POLICIES, REGULATIONS AND STRATEGIES IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN TO PREVENT MARINE LITTER AND PLASTIC WASTE

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Executive Summary

The problem of marine litter has been present over several decades, however it has been more recently that this issue gained global attention, due to increased evidence and awareness of the widespread pollution and related impacts. It is estimated that around 80% of pollution discharged in seas and oceans comes from land-based activities, including urban settlements and industry, sewage outfalls, and beach littering, mainly composed by plastics. In fact, waste plastic makes up 80% of all marine debris from surface waters to deep-sea sediments, causing impacts on the marine environment, on food and human health, on climate change, and on relevant and dependent economic sectors, such as tourism.

The region of Latin America and the Caribbean is not unfamiliar with the marine litter problem, notably influenced by the improper waste management practices. Although adequate final disposal of solid waste has improved during the last decades, about 145,000 tons/day end up in dumpsites, including 17,000 tons/day of plastic waste (UNEP, 2018a), that is often discharged into the coastal and marine ecosystems.

To address this problem, many countries in the region are addressing marine litter and plastic pollution through existing or new frameworks of solid waste management, banning or restricting the import, manufacture, distribution, sell and use of single-use items at the national and sub-regional level, and preventing waste from entering the marine environment (UNEP, 2016). However, increasing amounts of waste generation, limited recycling of discarded materials, prevalent unsound waste management practices, and lack of capacity to enforce related policies and regulations, are some of the factors hampering the effective reduction of marine litter and plastic pollution.

At the Intersessional Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean (Bridgetown, Barbados, 5-6 November 2019), countries raised their interest in learning from experiences implemented by different countries in the region and recommended **the compilation of adopted policies, regulations and strategies undertaken by Member States to prevent marine litter and enhance management of plastic waste,** to be presented at the XXII Forum of Ministers of Environment to be held by early 2021.

While not comprehensive, this document attempts to identify regional and national strategies, policies, and legal mechanisms for action to provide to governments and decision makers, who are considering the development and adoption of policies and regulations to address single-use plastics and marine litter.

This research provides insights on:

- Existing global and regional multilateral agreements, programmes and initiatives relevant to marine litter and plastic pollution.
- Regional and national strategies and action plans to tackle marine litter that have been identified in the LAC region, including the Wider Caribbean Region, Northeast Pacific, Southeast Pacific, Belize, Brazil, and Panama.

- The development and implementation of regulations that ban or restrict the production and use of single-use plastic items at the national and sub-national level, such as bags, bottles, cups, and straws, which are often found in marine litter.
- Regulations and initiatives concerning the prevention and sound management of waste. In this regard, examples of measures and approaches to improve the prevention and reduction of plastic waste are included, such as recycling initiatives, circular economy strategies, producer extended responsibility schemes, and sustainable public procurement, among others.
- Lessons learned that have led to positive long-term impacts through the analysis of three case studies in the region: Antigua and Barbuda, Colombia, and Peru.
- The identification of existing regional or sub-regional coordination mechanisms and efforts addressing marine litter, that may be considered to enhance regional cooperation in the LAC region, and facilitate the exchange of information and best practices.

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1. Introduction and background

1.1 General overview of marine litter and plastic waste

Oceans are the core of the planet covering around 72 per cent of the Earth's surface. It provides endless benefits: oceans feed us, regulate our climate, generate most of the oxygen we breathe, create jobs, support the development of medicines, and offers recreation and entertainment. Thus, all of the planet's 7.6 billion people (World Bank, 2019) depend on oceans in fundamental ways, especially people living in coastal communities, who represent 37 per cent of the global population (The Ocean Conference, 2017).

> ***Box 1: What is Marine Litter?***
>
> *Marine litter refers to any persistent, manufactured or processed solid material that is discarded, disposed of or abandoned in the marine and coastal environment* (UNEP, 2009).

However, oceans are facing unprecedent challenges as a result of human activity. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), 80 per cent of all the pollution in seas and oceans comes from land-based activities, including urban settlements and industry, sewage outfalls, beach littering, and it is mainly composed by plastics. The Ocean Conservancy in 2017, made a global beach clean-up[1] evidencing that the main items collected were cigarette butts, plastic bottles, plastic bottle caps and food wrappers. It has been estimated that more than 8 million tons of plastic enter the oceans annually (UNEP, 2018b), equal to dumping a garbage truck of plastic per minute. This exposes the fragilities of the waste management systems as well, and the need to strengthen its infrastructure. Thus, as alarming as it may be, if current consumption and production patterns continue, as well as growth of population and the quality of waste management systems is not improved, by 2050 the planet will carry more plastic mass than fish (UN News, 2017). Other sources of marine litter include sea-based from fishing activities, container ships, cruise liners, and boats. It is estimated that, from the fishery industry alone, 640,000 tons of fishing gear is lost in the oceans (USAID, 2019).

Marine litter affects ecosystems and marine based economic sectors such as tourism, fisheries, and maritime transport. It also impacts other aquatic environments that are vital for human societies, such as rivers and lakes. The extent of marine litter is now global, with plastic particles detected in all the world's oceans, even the most remote and untouched environments, and it has also entered the food chain (Velis C., 2017).

The region of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) is not unfamiliar with the marine litter problem, notably influenced by the improper waste management practices and infrastructure. Around 10 per cent of the global waste is generated in the region and, although proper final disposal of solid waste has improved, about 145,000 tons/day end up in dumpsites, including 17,000 tons/day of plastic waste (UNEP, 2018a), that is often discharged into the coastal and marine ecosystems.

Some rivers with higher volume and flow in Central and South America that drain into the Atlantic and the Caribbean have been reported as major contributors of marine litter. This is the case of the Amazon river which runs through Peru, Colombia and Brazil, and the Magdalena River of Colombia, both listed among the top 20 contributors of plastic waste transported to the ocean (USAID, 2019). However, smaller rivers act as well as regional contributors, for instance, the Motagua river in Guatemala and

[1] 2017 International Coastal Cleanup where more than half a million volunteers participated from 112 countries around the world.

Honduras, or the San Juan river in Costa Rica and Nicaragua. Along the Pacific coast, Chile's and Peru's marine litter originates from adjacent land via river transport, beach visitors, and marine activities, including aquaculture and fisheries (USAID, 2019).

In the Caribbean, solid waste and wastewater are the most prevalent sources of marine pollution in the region. These sources are projected to increase as populations, coastal cities, and tourism continue to grow. Eighty per cent of marine pollution results from direct or indirect discharge of solids and liquids from land-based sources such as rivers, outfalls, waterways, agricultural runoff, and infrastructure. About 85 per cent of wastewater in the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR) goes untreated into the ocean. In the insular Caribbean, about 52 per cent of households lack sewer connections and only 17 per cent have acceptable collection and treatment systems. Small islands often have insufficient or no wastewater treatment facilities at all. The rest enters the oceans through petroleum exploration and production, shipping, discarded fishing gear, and the atmosphere (Diez, et al., 2019).

Plastic has also been found to be a key component of marine litter in the Caribbean. Almost all consumable goods are imported to the region and contribute to the plastic waste problem. An estimated of 322,745 tons of plastic go uncollected each year across selected Caribbean countries (Diez, et al., 2019). The plastic waste from imported consumable goods, coupled with the waste imported by the tourism industry, means that the average consumer on these Caribbean islands has very little control on their waste production. Additionally, once the waste is imported or brought to the island, the lack of a strong waste management system means that the waste is poorly disposed, sometimes even buried, or burned openly on beaches (USAID, 2019).

To address these concerns, it is necessary to disrupt the "produce, use, and dispose" traditional business model and rethink how products are designed and manufactured in a way they can be reused, recycled, remanufactured and reintroduced in the economy, jointly with the reinforcement of regional waste management systems. Hence, global leaders, regional governments, the private sector, international organizations, among other relevant actors, are including in their agendas the need to prevent, reduce and design-out marine litter and plastic waste, and calling for the acceleration to a low-carbon, green and circular economy actions.

1.2 Objectives and scope of the report

1.2.1 Background and general objective

During the Intersessional Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean (Bridgetown, Barbados, 5-6 November 2019), and as a follow-up to Decision 1 of the XXI Meeting of the Forum of Ministers, delegates acknowledged that the LAC region has taken significant steps to prevent marine litter, through the adoption of national plans and regulatory measures such as bans and restrictions on single-use plastics, as well as awareness raising activities. At the same time, participants expressed an interest in learning from experiences implemented by different countries in the region, and accordingly, a "compilation of adopted policies, regulations and strategies undertaken by member States to prevent marine litter and management of plastic waste" was recommended. This will enable lessons learnt to be identified as well as provide the basis for the regional exchange of information, through suitable coordination and communication mechanisms.

In response to this recommendation, this report intends to be an initial attempt to provide member states and decision makers with an overview of existing and on-going regional, national, and local

efforts in the LAC region, that contribute to the adoption of measures to prevent, reduce, and control marine litter and plastic pollution.

The information has been gathered from secondary sources and does not intend to be comprehensive, but a preliminary overview to identify trends and relevant experiences.

1.2.2 Specific objectives

i. Identify on-going or existing regulatory mechanisms, programmes and strategies to prevent marine litter and plastic waste in the LAC region.
ii. Identify international and regional policy frameworks, and existing mechanisms and opportunities to reinforce regional coordination and cooperation to address marine litter and plastic pollution.
iii. Facilitate the exchange of information, knowledge, and best practices among governments and relevant stakeholders.

2. International and regional framework on marine litter and plastics

2.1 Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

The Sustainable Development Goals are the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all and establishes the set of goals, targets and indicators that UN member states are expected to use to frame their agendas and political policies. They address the global challenges we face, including poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace, and justice (UNEP, 2015). The SDGs contain targets addressing explicitly and implicitly the topic of marine litter, waste and resource management, marking an advance of this topic to the global development agenda, such as:

- **Goal 6:** Ensure access to water and sanitation for all.
- **Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.** It proposes changes in production systems, consumption habits and use of resources, seeking for their sustainability.
- **Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.** Include goals aimed at stopping the damage caused to the planet and at building a sustainable model in which we can inhabit the earth without destroying it.
- **Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources.** Proposes goals focused on reducing and eradicating the dumping of waste and marine litter. The overfishing that causes poverty in many areas of the planet is killing and deforming the life of many species.
  - **Target 14.1:** By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution**.**

2.2 The United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA)

The United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) is the world's highest-level decision-making body on the environment, with the universal membership of all 193 Member States, in which the 33 countries form the Latin America and the Caribbean region are part and have recognized marine litter as a problem that must be addressed by the countries of the region. Within this framework, the Assembly has adopted a set of resolutions in this area, including:

Marine plastic debris and microplastics (UNEP/EA.1/Res.6) – 2014. It encourages governments, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, industry, and other relevant actors to cooperate with the Global Partnership on Marine Litter in its implementation of the Honolulu Strategy and recognizes that plastics, including microplastics, in the marine environment are a rapidly increasing problem.

Marine plastic litter and microplastics (UNEP/EA.2/Res.11) – 2016. It recognizes that the presence of plastic litter and microplastics in the marine environment is a rapidly increasing serious issue of global concern that needs an urgent global response taking into account a product life-cycle approach, and acknowledging that the levels and sources of marine plastic litter and microplastics, and the resources available to tackle the issue, can vary between regions, and that measures need to be taken and adapted as appropriate to local, national and regional situations.

Marine litter and microplastics (UNEP/EA.3/Res. 7) – 2017. It urges all actors to step up actions to "by 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution".

Marine plastic litter and microplastics (UNEP/EA.4/Res.6) – 2019. It encourages good practices, innovation in the design of products that reduce microplastic releases, proper waste management, and the generation of technical and scientific information on marine litter, from the perspective of sustainable consumption and production.

Addressing single-use plastic products pollution (UNEP/EA.4/Res.9) – 2019. It encourages the development and implementation of national or regional actions to address the environmental impact of single-use plastic products; it also promotes the cooperation between the private sector, intergovernmental organizations, the scientific community, non-governmental organizations, and other relevant stakeholders.

Environmentally sound management of waste (UNEP/EA.4/Res.7) – 2019. It promotes an environmentally sound management of waste and the recovery of marine plastic litter that would improve not only human health but also protect the marine environment.

2.3 LAC Forum of Ministers of Environment

Within the framework of the XXI Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean (Buenos Aires, Argentina, 9-12 October 2018), the *Decision 1 on Chemicals, Marine Litter and Waste Management* was adopted, which recognized the importance of addressing coordinated actions to effectively address the risks to human health and the environment associated with the accumulation of marine litter and microplastics. The decision encourages countries to **develop and implement national and regional plans to reduce marine litter,** develop the necessary policies, strategies and programs, strengthen regional coordination together with the different programs and initiatives that promote the reduction of marine litter, and strengthen cooperation, exchange of information, knowledge, good practices, and other similar activities.

2.4 Multilateral and regional agreements, programmes and initiatives relevant to marine litter

This section provides an overview of existing global and regional programmes, agreements and initiatives that aim to support the reduction of marine litter from land or sea-based sources. It aims to

provide an overview of current cooperation structures, organized from the initial mechanisms that were adopted, to the most recent initiatives.

Agreement / Initiative	Description
International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL - 1973)	The MARPOL Convention was adopted in 1973 at the headquarters of the International Maritime Organization (IOM). The Convention includes regulations aimed at preventing and minimizing pollution from ships - both accidental pollution and that from routine operations - and currently includes six technical Annexes. Special Areas with strict controls on operational discharges are included in most Annexes (IMO, 2020).
The Regional Seas Programme (RSP – 1974)	The UNEP Regional Seas Programme was established in 1974 for the protection of the coastal and marine environment. Its objective is to address problems related to the accelerated degradation of the world's oceans and coastal areas through a "shared seas" approach, that is, involving neighboring countries in comprehensive and specific actions to protect their common marine environment (UNEP, 2020a). Today, more than 143 countries have joined 18 Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans for the management and the sustainable use of the marine and coastal environment. In Latin America, three Regional Seas programmes exist: Wider Caribbean, South Pacific, and North East Pacific. Regional Seas programmes work with the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA) and its Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML) to address marine litter and microplastics.
Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS – 1979)	It provides a global platform for the conservation and sustainable use of migratory animals and their habitats. CMS brings together the States through which migratory animals pass, the Range States, and lays the legal foundation for internationally coordinated conservation measures throughout a migratory range. As the only global convention specializing in the conservation of migratory species, their habitats and migration routes, CMS complements and co-operates with a number of other international organizations, NGOs and partners in the media as well as in the corporate sector (CMS, 2021). As of marine litter, the convention has three related resolutions on the matter: • UNEP/CMS/Resolution 11.30 (2011): Management of Marine Debris. • UNEP/CMS/Resolution 10.4 (2014). Marine Debris • UNEP/CMS/Resolution 12.20 (2017): Management of Marine Debris.
Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Area of the South-East Pacific (Lima Convention) (1981)	The Convention was signed by the plenipotentiaries of Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Panama, and Peru, in Lima on November 12, 1981. The instruments of ratification were deposited by the respective signatory governments. The Contracting Parties to this Agreement, in the preamble and preliminary declarations thereof, express the need to protect and preserve the marine environment and the coastal zone of the Southeast Pacific against all types and sources of pollution; and

	they highlight the economic, social, and cultural value of the Southeast Pacific as a means of linking the countries of the region. The Action Plan for the Protection of the Marine Environment and Coastal Areas of the South-East Pacific, has the same characteristics as other Regional Seas Programs promoted by UNEP, having designated the Permanent Commission of the South Pacific (CPPS) for regional coordination, the appropriate maritime agency of the Southeast Pacific, created in 1952.
Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (Cartagena Convention) (1983)	Adopted by countries in the Wider Caribbean in 1983, is the only legally binding agreement of its kind in the region for the protection of the Caribbean Sea. Through the Convention, governments receive support to control, reduce and prevent marine pollution from all sources. Marine litter is one of the priority pollutants being targeted for improved management by the Cartagena Convention Secretariat. The Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities (LBS) of the Cartagena Convention, was signed in 1999 and adopted in 2010.
Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal (1989)	The Basel Convention was adopted on 22 March 1989 by the Conference of Plenipotentiaries in Basel, Switzerland, in response to a public outcry following the discovery, in the 1980s, in Africa and other parts of the developing world of deposits of toxic wastes imported from abroad. During the Basel Conference of the Parties from 29 April to 10 May 2019, Governments amended the Basel Convention to include plastic waste in a legally-binding framework which will make global trade in plastic waste more transparent and better regulated, whilst also ensuring that its management is safer for human health and the environment. At the same time, a new **Partnership on Plastic Waste** was established to mobilize business, government, academic and civil society resources, interests and expertise to assist in implementing the new measures, to provide a set of practical supports – including tools, best practices, technical and financial assistance (Basel Convention, 2019).
The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD – 1992)	Signed by 150 government leaders at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, the Convention on Biological Diversity is dedicated to promoting sustainable development. Conceived as a practical tool for translating the principles of Agenda 21 into reality, the Convention recognizes that biological diversity is about more than plants, animals and microorganisms and their ecosystems – it is about people and our need for food security, medicines, fresh air and water, shelter, and a clean and healthy environment in which to live (CBD, 2021). Regarding marine litter, the convention has the following related decisions on the matter: • CBD/COP/DEC/XIII/10 – 2016: Addressing impacts of marine debris and anthropogenic underwater noise on marine and coastal biodiversity. • CBD/COP/DEC/14/10 – 2018: Other matters related to marine and coastal biodiversity.

Global Programme of Action (GPA) for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (1995)	The GPA is the only intergovernmental mechanism explicitly addressing the linkages between freshwater, coastal and marine environments. It is a voluntary, action-oriented, intergovernmental programme, led by UNEP, to prevent the degradation of the marine environment from land-based activities. It brings together governments, private sector actors, NGOs, and the scientific community to discuss solutions and catalyze action. It has work since 2012 in the establishment and strengthening of three partnerships: • The Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML) • The Global Partnership on Nutrient Management (GPNM) • The Global Wastewater Initiative (GW^2I)
The Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (2001)	The Stockholm Convention, adopted in year 2001, is a global treaty to protect human health and the environment from Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs, including substances that are added or adhered to plastics and are detected in marine plastic litter), and other chemicals that remain intact in the environment for long periods, become widely distributed geographically, accumulate in the fatty tissue of humans and wildlife, and have harmful impacts on human health or on the environment (Stockholm Convention, 2020).
Convention for the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Marine and Coastal Zones of the Northeast Pacific (Antigua Convention) (2010)	The main purpose of the Antigua Convention is to establish a regional cooperation framework to encourage and facilitate the sustainable development of marine and coastal resources of the countries of the Northeast Pacific for the benefit of present and future generations of the region. The Convention was signed by two countries and is yet to entry into force. The Plan of Action for the protection and sustainable development of the marine and coastal environment of the north-east pacific has been adopted and is in effect.
Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML - 2012)	Launched in Rio+20 to protect human health and the environment by the reduction and management of marine litter. It is a voluntary multi-stakeholder partnership of more than 300 partners, including many networks (African Marine Waste Network, Clean Europe Network etc.). The partnership helps countries reach their targets related to Sustainable Development Goal target 14.1.
Ad Hoc Open-Ended Expert Group on Marine Litter and Microplastics of the UN Environment Assembly (2018)	Established by UNEP/EA.3/Res.7 Marine Litter and Microplastics, in which the UN Environment Assembly had decided to convene meetings of an open-ended ad hoc expert group to further examine the barriers to and options for combating marine plastic litter and microplastics from all sources, especially land-based sources. Its mandate was extended by UNEP/EA.4/Res.6. The 4th and final session of the AHEG was held virtually from 9-13th November 2020, adopting a Chair's summary that will be submitted to UNEA-5, allowing UNEA to further deliberate on the way forward.

3. Overview: Regional strategies, policies, and regulatory context

One of the key factors in the prevalence of marine litter in our oceans, are the gaps and deficiencies in regulations and public policies and its enforcement. Accordingly, in order to address this issue countries of the region are making progress in the development and implementation of regulations, strategies, and national and regional programmes to prevent and reduce marine litter and plastic pollution.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, some regional and national marine litter action plans are in place or under development to contribute in the management and sustainable use of the marine and coastal environment, and the reduction and eventual elimination of marine litter. These generally include a number of priority actions within strategic thematic areas such as education and awareness raising, governance, financing, monitoring and research.

Most countries utilize a variety of laws and policies to tackle marine litter and plastic pollution through the prevention, management, and reduction of single-use plastics, usually as part of frameworks specifically designed to decrease the generation and spread of solid waste. Generally, explicit or specific regulations on marine litter in the region are not identified.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, at least in 27 of the 33 countries of the region, national and/or local legislation towards the reduction, prohibition, and/or elimination of single-use plastics have been issued. These regulations aim to restrict or eliminate the use of certain single use-plastics, also considering challenges to secure its recycling (globally only 9% are recycled, and in the region national recycling rates are generally below 10% (UN News, 2018). A suitable approach to design effective regulations require the engagement of the different stakeholders, including government, industry, and civil society.

The proliferation of regulations on single-use plastics has taken place in a relatively short period of time. In the LAC region, the first country to take regulatory action and ban plastics bags was Antigua and Barbuda. In January 2016 it banned the import, manufacturing, and trading of plastic shopping bags. In July of the same year, the distribution of such bags at point of sale was banned. Since 2016, Colombia has a regulation on plastic bags by which it began to collect a tax as a measure of ecosystem protection. In the Southern Cone, in 2018, Chile established a ban to the delivery of plastic bags, as an initial step in a wider strategy to promote the circular economy in the country, which they call *Chile Circular Sin Basura* (COP 25 Chile, 2020)**.**

At local level, some of the largest cities in the region, such as Mexico City, Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro and Quito, have also approved regulations that ban or restrict the use of single-use plastics. Mexico City prohibited since 2010 the use of non-biodegradable plastics bags within the framework of the Solid Waste Act. Coastal cities or those with sensitive environments have also been proactive in adopting these types of measures, such as Mar del Plata (Argentina), Providencia (Chile), Santa Marta (Colombia), or Baja California Sur (Mexico), among many others.

3.1 Regional and national strategies to tackle marine litter

In addition to the legislative efforts among countries in the region, governments have increased their willingness to participate in regional and national processes in which they can identify clear actions and activities to address marine litter problems. In this regard, countries in Latin America and the Caribbean are developing or have already developed Marine Litter Action Plans, which cover so far different geographical locations and have the potential to be replicated in other countries or sub-regions. An overview of identified marine litter action plans developed or in development in the LAC region is provided below.

3.1.1 Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter Management (RAPMaLi) for the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR)

The RAPMaLi (2014) for the WCR was originally developed in 2007 as a project under the directive of the United Nations Environment Programme (through its Regional Seas Program) as a regional policy response to the growing global concerns of litter accumulation in the Caribbean Sea. It is an update of the 2008 “Marine Litter in the Wider Caribbean: A Regional Overview and Action Plan”. The Caribbean Regional Coordinating Unit of UNEP undertook the task of compiling and developing the RAPMaLi. It was designed to serve as a comprehensive toolkit to assist SIDS in incorporating components of proper waste management across all sectors. These sectors included but were not limited to governmental legislation, enforcement, monitoring and research, community engagement, and the business sector. So far, the Action Plan has been implemented through selected pilot projects in Guyana, Barbados and Saint Lucia.

3.1.2 Marine Litter Action Plan for the Northeast Pacific

The Northeast Pacific subregion is composed by eight countries with direct access to the Pacific Ocean through the intermediate zone between the north and east cardinal points. It starts from the northern part of the continent in Mexico, bordering Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, until Colombia.

The Marine Litter Action Plan for the Northeast Pacific is currently being developed with the support of the United Nations Environment Programme and the Marviva Foundation. It is expected that this will contribute to the implementation of the Plan of Action for the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the North East Pacific, as well as to other global and regional frameworks.

The Marine Litter Action Plan for the Northeast Pacific proposes actions applicable to the municipal, national and regional context that allow addressing the problem of marine litter effectively and sustainably over time, contributing to sustainable economic growth, to social development and the improvement of local prosperity at the same time that it protects and restores the ecosystems, biodiversity and marine areas of this sub-region.

3.1.3 Regional Program for the Comprehensive Management of Marine Litter in the Southeast Pacific

Within the context of the of the Permanent Commission of the South Pacific (CPPS, in Spanish), the Regional Program for the Comprehensive Management of Marine Litter in the Southeast Pacific was adopted in 2007, providing a regional cooperation framework between Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Panama. It aims to address the marine litter problem in a comprehensive manner, as part of the commitments adopted by the countries in various international instruments, among which is the Declaration of Santiago of 1952, the Protocol for the Protection of the Southeast Pacific against Pollution from Terrestrial Sources (1983), the Declarations of Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the Declaration of the Presidents of the member countries of the CPPS (Panama, Nov. 2000), as well as "The Galapagos Commitment for the XXI Century" adopted in the VIII Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the CPPS (CPPS, 2020).

In a training celebrated in 2019 in Guayaquil, Ecuador, related to the best practices on Marine Litter Management in the Southeast Pacific, the updating of the Regional Program in terms of implementation and current context of marine litter of the sub-region was suggested (CPPS, 2019).

3.1.4 National Action Plan on Marine Litter in Brazil

The National Action Plan on Marine Litter in Brazil includes a diagnosis of the problem of marine litter in Brazil, with information on reference values, desired situation, governance model, guidelines, indicators, and specific proposed actions. The 8,500 km of coastline, in which 274 coastal municipalities facing the sea are located, illustrates the size of the challenge of combating marine pollution in the country.

To support the implementation of the Marine Litter National Plan, the Sustainable Consumption and Production Project, implemented by the Ministry of Environment in partnership with the UNEP Brazil Country Office, developed a 2020 work plan aiming to contribute to the achievement of the Ministry goals on themes such as recycling, technological innovations in the reuse of waste, responsible consumption and proper disposal of waste.

3.1.5 Belize Marine Litter Action Plan

This Marine Litter Action Plan, named 'Belize: Blue, Clean, Resilient, and Strong', was validated in August 2019, within the framework of the Commonwealth Litter Programme. It was developed after the Environmental Policy and Strategy 2014-2024, intended to follow a similar path in providing a framework for addressing marine litter and waste management. One of the key reasons of the country in developing this marine litter tool is due to its waste management challenges.

The purpose of this Action Plan is to provide a framework for policies and actions necessary for Belize to prevent and reduce marine litter and strengthen waste management within the marine environment. The Plan has five main areas of work focused in: i) marine science, ii) land-based sources, iii) sea-based sources, iv) outreach and education, and v) waste removal. The implementation of the Marine Litter Action Plan will be led by the Government of Belize through the Ministry responsible for the Environment over a five-year period (Commonwealth Litter Programme, 2019).

3.1.6 Marine Litter Action Plan for Panama (2021 – 2026)

The Marine Litter Action Plan for Panama has been a collaborative effort of national and local government entities, non-governmental organizations, indigenous leaders, academia, and private companies throughout the country, which involved the 10 provinces and 3 indigenous regions of the country. Its objective is to reduce and eliminate marine litter that threatens biodiversity and ecosystems on its coasts and seas, involving and joining the efforts of the largest number of national actors (government, technical institutions, community, private sector).

The Action Plan proposes actions in key areas such as sensibilization and education, legislation and governance, cleaning and restauration of the oceans, financing, and research, development, and innovation. The plan was released for public consultation during October 2020, and it is expected to be launched by early 2021.

3.2 Policies or regulations to tackle the production and use of plastics

The development and implementation of laws that ban or restrict the production and use of single-use plastics items, such as bags, bottles, cups, and straws, which are often found in marine litter, contribute to cease sea pollution. In this regard, many countries at the national and sub-national level have introduced bans on certain types of single-use plastic items, especially plastics bags. This section is focused on national and local regulations that address consumer use and production of a variety of items that end up as marine litter. More details about some regulations in the region can be found in the *Annex 7.1 List of regulations on single-use plastics identified in LAC countries.*

- In the **Caribbean**, policies have been introduced in the last five years to encourage more sustainable consumption and productions patterns, and to develop a regional approach on waste management (UNEP, 2018c). The first country to undertake this type of regulatory action was **Antigua and Barbuda,** by prohibiting the import, distribution, and sale and use of shopping plastic bags after 30th June 2016 by the External Trade (Shopping Plastic Bags Prohibition) Order, 2017, No. 83. The distribution of such bags at points of sale was banned, afterwards the ban was extended to all businesses within the food service industry to include large and small supermarkets, grocery stores and the catering sector in Antigua and Barbuda. The ban in fact took place in five phases, through a planned strategy with a total duration of more than three years as of 2016. The ban was extended to the import and use of clamshell and hinge containers, bowls, plates, hot and cold beverage cups, spoons, forks, knives, straws, fruit trays, meat trays, vegetable trays and egg cartons, "naked" Styrofoam coolers, among others (UNEP, 2019a).

  In **Bahamas** the ban on single-use plastics is on track for full implementation since the 1st July 2019 and came into force as of the first day of 2020 according to the Environmental Protection (Control of Plastic Pollution) Act adopted on December 19, 2019. After six-months transition phase, the import of single-use plastic and Styrofoam of four-bidden products have been banned such as plastic bags, plastic straws, plastic utensils and Styrofoam cups and food containers. The Act also regulates the banning on the import, distribution, manufacture, sell, supply or use of non-biodegradable, oxo-biodegradable or biodegradable single use plastic bags, as well as the prohibition on release of balloons into the air, as they end up in the oceans, realizing toxins and injuring marine life[2].

  Barbados, as part of the movement towards a green economy and in its goal to have a plastic-free country by 2020, placed a ban on the import, manufacture, and retail of petrol-based single-use plastics, including items made of plastic or polystyrene such as cups, plates, cutlery, straws, egg trays, and Styrofoam containers used in the culinary retail industry, except those used for the packaging of pharmaceuticals, hygiene products, and food preservation (Control of Disposable Plastics Act, 2019-11). However, it should be stressed that more recently the government has banned reusable bags at supermarkets and markets across the island in response to the concerns about the possible transmission of the COVID-19 via reusable bags[3].

[2] Ministry of Environment and Housing, 2019 "Towards a Plastic-free Bahamas". Available at: https://www.plasticfree242.com/news-1/bill-to-prohibit-single-use-plastics-regulate-compostable-plastics

[3] LOOP, "Covid-19: Plastic bag ban takes a backseat amid virus pandemic". 15 April 2020. Available at: https://www.loopnewsbarbados.com/content/covid-19-plastic-bag-ban-takes-backseat-amid-covid-19-pandemic.

In the case of **Belize**, in March 2018, the Government committed to phase out the use of single-use plastics such as plastic shopping bags, drinking straws, Styrofoam, plastic food utensils, clamshells, flat plates, and cups. On January 14th, 2020, the country announced that the phase-out plan to ban single-use plastics was now officially under the Environmental Protection (Pollution From Plastics) Regulation of 2020. It also prohibits the import, manufacture, sale, and possession of single-use Styrofoam and plastic "clamshells", single-use Styrofoam and plastic plates, bowls, and cups and lids, single-use plastic forks, knives, spoons, sporks, and cutlery, single-use plastic carrier bags commonly referred to as shopping bags and/or T-shirt bags, single-use plastic drinking straws. As for **Dominican Republic**, the General Law 225-20 on Integrated Management and Coprocessing of Waste in the Dominican Republic approved in 2020, details among its main objectives, the legal framework for waste management along with the promotion of the reduction, reuse, recycling, and recovery of waste[4].

Grenada passed the Non-Biodegradable Waste Control Act, No. 9, 2018, which banned on the further import of Styrofoam, and involves four phases four phases: the ban on the production, import, sale and offer for sale of food of non-biodegradable items. Regarding single-use plastic bags, their import was banned in February 2019 by the Non-Biodegradable Waste Control (Plastic Bags) Order No. 19, establishing the total elimination of plastic shopping bags from the 1st day of February, 2020. Recently, the country is moving in the second phase of ban on single-use plastics utensils. In line with the gradual enactment strategy, Phase 1, commenced 1st March 2020 with a ban on the importation (or local manufacture) of plastic utensils. Phase 2 commenced seven months later, on 1st September 2020, with a ban on the bulk sale (wholesale purchase) of plastic utensils. The final, full ban will commence 1st March 2021 after which, no person shall offer any food item accompanied by a single use plastic utensil[5].

Guyana as well, signaled its intention to institute a ban on the import, manufacture, distribution and use of single-use plastics carrier bags and other single-use plastic products. The government has already begun on sensitizing the population on this ban which will take effect from January 2021 in the following items: plastic carrier bags, plastic straws, plastic cups, plastic plates, plastic food containers, plastic spoons, plastic fork, and plastic knives (EPA Guyana, 2019). In respect to Styrofoam, the use, manufacture, import and distribution of all related products, inclusive cups, plates, egg cartons, meat and vegetable trays, among others, has been banned in 2016 by the Environmental Protection Act, No 8 of 2015, due to the Styrofoam is a major contribution to the solid waste problem in this country and across the region.

Other examples of Caribbean countries that have also taken steps in this issue are Dominica, Haiti, and Jamaica. In **Haiti**, the government has banned the import, manufacture, and marketing of black plastic polystyrene bags and polystyrene foam containers by presidential decree on August 1st, 2013 (UNEP, 2019a). **Dominica** announced back in 2018 the ban to the

[4] Government of Dominican Republic, 2020 "Ministry of the Environment is working on regulations to apply the Solid Waste Law". Available at: https://ambiente.gob.do/ministerio-de-medio-ambiente-trabaja-en-reglamento-para-aplicar-ley-de-residuos-solidos/

[5] Grenada moves to second phase of ban on single-use plastic utensils. 19th September 2020. Available: https://www.thenewtodaygrenada.com/local-news/grenada-moves-to-second-phase-of-ban-on-single-use-plastic-utensils/

import and use of Styrofoam products and certain single-use plastic utensil. Moreover, the government also announced in February 2020 that it will provide all households on the island with jute and cotton bags to use as a sustainable alternative to plastic bags. **Jamaica** passed the Trade (Plastic Packaging Materials Prohibition) Order, 2018, which prohibits the import of expanded polystyrene products, distribution or import of plastic bags 24" x 24" or less in size, and plastic drinking straws, effective January 1, 2019. More recently, the Ministry of Housing, Urban Renewal, Environment and Climate Change, announced about the third phase of the Government's ban on single use plastics, which takes effect in January 2021. This phase will incorporate single-use plastic bags with dimensions above 24 x 24 inches and thickness of 2.5 mils[6].

The Government of **Saint Lucia**, in February 2017, made commitments under the #CleanSeas Campaign to eliminate marine litter. In this regard, the country passed the Styrofoam and Plastic Food Service Containers (Prohibition) Act No. 22 of 2019, which banned the import, manufacture, sale, use or distribution of Styrofoam and plastic food service containers and for related matters. Furthermore, the second phase in the reduction of single-use plastics started in August 2020, restricting the manufacturing, sale, distribution and use of items prohibited in phase one[7].

The import, distribution, sale and use of single use plastic bags and certain plastic food containers will be completely banned in **St Vincent and the Grenadines** by January 2021, to the firm of the Environmental Health Control of Disposable Plastics Regulations 2019. Under the law, a person shall not import disposable plastic shopping bags from the first day of March 2020 and shall not distribute, sell, or use them as of the 1st August 2020. Regarding disposable plastic food service containers, their import is prohibited also from August 2020 so as their distribution, sell or use from the first day of January 2021. Under the Environmental Health (Expanded Polystyrene) Regulations 2017, St Vincent and the Grenadines took the first regulatory step in this matter, banned the manufacture, use, sale, and import of all expanded polystyrene products in the food service industry between 2017 and 2018. However, due to the COVID-19 situation, the ban on the distribution, sale and use of disposable plastic shopping bags has been suspended after the Christmas season[8].

Finally, in **Trinidad and Tobago**, the government has approved a ban on polystyrene from products, such as Styrofoam, which started the implementation during 2019. In addition to the ban, the government is also encouraging citizens to begin recycling other types of waste such as PET plastic bottles, drink cartons, aluminum cans, and glass bottles. Also, as was stated in the

[6] Gov't to Make Announcement on Third Phase of Plastic Ban. December 3, 2020. Available at: http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20201203/govt-make-announcement-third-phase-plastic-ban

[7] Department of Sustainable Development, Government of Saint Lucia "Styrofoam and plastics phase out". January 10, 2020. Available at: http://www.govt.lc/news/styrofoam-and-plastics-phase-out

[8] Ban on use of disposable plastic bags suspended. August 15, 2020. Available at: https://searchlight.vc/searchlight/breaking-news/2020/08/15/ban-on-use-of-disposable-plastic-bags-suspended-pm/

2020 National Budget Statement, the import of finished expanded polystyrene in the food and beverage industry, and its manufacturing started in January 2020 and June 2020, respectively.[9]

- In the **Southern Cone**, in **Argentina**, in 2018 was approved the Plan for the Reduction of Bags and Substitution of Non-Biodegradable Envelopes, and in May 2019, the use, delivery and sale of single-use plastic straws was banned. Other local regulations in Argentina including bans of plastics have been established in Neuquen, Rio Negro, Chubut, Pinamar, Villa Gesell, and Usuahia. Recently, Argentinian National Senate passed a law that bans the production, import and marketing of cosmetics and care products with plastic microbeads, becoming the first country in South America to ban microbeads. This new regulation includes creams, make-up, toothpaste, nail polish, soaps, among other products, that have intentionally added microbeads for exfoliation.[10]

As for **Chile,** its coastal cities have banned plastic bags in advance of a planned national ban entitled ***"Chao Bolsas Plásticas"***[11] in 2018. As a result, in the same year the Law 21.100 was passed aiming to ban the delivery of plastic bags at shops and stores throughout the country. The measure exempts the plastic bags used to package food or fruits and vegetables, for hygienic reasons or because its use prevents food waste.

In **Paraguay**, Law No. 5414/15 enters in force in January 2021, establishing *"the promotion of the reduction in the use of plastic bags*". In this sense, all stores must replace the single-use plastic bags by reusable ones. In August 2018, **Uruguay** passed the Law No. 19655, which establishes measures for the prevention and mitigation of environmental impacts due to the use of plastic bags. In 2019, Decree 3 began to regulate this Law through the sustainable use of plastic bags, prohibiting single-use plastic bags that were not certified or had proof of compliance (IMPO, 2019). In the same year, the regulation Nº 26660 under the law Nº 17.849 on the use of non-returnable containers, promoting the reuse, recycling, and other forms of recovery of packaging waste was published, in order to avoid its inclusion as part of common or household solid waste (IMPO, 2019).

In **Brazil**, local legislations such as Rio de Janeiro enacted the Law 8006 in 2018, which provides that the delivery of **single-use-plastic bags** must be replaced within 18 (eighteen) months by reusable or returnable bags (UNEP, 2019b). Furthermore, in 2018, the city became in the first city in Brazil to restrict the distribution and use of plastic straws (UNEP, 2019c). The city of São Paulo approved a ban on single-use plastics (glasses, plates, or cutlery, etc.) in commercial establishments as of January 1, 2021[12]. With more than 12 million inhabitants, it had also already banned the use of plastic drinking straws in June 2019, like other Brazilian cities[13].

[9] Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, "Expanded Polystyrene in the food and beverage industry". 2020. Available at: http://www.news.gov.tt/content/expanded-polystyrene-food-and-beverage-industry#.X8jk49hKg2w

[10] Futuro Sustentable, 2020 "El Senado sancionó la ley que prohíbe cosméticos y dentífricos con microperlas". Available at: http://www.futurosustentable.com.ar/aprueban-ley-que-prohibe-cosmeticos-y-dentifricos-con-microperlas/

[11] Chao Bolsas Plásticas, Chile. Available at: http://chaobolsasplasticas.cl/en/

[12] La ciudad brasileña de Sao Paulo prohíbe los objetos de plástico de un solo uso. January 13th, 2020. Available at: shorturl.at/sDHIQ.

[13] Ciudade de Sao Paulo, 2019 "Mayor sanctions bill that prohibits the supply of plastic straws in comercial establishments". Available at: http://www.capital.sp.gov.br/noticia/prefeito-sanciona-projeto-de-lei-que-proibe-o-fornecimento-de-canudos-plasticos-em-estabelecimentos-comerciais

Brasilia enacted the law that prohibits the distribution or sales of plastic bags in the city in 2019[14]. Fernando de Noronha decreed prohibits the entry of disposable plastic on the island. The measure, called "Zero Plastic", prevents the use and marketing of plastic containers and containers for drinks, as well as glasses, disposable cutlery, grocery bags and other objects made of polyethylene and polypropylenes[15].

- As per the **Andean region,** the government of **Colombia**, through the Resolution 0668, banned in 2017 single-use plastic bags smaller than 30x30 cm and introduced a tax on this item. Thus, the tax began at US$ 1 cent to purchase single-use plastic bags and will increase each year until 2020[16]. **This measure has contributed to reduce plastic bags consumption by 35 per cent and raised a total of about US 3.6 million.** The islands of San Andrés, Providencia, and Santa Catalina in the country have also approved a bill to prohibit the entry of plastics such as straws and glasses. Finally, Colombia presented the National Strategy on Circular Economy in 2018 and launched a National Plan on Sustainable Management of Single-use plastics in 2019, introducing the lines of action for single-use plastics and priority cross-cutting actions. Recently, the House of Representatives approved in first debate the ban of single use plastics as from 2025.

  In **Ecuador**, Galapagos Islands have banned single-use plastic bags by Resolution No. 05 in 2015, which restricts the use of plastics such as straws, polyethylene containers and non-returnable plastic bottles. Likewise, in 2019, the National Assembly approved the Organic Law of Tax Simplification and Progressivity bill at the national level for the rationalization, reuse, and reduction of single-use plastic bags. Some of the exemptions contain biodegradable and compostable plastic bags, so as plastic bags used as primary packaging (e.g food), industrial, agricultural and export use. In the city of Quito, a local ordinance to reduce progressively and phase out the use of single-use plastics so as the promotion of sustainable alternatives, is in process. In the national level, in November of 2020, the General Assembly of Ecuador approved the Organic Law for the Rationalization, Reuse and Recycling of Plastics, and the Prohibition of Single-Use Plastics in Business, which prohibits the manufacture, disposal, and sale of single-use plastics such as plastic bags, straws, cups, and plastic bottles made of PET, being the first law at national level to regulate the progressive reduction of single-use plastic.

  In 2018, **Peru** passed a single-use plastic ban, with a 3-year phase-out period. This ban includes straws and other single-use plastics. On 5 November 2018, the Supreme Decree No. 013-2019-of the MINAM approved the reduction of single-use plastic and promotes responsible consumption of plastic in the Executive entities. Then, Peru Congress passed in 2019 the Law No. 30884, Law Regulating Single Use Plastics and Disposable Containers or Containers, regulated by Supreme Decree No. 006-2019-MINAM, with the purpose to establish a regulatory framework on the provision and prohibition of single-use plastic, other non-reusable plastics and containers or disposable expanded polystyrene (Styrofoam) containers for food and

[14] Brasilia Government Portal, 2019 "GDF sanctions law that prohibts distrubition and sale of Plastic bags". Available at: https://agenciabrasilia.df.gov.br/2019/07/11/gdf-sanciona-lei-que-proibe-distribuicao-e-venda-de-sacolas-plasticas/

[15] Prohíben descartables en Fernando de Noronha, Brasil. 24th July 2019. Available at: shorturl.at/diHPT

[16] UNEP website, 2018 "Latin America and the Caribbean bids good-bye to plastic bags". Available at: https://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/story/latin-america-and-caribbean-bids-good-bye-plastic-bags

beverage for national consumption in the national territory. It also was created a new tax of PEN 0.10 cents for the distribution of single-use plastic bags at points of sale. The tax will increase annually by PEN 0.10 cents until reaching PEN 0.50 cents in 2023. In addition, Peru is seeking to raise awareness through the movement **"Menos plástico más vida"**, regarding the minimization of single-use plastics. Likewise, in 2019, the Ministry of Environment presented the campaign "**Promesas en Plástico**", in favor of the elimination of single-use plastics by the Government of Peru.

Bolivia since 2019, has a preliminary bill prohibiting the use of plastic bags. It is in process of entering to the Chamber of Senators of the Plurinational Legislative Assembly for treatment. Its objective is to raise awareness among the population about the harmful effects of ordinary plastic bags for the environment and to replace them with less toxic materials such as cloth bags and biodegradable bags. Legislators and senators are waiting for the approval of the bill[17].

- Concerning the region of **Mesoamerica**, on 5th June 2017, **Costa Rica** announced a National Strategy to phase out all forms of single-use plastics by 2021 and replace them with alternatives that biodegrade within six months. The ban aims at eliminating not only plastic bags and bottles, but also other items such as plastic cutlery, straws, Styrofoam containers and coffee stirrers (UNEP, 2018c). In July 2019, it is decreed by Law No. 9703 the prohibition of importation, commercialization and delivery of polystyrene containers in any commercial establishment in the national territory. In November of the same year a law to fight against plastic pollution and protect the environment (Law No. 9786) was approved, which prohibits the commercialization and free delivery of single-use plastic throughout the country, such as straws, plates, cutlery, glasses, stirrers, plastics bags, among others.

  In **Guatemala**, the government announced in 2019 a ban on single-use plastics and expanded polystyrene items, a measure that will take effect in two years to stop contamination by the Government Agreement 189-2019. Until then, ten of the 240 municipalities of the country had already adopted a ban on single-use plastics, among them, San Pedro La Laguna, Cantel, Quetzaltenango and San Juan Sacatepéquez. In the case of **Honduras**, the municipality of Roatan banned in 2019 plastic bags, straws, and bottles through an ordinance, being the first municipality in the country to take this type of action. The ban on plastic bags was also instituted at the municipal level in the Bay Islands and Guanaja resulting in substantial declines in the amount of plastic litter in the environment. The ban was announced one year before its implementation and accompanied by well-designed outreach and notification activities (UNEP, 2018c).Moreover, in the first days of 2020, 6 municipalities in the country (Trujillo, Puerto Cortés, Santa Cruz de Yojoa, Gracias, Lempira, and soon Omoa), have stablished municipal ordinances that aim to reduce the use of plastic.

  In **Mexico**, there is not a national legally binding instrument that prohibits single-use plastics, but 26 of the 32 states have regulations or personalized measures to control single use plastics such as Durango and Hidalgo (UNEP, 2020b). Regarding plastic bags, 27 of the 32 Mexican states

[17] Ley sobre uso de bolsas plásticas está en suspenso hace tres meses, August 2019. Available at: https://www.opinion.com.bo/articulo/informe-especial/ley-uso-bolsas-pl-aacute-sticas-est-aacute-suspenso-hace-meses/20190804072000680261.html

have already passed laws to ban them and others are considering imposing restrictions[18]. Mexico City, for instance, as of March 2020 was approved the Law that prohibited the delivery, distribution, and sell of items such as plastic bags, plastic cutlery, glasses and plates, coffee capsules, stirrers, straws, plastic swabs, among others. Only the prohibition of plastic bags (including biodegradable's) entered into force the same month, the rest of the items will enter in place as of January 2021.

To conclude, **Panama** approved a law on the ban of plastic bags in 2018, which prohibits the use of polyethylene bags in shops in general to transport products or merchandise. Recently in December 2020, Law No. 187, was passed; it establishes the legal framework on single-use plastic items in the national territory that will entry into force in 2021 as part of the public environmental policy in the State.

[18] Ciudad de México, una megalópolis en guerra contra las bolsas plásticas. February 2020. Available at: http://www.ipsnoticias.net/2020/02/ciudad-mexico-una-megalopolis-guerra-las-bolsas-plastica/

3.3 Case studies and impacts of the single use plastic regulations

CASE STUDY I: ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

Prohibiting the import, distribution, and sale and use of shopping plastic bags

On July 1st, 2016, the country started its ban of single use plastic grocery bags, being a pioneer in the Latin America and the Caribbean Region to pass a regulation to tackle plastic pollution.

Picture 1 Shopping bags from Adventure Antigua, Epicurean and Crab Hole Liquors

During the process, different stakeholders from multiple sectors participated in its development, such as the private sector, retailers, supermarkets, the National Solid Waste Management Authority, the Ministry of Commerce, and the Ministry of Environment. It was key to involve supermarkets and retailers as 90% of plastic waste came from the main important chains in the country. The day the regulations came into force, reusable bags were distributed in all establishments and it adopted first by the largest supermarkets and then by the smallest stores.

It took from 9 months to 1 year to sensitize companies and citizens to understand the objective of the measure[19]. This regulation was accompanied by public awareness campaigns, and the manufacture and use of alternatives to plastic bags with tax-free materials such as sugar cane, bamboo, and paper and potato starch was promoted.

As a result, during the first year, a **15% reduction in the amount of plastic discarded in landfills in the country was achieved**, and it has been the entry point to propose additional policies such as the prohibition of plastic cutlery, food trays and cardboard egg boxes.

[19] Posibl, 2019 "Antigua and Barbuda lead the initiative against plastic in the Caribbean". Available at: https://www.posibl.com/es/news/medio-ambiente/antigua-y-barbuda-encabeza-la-iniciativa-contra-el-plastico-en-el-caribe-7efaf69

CASE STUDY II: COLOMBIA

Ban and tax on single-use plastic bags smaller than 30x30 cms.

It is estimated that a Colombian uses in average 6 plastic bags per week, 24 per month, 288 per year and 22,176 in a life of 77 years. In most of the cases, it is unknown the destination of the plastic bag. Thus, in 2016, in the country entered into force the regulation for the rational use of plastic bags which includes a tax that increases every year. In the first year, the tax was of COP $20, and each year has been increasing COP $10 until 2020, year in which bags have a tax of COP $50.

Beyond the establishment of this tax, the aim of the regulation is to discourage their use and reduce the impacts associated with the waste generated by the bags once they are no longer used.

Impacts of the regulation:

a. During the first year of implementation of the regulation in 2017, according to the National Environmental Licensing Authority (ANLA), the **consumption of plastic bags was reduced in a 35%** and due to the tax, **COP $10,404 million were collected (around US $3 million).**

b. Between 2016 and 2019, 59,4% of the distribution of plastic bags in commercial establishments were reduced.

c. In 2018, the **reduction of plastic bags was equivalent to approximately 575 million plastic bags** in the first years since the adoption of the regulation.

d. A communication campaign was launched, called "Reembolsale al Planeta" aiming to sensitize consumers on the impacts of these plastic items.

e. According to the plastics industry, in Colombia the consumption of plastic bags was reduced by 27%, data recorded by annual sales in about 80 companies that produce this material, with total sales worth $ 475,000 million Colombian pesos (US $ 118 million). However, according to the Minister of Environment, the reduction in some chain stores has reached figures of more than 50%.

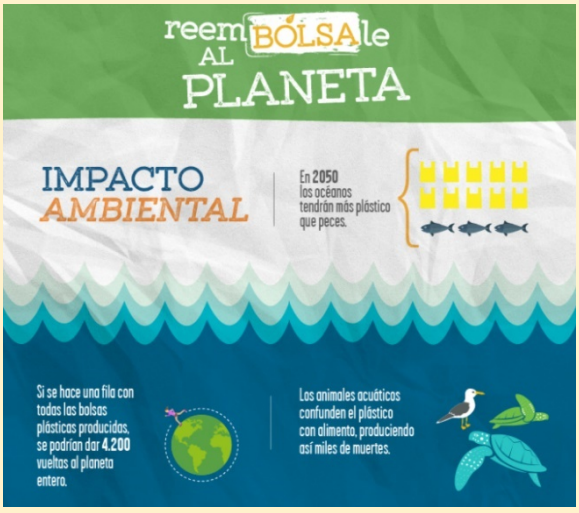

Figure 1 and 2. Materials of the campaign "Reembólsale al Planeta".

CASE STUDY III: PERU

Tax on the Consumption of Plastic Bags

Peru envisions to guide the use of plastic towards a circular economy, where plastic goods are reusable, back to the production system and recyclable, or whose degradation does not generate contamination by microplastics or dangerous substances, intending to move the country towards a modern industry of the recycling.

The rule creates a tax on the consumption of plastic bags (in addition to putting a price on the same product), which was 0.10 in 2019 and will increase by 0.10 soles per year until reaching 0.50 by 2023. This is a practice that is already It has been shown to be quite effective in countries such as the United Kingdom, Ireland, and Colombia.

The campaign **Menos plástico más vida** *(Less plastic, more life in English)* seeks to increase awareness among the population regarding the reduction of plastic consumption. Among its strategies, the action of several private institutions that stop using plastic and Styrofoam in their production processes or in their packaging stands out.

Figure 3 Menos Plástico, Más Vida

Law 30884, for instance, which regulates single-use plastic and disposable containers allowed the **reduction of 1,000 million units of plastic bags during the first year of the rule, which is equivalent to 30% of plastic.**

This law does not seek to ban all plastic, but only prohibits those plastic products that are unnecessary, cannot be recycled, or pose a risk to public health and/or the environment. In this way, it does not seek to harm the plastic industry, but rather seeks to promote innovation, the sustainable plastic industry and the industry of alternative products made from national raw materials such as bamboo, bagasse, leaves of the banana tree, organic waste, among others. Under this law, the Supreme Decree No. 006-2019-MINAM Regulation of the Plastics Law was also approved.

3.4 Policies, regulations, or initiatives to enhance plastic waste management

In addition to policies and laws governing the production and use of materials that cause marine litter, such as single-use plastics, many countries have adopted legislation concerning the adequate management and disposal of discarded products that could otherwise become marine pollution. This is an important area of intervention, considering that it is estimated that around 80% of marine litter originates from land-based sources, which is the focus of this section.

Although waste management systems have been notably improved over the past decades in the region of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), about 45% of all waste generated in the region still end up in inadequate final disposal sites, including more than 10,000 dumpsites identified in LAC countries (UNEP, 2020c). Total **waste generation** in the LAC region continues to increase, and the per capita generation rate is also expected to increase in the coming years (currently averaging 1 kg/inhab/day). Previous estimates indicate that the approximate amount of solid waste that end up in dumpsites, burning or other inappropriate practices is 145,000 t/day, including 17, 000 tons/day of plastic waste (UNEP, 2018a). Generally, **plastics represent around 10 and 12 per cent of the municipal solid waste composition**, depending on the level of country income.

Despite the continuous increase of waste generation, waste recovery or **recycling rates generally remain below 10% in the LAC countries**. This represents a challenge for the progressive closure of dumpsites, the siting of new facilities and the reduction of waste sent to final disposal. The actual recovery of waste is difficult to estimate, considering the important activity of informal waste pickers, that can be up to 4 million people in the region (IBD, 2015).

Regardless of the challenges, the region has moved forward with different instruments, initiatives, and policies to improve the prevention and reduction of plastic waste. Some of them are aligned with recycling measures, producer extended responsibility initiatives, and sustainable public procurement, among others. Moreover, a systemic shift tackling the root causes has been identified: **a transition towards a circular economy for plastics,** in which plastics never become waste (EMF, 2020).

3.4.1 Circular Economy

The idea of **Circular Economy** is focused on replicating the biological mechanism in nature by incorporating the idea of an industrial metabolism based on devising and designing products that after their initial use they can be reused or turned into a secondary raw material for a new industrial process, leaving the idea of the final disposal of waste received from the linear economy to move towards an adequate management of resources (UNEP, 2018a).

Global initiatives are now more evident and the search for solutions under the circularity approach have been recognized. In this sense, the **New Plastics Global Commitment**, launched in 2018 presents a unique opportunity for governments and business to step forward as global leaders working on solutions that address plastic waste and pollution as its source. In the LAC region, **Chile** and **Peru** are country signatories, while **Argentina**, **Brazil** and **Mexico** are local signatories. It means, they should set ambitious policies and measurable targets in 2025 in different areas, such as the elimination of unnecessary plastic packaging, encouraging reuse models, incentivize the use of reusable, recyclable, or compostable plastic packaging, increase the collection, sort, use and recycling rates, and stimulate the demand for recyclable plastics.

Other countries, such as **Colombia,** have launched different strategies and plans. In 2018, the country launched its National Strategy on Circular Economy were packaging materials are prioritized. In 2019, it launched its National Plan for the Sustainable Management of Single Use Plastics. It aims by 2030 not to cause pollution to the oceans and natural resources coming from single-use plastics due to the implementation of Sustainable Plastic Management practices, with the participation of all interested parties, implementing the closure of cycles and the circular economy. For instance, the Plan is focused on activities that promote the **prevention, rethinking, reduction, reuse, recycling, and substitution** of plastic with a value chain approach including eco-design and proper management of plastic waste. One of the main concrete goals of the National Plan by 2030 is all the single-use plastics available in the market are reusable, recyclable, or compostable.

By the end of 2020, **Chile** launched its Roadmap on Circular Economy. It proposes 32 initiatives divided into four lines of action: i) circular regulation, ii) circular innovation, iii) circular culture and iv) circular territories, with short, medium, and long-term implementation scenarios. Moreover, it sets goals for 2040: creation of 180 thousand jobs, reduction of waste generation by 25% and increase recycling to 75% and increase the country's material productivity. Regarding circular regulation, it is suggested that one of the most critical aspects that needs to be addressed to accelerate the transition is the current cost structure of the country's waste management system, so that the principle of "the polluter pays" express with balance in all areas of regulation. The objective is that, in 20 years, "the regenerative circular economy will propel Chile towards a more sustainable, fair and participatory development that puts the well-being of people at the center"[20].

3.4.2 Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)

The Extended Producer Responsibility has transformed the way products should be managed at the end of their life cycle. Whereas the responsible for managing almost all waste generated from consumption used to be the public authorities, the proposal now is to focus on the product, including its characteristics, composition, volume and even its mass consumption.

The region is progressing in this regard, and this principle can already be observed in about one third of the LAC countries. For instance, **Ecuador**, since 2013 has published and implemented rules related to comprehensive waste management based on the EPR principle, who is responsible for the products placed in the market throughout their life cycle. Under this principle, companies must register and present and implement a comprehensive management program which provides a detail of the mechanisms and strategies to use at all management stages (establishment of recovery points for the citizens, collection, temporary storage, transportation, and delivery to handlers for treatment or final disposal). Up to now, the implemented policies include **used mobile phones, agricultural-use plastics**, and **tires** (UNEP, 2018a).

In 2010, **Costa Rica** enacted the Waste Management Law, but there were already several national programs established promoting the practice of EPR. The country legislation classifies waste from special handling, such as those that enter within the EPR system and gives the competence to the Ministry of Health to determine which are the types of waste that fall under the special handling classification (GIZ, 2018). As the Waste Management Law creates incentives for producers and

[20] País Circular Chile: Hoja de Ruta de Economía Circular. December 2020. Available at: https://www.paiscircular.cl/consumo-y-produccion/hoja-de-ruta-de-economia-circular-fija-metas-a-2040-180-mil-empleos-bajar-25-generacion-de-residuos-y-aumentar-el-reciclaje-a-75-e-incrementar-productividad-material-del-pais/

companies, as a result, in Costa Rica **an emerging market has been generated for plastic collection**. For instance, a beverage private company in the country implemented a waste management system to recover 8,000 tons of recyclable material (GIZ, 2018).

Chile presented in June 2020 a decree that sets recycling goals for companies, inviting them to take care of the waste they generate[21]. In addition, it establishes a door-to-door collection system and promotes the formalization of recyclers. The legislative initiative also sets goals for the **collection and recovery of packaging**, which is one of the priority points established in the Extended Producer Responsibility law approved for the country (GIZ, 2018). The decree establishes specific goals for each material (60% for cardboard for liquids, 55% for metal, 50% for paper and cardboard, **45% for plastics** and 65% for glasses), seeking to increase by five times and increase current recycling rates in household packaging from 12.5% to 60%[22].

3.4.3 Sustainable Public Procurement

Sustainable public procurement involves the government's purchasing power so that, through public spending, it stimulates a better environmental and social performance of the private sector (IDRC, 2015). Countries such as Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, Mexico, Ecuador, Peru, Costa Rica, Colombia, and Uruguay are already working on the implementation of their sustainable public procurement strategies, on preparing the market with respect to product sustainability criteria, and the exchange of information and good practices[Error! No bookmark name given.].

In the Caribbean, the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) launched a new project that aims to foster sustainable public procurement processes in the region. The project will support the development of sustainable public procurement frameworks and tools, while also building capacity in this field[23].

3.4.4 Recycling initiatives

In the LAC region the separation and recovery of recyclable materials is not practiced on a large scale and there are few countries that have formally introduced recycling initiatives (IDB, 2016), while informal recycling is very important in the region. Many initiatives to promote recycling of waste can be identified across the region, some examples are indicated below.

In Barbados, the Returnable Containers Act (1986) provides for the control of the sale of beverages in beverage containers, the payment of a deposit on beverage containers, a refund for the return of those containers and the final disposal of unused or unusable containers. This Act has been instrumental in

[21] Ministerio del Medio Ambiente ingresa a Contraloría decreto que permitirá quintuplicar tasa de reciclaje de envases y embalajes en Chile. June 2020. Available at: https://mma.gob.cl/ministerio-del-medio-ambiente-ingresa-a-contraloria-decreto-que-permitira-quintuplicar-tasa-de-reciclaje-de-envases-y-embalajes-en-chile/

[22] Legislación: La Responsabilidad Extendida del Productor cambia el paradigma de los residuos. July 1, 2020. Available at: https://www.mundopmmi.com/empaque/sustentabilidad/article/21139011/legislacin-la-responsabilidad-extendida-del-productor-cambia-el-paradigma-de-los-residuos

[23] Eastern Caribbean States embraces sustainable public procurement for COVID-19 recovery. November 2020. Available at: https://www.iisd.org/sustainable-recovery/news/eastern-caribbean-states-embrace-sustainable-public-procurement-for-green-recovery/

the way in which recyclables are treated today in the country and the growth of the recycling industry in Barbados (IDB, 2016).

In Jamaica existing initiatives to collect and export recyclables have been led primarily by the private sector: (i) Recycle Now Jamaica, which is a public private partnership (PPP) between Wisynco, PepsiCo and the Government of Jamaica. The initiative is initially focus on reclaimed post–consumer polyethylene terephthalate (otherwise known as PET) bottles, (ii) Jamaica Recycles, which is a private entity that collects plastics, cardboard, and paper for export (IDB, 2016).

In Trinidad and Tobago, a National Waste Recycling Policy was approved by the Cabinet in February 2015. The Policy takes into consideration existing overarching policies such as the National Integrated Waste Management Policy and the National Environmental Policy (IDB, 2016).

In Latin America, Peru approved in May 2020 a decree that modifies the current legislation on solid waste. The new legislation (Law 1278), establishes the basis to develop the industry of recycling at the international level, incorporating the use of state-of-the-art technologies in the management of solid waste, which will allow us to give greater value to the new raw material and the consolidation of enterprises linked to the sector. Chile, through the Minister of Environment, counts with the Fund for Recycling (Fondo para el Reciclaje), which aims to promote more sustainable habits in waste management, install technical knowledge and have suitable infrastructure for separation and recycling[24].

4. Identification of existing regional or sub-regional coordination and cooperation mechanisms

As exposed in previous chapters, there is an increasing number of activities in LAC region related to prevention of marine plastics litter, including development of laws to prohibit or restrict certain single use plastic items such as bags, foam, cutlery, and straws, launching of education and advocacy campaigns, or the development of regional and national action plans and related initiatives. Considering the transboundary dimension of marine litter, and the potential to learn from existing national and local initiatives, there is a need to enhance regional cooperation in LAC, as expressed by the Forum of Ministers of Environment in previous meetings, in order to coordinate and intensify efforts to tackle the root causes and impacts of marine litter ecosystems, human health and economies.

To this end, this section intends to preliminary identify some of the existing international cooperation and coordination frameworks and initiatives that could be considered for this purpose, such as the Regional Seas Programme (RSP), or the GPML, among others, which have already been introduced above.

The **Regional Seas Programme** has constituted since its inception a unique approach to the protection of the coastal and marine environment. The programme covers different regions such as the Mediterranean, the East Asian Seas, East Africa, the Caribbean, and the Caspian Sea, and most of them function through action plans. In the case of the Caribbean, the governments of the **Wider Caribbean Region** (WCR) encouraged the launch of the Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP) in 1981 as one of its RSP, and countries then adopted an Action Plan to lead the development and adoption of the Cartagena Convention in 1983. The WCR includes 28 UN member states that border the Gulf of Mexico,

[24] Fondo para el Reciclaje. Available at: https://fondoreciclaje.mma.gob.cl/

the Straits of Florida, and the Caribbean Sea out of 200 nautical miles from there. The **North East Pacific** Regional Seas programme covers eight countries from Mexico to Colombia. In February 2002, the Convention for Cooperation in the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the North-East Pacific (The Antigua Convention) was signed. The Convention is not yet entered into force. As indicated above, a regional action plan on marine litter for the NEP region is being developed. Finally, the **South-East Pacific** Action Plan was adopted in 1981 with the signing of the 'Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and Coastal Areas in the South-East Pacific' (Lima Convention). The Contracting Parties to the Convention, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Panama, and Peru, committed to protecting and preserving the marine environment and coastal areas of the South-East Pacific from all types and sources of pollution. As indicated above, the region also has a program for the management of marine litter. In the LAC region, the South Atlantic is not covered by a Regional Seas Programme.

Under the **Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA)**, land-based marine litter has been highlighted in the Manila Declaration as a priority source category, giving UNEP a strong mandate to continue its work on this issue. In the context of the LAC region, for instance, the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources (LBS Protocol), has been a relevant agreement that have contributed with the implementation of the GPA.

Additionally, the **Global Partnership for Marine Litter (GPML)** has been mentioned in several decisions and resolutions from different international forums including UNEA, G20, G7, Basel and Convention. Since 2018 it provided inputs to the Open-Ended Expert Group on Marine Litter and Microplastics of UNEA, which in November 2020 celebrated its fourth and final meeting, where several representatives worldwide emphasized in the importance of international cooperation and partnerships, the synergies between partnerships to tackle marine litter and microplastics, and the need to strengthened regional frameworks.

In the region, specific reference to enhance regional cooperation and coordination was made at **the XXI Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment for Latin America and the Caribbean** (Buenos Aires, Argentina, October 2018), where Decision 1 was adopted, highlighting: "*To strengthen the existing regional coordination mechanisms such as the Regional Seas Programme, the Global Partnership for Marine Litter and its Regional nodes, and the Basel and Stockholm Convention Regional centers, for their suitability to serve as a regional coordinating platform to strengthen the cooperation on reducing marine litter and microplastics, including through sharing of information, knowledge and best practices, capacity building, special events and other similar activities.*"

In relation to the GMPL **Regional Nodes**, these can be proposed by GPML members to provide effective regional network of public and private bodies to promote the objectives and the implementation of the GPML; they are composed by different bodies to support the implementation of Action Plans in the respective regions. Given the different characteristics and needs, each Regional Node and Action Plan is developed and tailored to address the specific environmental challenges. The existing regional nodes are:

- The South Asia Regional Node (TBC)
- Northwest Pacific Regional Node of the Global Partnership on Marine Litter (2014)
- The GPML Caribbean Node (GPML – Caribbean, 2015)
- The Pacific Regional Node for the Global Partnership on Marine Litter (2017)

- The Mediterranean Node of the Global Partnership on Marine Litter (2018)

In the case of the **GPML – Caribbean**, over the last 4 years, it has facilitated several projects for improving marine litter management in the region including training, outreach, advocacy, resource mobilization and project development. Some of its projects have been developed in Grenada, Trinidad and Tobago, and Puerto Rico.

Within the framework of the LAC Forum of Ministers Chemicals, the **Intergovernmental Network on Chemicals and Waste** was also established in 2016, comprising national focal points from LAC countries and other relevant stakeholders. The first regional action plan 2019-2020 has been recently completed, and a new action plan 2021-2024 is expected to be adopted at the XXII Forum of Ministers by early 2021. Within the new action plan, member states proposed to include marine litter and plastic pollution as a new priority area of work, with specific regional cooperation activities. In this sense, LAC countries may wish to consider also the potential synergies with this Network, when exploring the options to reinforce regional coordination and cooperation on marine litter issues in LAC.

All in all, it is evident that there are some existing mechanisms of cooperation that can be considered to strengthen the work towards the conservation of the regional marine ecosystems. At the same time, some gaps in terms of regional coverage can be identified, more specifically in Latin America, since the Wider Caribbean already has an active marine litter regional node. Consequently, there is potential to enhance its work to address marine litter and plastic pollution, through a comprehensive regional coordination mechanism that engages governments and the private sector, that establishes a framework of work, with clear objectives and goals, with national representatives in the matter, that promotes a circular economy with a life cycle perspective and support the transition towards sustainable consumption and production patterns of plastic products.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

As it has been observed through the preliminary compilation conducted in this report, numerous countries and cities in the LAC region are addressing marine litter and plastic waste through existing frameworks of solid waste, banning or restricting the import, manufacture, distribution, sell and use of single-use items at the national and sub-regional level, and preventing waste from entering the marine environment. However, important amounts of plastic waste are still being unproperly managed and reaching the coastal and marine ecosystems, with significant impacts on the environment, health and economies.

The following points outline key recommendations that will support the prevention of marine litter and plastic waste in the LAC region:

i. **Addressing marine litter and plastic waste requires the design and enforcement of adequate policies and laws with specific focus on marine litter and single-use plastics**, considering measures to promote their prevention and recycling, including circular economy and extended producer responsibility (EPR) approaches.

ii. **Promote actions around an efficient waste management that enables the transition towards a sustainable production and consumption patterns such as through a circular economy model**.

Traditionally, waste management systems dealt with them once they had been generated. An approach which includes the life cycle concept suggests that the focus must be shifted and be placed on the beginning of the process to prevent the generation of waste through an appropriate design, applying sustainable production and consumption practices, identifying, and reducing hazardous substances, reusing and recycling and, where residuals do occur, proceed to a safe final disposal or utilize them for energy recovery (UNEP, 2018a).

iii. **EPR policies and governance models in LAC countries need to incentivize not only producers, but other actors in the supply chain**, to carry out their allocated tasks and responsibilities. The achievement of a good national level of EPR performance result of each stakeholder's contribution and within any EPR scheme should be define the respective responsibilities. Furthermore, EPR polices should be associated with other economic instruments such as taxes.

iv. **Political willingness beyond the alternation of political mandates is necessary**, as much as technical and funding capacity to implement and enforce marine litter legislation. It is also required engagement of civil society, industry stakeholders, and decision-makers by means of awareness-raising measures (Deloitte, 2014).

v. **Ensure the engagement of relevant stakeholders within the value chain**. Involving actors from the plastic value chain in the policies, regulations, action plans and initiatives takes relevance considering their critical role to promote the prevention of marine litter and plastic pollution. Some of the stakeholders are national and local government entities, local waste management authorities, single-use plastic producers, retailers and distributors, civil society, informal sectors such as waste pickers, environmental NGOs, among others.

vi. **Promote sustainable alternatives.** Among the different measures taken by governments, eco-friendly alternatives are proposed to substitute some types of plastic materials. However, besides their promotion and inclusion, it should be validated the effectiveness and compliance with sustainability criteria.

vii. **Increase public awareness.** Consumers and civil society should be aware of their key role within the value chain and the ways to minimize their environmental impact to the oceans and marine ecosystems. National and local governments can develop educational programmes, extensive-multimedia awareness-raising campaigns, door-to-door campaigns, showcase and distribute alternative options to single use plastics, among others (UNEP, 2018c).

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7. Annexes

7.1 List of regulations on single-use plastics identified in LAC countries

Country	Year	Legal Framework		Details	Access
Antigua and Barbuda	2016	External Trade (Import Prohibition) Order, 2016		Repeal	No data
	November 2017	External Trade (Shopping Plastic Bags Prohibition) Order, 2017, No. 83		The importation, distribution, sale and use of shopping **plastic bags** was banned absolutely after the 30th of June, 2016 (Section 3) The ban on the importation and use of **Styrofoam food service products** starts July 1st 2017, and had been implemented in three stages: STAGE 1 July 1st, 2017 – December 1st, 2017 Ban on importation and use of **food service containers** (clamshell and hinge containers, hotdog containers), and all other **containers made of Expanded Polystyrene** (**bowls, plates, hot and cold beverages cups, lids** and **caps**) STAGE 2 January 1st, 2018 – June 30th, 2018 Ban on importation and use of **utensils** (**plastic spoons, forks, knives,** and **straws**), **fruit trays, meat trays, vegetable trays** and **egg cartons**. STAGE 3 July 1st, 2018 – January 1st, 2019 Ban on importation and use of **'naked' Styrofoam coolers**.	English
Argentina	National Level	2020	3847-D-2018	This law bans the production, import and marketing of cosmetics and care products with plastic microbeads, including cosmetics such as **creams, make-up, toothpaste, nail polish, soaps, among other products, that have intentionally added microbeads for exfoliation**.	Español

Country	Year	Legal Framework		Details	Access
				According to the new regulation, the industry in Argentina will have **two years** to adapt to it and exhaust their available stock.	
	The Autonomous City of Buenos Aires	2009	Law No. 3149	The purpose of this Law is to promote the development of the production of **biodegradable bags**; the progressive reduction and subsequent ban on the delivery of **non-biodegradable bags** by businesses; and the substitution of **non-biodegradable envelopes and bags** for those that are.	Español
		2018	Resolution 29	This Resolution modified Resolution 341/ APRA /16, and prohibits the dispose and use of **non-biodegradable bags** and **envelopes** through all the territory of the City of Buenos Aires (Section 1)	Español
		2019	Resolution 816	The use, delivery and sale of **single-use plastic straws** was banned immediately since May 2019. From 6 months after the ban started, the use, delivery and sale of plastic **straws** was prohibited in restaurants, dance halls, kiosks, 4- and 5-star hotels, shopping centers and related businesses (Section 1 (a) and (b), and Section 2).	Español
	Province of Buenos Aires	2008	Law 13868	Section 1 provides that this Law prohibits throughout the territory of the Province of Buenos Aires, the use of **polyethylene bags** and all other **conventional plastic material**, used and delivered by supermarkets, warehouses and shops in general for the transport of products or merchandise. The referred materials should be progressively replaced by containers of degradable and/or biodegradable material that are compatible with minimizing environmental impact.	Español
Bahamas	December 2019	Environmental Protection (Control of Plastic Pollution) Act		This Act came into force on the first day of January, 2020 (Section 1). The import, distribute, manufacture, possess, sell, supply, or use of single-use plastic and Styrofoam of four-bidden products has been banned: **plastic bags, plastic straws, plastic utensils and Styrofoam cups and food containers** (Section 4(1) and Schedule) It is also prohibited release or permit the release any number of **balloons** (Section 5 and 6).	English
Barbados	March 2019	Control of Disposable Plastics Act, 2019-11		The prohibition of import **single-use plastic containers and single-use plastic cutlery** took effect from the 1st day of April, 2019 (Section 4(1)) The prohibition of distribute, offer for sell, sell or use of single-use **plastic containers** and **single-use plastic cutlery** took effect from 1st day of July, 2019 (Section 4(2)) Ban on the import or manufacture any **petro-based plastic bag** took effect from the 1st day of January 2020 (Section 5)	English
Belize	January 2020	Environmental Protection (Pollution from Plastics) Regulations, 2020		It prohibits the import, manufacture, sale, and possession of **single-use Styrofoam and plastic clamshells**; **plates, bowls, cups, lids, forks, knives, spoons, sporks,** and **cutlery; carrier bags commonly referred to as shopping bags and/or T-shirt bags; and drinking straws, among others** (Schedule II).	English

Country	Year	Legal Framework		Details	Access
Plurinational State of Bolivia	2019	-		A preliminary bill on single-use plastic is in process of entering to the Chamber of Senators of the Plurinational Legislative Assembly for treatment. Its objective is to raise awareness among the population about the harmful effects of ordinary **plastic bags** for the environment and to replace them with less toxic materials such as cloth bags and biodegradable bags. Legislators and senators are waiting for the approval of the bill	No data
Brazil	Rio de Janeiro	2009	Law No. 8006	Requirement to substitute polyethylene and polypropylene bags with alternatives, or, if not done, to take back any quantity of plastic bags from any source and dispose of them properly and compensate the public by giving them a discount if they bring their own bag, or to pay them with food products for every 50 plastic bags they bring (UNEP, 2018, single-use roadmap). It was modified by Law No. 8006 of June, 2018. The delivery of **single-use-plastic bags** must be replaced within 18 (eighteen) months, counting from the date of publication of this Law, by reusable or returnable bags. In 2018, the city became in the first city in Brazil to restrict the distribution and use of **plastic straws**	Portuguese
	Sao Paulo	2019	Law No. 6322	Following Section 1, the free distribution or sale of **single-use plastic bags**, made from polyethylene, propylene, polypropylene or equivalent raw materials, is prohibited for the packaging and transport of goods purchased in commercial establishments of the Federal District. This provision must be implemented within a maximum period of 12 months (Section 3)	Portuguese
Chile	August 2018	Law No. 21100		The delivery of **plastic bags** through the national territory was banned. Since its publication, the entire store could deliver a maximum of two plastic bags per purchase. Following the transitional provision: - After six months of their publication, the big commerce –supermarkets, big stores and retail in general- were prohibited from delivering **plastic bags**. Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises may continue to deliver two **plastic bags** per purchase until August 3, 2020, where delivery will also be prohibited for these businesses.	Español
Colombia	2016	Resolution No. 0668		It established a Plastic Bags Rational Use Program for retailers of **plastic bags** to implement and update it. It was modified by Resolution No. 2184 of 2019	Español
	2016	Law No. 1819		In accordance with Article 512-12, a national tax on the delivery of plastic bags has been establish as of July 1st, 2017. The tax began at 1 US cent to purchase **single-use plastic bags** and increased each year until 2020.	Español
	2019	Law No. 1973		It establishes measures to reduce the environmental impact produced by the use, sale and import of some **plastic materials** in the archipelago of **San Andrés, Providencia and Santa Catalina**. Single-use plastics such as **plastic bags, straws, plates,** and **cups** were prohibited.	Español

Country	Year	Legal Framework	Details	Access
Costa Rica	July 2019	Law No. 9703	The prohibition of import, commercialization and delivery of **polystyrene containers** in any commercial establishment in the national territory were established.	Español
	December 2019	Law No. 9786	The sale and delivery of **straws, plastic bags, and plastic bottles** were banned. The restriction began 12 months after its publication. The purchase by all public administration institutions, public companies and municipalities of single-use plastic items, including **plastic plates, cups, forks, knives, spoons, straws**, and **others used primarily for food consumption**, has also been prohibited.	Español
Dominica	No data	-	Dominica announced back in 2018 the ban to the import and use of Styrofoam products and certain **single-use plastic utensil**. Moreover, the government also announced in February 2020 that it will provide all households on the island with jute and cotton bags to use as a sustainable alternative to **plastic bags**.	No data
Dominican Republic	2020	General Law 225-20 on Integrated Management and Coprocessing of Waste.	The Dominican Republic is developing and adopting in its legislation specific measures to combat marine litter generated by **plastic waste**. The General Law 225-20 on Integrated Management and Coprocessing of Waste, approved in 2020, details the legal framework for waste management, along with the promotion of reduction, reuse, recycling, and recovery.	English
Ecuador	Galápagos	2015 Resolution No. 05	Restricts the use of plastics such as **straws**, **polyethylene containers** and non-returnable **plastic bottles**, among others.	Español
	Quito	Quito Metropolitan Ordinance, 2018	Quito Metropolitan Ordinance Its aim is to prohibit the delivery of single-use plastics by commercial or service establishments to users or consumers, to encourage recycling and to progressively reduce the use of these products in the Quito Metropolitan District, in order to reduce the pollution that these items. The prohibition of single-use plastics is banned in five phases: 1) From the date of enforcement: **straws** and **plastic mixers** -Art. 5-. 2) As of 180 days: the delivery of single-use plastic **containers**, **glasses**, **dishes**, and **expanded polystyrene packaging** o single-use **flex foam** for carrying, containing, or consuming good or food -Art. 6-. 3) From 1st day of January, 2022: the delivery of single-use plastic **dishes or utensils** for carrying, containing or consuming the goods or food purchased in such an establishment is prohibited -Art. 7-.	Español

Country	Year	Legal Framework	Details	Access
			4) From 2022: the delivery of single-use plastic **containers and packaging** for goods or food -Art. 8-. From 1st day of January, 2022: the delivery of **single-use plastic covers** – Art 9 (b)-	
	National level	Organic Law of Tax Simplification and Progressivity Bill, 2019	For the rationalization, reuse, and reduction of single-use plastic bags, the purpose of this Resolution is to establish the rules for the declaration and payment of a tax on **plastic covers**, which increases until 2023 (USD 0,10 for each plastic bag)	Español
	National level	Organic Law for the Rationalization, Reuse and Recycling of Plastics, and the Prohibition of Single-Use Plastics in Business, 2020	The Law prohibits the manufacture, disposal, and sale of single-use plastics such as **plastic bags, straws, cups, and plastic bottles** made of PET, being the first law at national level to regulate the progressive reduction of single-use plastic.	Español
Grenada	August 2018	Act No. 9 of 2018 Non-Biodegradable Waste Control	This Act applies to the import, manufacture, sell or offer for sale of any **non-biodegradable products** designated by the Minister (Section 4, 5 and 6)	English
	September 2018	Non-Biodegradable Waste Control (Plastic Bags) Order 19	The prohibition of single-use plastic bags was banned in three phases: - 1st day of February 2019: prohibition of import or manufacture of **single-use plastic bags.** - 1st day of December 2019: prohibition of sell or offer for sale of **single-use plastic bags.** 1st day of February, 2020: no person owing or in charge of food premises shall sell or offer for sale any food in or with **single-use plastic bags.**	No data
Guatemala	September 2019	Government Agreement No. 189-2019	The use and delivery of single-use **plastic bags, plastic straws, plastic cups, plastic mixers, and plastic containers** were prohibited. This legal provision does not limit the legal provisions established or to be established by the municipalities (Art. 1). The text of the Agreement fixed a deadline of **two year**s to comply with Article 1. Other municipalities such as San Pedro La Laguna, Cantel, Quetzaltenango and San Juan Sacatepéquez have already adopted a ban on **single-use plastics.**	Español
Guyana	December 2015	No. 8 of 2015	These regulations prohibit the import, manufacture and sale of **expanded polystyrene products**; the sale, use or provision of **expanded polystyrene containers** by food service establishments; and promote and encourage the use of biodegradable, recyclable and other environmentally friendly	English

Country	Year	Legal Framework		Details	Access
				containers or packaging for food products *in lieu* of expanded polystyrene products in all food service establishment operating in Guyana (Part II Section 3).	
Haiti	No data	-		The government has banned the import, manufacture, and marketing of **black plastic polystyrene bags and polystyrene foam containers** by presidential decree on August 1st, 2013. As was stated in the 2020 National Budget Statement, the import of **finished expanded polystyrene** in the food and beverage industry, and its manufacturing started in January 2020 and June 2020, respectively.	
Honduras	-	Municipal ordinances		The municipality of Roatan banned in 2019 **plastic bags, straws, and bottles** through an ordinance, being the first municipality in the country to take this type of action. The ban on plastic bags was also instituted at the municipal level in the **Bay Islands** and **Guanaja** resulting in substantial declines in the amount of plastic litter in the environment. The ban was announced one year before its implementation and accompanied by well-designed outreach and notification activities.	-
Jamaica	December 24, 2018	The Trade (Plastic Materials Prohibition) Order 2018		In accordance with Section 3, from the 1st day of January, 2019, no person shall import or distribute any **single use plastic** in commercial quantities. More recently, the Ministry of Housing announced about the third phase of the Government's ban on **single use plastics**, which takes effect in January 2021. This phase will incorporate **single-use plastic bags** with dimensions above 24 x 24 inches and thickness of 2.5 mils Following Section 4 (f) from the 1st day of January, 2021, no person shall import or distribute any **drinking straws** made wholly or in part of polyethylene or polypropylene, manufactured for single use, and attached to, or forming part of, the packaging of juice boxes or drink pouches.	English
Mexico	Mexico City	August 2009	Decree No. 1256	In August 2009, the capital city government reformed the Solid Waste Law and prohibited stores from **dispensing bags** free of charge.	Español
		March 2020	Decree No. 295 bis	Decree by which several articles of the Law of Solid Waste of the Federal District are amended. The prohibits the delivery, distribution, and sell of items such as **plastic bags**, **plastic cutlery, glasses and plates, coffee capsules, stirrers, straws, plastic swabs**, among others. Only the prohibition of plastic bags (including biodegradable's) entered into force the same month, the rest of the items will enter in place as of January 2021.	Español
Panama	January 2019	Law No. 1		The use of **single-use plastics** was banned in two phases: 1. As for eighteen months of the validity of the law: supermarkets, pharmacies and retailers.	Español

Country	Year	Legal Framework	Details	Access
			2. As for twenty-four months of the validity of the law: stores and wholesalers.	
	December 2020	Law No. 187	This Law has the main purpose of establish the legal framework of single-use plastic products in the national territory. The prohibition is intended to eleven products starting in July 2021: **plastic swabs, plastic laundry coverts, plastic egg packaging, plastic mixers, straws, disposable dishes, plastic bags ,** and others.	Español
Paraguay	2015	Law No. 5414	The purpose of this law is to regulate the consumption of **single-use polyethylene bags** delivered by shops in general for the transport of products or goods. The **single-use polyethylene bags** should be progressively replaced by ones reused or made of alternative non-polluting and reusable biodegradable materials (Section 1).	Español
	2020	Decree 3920	The Executive Power passed Decree 3920 of 2020, which modified Law No. 5414 and established a new starting date for the ban of **polyethylene bags** on December 31st, 2020.	Español
Peru	2018	Supreme Decree No. 013-2019-MINAM	Approved the reduction of **single-use plastic bags and covers**, promoting responsible consumption of plastic in the Executive entities.	Español
	2019	Law No. 30884	Establishes the regulatory framework on **single-use plastics**, other non-reusable plastics and disposable containers or packages made of expanded polystyrene for food and beverages for human consumption in the national territory. Following Article 3, the prohibition is banned in three phases: 1) As of 120 days from the date of enforcement: • **Single-use plastic bags**, **straws** or **expanded polystyrene containers or packages** for beverages and food in protected natural areas, areas declared cultural heritage, etc. • The delivery of **plastic bags or packaging in newspapers**, **magazines or other formats**; **payment receipts** for services, and any information addressed to citizens in general. 2) As of twelve months from the date of enforcement: • Manufacture, import, distribution, delivery, marketing and use of **straws**. • Manufacture, import, distribution, delivery, marketing and use of **single-use plastic bags**. 3) As of thirty-six months of the validity of this law: • Manufacture, import, distribution, delivery and consumption of polymer-based **single-use plastic bags**, which are not reusable and those whose degradation generates contamination by microplastic or hazardous substances and does not ensure their valorization.	Español

Country	Year	Legal Framework	Details	Access
			• Manufacture, import, distribution, delivery and consumption of **plates, glasses and other polymer-based utensils and dishes**, for food and beverages for human consumption, which are not recyclable and those whose degradation generates contamination by microplastic or hazardous substances and do not ensure their valorization. • Manufacture, import, distribution, delivery, marketing and use of **containers or containers and glasses of expanded polystyrene** for food and beverages for human consumption.	
	2019	Supreme Decree No. 006-2019-MINAM	It also was created a new tax of S0.10 cents for the distribution of **single-use plastic bags** at points of sale. The tax will increase annually by S0.10 cents until reaching S0.50 cents in 2023	Español
Saint Lucia	2020	Decree 3920	The Executive Power passed Decree 3920 of 2020, which modified Law No. 5414 and established a new starting date for the ban of **polyethylene bags** on December 31st, 2020.	Español
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	April 2017	Environmental Health (Expanded Polystyrene) Regulations 2017	By these Regulations the import, manufacture, sale, use and provision of **expanded polystyrene food service products** was banned, promoting and encouraging the use of biodegradable, recyclable and other environmentally friendly containers or packaging (Section 3).	English
	2019	Environmental Health Control of Disposable Plastics Regulations 2019	A person shall not: - Import disposable **plastic shopping bags** from the first day of March 2020 - Import disposable **plastic food service** containers from the first day of August 2020 - Distribute, sell or use disposable **shopping bags** from the first day of August 2020 - Distribute disposable **good containers** from the first day of January 2021	No data
Trinidad and Tobago	No data	No data	Polystyrene foam products, such as **Styrofoam** was banned and implemented in 2019.	No data
Uruguay	2018	Law No. 19655	The prevention and reduction of the environmental impact resulting from the use of plastic bags, through actions to discourage their use, such as reuse, recycling and other forms of recovery, was declared of "General Interest" The manufacture, import, distribution, sale, and delivery of **plastic bags** that are not compostable or biodegradable is prohibited.	Español
	2019	Decree 3, Regulation of Law No. 19655/18	It establishes the scope of application, exclusions of Article 3 of the law, authorized **plastic bags** and their quality requirements, the enforcement authority, among others.	Español

Country	Year	Legal Framework	Details	Access
	2019	Law No. 26660	It promotes the reuse, recycling and other forms of recovery of **packaging waste**, in order to avoid its inclusion as part of common or household solid waste.	Español