

GOVERNMENT NOTIFIES THE PLASTIC WASTE MANAGEMENT AMENDMENT RULES, 2021, PROHIBITING IDENTIFIED SINGLE USE PLASTIC ITEMS BY 2022.

Relevant for: Environment | Topic: Environmental Conservation, Sustainable Development, and EIA

In line with the clarion call given by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to phase out single use plastic by 2022, keeping in view the adverse impacts of littered plastic on both terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India, has notified the Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules, 2021, which prohibits identified single use plastic items which have low utility and high littering potential by 2022.

Pollution due to single use plastic items has become an important environmental challenge confronting all countries. India is committed to take action for mitigation of pollution caused by littered Single Use Plastics. In the 4th United Nations Environment Assembly held in 2019, India had piloted a resolution on addressing single-use plastic products pollution, recognizing the urgent need for the global community to focus on this very important issue. The adoption of this resolution at UNEA 4 was a significant step.

The manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of following single-use plastic, including polystyrene and expanded polystyrene, commodities shall be prohibited with effect from the 1st July, 2022:-

In order to stop littering due to light weight plastic carry bags, with effect from 30th September, 2021, the thickness of plastic carry bags has been increased from fifty microns to seventy five microns and to one hundred and twenty microns with effect from the 31st December, 2022. This will also allow reuse of plastic carry due to increase in thickness.

The plastic packaging waste, which is not covered under the phase out of identified single use plastic items, shall be collected and managed in an environmentally sustainable way through the Extended Producer Responsibility of the Producer, importer and Brand owner (PIBO), as per Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016. For effective implementation of Extended Producer Responsibility the Guidelines for Extended Producer Responsibility being brought out have been given legal force through Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules, 2021.

The waste management infrastructure in the States/UTs is being strengthened through the Swachh Bharat Mission. The following steps have also been taken to strengthen implementation of Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016 and also to reduce the use of identified single use plastic items:(i) the States/UTs have been requested to constitute a Special Task Force for elimination of single use plastics and effective implementation of Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016. A National Level Taskforce has also been constituted by the Ministry for taking coordinated efforts to eliminate identified single use plastic items and effective implementation of Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016.

The State /UT Governments and concerned Central Ministries/Departments have also been requested to develop a comprehensive action plan for elimination of single use plastics and effective implementation of Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016, and its implementation in a time bound manner. Directions under Section 5 of Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, have been issued to all States/Union Territories inter alia for setting up for institutional mechanism for

strengthening enforcement of Plastic Waste Management (PWM) Rules, 2016.

The Government has also been taking measures for awareness generation towards elimination of single use plastics and effective implementation of Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016. A two month long Awareness Campaign of Single Use Plastic 2021 has been organized. The Ministry has also organized pan India essay writing competition on the theme for spreading awareness amongst school students in the country.

To encourage innovation in development of alternatives to identified single use plastic items and digital solutions to plastic waste management, the India Plastic Challenge – Hackathon 2021, has been organized for students of Higher Educational Institutions and startups recognized under Startup India Initiative.

Gazette Notification

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