

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION No. 443
TO BE ANSWERED ON 03.04.2023

Alternative Products and Technologies to Plastics and their Applications

*443. SHRI SRIDHAR KOTAGIRI:

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

- (a) whether the Government intends to implement recommendations made under the Report titled 'Alternative Products and Technologies to Plastics and their Applications' published by the NITI Aayog to provide for waste minimisation through extended producer responsibility, labelling and collection of compostable and biodegradable plastics;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the progress made in this regard;
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor;
- (d) whether the Government has taken any other steps towards plastic waste minimisation; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI BHUPENDER YADAV)

(a) to (e): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement referred to in reply to parts (a) to (e) of Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 443 to be answered on 3rd April, 2023 on “Alternative Products and Technologies to Plastics and their Applications” by Shri Sridhar Kotagiri, Hon’ble Member of Parliament.

(a) to (e): NITI Aayog had brought out a report on “Alternative products and technologies to plastics and their applications”. The report *inter alia* provided recommendations with respect to strengthening waste minimization through extended producer responsibility, proper labelling and collection of compostable and biodegradable plastics, updation of Standards and increasing transparency in the process and encouraging R&D and incentivizing the manufacturing sector.

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has already 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. The implementation of ban on identified single use plastic items coupled with extended producer responsibility on plastic packaging will reduce pollution caused by littered and unmanaged plastic waste and waste minimization.

As part of transparency measures details of 6792 Producers, Importers and Brand Owners and also 1759 plastic waste processors registered on the Centralized Online Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Portal on Plastic Packaging is available on the dashboard of EPR portal. The registered PIBOs cover around 2.39 Million Tons of plastic packaging under Extended Producer Responsibility for the year 2022-23. Plastic packaging made of compostable plastics is covered under EPR Guidelines.

Vide Plastic Waste Management (Second Amendment) Rules, 2022, notified on 6th July 2022, the standards covered under Schedule I of the Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016 have been updated to their most recent versions. Also, provision has made for the tentative standard IS:17899 T: 2022 notified by Bureau of Indian Standards for the “Assessment of Biodegradability of Plastics in Varied Conditions”. Testing facilities for compostable plastics have been set up at 11 laboratories of Central Institute of Petrochemical Engineering and Technology (CIPET). Testing facilities for biodegradable plastics in accordance with IS 17899 T: 2022 have also been set up at CIPET centres.

The Department of Science and Technology and Department of Biotechnology support research and development projects for alternatives to banned single-use plastic items, as per scheme guidelines. The School of Advanced Research in Petrochemicals (SARP), CIPET are working on eco-friendly alternatives to banned single use plastic items. The Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises has schemes to provide support to MSME units, which include support to such units which were earlier involved in manufacturing of banned single use plastic items for switching over to alternatives / other products. Further, to encourage innovation in development of alternatives to banned identified single use plastic items and digital solutions to plastic waste management, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change organized an India Plastic Challenge – Hackathon 2021, for students of higher education institutions and start-ups.

A National Expo on eco-alternatives to banned single use plastics items and Conference of Startups - 2022 was organized jointly with Government of Tamil Nadu in Chennai on 26-27th September 2022 to raise awareness on alternatives. More than 150 manufacturers of eco-alternatives from across the country are participating in the Expo. The Eco-alternatives were made from coir, bagasse, rice and wheat bran, plant and agricultural residue, banana and areca leaves, jute and cloth. Awareness generation and capacity building programmes have been organized for elimination of single use plastics for plastic waste minimization.
