

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3734
TO BE ANSWERED ON 03.04.2025

Microplastics policy

3734. SMT. PRIYANKA CHATURVEDI:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has a policy on microplastics, given that high levels of microplastics have been found in water bodies and soil;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether any impact assessment for quantifying microplastics in soil and water bodies has been conducted; and
- (d) if so, the State-wise details thereof, and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a) & (b): In order to reduce pollution caused by littered and unmanaged plastic waste, which includes microplastics, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has already prohibited identified single use plastic items, which have low utility and high littering potential, with effect from 1 July, 2022. Further, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has also notified the Guidelines on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for plastic packaging vide Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2022, on 16th February, 2022. The Guidelines stipulate mandatory targets on EPR, recycling of plastic packaging waste, reuse of rigid plastic packaging and use of recycled plastic content. The guidelines provide for moving towards sustainable plastic packaging and reducing the plastic foot print. Already, 114 lakh tonnes of plastic packaging waste has been recycled, after the EPR Guidelines on plastic packaging have come into force in 2022.

Also, Swachh Bharat Mission provides central assistance for solid waste management including plastic waste management in urban and rural areas of the country. The Government of India is supplementing the efforts of the States/UTs by providing financial and technical assistance in addressing the challenges of river pollution through schemes/programmes such as National River Conservation Plan and Namami Gange programme. Different pollution abatement works inter alia, include interception and diversion of raw sewage, sewerage system, and establishment of sewage treatment plants, as per scheme guidelines. These measures shall also reduce microplastics generated due to littered and unmanaged plastic waste.

Further, vide Amendment No. 2, of Indian Standard IS 4707 (Part 2): 2017, Classification of Cosmetic Raw Materials and Adjuncts (*Fourth Revision*) notified in November 2017, under

Annex A at Sr. No. 1373 it has stated that Plastic microbeads: 5 mm or less, water insoluble, solid plastic particles used to exfoliate or cleanse in rinse-off personal care products are not recognized as safe for use in Cosmetics. The raw materials specified in Annex A of the Indian Standard IS: 4707 Part 2, as amended from time to time, shall not be added in cosmetic product, as per the Cosmetics Rules issued under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940.

(c) & (d): The presence of microplastics in environmental media and human and animal tissue has been reported. The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) – National Institute for Research in Environmental Health (NIREH) has done a systematic review of studies on presence of microplastics in human body.
