

SUSTAINABILITY NEWS

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NOTICE

»» ANNUAL RETURN FILING DEADLINE FOR PLASTIC PACKAGING EPR EXTENDED TO NOVEMBER 30, 2024 FOR FY 2023-24

Source: SGS

In a significant update, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) has announced an extension in the timeline for filing the Annual Return (AR) by registered Producers, Importers, and Brand Owners (PIBOs) as well as Plastic Waste Processors (PWP) for the fiscal year 2023-24. According to the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Guidelines notified by MoEF&CC as the IV Amendment to the Plastic Waste Management (PWM) Rules on February 16, 2022, PIBOs and PWP who were registered during the fiscal year 2022-24 on the EPR Plastic Portal are required to file their Annual Returns for FY 2023-24 by September 30, 2024, respectively. However, following the issuance of an Office Memorandum (OM) dated June 18, 2024, by MoEF&CC, it has been officially communicated that the deadline for filing the Annual Return on the EPR portal for plastic packaging for the FY 2023-24 has been extended to **November 30, 2024**, for both PIBOs and PWP registered during the year FY 2023-24.

»» FIFTH SESSION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

Source: UNEP

The Fifth Session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC-5), aimed at developing an international legally binding instrument to address plastic pollution (including marine pollution), will be held from **25 November to 1 December 2024** in Busan, Republic of Korea. The event will take place at the Busan Exhibition and Convention Center. Prior to the official session, there will be regional consultations on 24 November 2024 to prepare for the negotiations.

This meeting is part of ongoing efforts by global stakeholders to create a comprehensive treaty to combat plastic pollution, particularly focusing on its detrimental effects on marine ecosystems and global sustainability.



»» ELECTRICITY DEPARTMENT TO DISCONNECT POWER SUPPLY TO 22 PLASTIC-MANUFACTURING UNITS

Source: The Hindu

The Puducherry Pollution Control Committee (PPCC) has directed the Electricity Department to immediately disconnect the power supply of 22 plastic-manufacturing units over failure to register their units under the Extended Producer Responsibility Rules, 2022.

According to N. Ramesh, Member Secretary of PPCC, the Committee had directed all plastic manufacturers to register themselves through the centralised online portal, which is exclusively for extended producer responsibility (EPR) to prevent disconnection of power supply to their units.

As per EPR rules (notified by the Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change), all existing and new manufacturers of plastic covers (industrial packaging) should register their units in the EPR portal of the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB). Despite reminders, 22 units located in Bahour, Villianur and Nettapakkam communes, Oulgaret municipality, and Polagam and Kottucherry in the Union Territory had failed to register in the portal. The PPCC had directed the Electricity Department to immediately disconnect the power supply to these units. Action was initiated against the units under Section 5 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

»»» BERRY INVESTS TO BOOST RECYCLING OF SOFT PLASTIC WASTE

Source:Packaging Scotland

Berry Global's recycling facility in Heanor, Derbyshire, has undergone significant upgrades to enhance its capacity to recycle flexible plastic waste, such as carrier bags, bread bags, and plastic pouches. Currently, these materials are collected through supermarket front-of-store bins, but the facility is preparing for increased volumes when kerbside collection becomes mandatory in England by March 2027.



The upgrade, particularly to the wash plant, enables the facility to process a wider range of flexible plastics, even those of poorer quality. Despite challenges with recycling soft plastics, Berry Global is focused on producing second-life products such as refuse sacks and shrink films. The company aims to address the inefficiencies of supermarket collection schemes, which currently see around 70% of collected plastics incinerated for energy rather than recycled. This move supports a more sustainable approach to managing flexible plastic waste.

»»» AI AND INNOVATION TO TRANSFORM INDIA'S PLASTICS INDUSTRY: UFLex'S VISION

Source:The Economic Times

The flexible packaging industry is a cornerstone of India's economy, ensuring affordable packaged products for millions of consumers. Yet, as the world moves toward sustainability, the industry faces significant challenges, especially when it comes to transitioning to eco-friendly materials and recycling methods. Jeevaraj Gopal Pillai, Director of Sustainability and President of Flexible Packaging at UFlex Limited, shared insights on how AI and innovation are poised to revolutionize the plastics industry, ensuring a more sustainable future.

India has made considerable progress in the realm of sustainable packaging, supported by government initiatives like the Plastic Waste Management (PWM) Rules and Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) policies. These regulations foster a culture of sustainability, encouraging businesses to adopt eco-friendly solutions. Pillai emphasized that despite this progress, smaller businesses, particularly MSMEs, often struggle due to high upfront costs for implementing eco-friendly materials and recycling technologies. Many lack the necessary expertise in waste management, leading to improper disposal and significant environmental concerns.

UFlex, a leader in the flexible packaging industry, is actively addressing these issues. The company processes nearly 30,000 metric tons of plastic waste annually through its advanced recycling facilities in India, Mexico, Poland, and Egypt. UFlex is also pioneering innovations like Enzymatic Delamination Technology, which separates layers of multi-layer packaging for more efficient recycling. This technology allows UFlex to recycle difficult materials such as paper, polyethylene, and foil laminates, moving the industry closer to circularity.

In addition to these technological advances, Pillai highlighted the crucial role AI is set to play in transforming the plastics industry. AI can optimize manufacturing processes by analyzing vast amounts of data, improving efficiency, reducing waste, and enhancing product quality. At the end of the plastic product's life cycle, AI will be integral in waste management and recycling. Advanced AI sorting technologies are already being developed to differentiate between types of plastics, food-grade and non-food-grade materials, and other packaging variations. These AI-powered systems will be crucial in improving global recycling efforts.

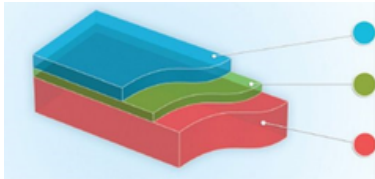
Looking ahead, the future of sustainable flexible packaging is driven by innovation and increased environmental awareness. Companies are increasingly focusing on biodegradable and compostable materials, while the push for recyclability is leading to closed-loop systems. UFlex is committed to staying at the forefront of these innovations, ensuring that India continues to lead in the global sustainable packaging landscape.

PLASTIC RECYCLING



MYTH-BUSTING TECHNOLOGY FOR RECYCLING MULTI-LAYER PACKAGING UNVEILED

Source: Plastemart



Three layer structure of a multi-layer flexible packaging film structure.

Multi-layer packaging (MLP) plays a vital role in the FMCG industry, extending product shelf life by protecting against moisture, gases, and other elements. Despite its benefits, MLP waste is often considered "non-recyclable" due to the complex combination of different polymers in each layer. However, new, advanced technology is breaking this myth by enabling the recycling of MLP. This innovative process transforms MLP waste into granules suitable for producing items like furniture, road dividers, bottle caps, trays, and more. The technology includes AI-driven sorting, multi-stage washing, and two-stage extrusion with vacuum degassing. It efficiently removes contaminants and blends incompatible polymers, making MLP recycling possible. With this solution, MLP waste can be repurposed, reducing environmental impact and offering a sustainable alternative for various industrial and domestic applications.

THE NEW BRITISH PLASTICS FEDERATION (BPF) RECYCLING ROADMAP

Source: Interplas Insights



The British Plastics Federation (BPF) has unveiled a new recycling roadmap, outlining how the UK can significantly enhance its plastic waste management by 2035. The roadmap acknowledges delays in achieving earlier targets due to economic challenges and policy gaps but sets ambitious goals for the future. By 2035, the BPF aims for a 70% recycling and reuse rate, which could reduce carbon emissions by one million tonnes. Achieving this requires increased investment in both mechanical and chemical recycling infrastructure, better government support, and clearer legislation, particularly around mass balance methodology for the Plastic Packaging Tax. The plan also stresses the need for improved waste collection and communication systems, positioning the UK to become a leader in sustainable plastic management practices.

EXXON FACES LAWSUIT FOR MISLEADING PUBLIC ABOUT PLASTIC RECYCLING

Source: SCIAM

Many people believe that plastics can be easily recycled, but the truth is much different. Unlike aluminum, which can be recycled endlessly, plastics are difficult to recycle. Most plastics are made from different types of materials and chemicals, making it nearly impossible to recycle them effectively. Despite this, companies like ExxonMobil have promoted the idea that plastics can be recycled, allowing them to continue producing harmful, single-use plastics.

Recently, California Attorney General Rob Bonta filed a lawsuit against ExxonMobil, accusing the company of misleading the public about the recyclability of plastics. This lawsuit marks a significant moment in the battle against plastic pollution. For decades, companies like Exxon have focused on spreading the false belief that plastic recycling is the solution to the pollution crisis. In reality, less than 6% of plastics are recycled in the U.S., and most plastic waste ends up in landfills or polluting the environment.

Exxon and other oil companies have been pushing "advanced recycling" techniques, which promise to break down plastics into fuel or new materials. However, these methods are costly, inefficient, and pollute the environment. This lawsuit seeks to hold Exxon accountable and force the company to stop spreading misinformation about recycling while addressing the damage caused by their products.



UP CABINET APPROVES NEW BIO PLASTIC POLICY, INDUSTRY STATUS FOR IT, AND BOOSTS PRIVATE INVESTMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Source: The Week

The Uttar Pradesh cabinet has launched a groundbreaking bio plastic policy to encourage investment in biodegradable and compostable plastic manufacturing. Under this policy, companies investing Rs 1,000 crore or more will benefit from a 50% subsidy for seven years and a 100% reimbursement of state GST for 10 years. Additionally, there will be no duties on electricity supply. The total benefits are capped at 2% of the investment over a 10-year period, and each unit is expected to generate over 2,000 jobs. By introducing this policy, UP has become the first state to take such a step, aiming to integrate bioplastics into the startup value chain.

In another key move, the cabinet granted industry status to information technology (IT) and IT services. This decision will enable IT companies to purchase land at industrial rates, while units consuming 150 KW or more will enjoy power at industrial rates, saving up to 18% on electricity costs. The cabinet highlighted that this initiative will play a significant role in supporting UP's goal of becoming a one trillion-dollar economy within the next five years.

Additionally, the cabinet approved the 'Higher Education Incentive Policy' to make private and foreign investment in higher education more accessible. This policy is designed to improve the quality of education and align it with current industry needs, while also reducing the outflow of students to other states in search of better educational opportunities.



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath

MALAYSIA'S CLIMATE CHANGE BILL: A STEP TOWARD A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Source: Eco Business

Malaysia is taking bold steps toward addressing climate change, with the government currently seeking public input on its draft Climate Change Bill. This bill aims to help Malaysia meet its international climate goals and tackle the challenges posed by climate change, such as extreme weather events like the recent flash floods in Kuala Lumpur. The public has until November 4 to provide feedback on the bill, which is expected to be tabled in Parliament early next year.

The Climate Change Bill focuses on the country's adaptation and mitigation strategies. It outlines Malaysia's commitment to the Paris Agreement, ensuring that the nation can meet its targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The bill also emphasizes the role of both the government and the public in addressing climate change, with a focus on making the legislation durable enough to outlast any individual government.



Malaysia cannot rule out CCUS but must keep 'eyes wide open' to risks, says environment minister Nik Nazmi

However, some groups have raised concerns about the bill's lack of specific provisions for vulnerable groups, such as indigenous communities, and its limited focus on extreme weather adaptation. Minister Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad acknowledged these concerns, highlighting that while the bill is primarily focused on climate action, the Environmental Quality Act (EQA) will be reviewed to better address the rights of those affected by environmental challenges.

The government is also working on a National Adaptation Plan, set for completion by 2026, which will address issues like floods, landslides, and the effects of climate change on agriculture and urban areas.

With Malaysia receiving financial support from the Green Climate Fund, the government is determined to build a strong foundation for climate action, but more funding is needed for a comprehensive and effective adaptation plan.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

ANTONY WASTE SECURES RS 908 CRORE CONTRACT FROM NAVI MUMBAI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

Source: DSIJ

Antony Waste Handling Cell Ltd's subsidiary, AG Enviro Infra Projects, has secured a significant contract from the Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation (NMMC), valued at Rs 908 crore. The contract, spanning nine years, involves door-to-door collection and transportation of municipal solid waste. Antony Waste is a leader in waste management services, specializing in waste collection, mechanical road sweeping, transportation, and waste-to-energy projects. The company also manages Mumbai's integrated waste management facility in Kanjurmarg.

With nearly 20 years of industry experience, Antony Waste ranks among India's top five companies in the municipal waste management sector. The company's shares have surged by over 85% in the past year. In Q1 FY25, Antony Waste recorded revenues of Rs 227 crore, with an operating profit of Rs 49 crore and a net profit of Rs 21 crore. For FY24, the company's total revenue stood at Rs 873 crore, up from Rs 854 crore in FY23, while net profit rose to Rs 100 crore, compared to Rs 85 crore in FY23.



SMART SENSOR BINS INTRODUCED TO HOSPITALS FOR PLASTIC-FREE WASTE MANAGEMENT

Source: The TOI



Kolkata's Charnock Hospital has launched an innovative waste management system with the introduction of Smart ReBins—sensor-fitted bins designed to reduce plastic waste and keep the hospital premises clean. These bins, developed through a collaboration between CII West Bengal Healthcare Taskforce and Magpet Polymers Pvt Ltd, aim to turn hospitals into plastic-free zones while ensuring proper collection and sorting of potentially hazardous clinical waste.

The Smart ReBins come with sensors that monitor how full the bins are and send alerts when they need to be emptied, preventing overflow and littering. Each bin is about six feet tall and can store a large amount of waste. The bins are also geo-tagged and geo-fenced, making them tamper-proof and ensuring they stay in place.

Hospitals that use these bins earn plastic credits for their recycling efforts. The initiative also supports the circular economy by turning recycled PET bottles into high-quality materials, while offering income opportunities to waste-pickers.

Other hospitals in the city are considering the installation of ReBins to help promote sustainability and responsible plastic waste management.

SC TELLS MCD: SHARE STEPS TAKEN FOR SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

Source: Hindustan Times

The Supreme Court of India has directed the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) to submit an affidavit outlining steps taken for solid waste management, in response to concerns about untreated waste in the capital. This comes after the MCD indicated that by 2026, the gap of 3,000 tonnes per day (tpd) of untreated waste would be addressed. The Lieutenant Governor of Delhi recently empowered the MCD commissioner to handle waste management projects costing over ₹5 crore, allowing quicker execution of large-scale projects.

Among the new developments are two waste-to-energy plants: a 3,000 tpd facility in Narela-Bawana and a 2,000 tpd plant in Ghazipur. These projects aim to tackle the city's waste management crisis, a significant contributor to pollution and public health risks, such as landfill fires. Currently, the city generates 3,800 tpd of untreated waste.

The Supreme Court's directive follows ongoing public interest litigation on pollution, and the bench will revisit the matter on November 25. The court is also examining the shortfall in waste processing capacities in the National Capital Region (NCR), with Gurugram, Faridabad, and Greater Noida also facing deficits. The court has sought responses from these regions, with a hearing set for November 11.



DO YOU KNOW

1 TONNE = 25,000 PLASTIC BOTTLES. RECYCLING 1 TONNE OF PLASTIC BOTTLES SAVES 1.5 TONNE OF CARBON

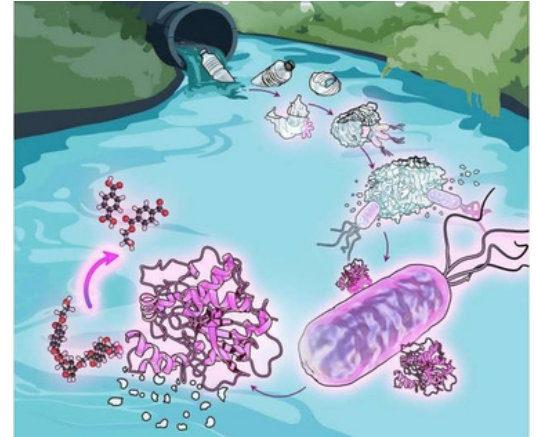
NEW RESEARCH/INOVATION

WASTEWATER BACTERIA CAN BREAK DOWN PLASTIC FOR FOOD, YIELDING NEW POSSIBILITIES FOR CLEANING UP PLASTIC WASTE

Source: Physorg

Northwestern University researchers have uncovered how *Comamonas* bacteria break down plastic waste in urban rivers and wastewater. The bacteria first shred plastic into nanoplastics, then secrete a special enzyme that further degrades the plastic, allowing them to consume it as a carbon source. This breakthrough could lead to bacteria-based solutions to tackle persistent plastic pollution that contaminates drinking water and endangers wildlife.

"We've demonstrated for the first time that a wastewater bacterium can fragment and consume plastic as a carbon source," said study lead Ludmilla Aristilde. Published in *Environmental Science & Technology*, this discovery paves the way for potential environmental clean-up applications.



REPOLYWISE INTRODUCES BREAKTHROUGH TECHNOLOGY TO RECYCLE PLASTIC WASTE

Source: Packaging Europe

A new technology developed by Repolywise, a startup founded by Oxford University researchers, promises a major leap forward in tackling plastic waste. Their innovation, called "Atomic Scissors," uses a hydrocracking process to break down plastic waste into its basic building blocks at the atomic level. This process converts waste plastic into propane, which is then used to create new, high-quality plastics like polyethylene (PE) and polypropylene (PP).

This technology is designed to help reduce the massive amount of plastic waste produced globally—about 330 billion kilograms each year. Unlike traditional recycling methods that often result in lower-quality materials, Atomic Scissors can turn waste plastics back into high-quality raw materials for new products.

Currently, the technology is in a lab-scale stage, and Repolywise is working to expand its capacity. The next step is to scale it up to a commercial level, potentially handling tons of plastic waste efficiently. They are also aiming for sustainability certification to ensure their processes contribute to a circular economy.

With this breakthrough, Repolywise hopes to revolutionize how plastic waste is managed and help reduce the environmental impact of single-use plastics.



UNIVERSITY RESEARCHERS STUDY PP PLASTIC RECYCLING ADVANCE

Source: Packaging Europe

Researchers at West Virginia University, led by Yuxin Wang, are exploring the use of microwave technology to recover propylene from polypropylene (PP) plastic scrap. Funded by a \$1 million Department of Energy grant, this energy-efficient method aims to improve PP recycling rates, which currently stand at just 1%.

The approach uses microwave irradiation to recover propylene at lower temperatures than conventional methods, offering a more sustainable way to recycle plastics and reduce emissions. The research also involves collaboration with Argonne National Laboratory and offers valuable learning opportunities for students.



Research by Yuxin Wang (pictured) at West Virginia University

DO YOU KNOW?



25 RECYCLED PET BOTTLES CAN BE USED TO MAKE AN ADULT'S FLEECE JACKET.