularly timely, following the recent conclusion of a second round of negotiations on a global agreement to end pollution in France.

Humanity produces over 430 million tonnes of plastic annually, two-thirds of which are short-lived products that soon become waste. The social and

economic costs of plastic pollution range between \$US300 to US\$600 billion per year.

According to a recent UNEP report, *Turning off the Tap*, plastic pollution could reduce by 80 per cent by 2040 if countries and companies make deep policy decisions to end productions and usage of single use plastics and promotes market shifts using existing technologies.

“For the sake of the planet’s health, for the sake of our health, for the sake of our prosperity, we must end plastic pollution. This will take nothing less than a complete redesign of how we produce, use, recover and dispose of plastics and products that contain them,” said Inger Andersen, Executive Director of UNEP. “How the world produces, consumes, and disposes of plastic has created a disaster. But it is one we can end by turning off the tap on plastic pollution. And help us beat plastic pollution, once and for all.” This is a global movement that we are all required to join.

I would further like to share with this August- house that during the second session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) on plastic pollution in Paris, France, the INC Chair was given the mandate to prepare a zero draft of an international, legally binding agreement on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment.

In February 2022, at the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-5.2), a historic resolution (5/14) was adopted to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment with the ambition to complete the negotiations by end of 2024. The instrument is to be based on a

comprehensive approach that addresses the full life cycle of plastic. The third session of the INC will take place in Nairobi, Kenya, in November 2023.

It is worth bringing to your attention that, single-use of plastics in Namibia pose an equally significant threat to the environment. Plastic pollution is a global problem and according to United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), approximately 7 billion of the 9.2 billion tonnes of plastic produced worldwide from 1950-2017 became plastic waste and ended up in landfills. Plastic pollution can alter habitats and natural processes, reducing ecosystems' ability to adapt to climate change, and directly affecting millions of people's livelihoods, food production capabilities, and social well-being.

**Hon. Speaker,**

**Hon. Members,**

To this end, Namibia has started the dialogue and is taking steps to address single-use of plastics. It is worth mentioning, Hon. Speaker, that consultation has been conducted with stakeholders through the National Solid Waste Management Advisory Panel (NSWMAP) on this subject matter and a consensus was reached to implement the ban on plastic products listed on Annex 1. The NSWMAP comprised of members from several key institutions, including the industry, and was established to oversee the implementation of the National Solid Waste Management Strategy under the Environmental Management Act no.7 of 2007. Hon. Speaker, other interventions undertaken by our government include the introduction of a plastic bag levy as well as the ban on plastics into our national parks. Furthermore, discussions between our Ministry and the Environmental Investment Fund of

Namibia (EIF) are currently underway on possible utilization of the collected levies towards funding initiatives that protect or promote responsible management of the environment, pollution control and waste management as well as the sustainable use of natural resources for economic development.

In Kenya for example, the Kenya Plastic Pact released new industry guidelines on recyclability for plastic packaging. The guidelines aim to provide clear recommendations to decision-makers on how to design plastic packaging to be compatible with future recycling infrastructure.

In Namibia, we have evident examples of how plastics have impacted our animals and environment such as livestock/wildlife mortality as a result of plastic ingestion as well as possible contamination of both surface and groundwater sources. Most of the plastic waste ends up in our oceans and accumulate in our food chains through the fish and sea products that we consume.

Therefore, I am submitting for your information the Ministry's plan in implementing Parliament recommendations to ban the use of single-use plastics in Namibia, effective from 2026 or earlier. This ban will follow the draft road map and will apply to the plastics as listed in the recommendations of the attached Annex 1 that will be submitted to cabinet for approval.

We believe that this ban will help to reduce the amount of plastic waste that ends up in our oceans and in our environment and wildlife. We also believe

that it will encourage individuals and businesses to adopt more sustainable practices and promote the use of alternative materials.

**Hon. Speaker,**  
**Hon. Members,**

We fully understand that this ban may require adjustment for some Namibians and businesses, but we believe that it is a necessary step toward a more sustainable future especially now that we are expected to implement the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. We encourage all Namibians to support this initiative and work together to protect our planet for future generations.

David Suzuki pronounced himself by saying, and I quote *"We humans have become so dependent on plastic for a range of uses, from packaging to products. Reducing our use of plastic bags is an easy place to start getting our addiction out of control"* end of quote.

**Honorable Speaker,**

I thank you for the opportunity to present and I so submit.

Annex 1.

Recommended types of Single-use Plastics to be banned and Draft Roadmap for Single-use Plastic Ban Implementation.

Single-use plastic product	Recommendations	Modality	Timeframe
1.Thin imported plastic shopping bags of <40 microns	Ban the import of these bags <b>as soon as possible</b> – they are currently avoiding the plastic bag environmental levy.	Regulation in terms of the Import and Export Control Act, 1994 (Act No. 30 of 1994)	By end of 2023/24 financial year.
2.Plastic shopping bags that contain calcium carbonate (CaCO <sub>3</sub> )	Ban the import of these bags <b>as soon as possible</b> , as they do not lend themselves to recycling. This is overdue as it was already a Cabinet directive.	Regulation in terms of the Import and Export Control Act, 1994 (Act No. 30 of 1994)	By end of 2023/24 financial year.

5.Single-use plastic drinks bottles	Introduction of a comprehensive compulsory deposit and refund on all single-use plastic bottles.	Regulation outlining the deposit system in terms of the Environmental Management Act of 2007	1 <sup>st</sup> January 2025 (give the drinks industry and retail outlets enough time to put appropriate mechanisms in place)
6.Single-use plastic straws	Ban the import, sale and commercial supply of plastic straws.	Regulation in terms of the Import and Export Control Act, 1994 (Act No. 30 of 1994)	1 <sup>st</sup> January 2024. Considered that alternatives are already available.
7.Plastic cotton (ear) buds	Ban the import, sale and commercial supply of plastic cotton buds	Regulation in terms of the Import and Export Control Act, 1994 (Act No. 30 of 1994)	1 <sup>st</sup> January 2024. Considered that alternatives are already available.