

9th World Environmental Education Congress (WEEC) Side Event
UN Environment Session - Supporting Policy through Education – No More Plastic Bags in Kenya

12 September, 2017 | 13:00 - 14:30hrs | Room 109 | Vancouver, Canada



Background

Organized by UN Environment in collaboration with Kenya’s National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), the workshop showcased the recent national plastic carrier bags ban introduced by the Government of Kenya, including the use, manufacture and import of any plastic bags in the country. The event explored the education initiatives that accompanied the ban and discussed their impact on public opinion, uptake and media coverage. The ban is also in line with SDG 12 – *Responsible Production and Consumption Patterns*.

Summary

- **Brian Waswala** (*Environment Education and Training Consultant*) welcomed the session delegates and gave opening remarks. He showcased the plight of plastic carrier bag usage in Kenya; the challenges of poor carrier plastic bag management and its impact on various sectors; how science-policy interphase guided the ban; plastic carrier bag environmental education awareness creation through public participation; and legal processes being undertaken to implement the plastic carrier bag ban;
- **Jaime Webbe** (*Chief, Environmental Education and Training, UN Environment*) highlighted UN Environment’s contribution in championing the ban through environmental education and research; and
- Delegates developed draft curriculum guides that would help NEMA and UN Environment design environmental awareness curricula for primary and secondary level students.



Outcomes of the Plastic Carrier Bag Ban in Kenya

- **Public participation** is essential for the success of the plastic carrier bag ban;
- Environmental awareness **awakens and raise people’s sensitivity** to sustainability concerns and helps **change people’s attitudes** (*SDG 4.7 – environmental education*);
- All levels of education are essential in championing environmental stewardship;
- The plastic carrier bag ban has **promoted alternative lifestyles and green enterprises**;
- **Environmental education creates responsibility** among the different communities, increases environmental accountability and governance; and
- Plastic carrier bag ban **promotes holistic resource use and resource efficiency**.

Way forward

- i. NEMA Kenya and UN Environment to champion the development of educational curricula for primary and secondary level education;
- ii. Integrated holistic waste management is essential to promote a circular economy; and
- iii. South-south collaboration and best practices exchange to be promoted.

The side event was attended by over 20 Environmental Education delegates.

More info: [NEMA ban on plastic carrier bags](#).