

Policy Brief No 1

Plastic Pollution in Senegal: From Law to Action, Building Local Governance for a Circular Future

21st

According to [Africa Carbon and Commodities](#), Senegal, with a population of 17 million inhabitants, is ranked 21st among the main countries contributing to ocean plastic pollution, with 254,700 tons of plastic waste discharged.

80-90%

A total of 80 to 90% of plastic waste is mismanaged, often ending up in landfills, in nature, or in the ocean.

50%

In Dakar, approximately 50% of the 250,000 tons of plastic waste produced annually in Senegal are generated, according to a coordinator from the Ministry of the Environment.

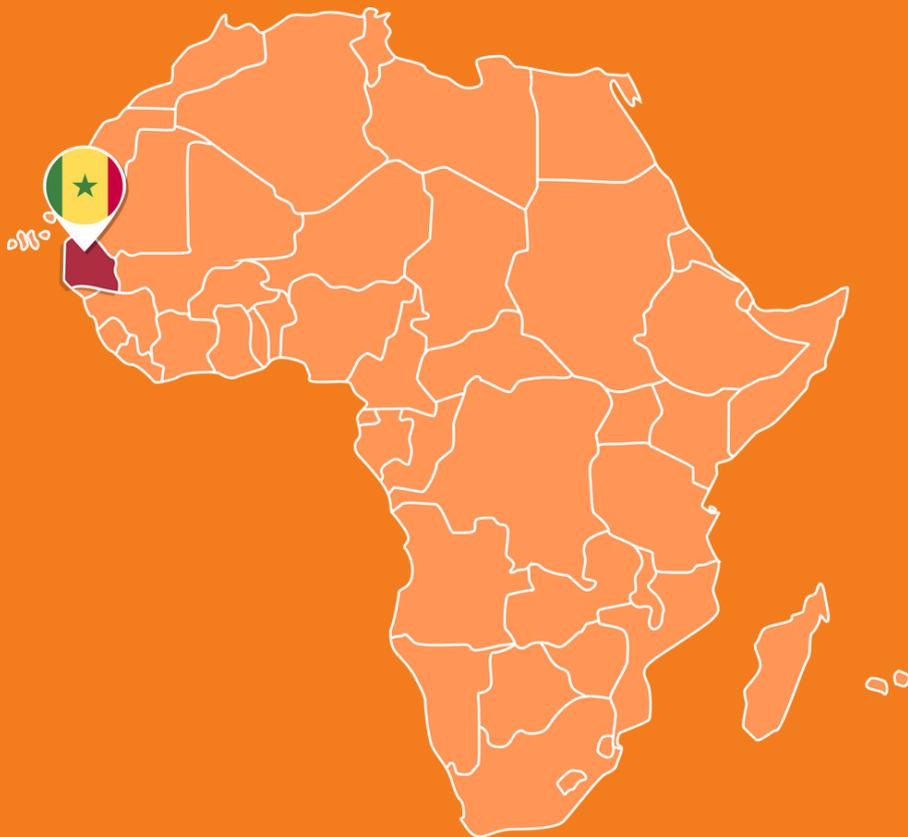


Table of Contents

Executive Summary	01
General Context	02
Identified Bottlenecks.....	03
Solution Pathways Proposed by Stakeholders.....	04
• Technical Solutions	
• Educational and Community Mechanisms	
• Solution Pathways Proposed by Stakeholders	
Strategic Recommendations	05
Conclusion.....	06

Executive Summary

Plastic pollution today constitutes a major environmental and societal challenge in Senegal. Today, in Senegal, more than 250,000 tons of plastic waste are produced each year only a third to a quarter is recycled (~36,000 tons, or 14.5%), while the rest clogs streets, beaches, gutters, and landfills, endangering biodiversity, public health, and the emerging circular economy (World Bank report, DIREC, CINU Dakar).

Despite the promulgation of a significant legal framework notably Law No. 2020-04 banning certain single-use plastics implementation remains incomplete, and tangible results are marginal.

During the webinar held on June 5, 2025, committed practitioners highlighted often isolated local efforts, strong structural constraints, and a pressing need for coherence between the legal framework, political will, community education, and incentive-based taxation.

Through this note, Vox Agency advocates for an integrated approach, based on three levers: local anchoring, shared responsibility, and cultural transformation in the relationship with plastic.

GRET. (2023). *Reducing Plastic Pollution in Hann Bay, Senegal*.

<https://gret.org/en/projet/reducing-plastic-pollution-in-the-bay-of-hann-in-senegal/> Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development. (2020). Law No. 2020-04 of January 8, 2020, on the prevention and reduction of the impact of plastic waste on the environment. Official Journal of the Republic of Senegal.

General Context: An Underutilized Legal Framework and Persistent Pollution

Senegal does not lack texts or speeches on environmental protection. Since the framework law on the environment in 2001, several specific texts have emerged, culminating in Law 2020-04, which bans thin, non-biodegradable plastic bags.

However, the lack of rigorous enforcement, insufficient control over production and distribution, and the massive informality of the waste sector limit the real impact of these measures.

Mr. Diaw, representative of SONAGED, emphasizes::

«The texts exist, but they are not enforced. The transfer of competence to local authorities is poorly understood, local relays are weak, and institutional actors lack synergy. »



He added:

« Every solution must be a turnkey solution for local actors. An apron will not change its habits if no concrete alternative is offered. »

Alioune Banda Fall, founder of Ecotree Senegal, first sums up the core issue:

« We adopt laws without offering realistic alternatives to those who depend on these plastics. A waste picker or informal trader will not change their practices out of constraint, but out of conviction or necessity. »



And he insists :

« Support the actors as well, because sometimes we see that there are actors who are truly aware, who want to transition, but they don't know how everywhere. If you tell them they must stop doing this, you have to give them a solution. The alternative must truly be turnkey to succeed. »

Identified Bottlenecks

Through the discussions, several systemic obstacles were highlighted:



LACK OF A CLEAR AND UNIFIED NATIONAL SORTING POLICY



MULTIPLICITY OF PLASTIC TYPES (BOTTLE, CAP, LABEL)



MARGINALIZATION OF INFORMAL ACTORS (TALIBÉS, GIES, YOUTH)



ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNICATION POORLY ADAPTED TO THE LOCAL CONTEXT



NO TAX INCENTIVES OR FAVORABLE ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK FOR VIRTUOUS INDUSTRIALISTS

According to Mame Balla Diouf, President of Xéex Mbalite :

« As long as the fight against plastic waste is not experienced as a personal and collective duty, we will go in circles. The problem is not the plastic. It is us. »

And he concluded forcefully :

« We must start with ourselves. We must start with ourselves. »

Solution Pathways Proposed by Stakeholders

a. Technical Solutions

- Simplified two-compartment sorting (recyclable/non-recyclable)
- Standardization of plastic materials
- Support for the creation of local plastic valorization units

b. Educational and Community Mechanisms

- Integration of environmental education into school curricula
- Community training in local languages
- Engaging cultural content (slam, theater, podcasts, TikTok)

c. Political and Economic Measures

- Implementation of extended producer responsibility (EPR)
- Green taxation (environmental bonus-malus)
- Mandatory national environmental labeling standard
- Regional directive (ECOWAS) on plastics

Towards a Circular Future: Measures in Action



Senegalese Press Agency. (2024, June 24). More than 250,000 tons of plastic waste produced per year in Senegal, 50% of which in Dakar. APS. <https://aps.sn/pus-de-250-000-tonnes-de-dechets-plastiques-produites-par-an-au-senegal-dont-50-a-dakar-rapport>

World Bank. (2023). Investing in Flood Resilience in Senegal: Lessons from PROGEP. <https://www.worldbank.org/>

Strategic Recommendations

Recommendation	Target Actors	Estimated Timeline
Launch a national waste sorting program	Ministry of Environment, Local Authorities	2025–2026
Create a support fund for recycling Economic Interest Groups	Ministry of Finance, Green Funds	From 2025
Enforce Extended Producer Responsibility	Ministry of Commerce, Parliament	2026
Define a harmonized ECOWAS directive on plastics	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ECOWAS	2026–2027
Train municipalities in waste management	SONAGED, ADM, ANCT	Ongoing
Establish a support framework for community communicators	Ministry of Communication, Cooperation Agencies	2025
Integrate community radio stations into local ORSEC (Emergency Response) plans	Ministry of Interior, Mayors	Immediate
Develop a multi-platform national awareness campaign	Ministry of Environment, CSOs	2025–2026
Create a national “Zero Plastic Neighborhood” label	Standards Agency, Municipalities, CSOs	2026

World Bank & ANSD. (2022). *Circular Economy Senegal – Diagnosis and recommendations for a transition to a sustainable circular economy in Senegal*. World Bank.

Senegalese Press Agency. (2024, June 24). More than 250,000 tons of plastic waste produced per year in Senegal, 50% of which in Dakar. APS. <https://aps.sn/pus-de-250-000-tonnes-de-dechets-plastiques-produites-par-an-au-senegal-dont-50-a-dakar-rapport>

Conclusion

This webinar demonstrated that solutions exist, on the ground, driven by women, youth, social enterprises, and committed local authorities. But these initiatives alone cannot transform the landscape if they are not supported, strengthened, and institutionalized.

Vox Agency calls for a paradigm shift: to consider the fight against plastic pollution as a collective, cultural, economic, and political endeavor, at the heart of our ecological sovereignty.

As Alioune Banda Fall said: “We will not change a country without changing its relationship with waste. And this change begins with a decision.”

And to conclude, Souleye Sarr, panel moderator, reminds us:

« If plastic is everywhere, the solution is too: in ideas, texts, and commitments. »

World Bank. (2023). *Investing in Flood Resilience in Senegal: Lessons from PROGEP*. <https://www.worldbank.org/>

World Bank & ANSD. (2022). *Circular Economy Senegal – Diagnosis and recommendations for a transition to a sustainable circular economy in Senegal*. World Bank.

Fund for Innovation in Development (FID), TAARAL, & SONAGED. (2025). *Pilot project on local governance of plastic waste: Unpublished internal progress report*.

This Policy Brief was produced by Vox Agency, following the webinar held on June 5, 2025.

Moderation : Souleye Sarr

Speakers : Alioune Banda Fall (Ecotree Sénégal), Mame Balla Diouf (Xéex Mbalite), M. Diaw (SONAGED), Rodolphe (Specialist in communication for development)

Nordic Development Fund (NDF). (2021). PROGEP I & II – Urban Flood Resilience in Dakar and Beyond. <https://www.ndf.int>

SenePlus. (2018, 16 novembre). 193,000 tons of plastic waste per year in Senegal, only 8,000 recycled.

<https://www.senepus.com/societe/193000-tonnes-de-dechets-plastiques-par-ausenegal-seules-8000>

Sonko, A. L. (2023). Field testimony on plastic waste in Senegal. Reddit.

<https://www.reddit.com/r/francophonie/comments/177kndo/>

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). (2022). Climate resilience and urban waste management in Senegal: PROGEP and beyond. <https://unfccc.int>

Voice of America Africa. (2023, octobre). Senegal works to limit plastics pollution. <https://www.voaafrica.com/a/senegal-works-to-limit-plastics-pollution/7310581.html>

World Bank, GFDRR, UNFCCC. (2022). Senegal Flood Resilience Plan 2012–2022 – Summary and Impact Assessment. <https://gfdr.org>

Policy Brief No 1

Plastic Pollution in Senegal: From Law to Action, Building Local Governance for a Circular Future



aguemon@voxagency.org
souleye.sarr@voxagency.org



www.voxagency.org