



PRESS RELEASE

21 MAY 2020

National Productivity Council, under DPIIT, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Govt. of India is organizing the National Policy Workshop through a series of webinars during 12-22 May 2020 comprising of six on-line sessions as part of the UNEP led project “Promotion of Countermeasures against marine plastic litter in Southeast Asia and India”, funded by the Govt. of Japan. The Webinar - 5 on theme “Impact of COVID – 19 on Plastic Waste Generation (used PPEs and wastes from HCFs) and upcoming challenges” as part of the National Policy Workshop on Countermeasures for riverine and marine plastic litter has been organized on 20 May 2020 from 14.30 – 17.30 hrs.

The Webinar via twelve insightful presentations highlighted the following aspects (a) The research initiatives in the health sector and beyond pertaining to COVID 19 and impacts across various sectors (positive and negative) and the tsunami of plastics; (b) Elaboration by Doctors regarding types of personal protective equipment being used by Doctors and the health care staff (including in Emergency medicine and Surgical Departments etc), addressing components such as masks and air-purifying respirators, goggles, face shield, gloves, and gowns and deliberations on the need for innovations in PPEs to improve breathability, fit aspects, issues of visibility, enabling overcoming communication difficulties and checking risks from infection etc, besides strengthening reusability and recyclability aspects along with an emphasis on mass training in the use of PPEs for a vast spectrum of COVID - 19 warriors; (c) Highlights regarding breakthrough medical devices and equipment that signaled the importance of plastics and polymers with case examples of cardiovascular devices and neurosurgery devices contributing to enhanced quality and outcomes of health care, in addition to the emphasis on incorporating principles for ‘design for the environment’; (d) Insightful review of PPEs for COVID – 19, detailing the type (woven, non-woven, knitted, etc), and the materials including polymers and composition, and standards and testing of parameters desirable for health sector; (e) Aspects of Demand and Supply of polymers and industry response for various plastics for the health sector and issues concerning recycling/recyclability of plastic waste; (f) Single-Use disposable Masks and increasing challenge on waste management in the community; (g) Deliberations on pre-COVID and during COVID 19 related Bio-Medical Waste Management systems and practices, and new developments concerning COVID 19 related guidelines to help tackle emergent waste streams – amongst domestic hazardous infectious wastes and from quarantine centers, isolation wards, and laboratories etc. and the significance of segregation of waste streams for efficient operations; (h) Insights on machinery and equipment to handle and manage Bio-Medical Wastes in the wake of COVID 19 and their operational considerations etc.

The webinar was attended by 630 plus participants as located across 13 countries representing public/private organizations, civil society, researchers, academia, and from across a range of national and multilateral institutions such as UN Organisations and the World Bank. The Webinar has been highly appreciated by participants and is attracting attention from a wide range of stakeholders.

The next webinar is scheduled for 22nd May 2020 and shall be leading to a policy dialogue on the subject. The participants can register for the webinars via <https://www.npcindia.gov.in/NPC/User/unep>

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