

Govt must enforce kaveera ban

Last month, Kenya's National Environment Management Authority enforced the plastic bag ban starting with the manufacturers, suppliers and retail outlets all of which are involved significantly in the supply and use chain of these plastic bags.

Kenya's plastic bag ban enforcement has been described as one of the toughest in the world with anybody found manufacturing, selling or using these bags risking imprisonment of up to four years or fines of \$40,000 (£31,000).

Back here in Uganda, our own environmental agency - National Environmental Management Authority (Nema), has come out several times and announced how the plastic usage has been banned. However, little has been done to enforce the ban. Consequently, manufacturing, selling and usage of plastic bags continues across the country. The negative impact of plastic bags are well known and



they include soil, air and water pollution; health impacts on both humans and other living things, accumulation in and blockage of drainage channels leading to flooding, increased costs of waste management by the relevant bodies, to mention but a few. This provides us with more than enough grounds to rid ourselves of this nuisance.

I suggest that Uganda's Nema emulates its counterpart in Ke-

nya and effectively enforce the *kaveera* ban. The easiest way is to start with the manufactures as well as shops and supermarket outlets which pack items using these bags. If there is any legal, economic or social issues stopping the enforcement of this well intentioned ban, Nema should come out clearly and tell the country such that a way forward is devised.

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