

# Oxo-Biodegradable Plastics Association

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EU reg. no. 186937011291 - 26

## **Katmandupost – Government toughens ban on plastic bags – 29-5-2016**

### **Maybe try a carrot!**

The reason it is so difficult to enforce a plastic bag ban is simple. There is nothing to replace plastic bags that is as flexible, strong, lightweight, waterproof and cheap when it comes to protecting food and other goods from damage and contamination and carrying things home from the shops.

Paper bags are more expensive, worse for the environment and fall apart when wet. Long-life/cloth re-usable bags are very rarely cleaned, often harboring dangerous germs such as E-coli and Salmonella, all of which makes replacing plastic bags more of a challenge.

But it needn't be, because plastic bags can be made with smart oxo-biodegradable plastic technology. It performs in exactly the same way as conventional plastic, but if the bag or packaging escapes collection/recycling and gets into the open environment it will not lie or float around for decades causing a visual intrusion, blocking water courses and endangering wildlife

With oxo-biodegradable technology the life of the bag or packaging can be determined at manufacture (typically 12 – 24 months) after which the item will degrade and biodegrade in the open environment (on land or sea) in months rather than decades. It will degrade in the same way as a leaf only quicker and there are no toxic residues or fragments of plastic.

Better still, if collected during its useful life it can be incinerated for energy recovery or recycled with conventional plastic, in a post-consumer waste stream. It can also be made in existing plastic factories at little or no extra cost, with their existing workforce, machinery and raw materials, thus safeguarding jobs in the plastics industry.

Nine countries in Asia, Africa and the Middle East have already legislated to make oxo-biodegradable plastic mandatory, because it works. There is also less resistance when it comes to enforcement because it offers a no-change solution, allowing plastic manufacturers, shopkeepers and consumers to keep the best product for the job without the environmental baggage associated with it.

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