

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 435
TO BE ANSWERED ON 23.03.2026

Plastic Packaging for Food and Water

*435. SHRI GURMEET SINGH MEET HAYER:

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

- (a) the estimated quantity of plastic used annually for food packaging and bottled drinking water in the country and the extent of plastic pollution including microplastic contamination arising therefrom;
- (b) the measures taken by the Government to regulate and reduce such plastic use including the status of the single use plastic ban, Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) framework and recycling targets;
- (c) whether the Government has examined the feasibility of imposing higher taxes or environmental levies on virgin and single-use plastics, particularly in food packaging and water bottles to discourage their use; and
- (d) whether any time-bound plan exists to systematically replace plastic packaging with sustainable alternatives and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

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

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (A) TO (D) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 435 TO BE ANSWERED ON 23RD MARCH, 2026 ON “PLASTIC PACKAGING FOR FOOD AND WATER” BY SHRI GURMEET SINGH MEET HAYER, HON’BLE MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT.

(a): The Plastic Waste Management Rules (PWMR), 2016, provides the statutory framework for plastic waste management in an environmentally sound manner throughout the country. Based upon the information provided by State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs) / Pollution Control Committees (PCCs) to CPCB, the quantity of plastic waste generation is given below:

Financial Year	Plastic waste Generation (TPA)
2020-21	41,26,808
2021-22	39,01,802
2022-23	41,36,188

(b) to (d): 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. Plastic carry bags having thickness less than one hundred and twenty microns have also been prohibited with effect from the 31st December, 2022.

States and Union Territories have been asked to undertake regular enforcement drives to implement ban on identified single use plastic items and on plastic carry bags having thickness less than one hundred twenty microns covering fruit and vegetable markets, wholesale markets, local markets, flower vendors, units manufacturing plastic carry bags etc. Actions have been taken by concerned authorities on the deviations, which include seizure of banned single use plastic items and levy of penalty. As per details provided by SPCB/PCC and details available at SUP compliance monitoring portal, a total of 8,61,908 inspections have been conducted and 1989 tonnes of banned single use plastic items have been seized and a total of Rs. 19.83 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. As per the EPR Guidelines, the Producers, Importers and Brand owners (PIBOs) are mandated to ensure minimum level of recycling (excluding end of life disposal) of plastic packaging waste collected under EPR target, category-wise as given below:

Minimum level of recycling (excluding end of life disposal) of plastic packaging waste
(% of extended producer responsibility Target)

Plastic packaging category	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28 and onwards
Category I – Rigid plastic packaging	50	60	70	80

Category II – Flexible plastic packaging	30	40	50	60
Category III – Multilayered plastic packaging	30	40	50	60
Category IV – Compostable plastic packaging	50	60	70	80

The EPR guidelines on plastic packaging promote moving towards sustainable plastic packaging. As per the Centralized Online Extended Producer Responsibility Portal on Plastic Packaging, there are 60,128 of registered Producers, Importers and Brand Owners and 3012 registered Plastic Waste Processors on the portal. Around 207 lakh tonnes of plastic packaging waste have been recycled, after the EPR Guidelines have come into force in 2022. In order to ensure compliance with EPR obligations, Central Pollution Control Board has issued Show Cause Notices on 25.11.2024, 30.12.2024 and 11.03.2026 to registered Producers, Importers and Brand Owners under Section 5 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, for non-fulfilment of EPR targets and non-submission of Annual Returns for FY 2022-23 and FY 2023-24.

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. Based upon the information provided by State Pollution Control Boards and Pollution Control Committees, the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change and Central Pollution Control Board have prepared a “Compendium of Manufacturers / Sellers of Eco-alternatives to Banned Single Use Plastic Items”, which was launched on World Environment Day, 2025. The compendium provides details of nearly 1000 units spread across the country. The Compendium is available on the website of CPCB for wider dissemination and use. In keeping with the development of eco-alternatives, Bureau of Indian Standard had earlier notified Indian Standard IS 18267 for Food Serving Utensil Made from Agri By-Products.

Keeping in view the focus of the Government on addressing plastic pollution, a National Expo on eco-alternatives to banned single-use plastic was also organized during WED 2025. The expo saw a vibrant participation by 150 startups, recyclers, and local bodies from across India showcasing innovative technologies and best practices on Eco-alternatives to single use plastics and plastic waste management.

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. A Hackathon on eco-alternatives to single-use plastics was also organized by Central Pollution Control Board, as part of NPPRC.
