

## **Minutes of Fourth Project Steering Committee meeting to discuss various matters under India Norway Marine Pollution Initiative**

The **fourth Project Steering Committee (PSC) meeting** of the India-Norway Marine Pollution Initiative was held virtually on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2022. The meeting was co-chaired by Mr. Naresh Pal Gangwar, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), Government of India and Excellency Mr. Hans Jacob Frydenlund, Ambassador of Norway to India, Royal Norwegian Embassy, New Delhi. The list of all participants present in the meeting is enclosed in **Annexure I**.

At the outset co-chairs welcomed the participants to the fourth meeting of the Project Steering Committee. Dr. Satyendra Kumar, Director, HSMD, MoEF&CC initiated the discussions as per agenda.

1. **Mr. Atul Bagai**, UNEP India Office, Country Head gave a brief overview on the India-Norway Marine Pollution Initiative. It was told that around 17 reports and 14 research articles have been developed by different project partners. In addition, capacity building and awareness programmes have been organised by partners.
2. **Mr. Naresh Pal Gangwar**, Additional Secretary, MoEF&CC highlighted that the project reflects the joint commitment of both countries to tackle the issue of marine plastic pollution. He highlighted that Hon'ble Prime Minister of India has reiterated commitments on elimination of Single Use Plastics (SUPs) and effective plastic waste management on several occasions. He mentioned the several steps that have been taken to address the issue of plastic pollution. Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules was notified in August 2021, prohibiting identified SUP items with effect from 1st July 2022.

He further mentioned that the Central government has been focusing on improving the plastic waste management infrastructure under Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban and Rural).

It was informed that the Ministry was working on guidelines for Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) of plastic packaging. These guidelines are based on the principles of reduce, reuse and recycle. Also, these guidelines seek to mandate the use of recycled plastic content in plastic packaging, that will catalyze circularity in plastic packaging waste.

4. **H.E Mr. Hans Jacob Frydenlund**, Ambassador, Royal Norwegian Embassy, New Delhi mentioned that the India Norway Marine Pollution Initiative will be completing 3 years and have achieved a lot in this time frame. He highlighted that they have exchanged best practices on how to make circular economy work in our societies through better waste management and EPR. He emphasized on how this project has been able to build relationships between Indian and Norwegian government institutions, researchers, and NGOs, ensuring that projects move forward during this ongoing Covid 19 pandemic. He mentioned that projects are nearing end of their tenure. He further suggested a close dialogue between the Government of India and Government of Norway is required on how the future phases of the projects can be designed to be useful for both the governments.

It was emphasized that the issue of plastic pollution cannot be solved only by cleaning up, but consumption of plastics needs to be reduced. The plastic items manufactured need to be reusable, recyclable and to be part of the circular economy. He also mentioned about the upcoming UNEA 5.2, especially with respect to draft resolutions. He urged India to take significant role in the negotiation process at the UNEA 5.2.

Finally, he concluded by thanking the Ministry for their leadership role in this initiative and hoping that all line ministries and partners in India and Norway contribute towards making this a success.

5. The project partners were requested to provide a progress update on the project.

The summary is provided below:

- a. **Mainstreaming Circular Economy in Waste Management Sector - Centre for Science and Environment (CSE): Mr. Atin Biswas**, Programme Director (Municipal Solid Waste), CSE presented their work on the project '*Mainstreaming Circular Economy in Waste Management Sector*'. The presentation is at **Annexure II**. He presented the progress made by them for different outcomes:

***Outcome 1: Urban local bodies manage waste in accordance with the concepts of circular economy:*** He highlighted that the Forum of cities (a knowledge exchange platform for participating ULBs on SWM with a focus on waste segregation), has a network of 72 cities across 19 states, encompassing 1064 wards roughly covering 3.4 million population. It was informed that 11 trainings were conducted; and in partnership with NITI Aayog, a pan-India compendium of best practices was released. He informed that 3 new research publications were developed and 4 webinars have been organized with partner cities. In addition, through environmental labs and technical support, they were able to test 27 compost samples. Systems have been set up to test sample from all the partner cities and test facilities have been expanded for plastics, leachates, and legacy waste (waste from dumpsites). Under Green School Programme, a network of 126 green schools was supported by CSE, and 5000+ students undertook home audits as waste warriors.

***Outcome 2: Agra and Gurugram developed as model cities on waste management:*** In Agra, a roadmap has been submitted to Agra Municipal Corporation for improvement of municipal SWM. They are also supporting pilot on source segregation, awareness campaigns in 6 municipal wards, and also came out with a report on petha waste and decentralised management of solid waste. In Gurugram, a partnership was initiated with Gurugram municipal corporation on developing action plan for clean air, support for capacity building to augment biomining of Bandhwari dumpsite, and support SWM with bulk waste generators.

CSE also informed on their planned activities for various outcomes. Under outcome 1, CSE plans to expand the network of Forum cities to 100 cities by the end of 2022 and build capacities of these cities to improve their Swachh Survekshan ranking. It also aims to release a minimum of 4 research publications, toolkits, and to create a coalition of coastal cities and a forum of Himalayan States. Finally, CSE plans to organise regional workshops and exposure visits to cities with best practices to promote evidence-based learning. Under outcome 2, CSE plans to do a deep dive

study on plastic leakage to Yamuna, leather waste management, support the cities on implementation and arrange exposure visits for city managers.

- b. **India Norway Cooperation Project on capacity building for reducing plastic and chemical pollution in India (INOPOL) – NIVA:** Mr. Eirik H. Steindal, Project Manager, INOPOL project, briefed about the objective of the project. The Indian partners in the project are The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), Mu Gamma Consultants (MGC), Central Institute of Plastics Engineering and Technology (CIPET), SRM Institute of Science and Technology and Toxics Link.

It was informed that the project was officially launched in Ahmedabad in 2020 and will be ending in mid-2022. He presented the status of the activities under the project. Baseline reports on micro and macro plastic was completed; and another baseline report on Covid 19 plastic assessment with respect to plastic pollution was also completed, and the pollution hotspot identification report is still ongoing. He told that they have also completed online training on plastics and POPs and training material has been developed. Also, under management tools/modelling component, a hydrodynamic model was developed. He then informed that they are carrying out policy analysis and an assessment of the role of informal sector. NIVA is also doing modelling on POPs fluxes in the environment and it will also carry out impact assessment & policy analysis and organise training programmes on the issue of POPs.

As a way forward, NIVA would carry out stakeholder consultations, capacity building workshops, laboratory training, data reporting on POPs and chemical analysis, data collection and mapping on plastic recycling chains, waste generation, materials, and value flows. They also plan to do dissemination of scientific data and policy relevant knowledge through publications, webinars etc., action plan on POPs and strategy report on PWM. The presentation by NIVA is attached in **Annexure III**.

- c. **Ocean plastic turned into an opportunity in the circular economy – OPTOCE:** Dr. Palash Kumar Saha, Research Scientist, SINTEF, gave an overview of the work. The timeline of the project is till 2023 and is funded by NORAD. The presentation is at **Annexure IV**.

It was informed that in 2021, main activities conducted by them include academic collaboration with two universities, where two master theses were prepared; SINTEF also co-authored the book ‘Sustainable management of waste through co-processing’. SINTEF sponsored and organized several workshops on resource recovery and circular economy, where the progress of the OPTOCE project was discussed. Mr Saha also informed that Ghazipur pilot project which was principally approved by Principal Scientific Advisor's (PSA) Office of GOI was cancelled in Q2 2021, which was a setback under the project. He also highlighted that SINTEF has signed MoU with Dalmia Cement, SSA and Geocycle and have been discussing alternative pilots.

As way forward, SINTEF is planning to collaborate with GIZ to provide guidance for completion of the three-master thesis, finalise the desktop study report, gather

data and decide on pilot sites on co-processing and continue to prepare journals articles presenting and disseminating the findings of OPTOCE activities.

- d. **Marine Litter and Mindset change programme in Mumbai: Mr. Afroz Shah** gave a brief overview of the project and the progress under the project.

Fourteen programmes were successfully implemented under the mindset change work on the communities such as beach clean-up, training of households, and river Mithi clean up. It was also mentioned that through their initiatives a) about 6 million pieces were removed from the households during pre-litter stage; b) 1.36 million kg of plastic legacy waste was cleaned up; c) 1.6 million kg of marine debris was plucked out of the ocean for cleaning up of mangroves which is ecologically sensitive. This is also helping in reduction of carbon footprint – 6,46,287 kg CO<sub>2</sub>, due to the implementation of the 14 programmes.

He added that they would be sharing the data to the State and Central government, and CPCB, in order to support them in making concrete policies. Finally, he concluded by saying that changing the mindsets and preparing reports for supporting adequate policies are the aims of the foundation.

- e. **Coordinating and Providing a Common Platform for India-Norway Marine Pollution Initiative in India: Dr. Sumit Sharma**, Programme Officer, UNEP, gave a presentation on the progress made in the project. The presentation is at Annexure V.

It was informed that three research studies- a) *Single use plastics: A country wide analysis of the status of regulation, implementation and compliance in India*, b) *Status of Research Capacities and Information systems of Marine Plastic Litter in India* and c) *Strengthening BMW management in India focusing on plastics*, were conducted, and completed. In addition, a policy brief on reducing marine plastic has also been prepared. It was mentioned that the first two reports and the policy brief have been submitted to the Ministry. An annual report of 2020 was submitted to the Embassy. He also informed that UNEP conducted various events on spreading awareness on SUPs, state level consultations on SUPs, and discussions on EPR.

6. The presentations were followed with deliberations by PSC members.

**Ms Marit Marie Strand**, Counsellor, Royal Norwegian Embassy, New Delhi thanked UNEP and PSC members for useful presentations. She told that the embassy thinks that it is an important forum to exchange information on the topic and we must continue to do that. She further suggested that in our next PSC meeting we could have a separate discussion on scaling up the various projects and results and sharing of these results through a separate event. She emphasised that she was looking forward to work with the Ministry and glad to inform that Ms **Beate Langset**, Counsellor (Climate & Environment) has joined the team at the Embassy.

**Dr. Satyendra Kumar**, Director, MoEF&CC thanked all the project partners in taking up the project in right spirit and full sincerity. He also mentioned that that the Ministry would be engaging with the project partners on a regular basis, such that project moves ahead with intense involvement of all the stakeholders. He told that all the projects should reflect the outcomes in measurable terms and should also

reflect the sustainability aspects. The progress of the projects may be monitored through specific milestones and intended outputs/outcomes.

He told that there may be sharing of the progress of the projects to the Ministry on quarterly basis. In this regard, a digital platform may be put in place. He also told that there may be focus on actionable projects and the project outcomes may have indicators that reflect the achievements of the implementation of the projects in tangible terms. There needs to a two-way approach in engagements between the two countries. Any project may include the structural interventions of similar nature done in either country to have hand holding in creating solutions and structural interventions.

The floor was opened for discussion and comments by other participants.

7. The last section was on discussing strategic issues to deal with plastic pollution and marine plastic -national policies on plastic and global processes to prevent plastic pollution. The summary of presentations given by the Government of Norway and Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India are given below:
  - a. **Dr. Satyendra Kumar, Director, HSMD, Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change**, presented the national strategy for plastic waste management and elimination of identified single-use plastic items in India. He explained the different components of the strategy to manage plastic waste in India which include strengthening the regulatory and institutional framework, development of comprehensive action plans at central and States/UTs levels on SUPs and developing a national dashboard for monitoring the progress made in this regard. He highlighted the Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules 2021, notified on 12<sup>th</sup> August 2021, prohibiting 12 identified SUP items by 2022, which have low utility and high littering potential, as well as specifying thickness of plastic carry bags.

He mentioned about the draft regulation on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) on plastic packaging and mentioned how EPR is important to strengthen circular economy of plastic packaging waste, promoting development of new alternatives to plastics and sustainable plastic packaging. It proposes to mandate reuse, recycling of plastic packaging waste, use of recycled plastic content, and environmentally sound management of plastic waste, sustainable plastic packaging and promotion of development of alternatives.

- b. **Mr Erlend Draget, Senior Advisor, Ministry of Climate and Environment, Government of Norway**, presented the Norwegian Plastic Strategy and its key approaches. Mr Draget informed that the goal of the Norwegian Plastics Strategy is to reduce plastic pollution and increase the resource efficiency. He stated that Norway has taken several measures to strengthen plastic policy in recent years. These include introduction of stricter rules on the import and export of plastic waste in alignment with Basel Amendment, and implementation of bans on certain SUPs in alignment with EU single use directive. He highlighted that the strategy for the first time takes a broad approach to plastic management aiming to make use of plastic as a resource more efficiently, while also reducing the plastic pollution in the environment.

He stressed that Norway, being part of EU's internal market, shares a number of targets (including targets like all plastic packaging will be reusable or recyclable by 2030 and PET bottles must contain 25 percent secondary raw material in 2025 and 30 percent in 2030). Further, he mentioned about the national targets related to waste such as increasing recycling to 65% of municipal waste by 2035 and increasing the share of material recovery for plastic packaging to 50% in 2025 and 55% in 2030.

He highlighted a number of global initiatives which have been initiated, like G7 Oceans Plastics Charter championed by Canada 2018, Basel Convention 2019, G20 Osaka Blue Vision initiative 2019, UNEA plastic resolutions, all of which provide a framework to reduce the plastic pollution. Additionally, UNEA 4 in 2019, tasked UNEP to set up a multi-stakeholder forum to improve science and knowledge as well as to provide opportunities to exchange best practices among countries.

He then mentioned that the Pew and SYSTEMIQ report provided a comprehensive assessment of existing instruments and voluntary initiatives. According to the reports, there will be 7% reduction in plastic leakage with current voluntary measures over the business-as-usual scenario. This has led Norway and many countries to reach to a conclusion that we need to establish a new governance structure with a common framework with a firm commitment of countries to work together and strengthen their national approach to plastics by addressing the plastic through the full life cycle. Many experts in the Ad Hoc Open Ended Expert Group also pointed to the need for a new global instrument. Large number of countries supported establishing an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee at UNEA-5.2. including the group of African countries, the EU, US, Japan etc. It was also informed that there is support from businesses including from European and American chemical industry associations.

Finally, he emphasized that both Peru/Rwanda and Japan's draft resolutions call for an INC and have been widely shared and discussed for many months. He also welcomed the approach by India to come out with a new draft resolution and look forward to discussing the contents as well as the approach taken towards UNEA to reach a common understanding of what is needed at a global level.

8. While concluding the discussions, **H.E.** Mr. Hans Jacob Frydenlund, Ambassador highlighted that many projects are nearing the end of phase 1 . H.E. Ambassador mentioned that they look forward for having dialogue with Government of India on developing projects/programmes in a manner that it is beneficial to both countries.
9. The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks to the participants.

**ANNEXURE I****Fourth Project Steering Committee Meeting  
India Norway Marine Pollution Initiative-3<sup>rd</sup> February 2022****List of participants**

<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>Name of the participants</b>	<b>Designations</b>	<b>Organizations</b>
1.	Mr. Naresh Pal Gangwar	Additional Secretary	Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC)
2.	Dr. Satyendra Kumar	Director	Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC)
3.	Dr. Amit Love	Additional Director	Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC)
4.	H.E.Hans Jacob Frydenlund	Ambassador	Royal Norwegian Embassy
5.	Ms. Martine Aamdal Bottheim	Minister Counsellor & Deputy Head of Mission.	Royal Norwegian Embassy
6.	Ms. Marit M. Strand	Counsellor & Head of Cooperation	Royal Norwegian Embassy
7.	Ms. Karina Asbjørnsen	Second Secretary	Royal Norwegian Embassy
8.	Ms. Beate Langset	Counsellor (Climate & Environment)	Royal Norwegian Embassy
9.	Mr. Suresh Mathevan	Advisor	Royal Norwegian Embassy
10.	Mr. Erlend Draget	Senior Advisor	Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment
11.	Ms Helene Aarvik	Consul	Royal Norwegian Consulate General, Mumbai
12.	Mr.Jon Heikki Aas	Senior Advisor	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway
13.	Mr. Atul Bagai	Country Head	UNEP, India
14.	Dr. Divya Datt	Programme Management Officer	UNEP, India
15.	Dr. Sumit Sharma	Programme Officer	UNEP, India
16.	Dr. Sonia Henam	Marine Pollution Expert (Consultant)	UNEP, India
17.	Mr. Dilip Menon	Marine Pollution Consultant	UNEP, India & MoEFCC
18.	Dr. Amit Jain	Technical Lead	UNEP, India

19.	Ms. Subhi Dhupar	Project Coordinator	UNEP, India
20.	Mr.Reuben Gergan	Technical Consultant	UNEP, India
21.	Dr. Kare.H.Karstensen	Chief Scientist and Programme Manager	SINTEF
22.	Mr. Palash Kumar Saha	Research Scientist	SINTEF
23.	Ms. Anneli Alatalo Paulsen	Research Manager	SINTEF
24.	Mr. Atin Biswas	Programme Director (MSW)	CSE
25.	Mr. Aditya Batra	Senior Programme Director	CSE
26.	Mr. Eirik Hovland Steindal	Project Manager, INOPOL	NIVA
27.	Mr. Hans Adam	INOPOL	NIVA
28.	Ms. Emmy Noklebye	Research Assistant	NIVA
29.	Ms. Girija Bharat	Director	Mu Gamma Consultants
30.	Dr. Sunil Pandey	Director, Environment and Waste Management	TERI
31.	Dr. Smita Mohanty	Scientist	CIPET
32.	Mr. Afroz Shah	Advocate & Environmentalist	Afroz Shah foundation
33.	Ms. Divya Sinha	Sc. E & DH	CPCB
34.	Representative		CWC HQ
35.	Mr. Brijesh Sikka	Senior Consultant	NMCG
36.	Ms. Nidhi Dwivedi	Project Officer (Technical)	NMCG
37.	Mr. Pankaj Kumar Sharma	Secretary	MoWR
38.	Mr Ramesh Ramachandran	Director	NCSCM
39.	Ms Paro C	Associate Professor	SRM