

# Single-use plastics products

What is banned and what is not in India

India - Norway Marine Pollution Initiative



## CONTEXT

Plastics being ubiquitous materials find extensive application in varied sectors such as agriculture, automobile, aerospace, electronics, infrastructure, healthcare, packaging, textiles etc. Associated with its end-use, environmental concerns on plastics waste management have risen. The best way to avoid SUP waste is to refuse, and if not possible, reuse or recycle. In order to address the issue, Government of India has imposed a ban on select Single Use Plastics (SUP<sup>1</sup>) products, starting from July 1, 2021. To ensure effective implementation of the bans, public awareness on what is presently banned and what is not, is essential. Moreover, there is a need to identify suitable alternatives to these banned SUP items, that are environment-friendly and sustainable in the long run..

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), under the India-Norway Marine Pollution Initiative, has come up with this document to spread awareness on the banned SUP items, and the possible alternatives to these based on scientific life cycle assessment (LCA) studies (with an emphasis on re-use) conducted across the world. This document would serve as a ready reference for all different stakeholders including policy makers, pollution control agencies, municipal corporations, waste management practitioners and general citizens. The document specifically emphasises on the selection of suitable alternatives to the banned SUP products, based on scientific LCA studies in order to minimise their environmental footprints.

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<sup>1</sup> The definition of Single Use Plastic (SUP) is as per the Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2021 available on <https://moef.gov.in/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Draft-Plastic-waste-Notification.pdf>

# SUP PHASED OUT

## BANNED SUP ITEMS

### CUPS



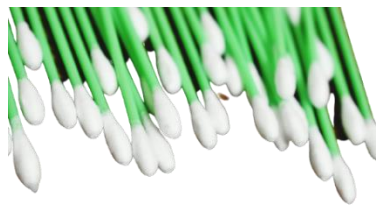
### PLATES



### FORKS, KNIVES & SPOONS



### PLASTIC EAR BUDS



### PLASTIC STRAWS



## ALTERNATIVES

### CERAMIC, GLASS, STAINLESS STEEL, BAMBOO<sup>i</sup>



### MELAMINE TRAY, PORCELAIN, STEEL PLATES<sup>ii</sup>



### STAINLESS STEEL CUTLERY<sup>iii</sup>



### PAPER BASED EAR BUDS<sup>iv</sup>



### NO STRAW OR METAL STRAWS<sup>v</sup>



# SUP PHASE OUT

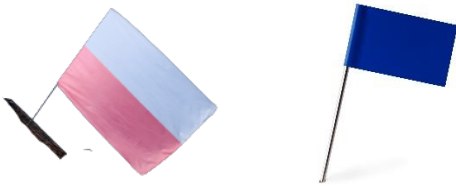
PLASTIC STIRRERS



METAL STIRRERS <sup>vi</sup>



PLASTIC FLAGS



PAPER OR CLOTH FLAGS <sup>vii</sup>



PLASTIC STICKS FOR  
BALLOONS, CANDIES &  
ICECREAM



WOODEN STICKS <sup>viii</sup>



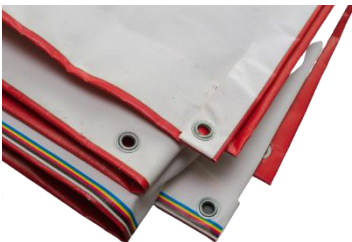
POLYSTYRENE [THERMOCOL]  
FOR DECORATION



USE OF CLOTH BASED <sup>viii</sup>  
DECORATIONS



PLASTIC OR PVC BANNER LESS  
THAN 100 MICRONS



LED OR METAL BANNER <sup>viii</sup>



# SUP PHASE OUT

## PLASTIC SHEET USED AROUND INVITATION CARDS <sup>xii</sup>



Plastic Sheet may not be required for invitation cards

## PLASTIC SHEET ON SWEET BOXES <sup>xii</sup>



Plastic Sheet may not be required for Sweet boxes

## PLASTIC SHEET USED AROUND CIGARETTE PACKS <sup>ix</sup>



Design for Environment or alternatives need to be introduced

CARRY BAGS >75 MICRONS <sup>x</sup>



CARRY BAG > 120 MICRONS<sup>xi xii</sup>



RECYCLABLE MULTILAYERED PLASTICS<sup>xiii</sup>



BOTTLES/TIFFIN BOXES



PLASTIC PACKAGING FOR GROCERY, BAKERY, FOOD ITEMS



PLASTIC FOR PACKAGING OF MEDICAL EQUIPMENT AND MEDICAL PRODUCTS



MILK SACHETS > 50MICRONS<sup>xiv</sup>



NON-WOVEN BAGS > 60 GSM



NOT PHASED OUT

## END NOTES

<sup>i</sup> LCA Beverage Cup Report available on [https://www.lifecycleinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/UNEP-D002-Beverage-Cups-Report\\_lowres.pdf](https://www.lifecycleinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/UNEP-D002-Beverage-Cups-Report_lowres.pdf)

<sup>ii</sup> UNEP: LCA Tableware Report available on [https://www.lifecycleinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/UNEP-D001-Tableware-Report\\_Lowres.pdf](https://www.lifecycleinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/UNEP-D001-Tableware-Report_Lowres.pdf)

<sup>iii</sup> LCA Tableware Report available on [https://www.lifecycleinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/UNEP-D001-Tableware-Report\\_Lowres.pdf](https://www.lifecycleinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/UNEP-D001-Tableware-Report_Lowres.pdf)

<sup>iv</sup> LCA of Single use plastic product study by Ministry of Environment and Food of Denmark [https://backend.orbit.dtu.dk/ws/portalfiles/portal/195360360/2019\\_LCA\\_of\\_Single\\_Use\\_Plastic\\_Products\\_in\\_Denmark\\_Environmental\\_Project\\_No\\_2104.pdf](https://backend.orbit.dtu.dk/ws/portalfiles/portal/195360360/2019_LCA_of_Single_Use_Plastic_Products_in_Denmark_Environmental_Project_No_2104.pdf)

<sup>v</sup> Rana, Karuna, "Plasticless: A Comparative Life-Cycle, Socio-Economic, And Policy Analysis Of Alternatives To Plastic Straws", Open Access Master's Thesis, Michigan Technological University, 2020 available on <https://doi.org/10.37099/mtu.dc.etr/1064>

<sup>vi</sup> LCA of Single use plastic product study by Ministry of Environment and Food of Denmark available on [https://backend.orbit.dtu.dk/ws/portalfiles/portal/195360360/2019\\_LCA\\_of\\_Single\\_Use\\_Plastic\\_Products\\_in\\_Denmark\\_Environmental\\_Project\\_No\\_2104.pdf](https://backend.orbit.dtu.dk/ws/portalfiles/portal/195360360/2019_LCA_of_Single_Use_Plastic_Products_in_Denmark_Environmental_Project_No_2104.pdf)

<sup>viii</sup> These are possible alternatives to the banned commodity available in the market that promote re-use. However, the same would need to be validated using a LCA study.

<sup>ix</sup> Plastic sheet used around the product has been phased out. With interventions relating to Design for Environment (DFE) the product design may be improved.

<sup>x</sup> Would be in effect after 30th September, 2021 as per PWM Rules, 2021

<sup>xi</sup> Would be in effect after 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2022 as per PWM Rules, 2021

<sup>xii</sup> The UNEP Report recommends that a Reusable bags can be environmentally superior to SUPBs, if they are reused many times. For example, a cotton bag needs to be used 50-150 times to have less impact on the climate compared to one SUPB, a thick and durable polypropylene (PP) bag must be used for an estimated 10-20 times, and a slimmer but still reusable polyethylene (PE) bag 5-10 times, to have the same climate impacts as a Single Use Plastic Bag. Report available on <https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/31932/SUPB.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

<sup>xiii</sup> It may be noted that as per the PWM Rules, 2016, no plastic sachets would be used for storing, packing or selling of gutkha, tobacco and pan masala products

<sup>xiv</sup> As a best practice, it is suggested that citizens look to avail the milk vending machines using their own containers wherever available