

A potential weapon in the war against plastic waste has been found here in Ahmedabad. A group of researcher has found tiny plastic eating bacteria at Pirana, which can be engineered to cut the city's garbage mountain to size.

In the first such study at the solid waste management (SWM) site in Gujarat, researchers discovered 17 classes of bacteria and 9 fungi that 'eats' plastic. Experts said that several enzymes present in the genome sequence of the microorganisms showed that the plastic materials were being used as carbon and energy source. "While plastic is not the natural source of sustenance for these organisms, mutation could have led to change in their behaviour," said a researcher associated with the project. "The bacteria attach themselves to the surface of plastic polymers after oxidization in presence of water, following which they start disintegrating the PE, PET, or PS."