

The Environmental Audit report on the plastic importing, management of usage and post usage in Sri Lanka



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**NATIONAL AUDIT OFFICE
ENVIRONMENTAL AUDIT DIVISION**



Executive Summary

The meaning of plastic “to change shape without breaking” has been derived from the Greek word “Plastikos”. The most commonly used plastic are classified under 07 categories in the present world. The total quantity of plastic imported to Sri Lanka during the 07 years from 2012 to 2018 was 3,353.9 million kg and costing Rs.184,300.9 million. Plastic imports are imported under 04 main categories such as raw materials, finished products, furniture and toys. In 2018, 64% of the total plastic were imported as plastic raw materials.

Approximately 30 percent of the quantity of plastic imported to Sri Lanka is recycled annually in systematical manner. Accordingly, 30% of the remaining 70% is dumped directly into the environment. The audit aims to evaluate the effectiveness of several plastic recycling programs currently being implemented, including the increasing use of plastic and even simultaneous post-plastic recycling programs not function at expected level and discharging the plastic waste in non-environmentally friendly manner. At the performance checking of 100 major centers in Sri Lanka in regard to the post usage plastic management process, there were 26 centers without an Environmental Protection License and the license had been expired in 28 centers, at the date of 31st August 2019.

Even though RS. 452.7 million has been invested in a project aimed at developing some exemplary local authorities that perform optimally in plastic polythene waste management as at 31 December 2018. It was observed that the performance of the project was inadequately met with the responsibility by the parties concerned. It was also observed that the objectives expected to achieved by the CEA by issuing 06 gazettes notifications in 2017 for achieving the eco-friendly nature of polythene plastic production, trade, minimization usage and post-usage management were not adequately addressed.

Although various programs have been implemented for the post usage of plastic, the success of these programs has been low and the performance has been low in implementing Cabinet decisions of the Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment regarding the post usage of plastic and polythene.

Reviewing the current legal status of plastic polythene and the necessary amendments and it was observed that important to focus on expeditious measures for the import, manufacture, trade, reduction of usage and taking immediate action for post usage management of plastic polythene. It was observed that the importation of plastic polythene should be discouraged and the usage of plastic polythene in the country should be reduced, support the implementation of post-management practices at rural level and further strengthen the market structure for the implementation of post-use management programs.