

10 Things to know about

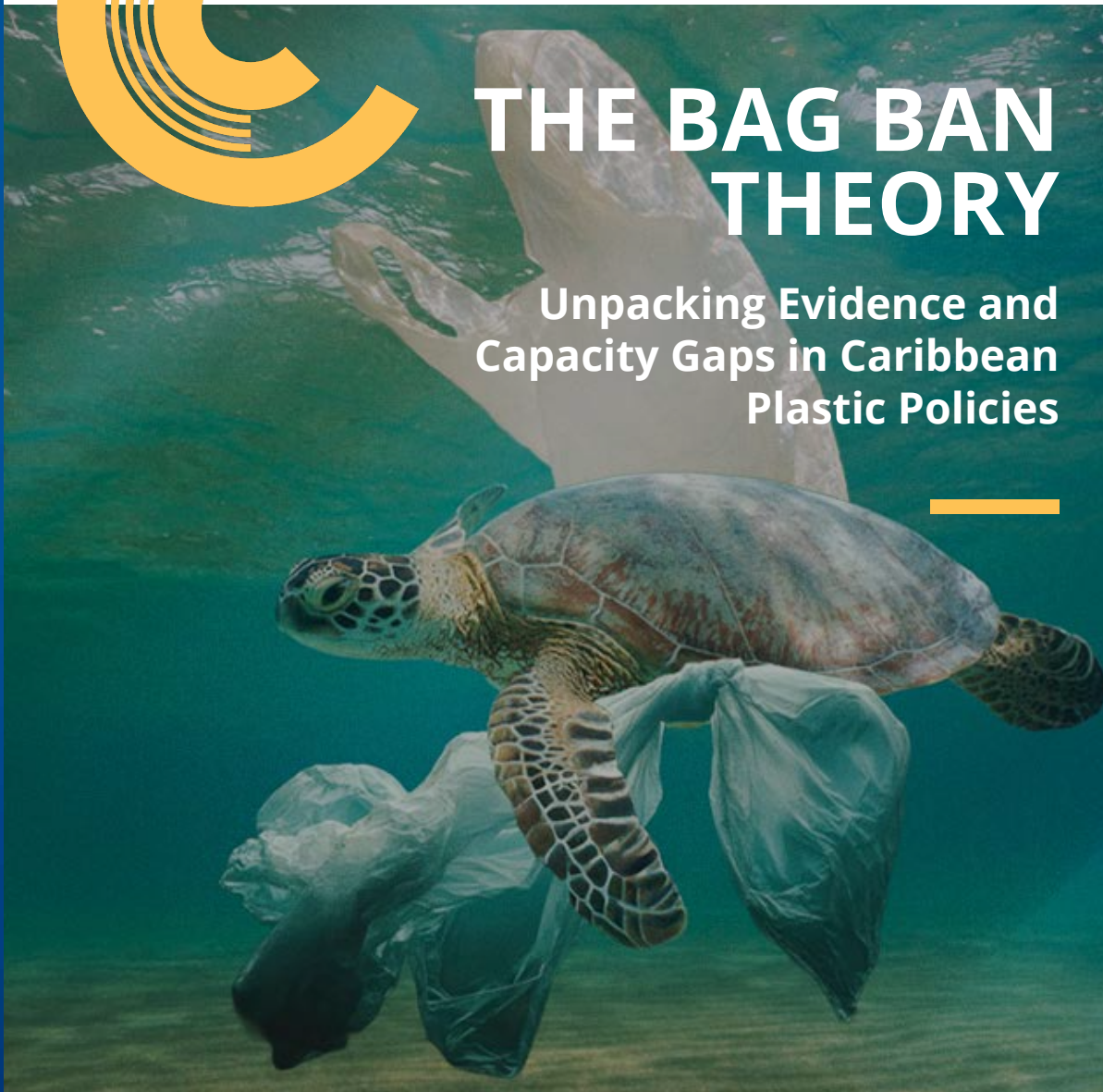


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THE BAG BAN THEORY

Unpacking Evidence and
Capacity Gaps in Caribbean
Plastic Policies



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1 PLASTICS ARE A CLIMATE PROBLEM

Their full lifecycle already produces 3% of global greenhouse gases—and could rise to nearly 20% by 2050 if trends continue.



2 THE WORLD IS ACTING, UNEVENLY



By 2023, 60 countries had introduced plastic controls—from outright bans to levies, taxes, and voluntary industry pacts.

3 THIN BAGS ARE BANNED FOR A REASON



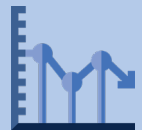
They're the ones most likely to blow into drains or the sea. But exempting thicker bags often just swaps one disposable plastic for another.

4 THE "GREEN" PLASTIC MYTH



Biodegradable and compostable bags aren't proven better—and the belief they can be tossed away freely risks making litter worse. (p.26)

5 BARBADOS SHOWS MIXED RESULTS



Plastics dropped from 12% of municipal waste in 2015 to 3% in 2021—but cleanups in 2023–24 still found plastics making up over 70% of beach litter.

6 PLASTIC POLICY HYPOCRISY



Caribbean bans look bold on paper but often lack the enforcement, resources, or institutional capacity to succeed.

7 ANTIGUA'S DROP WASN'T THE BAN



Plastics in landfills fell from 20% in 2006 to 4% in 2017, but most of that decline happened before the 2016 legislation. The ban mainly shifted bag use, not total waste.

8 JAMAICA'S ENFORCEMENT HAS FADED



Of the 52 prosecutions logged by end-2024, 15 occurred after mid-2020—showing declining intensity.

9 BANS CUT BAGS BUT NOT MUCH ELSE



They reduced targeted items and raised awareness in all three countries, but how much—and what it means for the environment—remains unknown.

10 WE DON'T KNOW IF BANS WORK



Without baseline data, import and sales records, litter audits, behavioural surveys, and health and environmental indicators, impacts remain guesswork.