

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 99
TO BE ANSWERED ON 01.12.2025

Presence of Microplastics in Rivers, Lakes and Coastal Waters

99: DR. M P ABDUSSAMAD SAMADANI:

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

- (a) whether studies have been conducted on the presence of microplastics in Indian rivers, lakes and coastal waters;
- (b) the extent of microplastic accumulation in aquatic organisms and its ecological and health impact;
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to regulate sources such as single-use plastics, synthetic textiles and cosmetic microbeads; and
- (d) whether the Government has any plan to establish a national framework for monitoring and mitigating microplastic pollution in coordination with State Pollution Control Boards and scientific institutions?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d): Studies undertaken by national institutions have shown the presence of microplastics in riverine and coastal zones. 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. As per details provided by SPCB/PCC and details available at SUP compliance monitoring portal, a total of 8,61,740 inspections have been conducted and 1985 tonnes of banned single use plastic items have been seized and a total of Rs. 19.82 crores of fine has been levied, since 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. 165 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 supplements 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.

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.

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, celebrated World Environment Day 2025 at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, on 5th June 2025, with the slogan ‘One Nation, One Mission: End Plastic Pollution’. As part of one month long pre-campaign activities undertaken before World Environment Day 2025, around 69,000 events were organized in which around 21 lakh people participated across the country. The National Plastic Pollution Reduction Campaign (NPPRC) was also launched for the period 5th June to 31st October 2025. The Campaign included activities to reduce plastic pollution in urban and rural areas under Swachhta Hi Sewa programme. The activities also included focus on reducing use of avoidable single use plastics in government offices especially during Special Campaign 5.0.
