High Ambition Coalition webinar "Eliminate and restrict plastic polymers, chemicals and products of concern"

BRIEF ON THE ROLE OF EAC/EALA IN SUPPORTING THE TREATY PROVISIONS

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Date: 5th May 2023

Venue: Kigali-Rwanda (Zoom meeting from 11:00am to 12:30pm CAT)
EALA is one of the seven organs of the East African Community (EAC) established under Articles 9 and 49 of the Treaty for the establishment of the EAC as the **legislative organ of the Community**;

The Assembly’s **Vision** is “To be an efficient, effective & people-centered regional legislature”; its **Mission** is “To promote timely legislation, effective oversight & broad representation through programmes that facilitate a prosperous, competitive, secure, stable & politically united region in order to enhance the welfare of East Africans”;

The Treaty under Article 49 bestows upon the Assembly the **legislative, oversight and representative functions** of the Community on all matters within the purview of the EAC. Those are the **three cardinal functions of any effective parliament**.
1. WHY IS IT IMPORTANT THAT THE PLASTICS TREATY ELIMINATE AND RESTRICT PLASTIC PRODUCTS OF CONCERN?

❖ As stated by the High Ambition Coalition (HAC) to end plastic pollution, this latter constitutes a planetary crisis with impacts on ecosystems, biodiversity, the climate and human health;

❖ Plastic production is set to double in 20 years and plastic waste leaking into the ocean is projected to triple by 2040 without new and effective control measures;

❖ Factory.directpromos.com: Plastic bags are not biodegradable: When plastic bags become litter, they pollute oceans, rivers, farmlands, cities, and neighbourhoods. Bans eliminate bags, which equals less litter and less pollution. The same for other kind of Plastic objects which do not decompose; they break down into small particles and affect animals and humans through bioaccumulation;

❖ Unep.org: (UN Environmental Protection) 2022: Every minute, the equivalent of one garbage truck of plastic is dumped into the ocean. This marine litter and plastic pollution endangers aquatic life, threatens human health and results in myriad hidden costs for the economy. 25 Feb. 2022
1. **WHY IS IT IMPORTANT THAT THE PLASTICS TREATY ELIMINATE AND RESTRICT PLASTIC PRODUCTS OF CONCERN?** (Cont’d)

- **Friendsoftheearth.uk** : Plastic sticks around in the environment for ages, threatening wildlife and spreading toxins. Plastic also contributes to global warming. Almost all plastics are made from chemicals that come from the production of planet-warming fuels (gas, oil and even coal);

**It was observed that:**

- Plastics leach toxins and harmful chemicals into soils and waterways which have a detrimental impact on human health;
- 5 trillion single-use plastic bags are used worldwide every year. Half of all plastic produced is designed to be single use;
- These single-use plastics are used for just a few minutes but take hundreds of years to decompose. Up to 12.7 million tonnes of plastic waste enters our oceans every year;
- Marine animals ingest or are entangled by this debris, causing injury and death;
- By 2050, it is estimated that the ocean will have more plastic than fish (by weight).
2. What kind of plastics and polymer wastes to be eliminated in the East African Community?

- **Rwanda**: Included in the EAC wastes are but not limited to: Plastic wastes and other polymer wastes such as textiles, biomass, and rubber;

- **Kenya Plastic Pact (KPP)**: (For plastic packaging): all polystyrene (PS) packaging • Polyvinyl chloride (PVC) rigid packaging (including bottles) • Expanded Polystyrene (EPS) plastics packaging for fast foods • Polyethylene Terephthalate Glycol (PETG) in rigid packaging • Secondary plastic cling film on takeaway packaging • Consumer plastic multi-wrap around cans, tins, bottles, and cartons for multi-sales • PETG and PVC shrink sleeves on PET bottle; (For non packaging plastics): disposable plastic cutlery • Disposable plastic plates and bowls • Plastic straws • Plastic stirrers • Plastic cotton bud stick and (for plastics additives) Oxodegradable plastics products.
SOME EXPERIENCES WITH POLICY HARMONIZATION TO RESTRICT PROBLEMATIC SINGLE USE PLASTICS IN EAST AFRICA

❖ Plastic pollution is an urgent and global problem. Current responses to this problem are fragmented, and can only provide a limited long-term effect on the discharge of plastics into the environment. Now, momentum is increasing to scale up global efforts;

❖ Recent studies show that with the current measures, we are only able to reduce marine plastic pollution, a central element of the plastic challenge, by 7 per cent. Plastic production is forecasted to continue growing and there is more single-use plastics waste generated than ever before (UNEP, 2008);

❖ Hence, it’s paramount for EAC and African Countries to join the EU efforts to pave the way for a new global agreement on plastics, to support the global shift to a circular economy as outlined in the circular economy action plan and as mandated by the 5th United Nations Environment Assembly, that in March 2022 launched negotiations for a new international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution. The new instrument should address plastic pollution throughout the entire plastics lifecycle, in order to minimise the mismanagement of plastics and prevent plastic from entering the environment.
1. RWANDA:
Rwanda was the first regional country to adopt a law against plastic bags in 2008. A new and extensive law was gazetted in August 2019 which prohibits the manufacturing, importation, use and sale of plastic carrier bags and single-use plastic items and other types of plastics deemed equally harmful to the environment.

2. KENYA:
After multiple failed attempts to curb plastic bag pollution through duties, standards, and pilot projects, Kenya instituted the world’s strictest plastic bag ban (in terms of penalties) in 2017 which has to date achieved a success rate of 80%. Kenya’s decision to implement the bans on plastic bags as well as SUPs in protected areas was driven by a strong civil society combined with strong political will.

3. UGANDA:
In Nov. 2018, the Ugandan Parliament passed the National Environment Bill, 2017 banning polythene bags below 30 microns. Specifically, Clause 75 of the Bill regulates importation, manufacture, use and reuse of some plastics.
4. TANZANIA (United Republic)
The first phase of Tanzania’s anti-plastic initiative began in 2017 to “protect the youth and environment,” with an initial ban on the manufacture of plastic bags and in-country distribution. In May 2018, Tanzania announced the implementation of the second phase of its plastic bag ban. This second phase came into effect on 1 June 2018 and prohibits the importation, exportation, manufacture, sale, storage, supply and use of plastic carrier bags in mainland Tanzania.

5. BURUNDI
In 2018, Burundi banned the manufacture, import, storage, sale and use of all plastic bags and other plastic packaging; an 18-month transitional period ended in February 2020.
6. SOUTH SUDAN

The Government of South Sudan banned the importation and use of plastic bags in the country in December 2017.

7. THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC)

The Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo has banned manufacture and sale of plastic bags and bottles, but implementation remains a challenge. Imports of plastic is still allowed.
3. Some experiences with policy harmonization to restrict problematic single Use Plastics in East Africa

- Kenya Plastic Pact (KPP) available: If you have any questions about it, please visit their website at https://kpp.or.ke/ or contact communication@kpp.or.ke
EALA Commitment

- We are ready to support this battle as legislatures, human, animal welfare and environmental protection matter most. Our earth needs all of us efforts to keep it safe and green. We say no to climate change impact. We will bring environmental friendly laws that are people Centred.
- Plastic free is fantastic: All stakeholders to work jointly with us to make this happen. Tx to ALN Kenya, Flipflopì, ICCF, UNCTAD, UK AID and all of you support.
THANK YOU

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