



### **This World Environment Day, Become An Anti- Plastic Crusader**

India is the global host for the 2018 World Environment Day (WED) which is being celebrated on June 5th across the globe. This year's WED is focussed on the theme of **Plastic Pollution**, an environmental challenge of recent origin, but one which is unprecedented in its scale and its impact on our planet.



.Plastic has added great value to our lives from allowing us easy access to technology to making our mission to the moon possible. It has, however, been accompanied with an exponential growth in **single use plastics**, which make up to **50% of all consumer plastic**. These plastics when thrown, unlike other natural material, stay in our environment for hundreds of years and break down in small particles called microplastics. They have invaded our lands and oceans alike, killing about 1,00,000 marine lives across 700 marine species each year, including some endangered ones. Further, latest studies show 83% of tap water being contaminated with plastic across the world. Scientists are yet to fully study what plastics in our food chain and drinking water could mean for our health, but it does not seem good news at all.

India produces more than 25,000 tonnes of plastic waste on a single day which accounts for 8-10% of our total waste generated. However, the projected amount of plastic waste recycled in India is much higher than the world average. India, in fact, is uniquely suited to host 2018 WED given its intrinsic culture of frugality and recycling on one hand, which are among the key solutions to the problem; and its growing population and rising economic wealth on the other, which indicates a steep increase in plastic production, consumption and disposal in coming years. **Plastic production is projected to double in next 10-15 years globally**, if we do not do something about it today.



In response to this complex problem a large number of countries across the world including **Kenya, France, UK, Australia** **have banned some form of single use plastic in their country**. The issue has also attracted a large scale attention of civil societies and individuals who have been exercising the strength of their voice, choice and actions to bring in the desired change.

In India, civil society organisations have been calling for levying of **Extended Producer's Responsibility (EPR)** mentioned in the Plastic Waste Management Rules, and Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016. EPR makes manufacturers responsible for proper disposal of plastic packaging that they produce. If implemented properly, EPR has the power to compel producers to transform their plastic footprint, especially for the plastic which has low or no recycling value, through product redesign, processing or responsible disposal

### What We Can Do

- We can start by **giving up on single use plastics** that we can easily do without. These could include straws, plastic beverage containers, cling films, wet wipes to name a few.
- Next, we can begin by **replacing our plastics with more sustainable options** like reusable steel or glass bottles, asking restaurants to serve in non disposable utensils, replacing disposable sanitary napkins with menstrual cups and cloth pads, or carrying our own bag for shopping

- We can segregate our plastic waste from rest of the waste to ensure maximum recovery and recycling of plastic waste
- Further, each of us needs to act as **anti-single use plastic activist** in our own right when it comes to encouraging authorities, sellers and even family and friends to take steps to move away from single use plastic

It is a battle we all need to fight collectively as well as individually, one which requires us to make harder but more sustainable choices. We, however, must think of it as an investment to save our planet and its many lives, including those of our generations to come.

*Join us today in our mission to fight plastic pollution by pledging to give up at least two single-use plastics from your life.*



## Inclusive Sustainable And Equitable Growth for All

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